

## Prop. 80: YES



Reliable Electric Power.  
Viable Electric Utilities.  
Stable Utility Workforce.  
A Responsible Market.  
No More Deregulation.

## Prop. 75: NO



Silences Working People.  
Undermines Unions.  
Discriminates Against Public Employees.  
Allows Employer to Dominate.

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Helping retirees helps us all

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### News briefs

**Duke Energy** will sell Moss Landing and Morro Bay power plants. Duke acquired the plants in 1997 after California launched its experiment with deregulation, which required PG&E to sell off much of its generating capacity.

**The Murder of Diosdado Fortuna**, a union leader at the largest Nestlé plant in the Philippines, has sparked demands for a full investigation. The union has been on strike since 2002 over bringing retirement benefits within the collective bargaining process.

**PG&E Open Enrollment** for the union-negotiated health benefits is Oct. 28-Nov. 10. Open Enrollment for retirees is Oct. 10 - 21.

**Striking electrical workers** ended a three-day work stoppage in Ireland on Sept. 23 in a dispute over use of outside contractors at the company. Talks resume in October.

**Medicare Part B premiums** will shoot up 13% next year, raising the cost to \$88.50 a month. In addition to the \$88.50, some beneficiaries will begin paying an extra premium for the new prescription drug benefit, expected to average \$32 a month.

# Utility Reporter

IBEW LOCAL 1245 • AFL-CIO

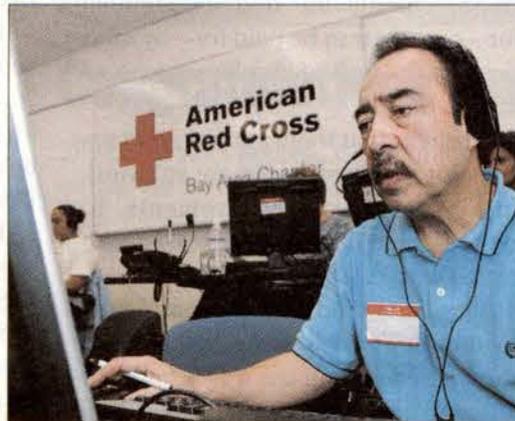
Volume 54 No. 8 • October 2005

UNITY IS STRENGTH

For up-to-the-minute news, see our web site: [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)

*"Sometimes all you can do is listen and be compassionate."*

Larry Lucero, on leave from PG&E to assist the Red Cross in Oakland, takes a call from someone displaced by Hurricane Katrina.



### CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS PRIZED BY RED CROSS

## Members aid Katrina victims

Volunteering her time isn't something new for Delores Jones.

Last month you might have seen her at Lake Merritt in Oakland, participating in a walk-a-thon to benefit the United Negro College Fund. In 1991 you could have found her over by the Claremont Hotel, assisting the victims of the Oakland Hills firestorm.

When Pacific Gas & Electric released employees last month to volunteer for Red Cross disaster relief, Jones—her friends call her Dee—didn't have to think it over. Besides, this time it was personal. She has a niece in Baton Rouge.

"All her husband's family is in Louisiana, and she has 22 people staying with her—kids and adults. It went from two to 22," says Jones. Because her niece didn't go to a shelter, "she's not on the emergency list for housing, so she's going to have them for a while."

Besides concern for her own kin, Jones is reaching out to strangers

caught up in Katrina's cataclysmic embrace. Along with fellow Local 1245 member Larry Lucero of San Francisco, Jones came to the Red Cross office in Oakland on Sept. 22 to offer something the relief organization needs in a big way right now: experience in customer service.

On this particular day some 50 volunteers, working in shifts, were taking calls from people in the gulf states. But few of them could match the experience of Jones, a Senior Service Rep with 32 years at PG&E, and Lucero, a Service Rep in San Francisco with 30 years at PG&E.

A Red Cross coordinator noted that PG&E employees like Jones and Lucero are ideal volunteers because they already know the hardest part of the job: using the phone to help people solve problems.

"All my calls have been people affected in Louisiana and Mississippi,"

continued on page 4



Retirees at the inaugural meeting of the Vacaville/Sacramento chapter lay plans for taking action.

## Retirees chart activist course at launch of new chapter

Pensions and post-retirement medical costs were key concerns voiced by retirees who gathered at Weakley Hall on Sept. 14 to launch the Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club.

Retiree Ed Lenoir put the matter bluntly during a wide-ranging discussion between retirees and Business Manager Perry Zimmerman. Speaking to those not in the room—current

employees—Lenoir said:

"You are not going to be able to retire at 55. You won't be able to afford it."

His sentiments were echoed by Mike Silva, president of the East Bay chapter of the Retirees Club, who brought fraternal greetings to the Vacaville meeting.

"I thought the PG&E retirement program was the greatest in the world—until I retired," Silva said.

continued on page 16

### NOV. ELECTION VOTER GUIDE

## Yes on Proposition 80

*It's time to put an end to electric deregulation*

By Eric Wolfe

Californians were promised that electric deregulation would bring cheaper power. But that's not the way things turned out. In 2000-2001, unregulated "Energy Service Providers" like Enron manipulated our electric system to create artificial shortages and drive up prices. Californians suffered blackouts and lost a staggering \$40 billion, while PG&E employees endured a dozen years of turmoil, including downsizings, dislocations and the bankruptcy of their employer.

Proposition 80 repeals deregulation. It is designed to protect Californians from being plundered again. It will restore an electric system that prioritizes service reliability over private profit and provide a more stable

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STOP ARNIE'S ATTEMPT TO SILENCE WORKING PEOPLE

## Proposition 75 NO!

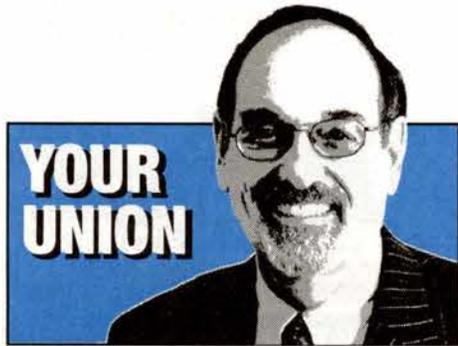
*Local 1245 public sector workers at risk*

Proposition 75 is the ultimate deception. It pretends to protect workers' paychecks, but its effect will be to undermine our standard of living.

Here's how Proposition 75 works. The measure would require public employee unions to get the consent of members every year before using their dues for political purposes. The business groups backing Proposition 75 say it is to "protect the paychecks" of workers who might disagree with their union's political activities. But Prop. 75 has a hidden agenda: to defund public schools, cut health care and roll back retirement security.

The goal of this proposition is to silence the political voice of public sector workers by wrapping that

continued on page 6



**Perry Zimmerman**  
BUSINESS MANAGER

## Helping retirees is in everyone's interest

Over the next 12 months, we will be in negotiations affecting more than 80% of our members. In each of these negotiations, there will arise critical and costly issues that affect our retired members, both in terms of pension and in terms of post-retirement benefits other than pension. I am writing this month to stress the very important nature of these issues, not just for our retired members but for our members who are still working.

Pension plans, both at investor-owned utilities and in the public sector, are under attack. For the last ten years we have seen dramatic efforts by employers and the government to shift the risk of retirement income from the employer to the employee. President Bush's effort to privatize Social Security and Governor Schwarzenegger's crusade to banish defined benefit pension plans for public employees are just two striking examples of the movement to free employers from the responsibility for pension risk. Even more disturbing is the pattern emerging in the airline industry, of turning pension plans over to the government where employees are paid cents on the dollar.

As issues arise in our negotiations over pension and post-retirement medical plans, it is sometimes difficult to build support for making any level of sacrifice among current employees in order to benefit retirees. While employees in principle support improvements for retirees, they balk when presented with a bargaining package in which the improvements for retirees are paid for—or appear to be paid for—by sacrifices on the part of employees who are still on the job.

I believe that there are two good reasons for employees who are still working to support improvements for retirees, even if there is some cost associated with those improvements.

First, it is the right and moral thing to do. Those who came before made sacrifices and built the wages and benefit package that are in place—and sometimes taken for granted—today. We enjoy good wages and good benefits because of their hard work, and it is only right that we remember them and acknowledge their contribution when we can do so.

Second, it is in our self-interest to build financial security for our retirees for one day each of us will be a retired employee. What we negotiate for today's retirees will one day be in place for us, and the precedent of sacrifice to help retirees will be ingrained in the fabric of our collective bargaining, making it more likely that those who follow us will be inclined to treat us as we have treated those who came before us.

This is not the first time that I have asked for the support of our current membership on this issue, and it won't be the last time either. I know that this is not a popular concept, but it is one that I believe is critically important. The allocation of some portion of the "pie" that is available in negotiations for pension and other post-retirement benefits is in our best interest, both morally and as a matter of self-interest.

## Unit corrections

Please note that the last-published unit meeting schedule contained several errors.

**Unit 2511, Stockton**, met Sept. 8, not on the published date of Sept. 15. Please also note another correction: the December meeting will be Dec. 8, not Dec. 15.

**Unit 2512, Angels Camp**, met on Sept. 15, not the published date of Sept. 20. Please also note another correction for this unit: the December meeting will be on Dec. 15, not the published date of Dec. 20.

**Unit 2519, Tiger Creek/Pine Grove**, met on Sept. 20, not the published date of Sept. 15. Please also note another correction for this unit: the December meeting will be on Dec. 20, not the published date of Dec. 15.

*Roger Stalcup,*  
Assistant Business Manager

## CALENDAR

**Oct. 10-Nov. 1:** Window for Absentee Ballot applications for Nov. 8 Calif. Special Election

**Oct. 22:** Retirement Planning Seminar/Public Sector, Vacaville

**Oct. 24:** Deadline to Register to Vote in Nov. 8 California Special Election. Call (800) 345-8683 to obtain registration application

**Oct. 28:** Service Awards, Petaluma

**Oct. 29:** Service Awards, Stockton

**Nov. 5-6:** Advisory Council, Vacaville

**Nov. 8:** California Special Election - **VOTE!**

## APPOINTMENTS

### CONFERENCES & CONVENTIONS

**Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Region X Conference**  
Bernard Smallwood

**IBEW Membership Development Conference**  
Perry Zimmerman  
Sam Tamimi

**Nevada State AFL-CIO**  
Mike Davis  
Jan Staible  
Randy Osborn  
Dennis Romeo

**CITY OF UKIAH Bargaining Committee**  
Phil Hyre

**WELLS REC Bargaining Committee**  
Shawn Kelley  
Torrey Leach

**DUKE ENERGY Fossil-Hydro Bargaining Committee**  
Hazel Bailey  
Doug Paslay  
Mehul Patel

**PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC Materials Labor-Management**  
Miguel Cano

**ISTS Labor-Management**  
Ron Dodson

**TRUCKEE DONNER PUD Bargaining Committee**  
George Caballero  
Mike Connell  
Rosana Matlock  
Pat Waite



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Our phone number is (707) 452-2700.

‘YES’  
ON PROPOSITION 80  
  
‘NO’  
ON PROPOSITION 75

# Union negotiates relief for retiree medical costs

*"(The agreement is) an important step towards remedying the problem facing retirees who are increasingly unable to afford medical premiums." —Perry Zimmerman*

Negotiators for Local 1245 and PG&E reached agreement Aug. 31 on the pension adjustment phase of the 2006-2007 pension and wage negotiations, as a result of which retirees on Medicare will see reduced medical premiums effective in 2006.

The scope of the pension negotiations was limited to existing retirees and so could not involve improvements in the pension formula such as those negotiated in 1999 and 2002.

Local 1245 initially proposed increases for retirees who have been retired at least five years based on sliding scale formulas used in past contracts. Over the course of several meetings, PG&E's negotiators emphatically stated their unwillingness to make any pension adjustments because of the pension fund's funding levels and the pending application before the California Public Utilities Commission to approve hundreds of millions of dollars for the pension plan.

Local 1245's bargaining committee then changed its approach and proposed that the company pass on the approximately \$4,000,000 in subsidies and premium enhancements that it can receive when Medicare Part D goes into effect in

2006. After a day of strenuous discussions on the issue, the company agreed to use all of the government subsidies and premium enhancements to reduce the premiums for Medicare retirees.

