

Inside:



Utility Reporter

Volume 58 No.5 • Sept/Oct 2009

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UNITY IS STRENGTH

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

Underground Construction 12

Dalzell: Rule#2 2

Letters from Members 3

Bargaining updates 3

Tree Trimmers vote on extension 4

Advisory Council report 6

Outside Report: Negotiations 16

Safety: PPE & Pole Top Rescue 17

Retirees: Relief at Last! 18

Fighting the Good Fight 19

Golf Tournament 22

News briefs

AIG, the biggest screw-up in corporate history, requiring \$182 billion in federal bailout funds, plans \$235 million more in bonuses—to employees in the Financial Services division that drove the company off the cliff.

A pimp was ordered by Israeli Judge Judith Hoffman to pay a prostitute from whom he had withheld wages, Inter Press Service reported. The pimp argued that there was no employer-employee relationship, because he had not directly supervised her. The judge found that although unusual, the relationship did have some aspects of a employer-employee relationship, since the woman performed work for the pimp and brought him profit.

Assassination:

Fredy Díaz Ortiz, a member of the Colombian prison workers' union, was murdered on Aug. 22. Forty-nine unionists were murdered in Colombia last year, making it the world's most dangerous place to be a union member.

One-third of all pay in the United States now goes to executives and other high-compensated employees, according to a Wall Street Journal analysis.

Get answers to your union questions at: www.ibew1245.com



Teresa Martin speaks up at the Reno unit meeting on ways that members can express their views about the current negotiations.

NV Energy negotiations

Retirement on the table

By Eric Wolfe

IBEW Local 1245 and NV Energy continued to grapple with several key issues as general bargaining headed into September.

Union negotiators reported progress in several areas of the union contract, including work rules, meal practices, rest periods, as well as changes in job descriptions that had been proposed by the company.

The union and company agreed in late August to form subcommittees to work on three issues: call-out procedures at Tracy Power Plant, apprentice recruitment and placement, and retraining and

placement of persons displaced by automated meter infrastructure.

In addition, members of the union came in to make presentations on inequity issues covering 15 job classifications.

All opening proposals by both the company and union have been published on

continued on page 23

NV Energy announces office closures —see Page 23

PG&E benefits package

Members say yes

Local 1245 members at PG&E have ratified a new benefits agreement that seeks to put medical benefits on a more secure footing for both current and future retirees.

The agreement passed 3,077 to 906, with 7 void ballots. The mail ballot was counted at Weakley Hall in Vacaville on Aug. 28.

The agreement removes the cap on company payments toward medical premiums for current retirees, something that retirees have sought for the past several years. Beginning in 2011, the company will help shoulder the burden of future premium increases. Those who retired prior to 1994 will receive additional assistance beginning no later than June 2010 in the form of monthly payments of \$40 per retiree and \$40 per spouse to apply to medical premiums.

The agreement establishes a new ap-



Members of the ballot committee confirmed voter eligibility and counted ballots on Aug. 28 in the PG&E Benefits ratification vote. From left: Christine Lay, Austin Lea II, Peggy Daniel, Lou Mennel (judge), Ken Amaral, Adrienne Franks, Randy Lassus, Lem Stubblefield and Keith Hopp.

proach to medical benefits for future retirees: Retirement Medical Savings Accounts (RMSAs).

PG&E will credit \$5,000 into the RMSA on December 31 of each year that the employee is 45 or older (or later if the employee is hired after age 45). For employees older than 45, payments are retroactive to age 45 (or later if the em-

ployee is hired after age 45).

Spouses or domestic partners get their own separate RMSAs with the same \$5,000 per year level of funding as the employee's RMSA.

The existing Retirement Premium Offset Account (RPOA) of \$7500 will also be paid into the employee's RMSA at the

continued on page 5



GLOBAL WARMING, ELECTRIC POWER, AND IBEW 1245

"Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody ever does anything about it."

Mark Twain

FIFTH IN A SERIES

The planet is warming. Carbon emissions continue to increase. Green energy will help. But ...