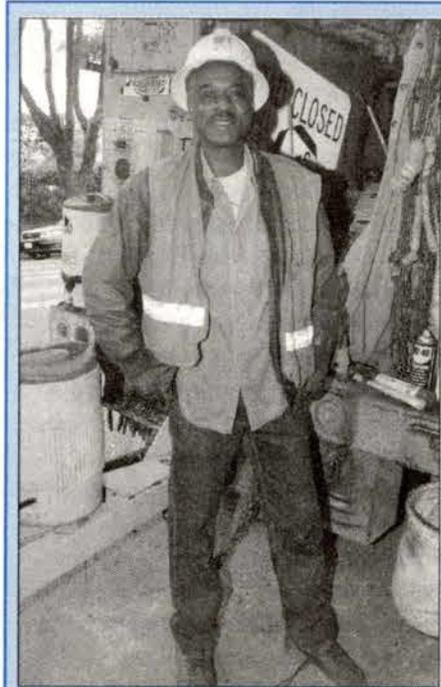
The monthly value of the subsidies and premium enhancements (doubled for employee and spouse) for each member will range from \$22.08 to \$62.20 in the first year, with the largest group of retirees seeing a benefit of \$43.25 per month per person. As a result, even when this cost decrease is coupled with medical cost increases, almost all retirees of Medicare age will see their total premium contributions go down in 2006. In fact, the premium

contributions for the largest group of retirees will decrease over \$30 per month (doubled with spouse included).

Business Manager Perry Zimmerman described the agreement as an "important step towards remedying the problem facing retirees who are increasingly unable to afford medical premiums."

"It doesn't do any good to increase the pension by \$20 a month if the premiums are going up \$60 a month," he said.

Zimmerman further vowed to continue his focus on pension and post-retirement benefit issues in the next set of general negotiations with PG&E.



Gilbert Kidd, Working Foreman B for PG&E, at work on the gas pipeline replacement project on Arguello Street in San Francisco last month.

## Union, PG&E exchange wage proposals

Members of the Local 1245 Bargaining Committee at Pacific Gas & Electric fanned out across California in September to discuss the opening offers in wage bargaining with the company.

Wages negotiations for 2006 and 2007 were mandated by the 5-year contract ratified in 2003. The union and company exchanged wage proposals on Sept. 8 at union headquarters in Vacaville.

Local 1245 proposed wage increases of 5.9% in both 2006 and 2007 as well as a graduated wage increase for employees on LTD.

PG&E's negotiators proposed 2.1% wage increases in both 2006 and 2007 for the Physical bargaining unit, 2.1% lump sum payments in both 2006 and 2007 for the Clerical bargaining unit, and no wage adjustment for employees on LTD.

In its opening remarks, Local 1245 urged PG&E to pay and treat its employees fairly if it is serious about its goal of becoming once again one of the best utilities in the United States. Additional points made by the union negotiating team were:

- The executive retention bonuses and dramatic increases in executive compensation seen in the last three years have created higher expectations for compensation in the bargaining unit.
- The company's financial health is far greater than it was when the last contract was negotiated, both permitting and demanding that bargaining unit employees share in the good times as they shared in the bad times.
- The company's large investment in the corporate transformation process demands a large investment

in the men and women who actually do the work.

- Substantial productivity increases in both the Physical and Clerical bargaining units warrant a sharing of productivity cost savings in the form of wage increases.
- The cost of housing and gasoline are rising more quickly than they can be measured accurately and demand wage increases just to keep even.

In support of its proposal, PG&E offered the following:

- Data from the Bureau of National Affairs showing a national weighted average wage increase of 2.1% for nonmanufacturing contracts reached to date in 2005.
- Survey results showing that the

Clerical bargaining unit wages are substantially above the market.

- Wage comparisons showing that PG&E linemen are paid more than linemen at most other utilities in central and northern California.
- Survey results showing that while PG&E workers enjoyed three 4% wage increases (12% total) over the last three years, workers at western utilities received wage increases averaging only 10.06%.

Members of the union bargaining committee will be attending unit meetings throughout the system to report on negotiations and seek membership support for the union's wage proposal. The next bargaining meeting is scheduled for Oct. 6, 2005.

## Union, PG&E agree to update Rubber Glove Agreement

The Local 1245-PG&E Joint Committee on Rubber Gloving reached agreement in late August to update the current Rubber Gloving Agreement.

The committee met for two weeks beginning on Aug. 15 in Livermore. The committee negotiated necessary changes that would be implemented if and when a proposed variance is approved for two-person rubber gloving.

- Highlights of the agreement:
- Two person rubber glove work procedures for voltages 600v to 21KV shall be performed according to the principles of insulate and isolate. (bucket truck only).

- Two-person rubber glove crew shall consist of a qualified Electric Crew Foreman and a qualified Lineman.
- The two-person rubber glove method will be only by consensus.
- There will be presentations on company time to discuss the changes to all rubber gloves.

There are other changes that will be discussed at the presentations.

Representing the union on the Rubber Glove Committee are: George Lindsey, Casey Barker, Vince Zinkl, Willie Bouzek, Steve Moore, Bob Gerstle, Tom Burks and Al White, along with Business Rep. Larry Pierce and Assistant Business Manager Bob Choate.

### Local 1245 Bargaining Committee

- Donna Ambeau, Sr. Service Rep. I, East Bay
- Terry Andreucci, Electric Crew Foreman, Sierra Division
- Bryan Carroll, Utility Worker, Gas
- Cecilia De La Torre, Service Rep., Stockton
- 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
- Mark Newman, Telecomm Crew Lead, Salinas
- Steve Pastor, Lineman, East Bay
- Mike Saner, Subforeman A, General Construction
- Mike Scafani, Gas Crew Lead - Welding, North Bay

Business Manager  
Perry Zimmerman  
Senior Assistant Business Manager  
Tom Dalzell  
Assistant Business Manager  
Bob Choate  
Assistant Business Manager  
Dorothy Fortier

**Proposition 80...continued from page 1**  
environment for utility employees and the customers we serve.

Californians may think the electric crisis is over. But it is not. The Energy Service Providers who extorted California are waiting for another bite at the apple. And they will get their chance if we do not act to stop them.

Electricity prices have stabilized since 2001 because the federal government ordered generators to stop withholding power and the state stepped in and negotiated long-term contracts for electricity. But deregulation remains the law of the land. When those state-negotiated contracts expire, the Energy Service Providers will have fresh opportunities to throw California's electric system into chaos.

Proposition 80 is a straightforward solution to the problem. It requires every retail provider of electricity in California to have sufficient resources and reserves to serve their customers. It places the previously unregulated Energy Service Providers under the jurisdiction of the California Public Utilities Commission.

Most importantly, Proposition 80 prohibits any new "direct access" contracts.

## Direct Access: Brainchild of Enron

Direct access was the brainchild of Enron. It paved the way for the meltdown of our electric system in 2000-2001, and it is the single biggest obstacle to restoring stability and reliability to our electric system.

Under direct access, Energy Service Providers are allowed to make contracts directly with individual customers. In theory, this is supposed to create a "free market" where everyone can shop for the cheapest power. But it was pure fantasy from the get-go. No one bothered to ask: "How will we make sure there is enough power to meet California's overall needs?"

Before deregulation, we had a process to make sure there was enough power. Utilities like PG&E were required by state regulators to *plan ahead*. Utilities would forecast electric demand well into the future, and buy or build enough generating capacity to meet that demand. Someone, in short, was driving the bus.

But with direct access, no one is driving the bus. When current electricity

contracts expire and deregulation returns to center stage, customers will again be able to get their power directly from unregulated Energy Service Providers. Utilities will be responsible, in theory, for serving everyone else, but will have no practical way to predict how much power is needed because direct access allows utility customers to come and go.

How can you plan for the future if you don't know how many customers you must serve? The answer is simple: you can't. As long as direct access remains a significant force in California's electric system, utilities cannot reliably plan for future electric demand.

Under direct access, your only real guarantee of reliable power will be a flashlight.

Proposition 80 prohibits any new direct access contracts, making it possible once again for utilities to accurately predict future electric demand and to make the investments needed to keep the lights on, something the utilities were exceedingly good at prior to deregulation.

## A Stable Workforce

Utility employees experienced deregulation up close and personal. When PG&E saw deregulation coming down the pike in 1993-94, the company downsized its unionized workforce by over 3,000 employees. When the energy crisis hit in 2000, Southern California Edison started a massive layoff and PG&E prepared to do the same. Local 1245 and the Coalition of California Utility Employees persuaded the California Public Utilities Commission to prohibit those layoffs, but the threat was clear: *In a market-driven system, service reliability is secondary and employees are expendable.*

Only a fool would think you could have service reliability without the employees who provide it. Unfortunately, that breed of fool has dominated the conversation over energy policy for the past decade. Proposition 80 would restore a healthy dose of sanity to this conversation by requiring *all* retail providers of electricity in California to have sufficient resources and reserves to serve their customers. Energy Service Providers would no longer be able to strip customers away from the utility and then dump them back in the utility's lap as soon as the going gets tough—like they did in 2001. The pas-

sage of Proposition 80 will make PG&E's customer base more predictable, which in turn will make its workforce more stable.

## An End to the Nonsense

Opponents of Proposition 80 call it a dangerous experiment. This turns reality upside down. The dangerous experiment was deregulation. It turned the state's electric system into a playground for get-rich artists who gladly turned off the lights in order to drive up prices. Proposition 80 restores the main features of a regulated system that has provided reliable electric service for decades.

The infamous "Enron tapes" exposed the dark heart of electric deregulation (see story, "Just Trust Us," page 5). Enron traders openly gloated about the money they "stole from those poor grandmothers in California." One Enron official bragged that one of his traders "steals money from California," but then rephrases his comment: "OK, he, um, he arbitrages the California market to the tune of a million bucks or two a day."

Opponents of Proposition 80 some-

times admit that "a few" bad actors picked the consumers' pocket in 2000-2001. But it wasn't just a few bad actors. Over two dozen private companies and public agencies were ultimately fined for participating in the market schemes that cost California citizens over \$40 billion. The looting was widespread because the target was so vulnerable: people cannot do without electricity and will pay almost any price to keep the power on.

Proposition 80 puts an end to the nonsense. It recognizes that electricity is essential to modern life, and that it must be universally available at the lowest possible price. For 12 long years, Local 1245 has argued that reliable electric service is far too important to be left to a marketplace. California chose to leap off the cliff anyway, and is \$40 billion poorer for the experience.

We cannot afford another disaster of this magnitude, and there is no reason why we should have to. Local 1245 members know how to keep the lights on. Passing Proposition 80 is the best way to ensure that we can continue doing our job.

## Red Cross...from page 1

says Lucero. "Some have relocated—some have come back. Some need medication, some need financial assistance."

Lucero searches the computer data base to link people up with the services they need. Or at least tries to.

"It's frustrating, because sometimes people have been waiting a week for assistance" and there's nothing more that the volunteer can do to speed things along, says Lucero. "Sometimes all you can do is listen and be compassionate."

Once you've done this kind of work, when you reach out to perfect strangers, you come to understand that the disaster victims aren't the only ones gaining something from the encounter. Helping others is at the heart of the human experience; sitting by and doing nothing can leave you with feelings that you might not want to examine too closely.

Lucero says he volunteered "out of frustration" after watching all the news coming out of the gulf states.

"It's real easy to drop a check in the mail," said Lucero, but "then you watch the news and say, 'What can I do?' Then I came here. It's perfect."

Of course dropping a check in the mail is important, too. Even if you can't get over to the Red Cross to volunteer your time, you can still help those whose lives have been turned upside down by Katrina. Agencies accepting donations for disaster relief in the gulf states are listed here. Write a check, then check out how it makes you feel.



Dee Jones fields a call from someone displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Jones was released from her Customer Service duties at PG&E to volunteer time with the Red Cross in Oakland.

American Red Cross/Disaster Relief  
P.O. Box 37243  
Washington, D.C. 20013

Donate on-line at: <https://give.redcross.org/donation-form.asp>

AFSC Development/Katrina Relief  
1501 Cherry St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Donate on-line at:  
<https://www.donatefast.com/donate/index.cfm?id=afcrisis>

For assistance targeted specifically to IBEW members:

The IBEW Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund  
Chevy Chase Bank  
7501 Wisconsin Ave.  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Donate on-line at:  
<https://secure.ibew.org/katrina.asp>

### Have a college-bound scholar in your house?

Since 1992, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$2 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their secondary education. Over 1,300 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.

All applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2006.

Search an online database of over 100 union scholarships at [www.UnionScholarships.com](http://www.UnionScholarships.com).

Union  
Scholarships



[www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org)

Most of Enron's trading strategies are "pure arbitrage," said Gary Ackerman... Arbitrage is the practice of profiting from price differences by buying low in one market and selling high in another. Particularly tough to prove, according to Ackerman, will be that Enron or any other traders purposely defrauded California consumers

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, quoted in Los Angeles Times, Sept. 30, 2002

"He just [expletive] California... He steals money from California to the tune of about a million."

"Will you rephrase that?"

"OK, he, um, he arbitrages the California market to the tune of a million bucks or two a day."

Enron traders discussing "arbitrage" during the energy crisis, Enron tapes

(Charges by CPUC President Loretta Lynch that energy suppliers are acting like a cartel are) "the height of idiocy."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, Los Angeles Times, May 18, 2001

"And you know if—if an opportunity presents itself where they can, ah, ah, pretty much gouge, ah, one of those smaller customers... they'll do it."

Enron trader discussing tactics, Enron tapes, Nov. 12, 2000

"Those allegations (of illegally manipulating the power market) are out of hand, there is no evidence to suggest that."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, CBS News, May 18, 2001

"There's not much, ah, demand for power at all and we're running kind of fat. Um, if you took down the steamer, how long would it take to get it back up?"

"Oh, it's not something you want to just be turning on and off every hour. Let's put it that way."

"Well, why don't you just go ahead and shut her down, then, if that's OK."

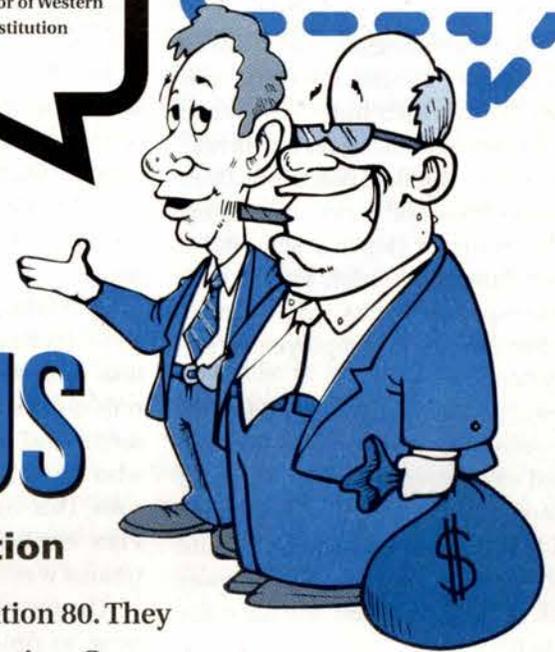
"OK."

Enron trader telling generator to shut down plant during energy crisis, Enron tapes

# JUST TRUST US

## The Big Lie Behind Electric Deregulation

Unregulated "Energy Service Providers" want to kill Proposition 80. They argue that California should press ahead with more deregulation. Can we trust what they have to say? Let the record speak for itself. What follows are quotations from spokesmen for the Energy Service Providers (what they said to the public) along with transcripts of private conversations between energy traders (what they said between themselves) during the 2000-2001 energy crisis.



"What happens is, you don't have price manipulation... We're not gouging, we're providing what the true cost of the energy is."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, Hoover Institution conference, 2001

"If the line's not congested then I just look if I can congest it. If you can congest it, that's a moneymaker no matter what."

Enron Trader, discussing method for creating congestion to drive up prices during energy crisis, Enron Tapes, Aug. 8, 2000

Energy companies were stunned by the claim of widespread manipulation, said Gary Ackerman... "Our members were disheartened and disappointed because they feel they were doing the best job possible of holding the regulations both in spirit and letter."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, quoted in Los Angeles Times, May 7, 2002

"This is where California breaks."

"What we need to do is to help in the cause of, ah, downfall of California. You guys need to pull your megawatts out of California on a daily basis."

Enron traders discussing "downfall of California" during the energy crisis, Enron tapes

Enron, like other power companies, was merely exploring the state's energy system in search of good deals, said Gary Ackerman. "They were probing different spots to see what worked."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, San Francisco Chronicle, May 7, 2002

"OK, there's two people I will gouge. And one is LA and the other one's Nevada."

Enron trader discussing tactics, Enron tapes, Nov. 12, 2000

"Look, when, you buy a house, there is a willing buyer and a willing seller. It's the same thing here: For every kilowatt of energy my clients sell, there is a willing buyer on the other end...It's what society values all the input factors that go into producing that electricity."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, Los Angeles Business Journal, May 28, 2001

"That's what we're gonna do tonight, I've got it already all scheduled...just wash it through El Paso, give 'em five buck for it...So hopefully they'll be congestion."

Enron trader discussing method for creating congestion to drive up prices during energy crisis, Enron tapes

"The 'blame game' should end... Whatever else the documentation shows, it has been well-established that the worst of California's wounds were self-inflicted."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, speaking to the Canadian Electrical Association, April 2, 2003

"So the rumor's true? They're (expletive) takin' all the money back from you guys? All the money you guys stole from those poor grandmothers in California?"

"Yeah, Grandma Millie, man. But she's the one who couldn't figure out how to (expletive) vote on the butterfly ballot."

Enron employees discussing California's effort to get refunds from energy companies, Enron tapes

Particularly tough to prove, according to Ackerman, will be that Enron or any other traders purposely defrauded California consumers...

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, Los Angeles Times, Sept. 30, 2002

As part of his Oct. 17 plea, (Tim Belden) the man who ran Enron's Western trading operations has pledged to cooperate with investigators... "The plea puts us in a very difficult position because now we have one of our peers who has admitted guilt."

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, Sacramento Bee, Nov. 17, 2002



The reason many plants have been down in recent months, (Ackerman) said, is that power producers must perform maintenance now in anticipation of heavy summer demand.

Gary Ackerman, executive director of Western Power Trading Forum, Los Angeles Times, May 18, 2001

"We want you guys to get a little creative and come up with a reason to go down. Anything you want to do over there? Any cleaning, anything like that?"

Enron trader telling Las Vegas Cogen plant to take generator offline during energy crisis, Enron tapes



"Hey Al, this is Leaf at Enron... Ah, let's go ahead and shut down Newman (power plant). Or, ah, not Newman—whoah! [laughing] Shut down Copper (power plant)."

Enron employee ordering the shut down of a power plant during the energy crisis, Enron tapes

"It's called lies. It's all how well you can weave these lies together, Shari, alright, so."

Enron employee named Greg coaches fellow employee on "marketing", Enron tapes

"The ESPs (Energy Service Providers) didn't do anything wrong."

Dan Pellissier, spokesman for the "No on Proposition 80" campaign

**Number of private and public energy companies fined, penalized or ordered to pay refunds in connection with the energy crisis: 25**

Source: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Quotations compiled by IBEW Local 1245 from published news accounts

UtilityReporter

**Proposition 75...continued from page 1** voice up in vast quantities of red tape. Those public sector workers include many members of IBEW Local 1245 who work for public agencies. They also include the teachers, the nurses, police and firefighters who have stood up to recent attempts to cut public education, health care and public retirement systems.

Gov. Schwarzenegger calls these working people "special interests" and promises to "kick their butts." Of course he had no problem taking record-breaking amounts of political donations from big corporations and right-wing interests who want to deprive schools of promised funding, burden nurses with high nurse-patient ratios, and dismantle California's public employee retirement system.

Nurses, police, firefighters and other public employees stood up to this scorched earth mentality. And they did it through their unions. They have proved that when working people unite through our unions, we have the power to speak up and be heard. We have the power to fight back.

Proposition 75 is a blatant attempt to crush the voice of people who are simply trying to preserve their wages, health benefits and retirement security.

## Long History of Deception

Proposition 75's advocates draw on a long history of deception in pursuing their anti-worker agenda.

We've seen Proposition 75 before. It first appeared in the early 1900s, when, responding to a surge of union organizing, employers devised a strategy called the "open shop." Proclaiming concern for workers' interests against "union coercion," bosses sought to ban the union shop, a workplace where all employees would receive union representation and all belong to the union.

Is a "union shop" coercion? On the contrary, it is democracy in action. A union shop comes into existence when

a majority of workers votes for it. All workers in the unit gain from the higher wages and benefits, the voice on the job and the political leverage that unions bring. The average difference in compensation between union and nonunion jobs today is about 27%, according to the US Department of Labor. This is the real reason many employers prefer nonunion workplaces.

Do these employers finance expensive ballot measures because of a deep concern over protecting workers' paychecks? Yes, in the same way that sharks patrol coastal waters just in case they are needed to assist struggling swimmers.

Following World War I, the open shop received a makeover. The new, improved version featured blacklists of unionists who were refused employment, and anti-union spies and thugs who were hired on to company payrolls. This version, called the American Plan, implied that anyone who favored unions was unpatriotic.

The greatest period of union organizing in America occurred during the 1930s and 1940s. In response, a conservative Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, allowing states to pass "right-to-work" laws. Like "paycheck protection," the "right to work" slogan was designed to deceive. Right-to-work laws gave no worker any right to any job. This was just a clever way to expand the open shop concept. Why bar union shops one at a time when it could be accomplished across an entire state?

In California, voters faced right-to-work Proposition 18 on the 1958 ballot. Arch-conservative Oakland Tribune owner William Knowland carried the right-to-work banner as he ran against Pat Brown for governor. Knowland, who was at the time US Senate Republican leader, lost the gubernatorial race by a wide margin and Proposition 18 went down in flames as well.

*Whenever proponents of Proposition 75 speak of their heartfelt concern for workers, an image appears before me. It's a drawing in the style of an early 20th century cartoon. An expensively dressed crocodile sits at a table in a fancy restaurant. Tears stream down his face, and he's protesting to his companion, "Why, I love workers," as he delicately pats his lips with a linen napkin. Across the table, W.C. Fields leans, adding, "With mustard."*

Fred Glass,  
California Federation of Teachers

## "Phenomenon of Anger"

By 1998 the anti-union concept had morphed into Proposition 226's "paycheck protection." Rivers of crocodile tears flowed from wealthy right-wing ideologues who "loved" California workers' rights. Which rights exactly did the bosses love? The workers' right to a living wage? The workers' right to affordable health care, a secure retirement, a voice on the job? It turns out the bosses were only concerned about one "right": they wanted workers to have the "right" to cripple labor's political efforts by withholding union dues, even though the union was acting with majority support from its members.

Despite a huge initial lead and aggressive advertising, Proposition 226 went down to defeat. Californians saw through the scam and understood Proposition 226 for what it really was: an attempt to keep workers out of the legislative process. Let the bosses make all the laws, was the rallying cry for Prop. 226. The people of California said, "Not a good idea."

Proposition 75 is merely a refinement of Proposition 226—it singles out public employee unions. This is what Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, summing up decades of open shop sloganeering by union foes, told Chris Matthews on March 15: "It is not the nurses. It is the unions I'm against." What the governor doesn't understand—or pretends not to—is that in attacking a union, he attacks its members."

One of Schwarzenegger's operatives advocated fanning a "phenomenon of anger" against public employees. A phenomenon of anger? What sort of politician, what sort of American,

would attempt to create a "phenomenon of anger" against people whose lives are devoted to public service—who teach your children, protect your home, tend to the sick and safeguard other vital public services?

## Lurking in the Shadows

Union members have demonstrated a fierce determination to protect high standards in public services. Over the past decade, Local 1245 members were in the forefront of efforts to defend reliable service against those who wanted to "deregulate" electricity. Likewise, nurses, police, firefighters and others have stood up to the governor's attack on public services, drawing attention to his broken promises on the education budget, his effort to cut the death benefits of firefighters and police, his attempt to roll back safe nurse-patient staffing ratios.

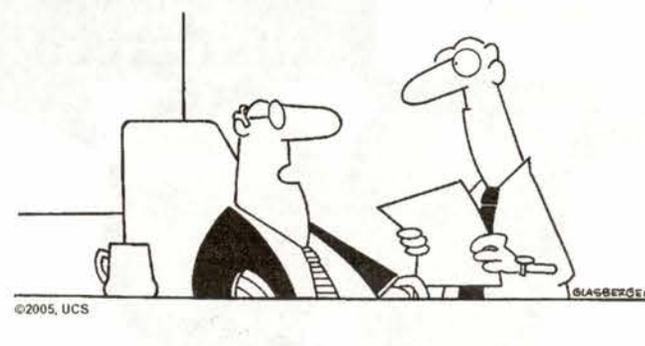
These "uppity" public employees enraged the political power brokers who lurk in the shadows behind Schwarzenegger. They retaliated with Proposition 75.

When in doubt, follow the money. Proposition 75 was written by the anti-tax zealot Lewis Uhler, who said he was targeting public employee unions because of their "greed" and "arrogance." Some major financial backers of Prop. 75 are Ameritrust Capitol (\$250,000); Wal Mart heir, John Walton (\$100,000); and mortgage broker Robin Arkley (\$100,000), among others. In all, 8 big businesses have accounted for 99% of the funds raised by Uhler so far. These corporations are against minimum wage, over-time, adequate health care, and adequate public employee pensions, and they've devised Proposition 75 to silence the voice of working people.