Will Green Jobs Be Good Jobs? *Story begins on page 10*



Tom Dalzell
BUSINESS MANAGER

Rule #2

Stanley Neyhart was a San Francisco labor lawyer who represented Local 1245 for the better part of four decades, from the early 1950s until the late 1980s. He was a lion among lions, a technically skilled lawyer with deep convictions and principles.

Neyhart was guided by two hard and fast rules in collective bargaining negotiations. Rule Number One: when times are booming, don't be too greedy. Rule Number Two: when times are not booming, don't give up too much.

I remember and repeat these rules often. Unfortunately, Rule Number Two is the operative rule for many of our members right now. The recession may have bottomed out or even ended, but for the employers of many of our members, the bottom has yet to come. This is especially true in the public sector, where revenues are falling well short of even the worst expectations. We understand the strain that this causes on public budgets, and we have been willing to work with our public sector employers to navigate through these tough times.

Even though we are willing to work together, we have not forgotten Stanley Neyhart's Rule Number Two. We have and will work to obtain short-term savings to make it through the current budget crunch, but we are not willing to give up too much. When a municipal utility that is still operating in the black asks for concessions because other departments in the city are struggling, we are less than enthusiastic to join in.

Utilities are prized assets for any municipality, and we believe that cuts in service and costs to "share the pain" with other city departments might have a brief, short-term benefit to the city, but in the long term they will decrease the value of a great asset.

We are also seeing some public sector employers taking advantage of the present crisis to seek institutional changes in their contracts with their employees. This too is a path that Stanley Neyhart would warn against, and one that we are not willing to go down. We will help in the short term, but not at the expense of giving up permanently benefits and working conditions that we have worked for years to achieve.

A final trend in the public sector that we will fight with all our might is privatization of public services. The Board of Directors at the Truckee Meadows

Water Agency briefly considered a privatizing venture recently, and we stood against it. Certain members of the City Council in Redding are gung-ho for privatizing city services, and they have eager allies in local contractors who want a slice of the pie, ignorant it seems of the City's track record of using out-of-town contractors in past privatizing projects. Just as municipalization efforts threaten the job security of our PG&E members, privatization efforts threaten the job security of our public sector members. We will fight privatization as fiercely as we have fought municipalization—not based on any preference for public or private ownership, but simply to protect our members.

In the investor-owned world, there are financial pressures, but none that rival the pressures in the public sector. We have seen reports of one western

utility that has taken up the cloak of recession to justify closing almost all of its customer service offices and to ask its union for wage concessions from a contract negotiated just last year. But the economy has generally had the effect of moderating increases rather than driving concessions in the private sector.

Perhaps the most surprising trend among the employers that we represent is with the contractors. One would think that contractors would be feeling the pinch of the economy more painfully than most, yet both in outside construction and in tree trimming we have seen proposals for modest improvements, not take-aways. An economist could probably explain the reasons for this better than we can, but it seems that contractors have realized that even in hard times they must do what they must do to attract and retain the workforce that they need.

With any luck, by this time next year we will be facing a situation where Stanley Neyhart's Rule Number Two can be put back on the shelf, and we can reacquaint ourselves with Rule Number One. In the meantime, I again urge our members to work safely. We all know what this means – back to basics, don't cut corners, no shortcuts. We are in the final stages of planning a proactive approach to safety, which I hope that we will be rolling out in late September. Our message will be simple – every moment, every day, work safely.

Utility conference confronts change

Change was on the agenda at the recent IBEW Utility Conference in Denver, Co.: economic change, political change, and climate change.

The economic downturn has led to an upswing in recessionary bargaining during contract negotiations. Industrial load for utilities is down, which has led to declines in revenue from industrial customers, according to a workshop attended by Local 1245 Vice President Art Freitas.

The political landscape has changed in a fundamental way after the 2008 election produced majorities in Congress that are much more sympathetic to labor. President Obama has given labor unions a seat at the table. Protecting those Congressional majorities in 2010 will be essential to protecting our back as the economy struggles to recover.