And finally, after a long period of pretending to be on the fence, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger revealed his true colors in September by endorsing Proposition 75. Those who subscribe to the concept of attacking unions, silencing workers and stifling political debate have a good friend in Gov. Schwarzenegger and Proposition 75.

The rest of us have our work cut out for us as Nov. 8 approaches.

Portions of this article are adapted from an opinion piece in the Sacramento Bee by Fred Glass, Communications Director for the California Federation of Teachers.



"We've got to draw the line on unethical corporate behavior. But draw it in pencil."

## Notice regarding agency fee payers objection plan

Any employee who is not a member of the IBEW and who pays agency fees to IBEW Local 1245 pursuant to a union security provision in Local 1245's collective bargaining agreement has the right to object to expenditures of fees for activities which are not reasonably related to collective bargaining or undertaken to advance the employment-related interests of employees represented by the Local. The agency fees paid by a fee payer who perfects an objection will be reduced by an amount reflecting the portion of the overall expenditures of the Local Union that are used for non-chargeable activities. Objections must be made annually and will be effective for a single calendar year. Each fee payer who wishes to file an objection with Local 1245 must do so in writing, addressed to the Business Manager, Local 1245, Post Office Box 2547, Vacaville, California 95696, by certified mail. In registering their objections, objectors must state their name and address and that they pay fees to this Local, and provide their nonmember identification number, if known, and their social security number. Objections must be postmarked during the month of November preceding the calendar year for which the objection will be in effect, or during the first thirty days after the objector commences paying fees to the Local Union as required by a collective bargaining agreement. Objections must be renewed annually, during the month of November.

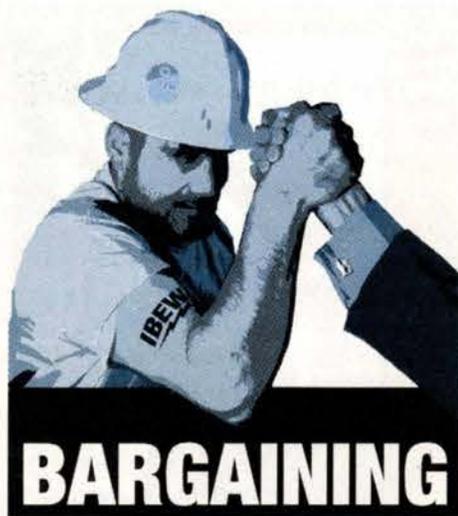
## Improvements bargained at South Feather Water

The Local 1245 Hydro Generation bargaining unit at the South Feather Water and Power Agency ratified new provisions negotiated to the agreement during a recent re-opener for 2005-2006.

Effective Aug. 23, 2005, the agreement:

- Increases by one additional paid hour a holiday that falls on a 9-hour day in a 9/80 schedule.
- Reduces to 22 years the amount of service required to qualify for five weeks vacation.

The hourly wage increases for 2006 will be parity with the PG&E settlement when those wage amounts are deter-



mined.

Serving on the committee were Henry Reeson and Business Rep. Jack Osburn.



Jack Osburn

## Time for EPA Provco proposals

Local 1245 is now accepting contract proposals from members at EPA Provco.

Line Clearance Tree Trimmers and employees in Vegetation Control, now is the time to put your ideas into action by submitting proposals for the upcoming negotiations!

The current labor agreement terms out on Dec.31. Local 1245 and the company have agreed to begin negotiations on Oct. 19 at Local 1245 headquarters in Vacaville.

You may present your proposal to your Local 1245 Shop Steward, or to your Business Representative at your next regularly scheduled unit meeting. Proposals can also be faxed to the attention of Ray Thomas at 530-547-1193.

Local 1245 Shop Stewards will have pre-printed proposal forms, but you may write your proposal on an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper with the following information included:

- Brief Description of your proposal.
- The Article of our current Labor Agreement which is affected by your proposal.
- Any specific facts and details that you can offer in support of your proposal.
- Your printed name and contact telephone number in order that the negotiating committee may contact you to seek clarifications.

*In solidarity,*

*Ray Thomas, Senior Business Rep.*

## Es hora de presentar las propuestas para EPA Provco

El Local 1245 está ahora aceptando las propuestas para contrato de los miembros que trabajan en EPA Provco.

Podadores de árboles para la limpieza de líneas y empleados de control de vegetación, esta es la hora de poner sus ideas en acción y presentar sus propuestas para las negociaciones venideras.

El presente contrato laboral termina el 31 de diciembre. El Local 1245 y la Compañía han acordado comenzar las negociaciones el 19 de octubre en las oficinas del Local 1245 en Vacaville.

Usted puede presentar su propuesta a su Delegado Sindical o a su Representante de Negocios durante la siguiente reunión regularmente programada para su unidad. Las propuestas también pueden ser enviadas por fax al Sr. Ray Thomas, por el teléfono 530-547-1193.

Los delegados sindicales del Local 1245 tienen formularios impresos para las propuestas, pero usted puede escribir su propuesta en una hoja de papel de 8-1/2 por 11 pulgadas, e incluir la información siguiente:

- Breve descripción de su propuesta.
- El Artículo en nuestro presente contrato laboral que es afectado por su propuesta.
- Cualquier información y detalles específicos que usted pueda ofrecer en soporte de su propuesta.
- Su nombre en letra de imprenta y su número de teléfono, para poder ponernos en contacto con usted, en caso de que el comité negociador necesite alguna aclaración.

*En solidaridad,*

*Ray Thomas,*

*Representante Principal de Negocios*

# ‘YES’

## ON PROPOSITION 80

# ‘NO’

## ON PROPOSITION 75

## Line Clearance Tree Trimmers

### Leaves of Absence: protect your rights

Line Clearance Tree Trimmers and Vegetation Control Specialists have rights that permit them to leave work to deal with family medical situations. But some Local 1245 members have been leaving work without properly applying for either a Family Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA), a contractual Leave of Absence or both.

An FMLA leave of absence will only protect your job for 12 weeks within any 12 month period, and applies only to employers with 50 or more employees. In order to protect your job beyond the FMLA 12 weeks, you must file for an Article VII Leave of Absence. Please refer to the specific Article VII Leaves-of-Absence language in your Local 1245 Labor Agreement.

In most cases, a company must grant a Leave of Absence for urgent and substantial reasons. More often than not

any FMLA absence would qualify as urgent and substantial.

Remember, you must request an Article VII Leave of Absence. It is best to contact your Local 1245 Business Representative prior to your Leave in order that we may assist you in both informing your company and documenting your request.

### Permisos de ausencia del trabajo: proteja sus derechos

Los podadores de árboles para la limpieza de líneas y los especialistas de control de vegetación tienen derechos que les permiten ausentarse de sus trabajos en caso de situaciones médicas en sus familias. Pero algunos miembros del Local 1245 han estado saliendo de sus trabajos sin haber solicitado primero un Permiso de Ausencia por Problemas Médicos en la Familia (FMLA son las

siglas en inglés), un permiso de ausencia contractual o ambos.

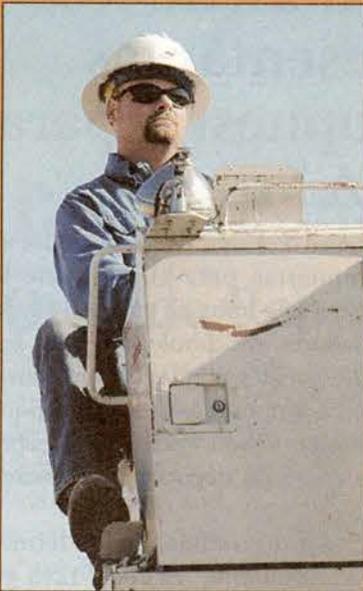
Un permiso de ausencia de tipo FMLA sólo protegerá su empleo por 12 semanas, durante cualquier período de 12 meses, y se aplica solamente a las empresas que tengan 50 o más empleados. Para poder proteger su empleo durante más de las 12 semanas de un permiso FMLA, usted debe solicitar un Permiso de Ausencia bajo el Artículo VII. Por favor, lea todo lo pertinente a los permisos de ausencia del Artículo VII en el contrato laboral de su Local 1245.

En la mayoría de los casos, una compañía debe otorgar un permiso de ausencia del trabajo si las razones son urgentes y substanciales. Más veces que no, cualquier permiso de ausencia FMLA calificará como de tipo urgente y substancial.

Recuerde, usted debe solicitar un Permiso de Ausencia bajo el Artículo VII. Es mejor que hable con el Representante de Negocios del Local 1245 antes de comenzar la ausencia, para que lo pueda ayudar a informar a su compañía y a documentar su solicitud.

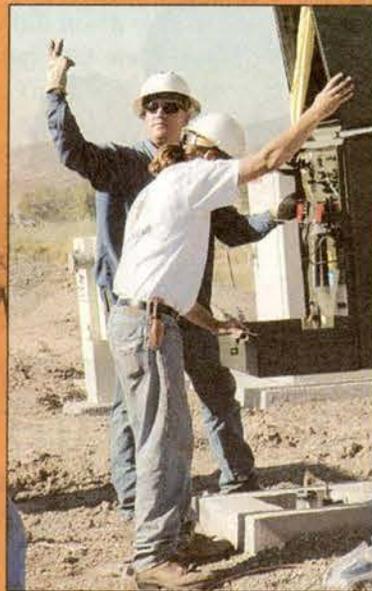
## City of Redding Seeks Linemen

The City of Redding is seeking journey-level personnel to perform all classes of electrical power transmission and distribution system construction, maintenance and operations work. The pay is \$33.37/hour plus employer-paid benefits package, including 2% @55 PERS retirement and 2.7% @ 55 PARS retirement. Three-year approved apprenticeship training & California Class A drivers license are required. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. For more information and application, call Job Hotline at 530-225-4069, or download from [www.ci.redding.ca.us](http://www.ci.redding.ca.us), or pick up at the Personnel Department, 777 Cypress Ave., Redding. Apply by Oct. 21, 4 p.m.



Mike Hillyer operates the boom.

John Brooke, signaling, and Sam Green guide the pad mount transformer into place.



*Nature does not ask your permission,  
she has nothing to do  
with your wishes, and whether you  
like her laws or  
dislike them, you are bound to  
accept her as she is, and  
consequently all her conclusions.*