Climate change is an unavoidable challenge going forward. Solutions dis-

cussed at the conference included energy efficiency and new technologies to capture carbon emissions from coal-fired electric generation.

The workforce is changing, too, reported IBEW Utility Department Director Jim Hunter. At electric utilities, 30-40% of the existing workforce are expected to leave by 2013.

Attending the conference for Local 1245, in addition to Freitas, were Business Manager Tom Dalzell, Southern-Area Executive Board member Mike Jacobson, and At-Large Executive Board member Mike Cottrell.

CALENDAR

Sept 12: Service Awards, Fresno, CA

Sept 26: Stewards Conference (Frontier), Vacaville, CA

Oct 1: Retirees Club, San Jose, CA

Oct 6: Retirees Club, Merced, CA

Oct 6: Retirees Club, Santa Rosa, CA

Oct 8: Retirees Club, Dublin, CA

Oct 9: Service Awards, Petaluma, CA

Oct 10: Service Awards, Ukiah, CA

Oct 14: Retirees Club, Vacaville, CA

Oct 17: Service Awards, Eureka, CA

Oct 17: Local 1245/Perry Zimmerman Annual Golf Tournament, Vacaville, CA

Oct 24: Advisory Council, Vacaville, CA

Nov 3: Retirees Club, Merced, CA

Nov 3: Retirees Club, Santa Rosa, CA

Nov 5: Retirees Club, San Jose, CA

Nov 11: Retirees Club, Vacaville, CA

Nov 12: Retirees Club, Dublin, CA

APPOINTMENTS

PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC

Ballot Committee

Ken Amaral
Peggy Daniel
Adrienne Franks
Keith Hopp
Randy Lassus
Christine Lay
Lou Mennel
Lem Stubblefield

CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

Congress of California Seniors

Waite Anthony
Ken Rawles

Nevada State AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention

Tom Cornell
Mike Davis
Mike Grimm
Randy Osborn
Patrick Waite

Inter-Union Gas Conference

Anna-Bayless Martinez
Mike Davis
Cecelia De La Torre
Ed Dwyer
Ron Fort
Chris Habecker
Randy Lassus
Mike Scafani



UtilityReporter

September/October 2009
Volume 58 No. 5
Circulation: 22,200



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Published bi-monthly at 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville, CA 95687. Official publication of Local Union 1245, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696.

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

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

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Our Web Site can be viewed at www.IBEW1245.com.

Our phone number is (707) 452-2700.



Got something to share with your fellow union members? Send signed letters to: Utility Reporter Letters, IBEW 1245, POB 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696. Please note that we cannot print personal attacks or letters dealing with union politics. Opinions expressed in "Letters" are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IBEW Local 1245.

Let's have some compassion

Editor's note: The following e-mail from Local 1245 Retiree Club member Walt Korus Jr. is printed here with his permission.

I believe the most important part of health care reform is getting health care for all American citizens. At the last meeting of our retiree club I was really upset at the members as they were spending so much time worrying that reform might cost them some money, and not enough time having some compassion for the men and women with no health care.

This is not the way we as union members should be thinking. Every year our medical goes up, and all of a sudden people want to defend our current system of health care? I believe in Obama as really wanting to make positive changes in our Government but what is so disappointing

is that there is so much negative thinking about Obama among my fellow retirees.

Walt Korus Jr.
Union City, CA

Recognize Miller

I am writing this letter to express my disappointment with the Utility Reporter. Not once anywhere in your publication was the anniversary of Henry Miller's untimely death mentioned. There was *nothing!*

There are two dates that should be significant to *all* of us in the IBEW. November 21, 1891 and July 10, 1896. If it had not been for Henry Miller, or the other nine founding fathers we would not be so fortunate today. Henry Miller was a pioneer, and I firmly believe that the Utility Reporter should mark the anniversary of his death to honor and commemorate him *every* July.

I also believe that the anniversary of the IBEW should be celebrated in the Utility Reporter every November. After all, it is our birthday!

By honoring these two dates, it will remind us of who we are as a union in general, and it teaches the younger generation the history of the IBEW which has become almost lost or forgotten in it's entirety.