DOSTOYEVSKY  
*Notes from the Underground*



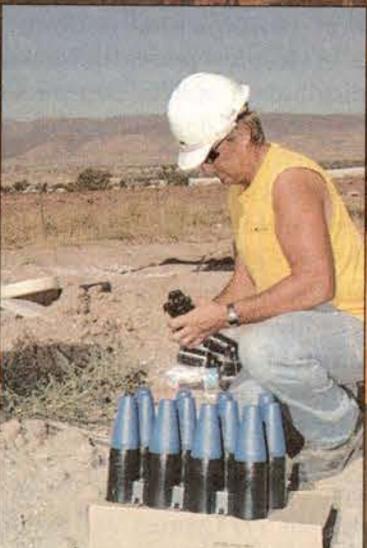
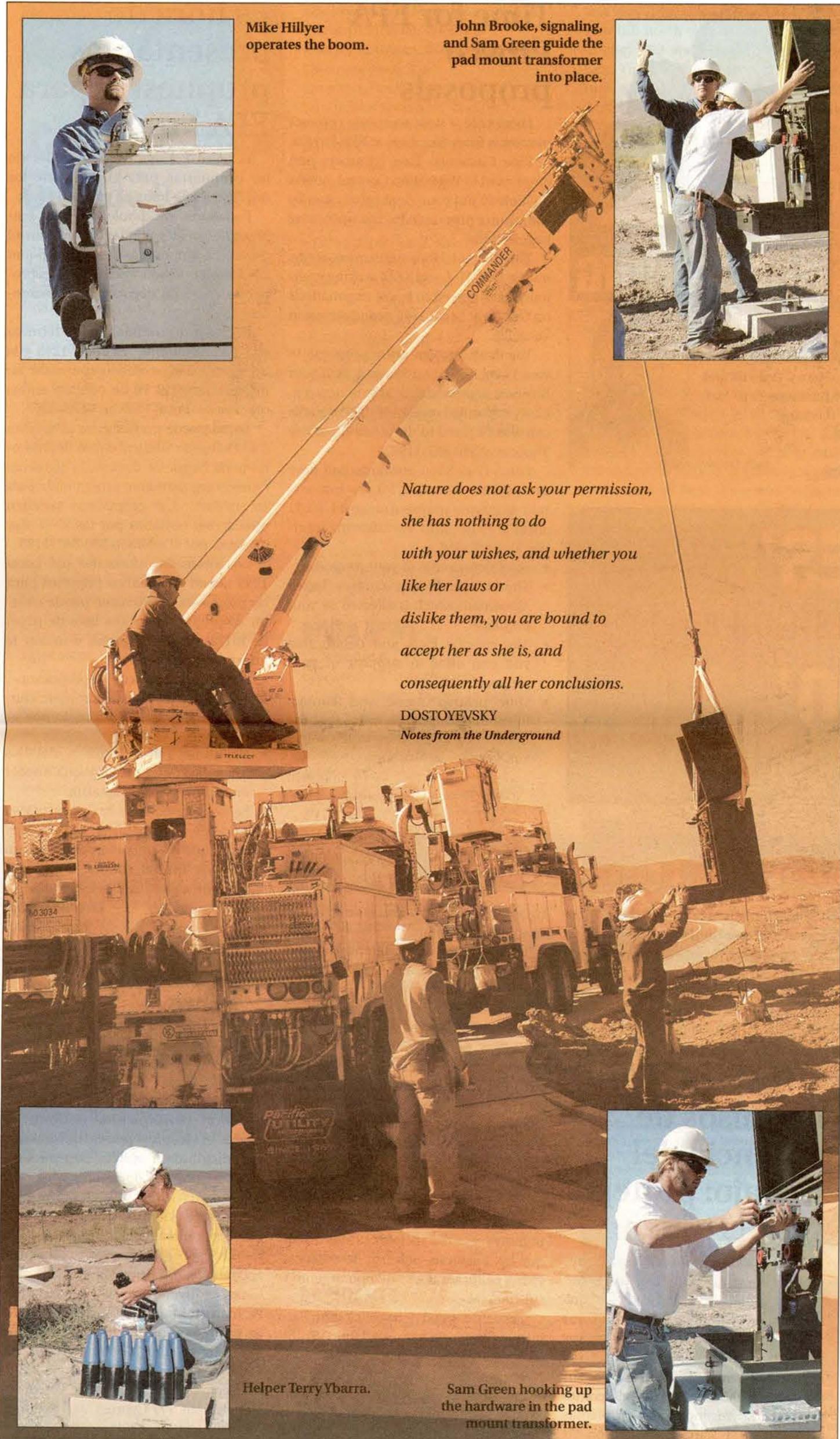
# UNDER



Sierra Pacific™

When he wrote of accepting nature "as she is," the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky wasn't writing about linemen. But IBEW linemen hooking up electric services in Reno's new housing developments find nature waiting for them in all her many guises.

Above ground, of course, there is the



Helper Terry Ybarra.

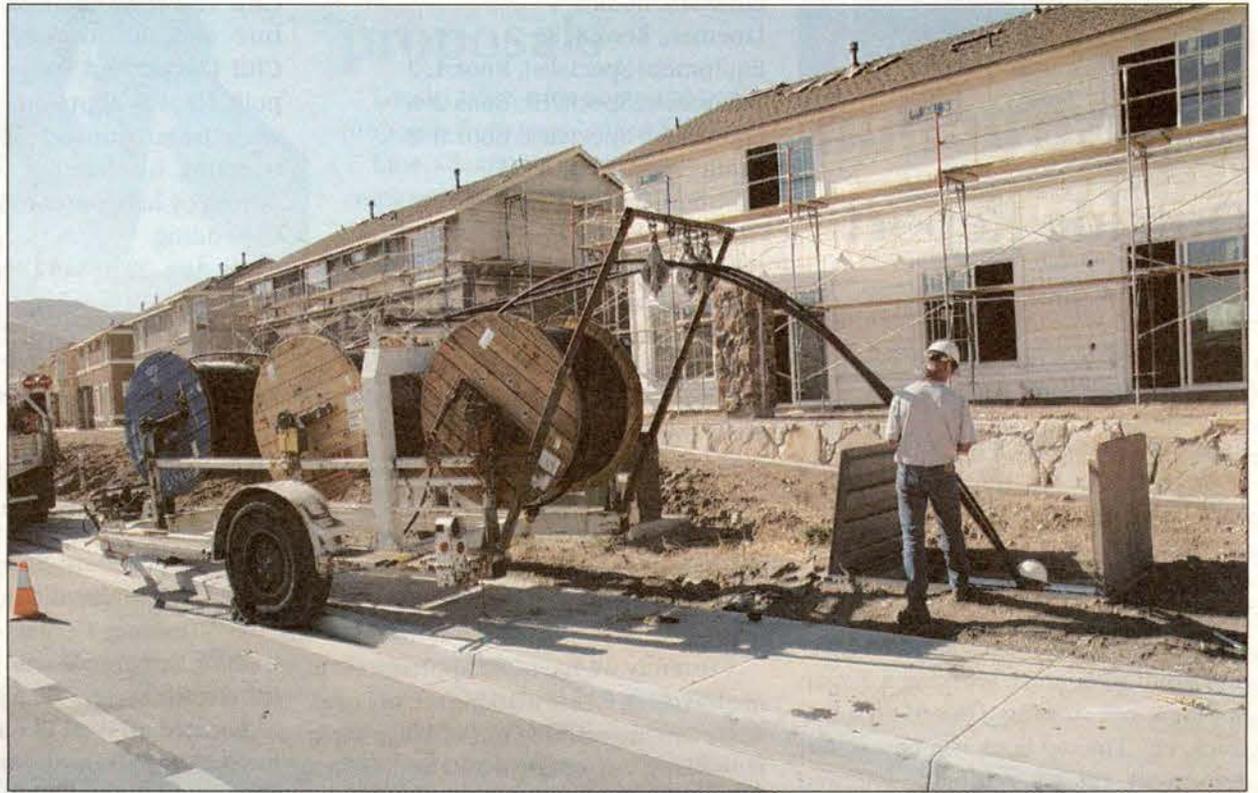
Sam Green hooking up the hardware in the pad mount transformer.



John Brooke, left, and Mike Hillyer pull cable from the vault near the transformer.



*Meanwhile, down the street, at the new development being wired for power...*



ABOVE: Foreman Jeff Kelly guides cable into the vault.



Foreman Jeff Kelly



Foreman Jeff Kelly and Lineman Wade Henderson.

BELOW: Lineman Wade Henderson ignores the water at his feet as he helps pull the cable into the vault for its journey through the underground.

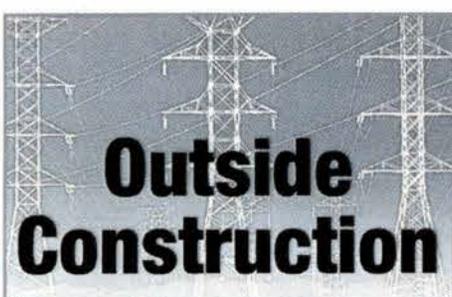
# GROUND

Nevada sun, formidably hot in August, when these photos were taken. Beneath the surface, as Sierra Pacific Power underground crews well understand, is another natural reality: if you dig any distance at all in these parts, the Reno high water table is waiting for you.

A Sierra Pacific underground crew under Foreman Jeff Kelly took nature as they found her last August on Pioneer Street in Reno: setting the pad mount transformer, hooking up the hardware, and pulling cable.

Down in the vault, Lineman Wade Henderson sloshed in several inches of water as he guided the cable on its journey through the underground. Also working on the crew were Linemen John Brooke and Mike Hillyer, along with Apprentice Lineman Sam Green and Helper Terry Ybarra.





## Outside Report

The last month has started off on the wrong foot concerning safety. Union brothers and sisters are the *best of the best*, but we have had a number of serious accidents this summer.



Dave Crawford

We are not following the most basic rules concerning second point of contact, working a 3-man hot crew, not stowing a boom on a line truck, etc. The red book is a part of our agreement, yet it is not being followed as closely as it should be. Local 1245 has a duty to be vigilant on safety. Anyone who believes they should be exempt from following safety rules are welcome to explain to the Executive Board why you were not following the rules of our agreement.

At our last Joint Safety meeting we discussed some changes in the red book. The committee discussed moving of potheads energized. This question keeps being raised. The committee approved new language to be submitted as following 2.05 Pole-Mounted Apparatus; new(c): (c) *Pole-mounted potheads shall not be transferred while energized.*

The CAL-OSHA has proposed a state standard Title 8, Chapter 4: regarding heat illness prevention. More will be reported at a later date.

Work is very plentiful. We are still running 6 open calls for Journeyman Lineman. Working 5/10's to 6/10's from Bakersfield to Northern California and Nevada.

I would like to thank everyone who came to the NEBF/NEAP Pre-Retirement Seminar that we put on Sept. 10. With your participation it was a great success. I hope all your questions were answered. If not, please let me know so I can get a hold of the NEBF to try and get an answer for you.

It has been a very busy month. Let's go out there and *work smart and safe* so that we can go home to our families. The numbers for the month are listed below.

David Crawford, Senior Outside Line Business Representative

### THE NUMBERS

Since last month's report, we had 59 calls for Journeyman Lineman; 6 calls for Equipment Specialist; 20 calls for Groundman; zero calls for Cable Splicers; 15 calls for U.G. Techs; and 23 calls for Apprentices, for a total of 123 calls.

The books, as of Sept. 14:  
 Journey Lineman, Book 1: 2  
 Journey Lineman, Book 2: 0  
 Lineman, Book 3: 1  
 Lineman, Book 4: 39  
 Equipment Specialist, Book 1: 2  
 Equipment Specialist, Book 2: 3  
 Equipment Specialist, Book 3: 2  
 Groundman, Book 1: 11  
 Groundman, Book 2: 5  
 Groundman, Book 3: 39  
 Groundman, Book 4: 79  
 Cable Splicer, Book 1: 0  
 Cable Splicer, Book 2: 0  
 Cable Splicer, Book 3: 1

Total crews working on Outside Agreement: 110  
 U.G. Agreement: 40 crews  
 Pole and Test Agreement: 40 crews  
 Teledata Agreement: 14 crews  
 Total crews working: 204

Currently we have 288 apprentices: 6 are traveling, 62 are working out of Local 1245; 219 are working out of Local 47; 1 is working out of Local 396 and 12 are laid off due to various reasons. 49 apprentices have passed their test and are Journeymen. We have indentured 106 apprentices this year.

### OTHER NEWS

First Aid & CPR is the 3rd Saturday of every month in Sacramento.

Sierra Pacific Power is putting out small projects. We have addendum to our Outside Agreement for a project: the Tracy to Silver Lake 120 KV, Phase 1 Transmission Line Project.

PG&E is putting out more pole packages and developer packages and Livermore Transmission U.G. Project is starting up. However they are having a rough start on the 230 KV Underground Project in San Francisco.

SMUD is putting out small projects. Starting some windmill work.

We are negotiating with San Francisco NECA on the Light Rail Agreement. As of late August we have an agreement with Republic Electric for street light and signal work.

We are still negotiating with NECA & Henkels & McCoy on the Teledata Agreement. However we have a new Agreement called Fiber to Home with Henkels & McCoy FTTP. With NECA Teledata we are still open at this time.

Organizing: We are talking to the Line School participants in Idaho about union opportunities. We are targeting a contractor in Nevada Pole Line Construction. We are making progress in signing Outback Communications.

### ACCIDENTS

On Aug. 17 we had a Journeyman Lineman fall from a pole, breaking his leg. The crew was working on a clearance on the Trinity-Maple Creek 60kv, in the Big Bear-Weaverville section. The job in progress was to replace bent dampers on a structure. The location

was very rugged terrain on the side of a step hill north east of the intersection of Hwy 299 and Helena Rd., Junction City. The crew had hiked into a structure and the Journeyman Lineman, Cliff Ducas, had started to climb the pole. He was approximately 35 feet up when he cut out and fell to the ground, breaking his left leg. He was transported by helicopter to Mercy Hospital in Redding.

On Aug. 29 in San Diego Wilson Construction had a job on a tower in the middle of Cotton Wood Golf Course.

They were modifying some towers that were double circuit. No wire was on the tower. They had a crane set up to pick it up and lay it on the ground to modify. Wilson was running a six-man crew: 5 journeymen linemen and an operator. The 4 JL went up and connected to the crane then each of them went and got on each leg of the tower. This was the 40th tower they were doing. Gene Bowers unbelted and was moving over to help his pole partner when he fell 50' to 70' down, dying instantly.

The next Joint Safety is Nov. 2, 2005.