Being union, and being a member of the IBEW means doing the right thing, and I am asking the the Utility Reporter to do the right thing!

Robert Watters
Henderson, NV

Editor responds: Brother Watters has a point. IBEW Founder Henry Miller has not received much recognition from Local 1245 in recent years. A story describing Miller's

central role in starting the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers can be found on Page 20 of this edition of Utility Reporter.

Nice note

This is the sort of note we like to get. A recent dues check from Michael

Lenhares of Rohnert Park, CA was accompanied by the following message:

"This check covers my union dues to the day I retire. My retirement date is 6-11-10. Local 1245, you have been great. Thanks for all the great years."

M. Lenhares
Rohnert Park, CA



PSREC pact

Members of IBEW Local 1245 ratified a new agreement with Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative in a second round of balloting conducted on Aug. 5.

The two-year agreement, which runs through June 30, 2011, increases wages 3.5% on July 1, 2009, and by another .75% on Jan. 1, 2010 based on PSREC meeting certain financial goals. A general wage increase on July 1, 2010 will reflect the Consumer Price Index plus 1.5%, with a minimum increase of 2% and a maximum of 5%.

The agreement's other provisions include:

- Limits holiday pay to 8 hours per holiday (employees on 10's had been receiving 10 hours)
- Employees to pay 1% of medical premium. Capped at 2% of employee-

continued on page 21



Representing the union in PSREC negotiations were Bruce Smith, Susan Sessions and Bryan Sherman, along with Business Rep. Randy Osborn (not pictured).

New officers at Santa Clara unit

Unit 1411, Silicon Valley Power/City of Santa Clara, has elected new officers. The new chairman is John Sanders. The new vice chairman is Dan Ryker. Ed Giardina will continue as unit recorder.

Bill Brill, Business Rep.

Gridley extension

The Gridley City Council in June approved a one-year contract extension with IBEW Local 1245. The extension had already been ratified unanimously by Local 1245 members.

The union committee had completed preparation for negotiations, but the city's financial condition created a poor environment for bargaining. The parties negotiated the one-year extension after meeting four times.

While the extension provided for no COLA, it did provide some low- or no-cost items of benefit to the members, including vacation buy back, renaming of senior line worker to Line Working Foreman, and Local 1245 clerk bumping rights to the confidential Administrative Assistant position for a period of two years.

LMUD pact

Local 1245 has negotiated an agreement with Lassen Municipal Utility District in the wake of the District's decision to close its Hazardous Waste Department. The District said the closure was needed to save revenue.

Local 1245 and the District met in June and negotiated an agreement that imposes the following conditions on the closure of the Hazardous Waste Department:

Hazardous Waste containment will be performed by the linemen only after they have received appropriate training and are provided with appropriate containment equipment.

The 1245 member currently in the Hazardous Waste Assistant classification will be moved to a Laborer position with no loss in wages, including future COLA increases.

The District agreed that, in the event that bargaining unit jobs are eliminated in the future, the District will preserve the wages of any employee moved to a lower-paying job.

Lemoore Unit

Unit 1128, Lemoore, has a new meeting location. Going forward, meetings will be held at 788 East "D" St., Lemoore, CA. Meetings will continue to be held on Thursdays at 5:45 p.m. Dates for the remainder of 2009 are: Oct. 15, Nov. 12 and Dec. 10.

Bob Dean, Business Rep.

Financial Planning

Dear I.B.E.W. Local 1245 Member,

For the past 25 years, Merrill Lynch and I.B.E.W. Local 1245 have worked together to provide financial planning, pre-retirement preparation, and asset management information to PG&E employees and their spouses who are at least 45 years of age or on LTD.

In the past, Robert Gallo, Dave Brantley, and Jon Henderson have provided free seminars to IBEW Local 1245 members to assist them with the financial planning process. Due to the time sensitive changes recently enacted in PG&E's 401k plan administered by Fidelity, Merrill Lynch is once again willing to provide financial advice to PG&E employees by offering phone appointments to discuss your current retirement situation and how the recent changes to the 401k plan might affect you. (For background information on changes recently enacted in PG&E's 401k, see www.ibew1245.com/newsarchive-docs/RSP_FAQs_6-29-09.pdf). As usual this service is being provided to IBEW mem-

bers free of cost and obligation.

On these phone calls, a Financial Advisor will work with you to answer the following questions:

- How to invest in the new 401k.
- How do the recent 401k changes affect me?
- How much money do I need to retire?
- How does an IRA rollover work?
- Should I use my vacation or save it?
- What is the appropriate spousal option percentage to select for my pension?
- How can I draw money from my IRA at any age free from penalty?
- What happens to my retirement if I go on LTD?
- 401k recommendations will be provided to you in writing at the conclusion of the call.

Please contact Yi Seeman at 800-234-3858 to schedule a phone appointment with Mr. Gallo, Brantley or Henderson.

Tom Dalzell
Business Manager, IBEW Local 1245

Line Clearance Tree Trimmers

Line Clearance Tree Trimmers and Vegetation Control Contract Extension Will Be Submitted To Members For Vote

IBEW Local 1245 members will have the opportunity to vote on an offer to extend the current labor agreements with Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Trees, Inc. and Utility Tree Service, Inc. Balloting will be conducted by mail, with ballots to be counted on Sept. 30.

The following letter will be sent to all members employed by Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Trees, Inc. and Utility Tree Service, Inc., along with a ballot. Voting instructions will accompany the ballot.

IBEW Local Union 1245 Line Clearance Tree Trimmers and Vegetation Control Members working for Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Trees, Inc. and Utility Tree Service, Inc.:

Re: Contract Extension Offer for Membership Vote
Dear IBEW Member,

As you are aware our labor agreements with Asplundh, Trees, Inc., and Utility Tree expire on December 31, 2009. While Local 1245 is actively accepting your proposals for contract negotiations in your August and September unit meetings, the Companies have agreed to offer IBEW 1245 terms for a two-year contract extension.

While IBEW 1245 takes negotiations on your behalf very seriously, we also must be aware of the overall poor state of the economy when considering whether or not put an offer such as this to a membership vote. IBEW Local 1245 strongly feels that the following extension offer is worthy of your consideration and vote:

ARTICLE VIII

WAGE INCREASES TO ALL CLASSIFICATIONS: 2010: 2.5% 2011: 3.5% (Total of 6% Increase)

While these wage increases would apply to all classifications and progression steps, here is the example of wage increases to 1 year Foremen, Climber, and VC 4 Specialist:

	2010 (Effective Date)	2011 (Effective Date)
VC 4 Specialist (In all areas)	\$18.63 (7-01-10)	\$19.29 (7-01-11)

San Joaquin/North Coast

Foreman 1-yr.	\$22.68 (8-01-10)	\$23.48 (8-01-11)
Climber	\$20.39 (8-01-10)	\$21.10 (8-01-11)

North Valley

Foreman 1-year	\$22.96 (7-01-10)	\$23.76 (7-01-11)
Climber	\$20.67 (7-01-10)	\$21.40 (7-01-11)

Manuel Ventura-Gonzalez

Manuel Ventura-Gonzalez, a line clearance tree trimmer working for Mountain Fire Enterprises, died in a work-related accident in Sonora, CA on July 13.

Ventura-Gonzalez, 25, was topping a tree in the Cedar Ridge area when he fell an estimated 50 feet. He died of impact wounds.

He leaves behind a wife and two young boys.

Mountain Fire Enterprises is an IBEW-represented contractor performing tree trimming services for Pacific Gas & Electric.

IBEW Local 1245 extends its deepest condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of Manuel Ventura-Gonzalez.