### California-Nevada Joint Apprentices Training Center

## Training for the future

The Northern School of the California-Nevada Joint Apprentices Training Center has a big job: training the people who will help build the electric system for a growing region.

Located off West El Camino in Sacramento, the JATC is a joint project of contractors and the IBEW to prepare the labor force for unionized contractors. Sacramento, with 45 currently working, serves as a satellite to the main center in Riverside, which has approximately 200 apprentices at work.

The 7-step apprenticeship prepares apprentices for all the responsibilities they will face as journeymen. Apprentices attend school one weekend a month for training throughout their apprenticeship. On the job they act

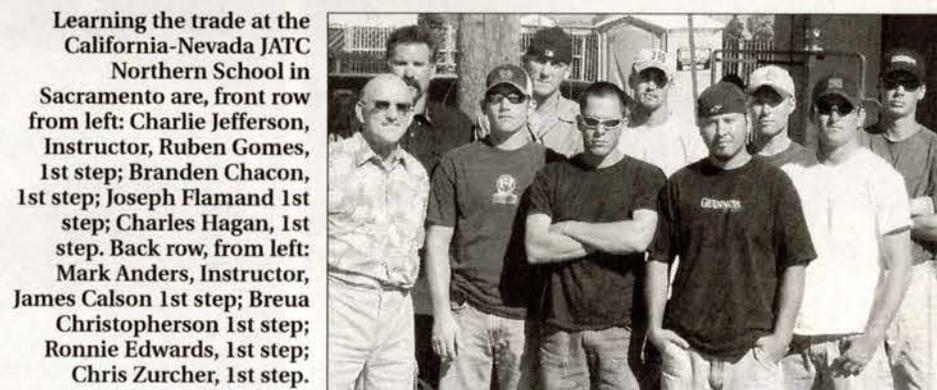
essentially as a groundman, assisting journeyman linemen in just about any task that doesn't require climbing a pole. When they get to the 2nd step they start climbing and doing hot secondaries and dead transmission work. At 4th step they can do hot primary and hot transmission work.

Apprentices are required to have hours in substation, transmission, hot distribution and cold distribution. They also have to perform some light rail and oil refinery work.

The core idea of apprenticeship is training on the job. Apprentices return to the training center to take the tests that enable them to advance to the next step. Roughly three-and-a-half years are required to complete the program.



Learning the trade at the California-Nevada JATC Northern School in Sacramento are, from left: Troy Brausell Instructor, Nolan Brimhall 5th step; David Jenkins 6th step; Brain McClure 5th step; Dean Bodenhamer 6th step; James Osterli Instructor.



Learning the trade at the California-Nevada JATC Northern School in Sacramento are, front row from left: Charlie Jefferson, Instructor, Ruben Gomes, 1st step; Branden Chacon, 1st step; Joseph Flamand 1st step; Charles Hagan, 1st step. Back row, from left: Mark Anders, Instructor, James Calson 1st step; Breua Christopherson 1st step; Ronnie Edwards, 1st step; Chris Zurcher, 1st step.



Learning the trade at the California-Nevada JATC Northern School in Sacramento are, front row from left: Troy Braswell Instructor, Eric Ball 2nd step; Chad Crosthwait 2nd step; Brain Nutter 2nd step; Clint Gage 2nd step; Stewart Russall 2nd step; James Osterli Instructor. Back row, from left: Russell Beard, 2nd step; Daniel Lindemeir 2nd step; Eric Schulke 2nd step.

# Legislators show true colors in vote on minimum wage

*When employers deny a subsistence wage to poor workers, they shift the costs of subsistence onto the state's taxpayers. According to a recent UC Berkeley study, two million working families in California rely on publicly funded safety net programs at a public cost of over \$10 billion a year.*

**T**wenty-six members of the California State Senate, including three Republicans, distinguished themselves on Sept. 7 by passing AB 48, a bill to raise the minimum wage by \$1 an hour over the next two years.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger had offered to accept a smaller increase in the minimum wage if unions would agree to weakening the standards for

overtime pay, but unions rejected that approach.

The vote in the Senate was 26-14. The measure passed the Assembly on June 2 on a 49-30 vote. The only Republican within Local 1245's jurisdiction to vote for the wage hike was Abel Maldonado.

When employers deny a subsistence wage to poor workers, they shift the

costs of subsistence onto the state's taxpayers. According to a recent UC Berkeley study, two million working families in California rely on publicly funded safety net programs at a public cost of over \$10 billion a year.

If all workers in the state earned a minimum wage of \$8 per hour, public assistance program costs would be reduced by \$2.7 billion, the UC Berkeley study shows.

While employers often try to portray minimum wage workers as teenagers out to earn some pocket money, the California Budget Project found that 58.1% of all minimum wage earners in California are 25 years of age or older.

Despite increases in the minimum wage over the years, the purchasing power of California's minimum wage is

down 28% since 1968.

Contrary to employer claims that minimum wage hikes will lead to unemployment, a 1998 Economic Policy Institute (EPI) study failed to find any systematic, significant job loss associated with minimum wage increases. In fact, following the most recent increases in the minimum wage, the low-wage labor market performed better than it had in decades, with lower unemployment rates, increased average hourly wages, increased family income, and decreased poverty rates.

The impact of a raise in the minimum wage on the state budget could be an economic stimulus as workers spend their new disposable income on taxable merchandise and services.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that a hike in the minimum wage lifts many boats, many members of the Assembly and Senate in Local 1245's jurisdiction could not bring themselves to support it. They have cloaked themselves in shame, and we bring their names to you on this page.

## Hall of Shame



### Assembly

#### Dist.

- 26 Greg Aghazarian
- 33 Sam Blakeslee
- 25 Dave Cogdill
- 15 Guy Houston
- 3 Rick Keene
- 2 Doug La Malfa
- 4 Tim Leslie
- 34 Bill Maze
- 32 McCarthy
- 10 Alan Nakanishi
- 5 Roger Niello
- 29 Michael Villines

### Senate

#### Dist.

- 4 Sam Aanestad
- 18 Roy Ashburn
- 1 Dave Cox
- 12 Jeff Denham
- 14 Charles Poochigian

## Assembly

#### Dist.

- ★ 31 Juan Arambula
- ★ 1 Patty Berg
- ★ 11 Joseph Canciamilla
- ★ 16 Wilma Chan
- ★ 24 Rebecca Cohn
- ★ 23 Joe Coto
- ★ 7 Noreen Evans
- ★ 14 Loni Hancock
- ★ 9 Dave Jones
- ★ 18 Johan Klehs
- ★ 27 John Laird
- ★ 13 Mark Leno
- ★ 22 Sally Lieber
- ★ 17 Barbara Matthews
- ★ 19 Gene Mullin
- ★ 6 Joe Nation
- ★ 30 Nicole Parra
- ★ 21 Ira Ruskin
- ★ 28 Simon Salinas
- ★ 20 Alberto Torrico
- ★ 8 Lois Wolk
- ★ 12 Leland Yee

## Hall of Fame

### Senate

#### Dist.

- ★ 13 Elaine Alquist
- ★ 2 Wes Chesbro
- ★ 10 Liz Figueroa
- ★ 16 Dean Florez
- ★ 5 Mike Machado
- ★ 15 Abel Maldonado
- ★ 3 Carole Migden
- ★ 6 Deborah Ortiz
- ★ 9 Don Perata
- ★ 11 Joe Simitian
- ★ 8 Jackie Speier
- ★ 7 Tom Torlakson

# SERVICE AWARDS



## Monterey, CA

MAY 21, 2005



Honoring Eugene Warrne for 55 years of service are, from left: Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer, Vice President Art Freitas, (Warrne), and Business Reps. Mike Haentjens and Bill Brill.

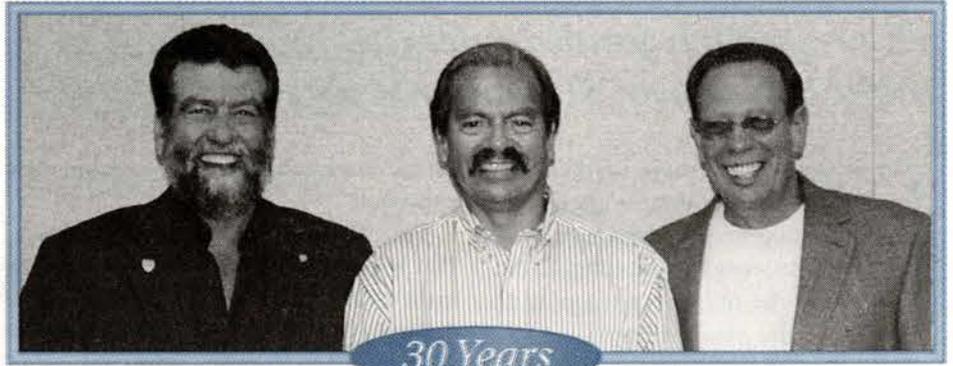


Darwin Ernst, left, is congratulated by Vice President Art Freitas for 40 years of service in Local 1245.

Photos: Lynn Moon



35 Years



30 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

#### 55 Years

Warrne, Eugene D.

#### 40 Years

Donat, Gary  
Ernst, D  
Ingels, Bruce  
Morris, Ronald

#### 35 Years

Arredondo, Henry  
Chapman, Charles  
Diaz, Steve  
Kennedy, Jeffrey  
Langfeldt, Larry  
Masatani, Michael  
Miller, David  
Moseley, Lonnie Ray  
Skillman, Robert  
Weininger, John  
Wiens, Edward

#### 30 Years

Allums, Mikel

Gagne, Shirley  
Garcia, Ricky  
Kim, Derek  
Machado, Louie  
Martinez, Vincent  
Mendolla, Adam  
Miguel, David  
Stone, G

#### 25 Years

Ackerman, Clark  
Allison, David  
Arreg, Theodore  
Azevedo, John  
Bartels, Mary  
Billingsley, Mary  
Changaris, Lorrie  
Dare, John  
Demateo, Rocky  
Dillon, Michael  
Galvin, Maria  
Gill, Edward  
Henderson, Martin  
Hernandez, Joey

Hicok, Darrel  
Hunter, Paul  
Kelly, John  
Markoe, Kevin  
Miyamoto, Martin  
Muro, Armando  
Olea, David  
Overman, Gary  
Pajerski, Philip  
Parslow, Paul  
Reed, Linda  
Rojas, Jim  
Ross Jr., Ronald  
Stoffey, Pat  
Stockton, Kenneth  
Stowell, Douglas  
Thorne, D K  
Tomka, Minerva  
Totes, Jerry  
Turner, Daryl  
Urquidi, Stephen  
Van Ingen, Jacquelin  
Vance, Thomas  
Walton, Richard  
Woody, Philip

## No on 74: don't punish new teachers

Proposition 74 would increase from two years to five years the length of time a new K-12 teacher must spend on probation. It would also allow school districts to terminate "tenured" teachers after two consecutive poor evaluations.

The governor's argument on behalf of Prop. 74 rests on two false assumptions: that asking new teachers to swallow five years with no employment rights instead of two years will somehow improve public education; and that it's impossible to get rid of "bad teachers" once they have "tenure," or permanent employee status.

This "tenure" that so enrages Gov. Schwarzenegger is nothing more than the regular employee status that many Local 1245 members are familiar with under our own collective bargaining agreements. For teachers, *it is simply the right to a hearing before being fired*, during which reasons for termination must be presented.

According to California Federation of Teachers attorney Stewart Weinberg, "In ninety nine out of one hundred termination cases brought before the hearing panels, if the principal has done her job and properly documented what's wrong with a teacher who should be fired, that teacher is fired. The problem is that often the administrator has failed to

document the case properly."

Is this "due process" protection a hurdle to getting teachers fired? Yes, and it should be. We have "tenure" to provide teachers with due process rights that protect them against arbitrary and unreasonable firing.

California law already provides a system to fire teachers who are not adequately performing in the classroom. The Education Code allows teachers to be fired for unsatisfactory performance, unprofessional conduct, criminal acts, dishonesty and conduct unfit for associating with children, no matter how long they have been on the job.

No academic research shows that extending probation to five years, or allowing teachers to be fired more easily, does anything to improve public education. Prop. 74 isn't just unfair—it's unnecessary.

Today, nearly half of all new teachers quit by their fifth year. We lose these dedicated and idealistic young people due to the difficulty of their jobs and lack of support for new teachers; our severely under-funded public school system, and low teacher salaries. Prop. 74 does nothing to address this problem; it will only makes things worse.

Local 1245 recommends that members vote "NO" on Prop. 74.