East Bay/Sierra

Foreman 1 year	\$23.08 (9-01-10)	\$23.89 (9-01-11)
Climber	\$20.76 (9-01-10)	\$21.48 (9-01-11)

Redwood

Foreman 1-year	\$22.31 (4-01-10)	\$23.10 (4-01-11)
Climber	\$20.09 (4-01-10)	\$20.79 (4-01-11)

Golden Gate

Foreman 1-year	\$23.64 (11-01-10)	\$24.46 (11-01-11)
Climber	\$21.27 (11-01-10)	\$22.01 (11-01-11)

Central Coast

Foreman 1-year	\$24.03 (11-01-10)	\$24.87 (11-01-11)
Climber	\$21.61 (11-01-10)	\$22.36 (11-01-11)

*ARTICLE XVI HEALTH AND WELFARE:

"Employer agrees to pay 50% of any increase in LINECO that occurs effective January 1, 2011, only."

Explanation:

*LINECO Administration has informed IBEW Local 1245 that no increases are scheduled for 2010, and that Trustees will meet in December of this year in order to determine if there will be any increase in the hourly LINECO costs for 2011. In the event that the Trustees approve an increase, this proposal would require that employees pay one half of that increase while the Companies pay for half also. Currently, your employer pays, and will continue to pay, \$4.75 to LINECO for each hour you work.

While there is no guarantee of any increase amounts which LINECO Trustees may implement in the future, here are a listing of past LINECO increases, 2004 to current:

*1-01-04: Increase of .50 cents per-hour to \$3.75.

*7-01-04: Increase of .50 cents per hour to \$4.25

*1-01-05: Increase of .25 cents per hour to \$4.50

*1-01-06: Increase of .25 cents per hour to \$4.75 (current rate)

ARTICLE XIX TERM

January 3, 2010 until midnight December 31, 2011
ALL OTHER TERMS OF THE CURRENT LABOR AGREEMENTS STAY IN EFFECT

Please follow the enclosed voting instructions and return your vote as soon as possible. Membership mail ballots for all companies must be received at the IBEW 1245 Vacaville P.O. Box no later than 10 am, September 30, 2009. Ballots for all three companies will be tallied individually on September 30, 2009 and the vote results will be posted.

*In Solidarity,
Tom Dalzell Business Manager
IBEW Local Union 1245*

Empleados de Poda de Árboles y Control de la Vegetación Cerca de Líneas Eléctricas: Prórroga del contrato será sometida a votación de los miembros

Los miembros del Local 1245 del IBEW tendrán la oportunidad de votar sobre una oferta para la prórroga de los contratos colectivos vigentes con Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Trees, Inc. y Utility Tree Service, Inc. La votación se realizará por correo postal, y las papeletas de votación serán contadas el 30 de septiembre.

La carta que se muestra a continuación será enviada a todos los miembros empleados por Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Trees, Inc. y Utility Tree Service, Inc., junto con la papeleta de votación. Las instrucciones para votar estarán incluidas con la papeleta de votación.

Miembros del Local 1245 del IBEW de la unidad de

Poda de Árboles y Control de Vegetación que trabajan para Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Trees, Inc. y Utility Tree Service, Inc.:

Re: Votación de los Miembros en Referencia a la Oferta para la Prórroga del Contrato

Estimado Miembro del IBEW,

Como es de su conocimiento, nuestro contrato colectivo con Asplundh, Trees, Inc., y Utility Tree se vence el 31 de diciembre de 2009. Al mismo tiempo que el Local 1245 está aceptando activamente las propuestas de sus miembros para las negociaciones del contrato en las reuniones del sindicato de agosto y septiembre, las Compañías han acordado ofrecer al IBEW 1245 términos para una prórroga del contrato por dos años.

El IBEW 1245 toma muy en serio las negociaciones en nombre de sus miembros, pero al mismo tiempo debemos estar conscientes del mal estado de la economía al momento de evaluar si debemos o no someter a votación de los miembros una propuesta de este tipo. El Local 1245 del IBEW considera firmemente que la siguiente oferta de prórroga amerita ser evaluada por sus miembros, y sometida a votación:

ARTÍCULO VIII

AUMENTOS DE SALARIOS PARA TODAS

LAS CLASIFICACIONES: 2010: 2.5% 2011: 3.5% (Aumento total de 6%)