# The Governor's software problem is our problem

by Fred Glass

In finally making his long-delayed pronouncement that there will be a fall special election, Governor Schwarzenegger gave every appearance of being on auto-pilot. And for good reason: he is.

What I am about to tell you may come as a shock. The people of California did not elect an actor who played a cyborg. They elected a real cyborg—part man, part machine.

Think about it. This explains a lot, like the governor's untiring repetition of simple, catch phrases: "special interests," "out of control spending," "let the people decide." Some believe this has to do with "staying on message." In reality, it's his programmers' clever work-around, solving the problem of an operating system struggling to keep up with too much input.

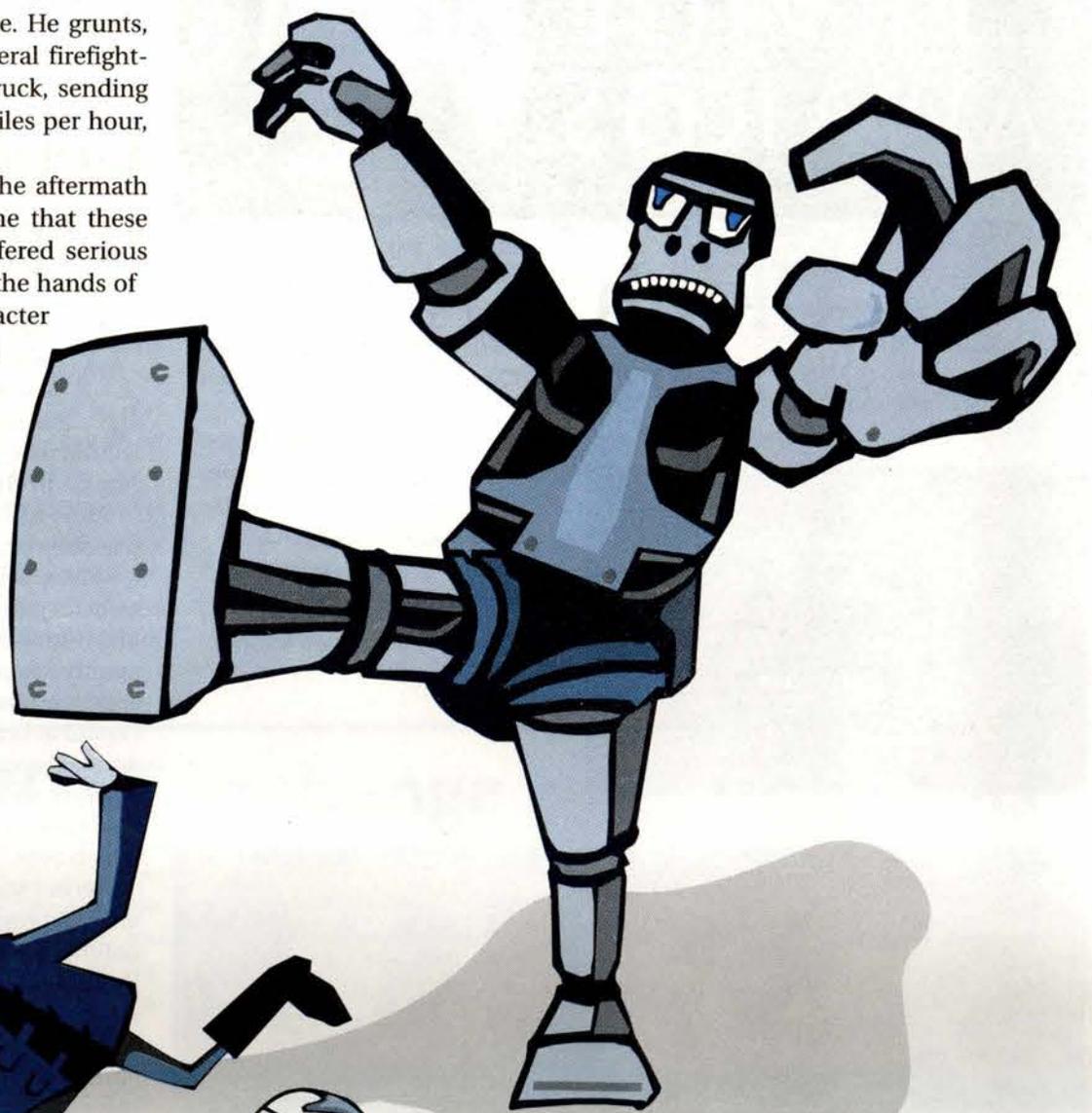
Remember the scene in the first *Terminator* movie, when we see through the video lens of the cyborg's eyes as he is confronted with a choice of four responses to a potentially threatening situation, A, B, C, or the infamous D: "F\*\*\* you, a\*\*\*\*\*." And of course, to the audience's delight, his cursor scrolls down to D. Many people were perplexed last December, at a woman's conference, when the Governor, confronted by nurses upset over his executive order overturning their patient staffing ratios, said of them, "I kick their butts." Be perplexed no more.

Similar head-scratching arose when the governor decided to go after the pensions of firefighters, teachers, and other public employees through a ballot initiative. But this hostility is consistent with the cyborg's hostility to firefighters all along. In *Terminator 3*, you will recollect, the cyborg, during a thrilling chase sequence, leaps in-

to the cab of a fire engine. He grunts, "I'll drive," and kicks several firefighters out the door of the truck, sending them tumbling, at fifty miles per hour, onto the asphalt.

Although we don't see the aftermath on-screen, we can assume that these public servants have suffered serious injury, perhaps death, at the hands of the cyborg. Yet the character evidences no remorse over his actions, just like the governor. Of course not; there are no "remorse" subroutines in his software.

Recently, people were confused and angry when the governor reneged on a promise to the education community to pay back two billion dollars he had



borrowed last year to close the state budget gap, which he'd said he would repay. The confusion rose to pandemonium when he began to call the educators who had been in the room when he'd made the promise "liars." After all, the evidence was right there in the newspapers in January 2004; he'd made that promise, all right.

One might reasonably infer that the cyborg's outmoded operating system,

subjected to the stress of plummeting popularity, had crashed. But that's not the whole story. Here's what happened. Speaking under condition of anonymity, one of the governor's top software designers has revealed that the cyborg, facing this crisis, called upon subroutines that had worked in similar situations in the past. It settled on the algorithm of the time-travel sequences from the *Terminator* movies.

As you remember, the premise of these films is that a cyborg comes from the machine-ravaged future to our own time, traveling to the past in order to change it and thus alter the future.

Apparently—and the governor's design engineer admits this remains but a plausible hypothesis—the governor be-

lieved he had already traveled to the past and changed the event in January 2004 so that he had never made the promise to repay the two billion dollars. Acting on this mistaken belief, he then accused the education leaders of lying, setting in motion months of turmoil, not to mention his own plunge in the polls.

Clearly, the governor hasn't received the software upgrades that one would expect a cyborg in his position to get. The glitches are multiplying as his operating system fails to keep up with complex policy issues. And now, Schwarzenegger is barreling ahead with an unnecessary and costly special election, in the face of mounting evidence that it will do more harm than good.

What can be done about this untenable situation? It is time for the people to jam the streets and demand a gubernatorial recall. No, not another recall election. We need something that's guaranteed to work better this time: a *factory recall*.

Fred Glass is the Communications Director for the California Federation of Teachers. He wrote this piece with the help of humor software, which explains why most of it isn't very funny.

# SERVICE AWARDS



## Ukiah, CA

MAY 13, 2005



Dallas Pearson, center, receives 55-year award from Business Rep. Rich Cowart, left, and Assistant Business Manager Bob Choate.



35 Years



25 Years

### THE HONOREES

#### 55 Years

Pearson, Dallas W.  
Rowland Jr., Edgar

#### 35 Years

Birkhofer, Larry  
Jones III, Roy  
Lozano Jr., Pedro  
Patrick, A J  
Schuldt, Lawrence

Todd, Gerald

Vadon, Tim  
Woodson, Gary

#### 30 Years

Carlstrom, Jeff  
Greco, Robert

#### 25 Years

Duffy, Suzanne

England, Bennie

Freidrich, Ed

Jensen, William

Prine, Patrick

Shuss, Ron

Sterbenk, Valerie

Stevenson, Richard

Weiper, Rodney

## WORKING Women



## Gender wage discrimination targeted by new bill

A California employer who pays a woman less just because she's a woman would face stiffer damage payments if Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signs a bill passed on Aug. 31 by the California Legislature.

Although existing state law generally prohibits employers from paying less to a woman when she is performing equal work on jobs requiring equal skill, effort and responsibility, AB 169 would significantly increase the damages an aggrieved employee could obtain if successful in bringing a civil action against an employer who has violated the law. (Editor's note: We learned at press time that Gov. Schwarzenegger vetoed this bill on Sept. 29.)

Recent statistics show pay inequities are still prevalent in California and the nation. According to the US Census Bureau, in 2002, American women working full-time year-round earned on average only 76 cents for every dollar earned by full-time working American men. The Women Employed Institute says that despite gains in education and employment experience, women continue to earn less than men doing the same work in nearly every occupational category from entry level

clerical positions to management. AB 169 follows on the heels of AB 2317, a similar measure that was passed by the California Legislature last year but vetoed by Schwarzenegger.

Of course, working people can look to the courts to help them achieve an end to gender wage discrimination. But they might feel a chill if they see John Roberts staring down at them.

Roberts, recently confirmed as Chief Justice on the Supreme Court, authored documents in 1983 and 1984 suggesting he did not believe that there was a gender pay gap or that women experienced pay discrimination. He voiced opposition to proposed actions to promote pay equity, including the Equal Rights Amendment and comparable worth remedies.

For example, one memo referred to "the purported gender gap," while another discussed "perceived problems" of gender bias, and another called comparable worth policies "highly objectionable" and "staggeringly pernicious."

Of course "staggeringly pernicious" might be just the right phrase to describe Roberts' apparent tolerance for wage discrimination.



## Thoughts for a safe autumn

Art Torres

Fall is the time of year with spectacular colors. But the beauty of fall is short lived as the leaves start piling up on the ground. The endless raking and bagging of those once beautiful leaves can lead to a sore back.

Care should be taken when twisting and lifting. Care should also be taken when using electric leaf blowers. Check your extension cords for damage and make sure your exterior receptacle is GFIC protected.

Another chore that we might tackle is the pruning of the trees that gave us the wonderful shade during the hot summer months and all that color in the fall. Be careful when climbing those trees. A fall could lead to a serious injury that will put a major damper on the holidays.

And be careful using ladders around overhead service drops, especially those aluminum ladders that most of us have. The colors from an aluminum ladder coming in contact with an energized conductor are colors none of us wants to see.

Let's be safe this fall so that next spring we can enjoy the shade from those trees once again.

Art Torres is a member of the Local 1245 Safety Committee.

## 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.

# Yes on 79 for real RX relief

## No on 78 – the drug companies' phony reform

Proposition 79 will bring Californians genuine relief from price-gouging drug companies. Proposition 78 is a phony reform proposal put forward by the pharmaceutical companies to confuse voters.

One quick way to figure out which proposition is the genuine article is to look at the sponsors. Proposition 79 is supported by Health Access California, Consumers Union, California Association of Retired Americans, the League of Women Voters, the California Labor Federation and IBEW Local 1245. The other proposition is backed by drug companies.

Here are the key features of Proposition 79 which will make a real difference in the lives of Californians:

Proposition 79 would use the purchasing power of the state of California to negotiate the best price for up to ten million Californians, who now pay more than anybody else in the world for prescription drugs.

Proposition 79 saves taxpayers money by reducing prescription drug costs by 50% or more, and ensuring that more people can afford needed medications now, rather than get more expensive care later.

Proposition 79 has an enforcement mechanism. If a drug company refuses to provide discounts, the state can shift business away from that company and buy more from other drug companies that offer discounts.

The fatal flaw in the drug company's plan, Proposition 78, is that it is completely voluntary—drug companies are free to choose whether or not to offer discounts.

California has tried a voluntary drug discount plan before. The pharmaceutical industry refused to participate so the program dissolved in 2001.

Between 8 and 10 million Californians will be eligible for discounts under Proposition 79 – twice as many as under Proposition 78, including:

- Californians with catastrophic medical expenses who spend at least 5% of their income on medical expenses

- The uninsured who earn up to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$64,360 for a family of three)
- Californians on Medicare for drug costs not fully covered by Medicare
- Seniors, the chronically ill and others with inadequate drug coverage through private insurers or their employer

Americans pay more for their prescriptions than consumers in many wealthy nations, in part because these other governments negotiate discounts from the drug industry on behalf of their citizens. California does something similar through Medi-Cal, negotiating discounts of 50% and more, saving taxpayers \$5 billion in the last 10 years.

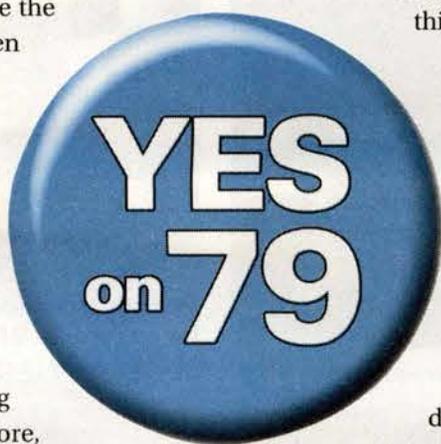
Proposition 79 builds on this success, using the same mechanism to negotiate these discounts for eligible Californians. As a result, consumers will pay less out of their own pockets for prescriptions at the expense of the drug companies, not taxpayers. Under Proposition

79, eligible Californians would get a drug discount card to present to their pharmacist to receive discounts of up to 50% or more.

By making affordable drugs more accessible to more people than Proposition 78, fewer people would fall onto Medi-Cal or other public programs, and need to use taxpayer-funded emergency rooms. Proposition 79 can reduce employers' health premiums by authorizing a new purchasing pool to reduce drug prices for employer-paid coverage.

Sometimes it's hard to tell the Phony Tony from the Real Deal. This isn't one of those times. Proposition 79 can bring financial relief and fresh hope to Californians struggling with high prescription costs. The rival proposition is just a bunch of hot air.

Local 1245 members and retirees should vote YES on 79, and NO on 78. Let's show the drug companies that we're not going to take their ridiculous prices lying down.



## Congratulations newly-retired members

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

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| John Adams,<br>34 years<br>Hayward, CA             | Stanley Miller Jr,<br>25 years<br>Eureka, CA   | Roy Dean,<br>23 years<br>Casa Grande, AZ          |
| Phillip Alcaraz,<br>30 years<br>Stockton, CA       | Howard Pedroia,<br>35 years<br>Rumsey, CA      | Paul Gamache Jr,<br>36 years<br>Tracy, CA         |
| Lorenzo Arjona,<br>36 years<br>Hercules, CA        | Henry Riva,<br>20 years<br>Ukiah, CA           | Danny Gorham,<br>34 years<br>Stockton, CA         |
| Leo Barba,<br>36 years<br>San Bruno, CA            | David Sandlin,<br>29 years<br>Fresno, CA       | Tommy Harmon,<br>20 years<br>Turlock, CA          |
| Carolyn Bell,<br>22 years<br>Lodi, CA              | Robert Skillman,<br>35 years<br>Oakdale, CA    | Dwight Harper,<br>32 years<br>Santa Rosa, CA      |
| Sherwood Caddy,<br>31 years<br>Auburn, CA          | William Stevens,<br>27 years<br>Penryn, CA     | Jerry Huey,<br>33 years<br>Merced, CA             |
| Patricia Collins,<br>25 years<br>Stockton, CA      | Gary Stevenson,<br>33 years<br>Helotes, TX     | Bruce Jesse,<br>26, years<br>Los Osos, CA         |
| Eric Elder,<br>31 years<br>Nipomo, CA              | James Aldrich,<br>23 years<br>Orland, CA       | Franklin Jones,<br>20 years<br>North San Juan, CA |
| Alan Flint,<br>33 years<br>Orangevale, CA          | Connell Allison,<br>42 years<br>San Jose, CA   | Donaciano Llamas,<br>27 years<br>Chico, CA        |
| Raymond Gerber,<br>33 years<br>Livermore, CA       | Doris Ashcroft,<br>23 years<br>Stockton, CA    | Thomas Lucas,<br>19 years<br>Hollister, CA        |
| Larry Gieselman,<br>31 years<br>Browns Valley, CA  | Byron Bonnell,<br>38 years<br>Ripon, CA        | James O'Toole,<br>33 years<br>Bakersfield, CA     |
| Lucile Hamilton,<br>8 years<br>San Luis Obispo, CA | Carl Cannata,<br>29 years<br>San Francisco, CA | Thomas Riddle,<br>30 years<br>Lincoln, CA         |
| Kenneth Horton,<br>31 years<br>Hanford, CA         | Richard Colgate,<br>34 years<br>San Carlos, CA | Larry Wickland,<br>33 years<br>San Jose, CA       |
| Betty Hughes,<br>27 years<br>Stockton, CA          | Marshall Cook,<br>25 years<br>Salinas, CA      | Chester Young Jr.,<br>34 years<br>Sacramento, CA  |
| Adelaide Hurst,<br>30 years<br>North Highlands, CA |  |   |
| Tommy Locklin,<br>38 years<br>Oakdale, CA          |  |   |
| Michael Mc Carty,<br>35 years<br>Loomis, CA        |  |   |
| Donald McLaughlin,<br>37 years<br>Dinuba, CA       |  |   |

### Current meeting locations

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

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

Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter: 2nd Wednesday each month, 10 a.m., at IBEW Local 1245, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville, CA.

## Vacaville/Sacramento

(Continued from page 1.)

Zimmerman painted a stark picture of the problems facing retired union members in coming years, but also pointed the way toward actions that retirees can take to defend themselves.

Post-retirement medical costs pose the most immediately problem for most retirees. At Pacific Gas & Electric, post-retirement medical costs have increasingly shifted onto retirees since 2000. While the union was able to negotiate a \$10,000 retiree premium to help offset this burden, that premium is now mostly depleted and retirees are understandably worried about how they will cover their medical expenses in coming years.

On that subject, Zimmerman had some good news to offer. Medicare Part D, the new federal prescription drug program for seniors, will offer a substantial rebate to employers who already offer medical benefits to their employees. Under the law, employers can choose to share all, some or none of the rebate with retired employees.

"We reached agreement with PG&E to use 100% of that money to help retirees," said Zimmerman.

The monthly value of the subsidies and premium enhancements for each member will range from \$22.08 to \$62.20 in the first year, with those fig-

ures doubled when spouses are included.

Zimmerman noted that a retiree, Jack Hill, currently serves on the Local 1245 bargaining committee with PG&E, and that the negotiations that take place in 2007 for the next contract will be critical for retirees. He offered several suggestions for action, sparking an extended discussion of strategies and tactics that retirees may want to employ in their own self-defense.

Business Rep. Darryl Norris, who will serve as staff liaison to the newly-formed chapter, reminded the 20 or so retired members in attendance that they need to officially join the club, at a nominal charge of \$36 per year, to enjoy the privileges of membership, including voting on officers at the next meeting. Norris urged the retirees to return on Oct. 12—the date of the next meeting—"with a hundred people."

The Vacaville/Sacramento chapter

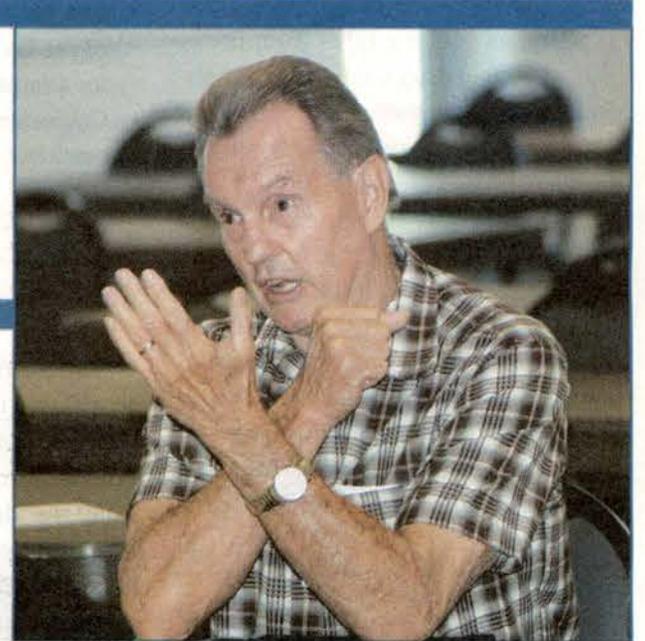
takes its place alongside existing chapters in Dublin and San Jose. It is the first new chapter of the retirees club to be organized in over a decade. But it is unlikely to be the last. Local 1245 retirees in the North Bay recently announced plans to launch a new chapter in December in Santa Rosa.

Members interested in more infor-

mation about the Santa Rosa unit should contact Business Rep. Joe Osterlund at 415-238-2898. For more information about the Vacaville/Sacramento unit, contact Darryl Norris at 916-688-3637. If you are interested in exploring the creation of a chapter in your area, contact Local 1245 Office Manager Tonya Alston-Maxwell at 707-452-2718.

*"You are not going to be able to retire at 55. You won't be able to afford it."*

—Ed Lenoir



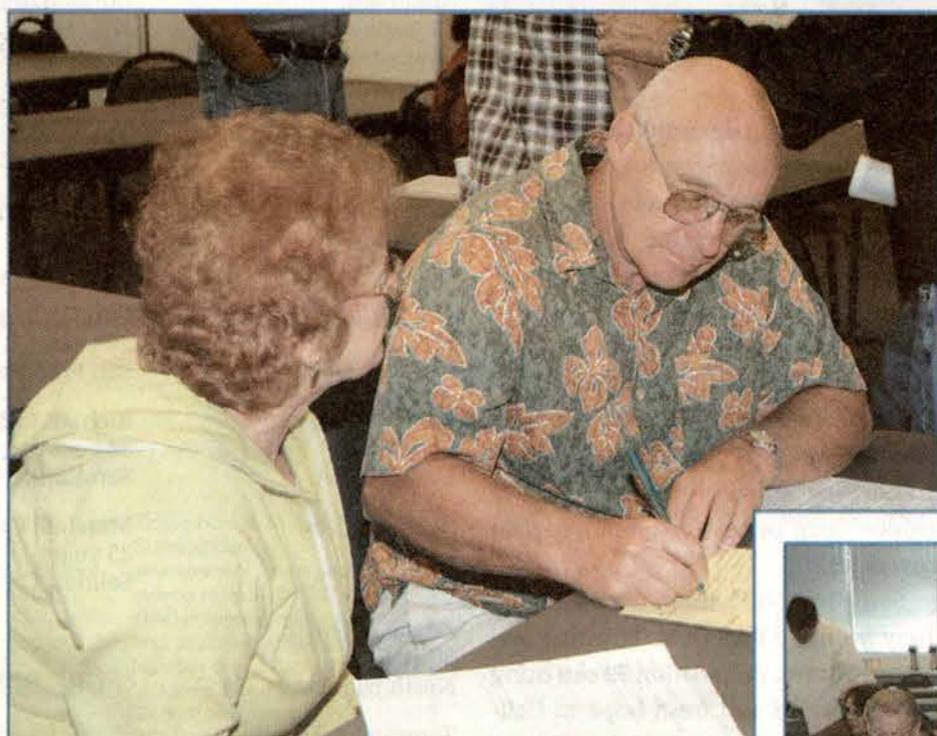
BELOW: Business Manager Perry Zimmerman stresses the importance of retirees becoming involved in defending their benefits.



Business Rep. Darryl Norris and Jerry Huck: Hey it's a great turnout!



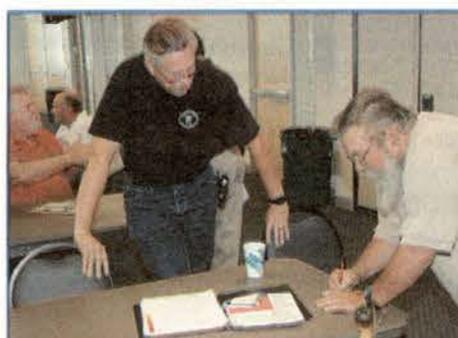
Jerry Huck discusses the problems retirees face. At left is George Murphy. At right, Andy Derflinger.



Retired member Bill Golterman, with wife Nancy, fills out an application to officially join the Retirees Club.

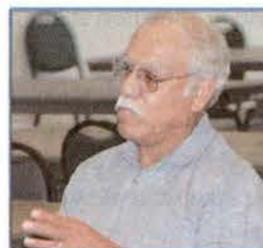


Kathy Perez, wife of retired member Richard Perez.



Ken Rawles, left, a chief organizer of the new Vacaville/Sacramento Chapter, exchanges information with Mike Silva, president of the East Bay Chapter.

Richard Perez



Retiree Jesse Rutledge, left, speaks with Cecil Padilla, management retiree from PG&E.