Estos aumentos de salarios aplicarían a todas las clasificaciones y escalafones de progreso, pero a continuación mostramos a manera de ejemplo los aumentos de salarios para los Capataces de 1 año, Escaladores y Especialistas VC 4:

	2010 (Efectivo) (Julio-01-10)	2011 (Efectivo) (Julio-01-11)
VC 4 Especialista (en todas las áreas)	\$18.63	\$19.29

San Joaquin/North Coast

Capataz 1 año	\$22.68 (Agosto-01-10)	\$23.48 (Agosto-01-11)
Escalador	\$20.39 (Agosto-01-10)	\$21.10 (Agosto-01-11)

North Valley

Capataz 1 año	\$22.96 (Julio-01-10)	\$23.76 (Julio -01-11)
Escalador	\$20.67 (Julio-01-10)	\$21.40 (Julio -01-11)

East Bay/Sierra

Capataz 1 año	\$23.08 (Sept-01-10)	\$23.89 (Sept-01-11)
Escalador	\$20.76 (Sept-01-10)	\$21.48 (Sept-01-11)

Redwood

Capataz 1 año	\$22.31 (Abril-01-10)	\$23.10 (Abril -01-11)
Escalador	\$20.09 (Abril -01-10)	\$20.79 (Abril -01-11)

Golden Gate

Capataz 1 año	\$23.64 (Nov-01-10)	\$24.46 (Nov-01-11)
Escalador	\$21.27 (Nov-01-10)	\$22.01 (Nov-01-11)

Central Coast

Capataz 1 año	\$24.03 (Nov-01-10)	\$24.87 (Nov-01-11)
Escalador	\$21.61 (Nov-01-10)	\$22.36 (Nov-01-11)

*ARTÍCULO XVI SALUD Y BIENESTAR:

"La Compañía acuerda pagar el 50% de cualquier aumento en el LINECO que ocurra efectivo el 1 de enero de 2011, únicamente."

Explicación:

*La administración de LINECO ha informado al Local 1245 del IBEW que no hay aumentos programados para 2010, y que los Administradores se reunirán en diciembre de este año para determinar si habrá algún aumento en los costos por hora de LINECO en

continuado en la página 23

Members Say Yes, *continued from page 1*

time of retirement. An additional \$1000 will be paid for each full year of service over 15 years at the time of retirement (for the employee only).

Additionally, simple interest of 4.5% each year is credited to the RMSA. When the RMSA is created in 2011, past interest will be calculated and added to the account.

The money in these accounts is “notional” money, which means the money is guaranteed for the retiree’s use, but is controlled by PG&E, cannot be used for any other purpose, and does not become part of the retiree’s estate. Funds can be drawn from the account according to rules that are established by the agreement and explained in more detail on the union’s website at www.ibew1245.com.

The agreement also provides benefit enhancements for current members. Most notably, PG&E will increase its match on the Retirement Savings Plan from \$.50 on the dollar to \$.60 on the dollar. There are also enhancements to dental, orthodontia and vision benefits, as well as access to a large number of generic drugs at no cost.

The agreement also creates two new plans as options for IBEW members: a new High Deductible Health Plan with Health Savings Account, and a new low-cost PPO.

Subscribers to the new low-cost PPO will continue to pay 3.75% of the cost of their medical premium. All others will pay 7.5% of the cost of their medical premiums.

The union committee negotiating the agreement consisted of Donna Ambeau, Graciela Nunez, Jennifer Gray, Cecelia De La Torre, Donna Ambeau, Dee Green, Mike Scafani, Mark Newman, Ed Dwyer, Bryan Carroll, Stu Neblett and Mike Jacobson, along with retired members Jack Hill and Perry Zimmerman. Staff members on the committee were Senior Assistant Business Manager Sam Tamimi and Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier. Business Manager Tom Dalzell led the negotiations.

Serving on the committee counting the ballots were Ken Amaral, Peggy Daniel, Adrienne Franks, Keith Hopp, Randy Lassus, Christine Lay, Austin Lea II and Lem Stubblefield. Lou Mennel served as judge.

PG&E Open Enrollment

Open enrollment for PG&E health plans will be in October and November as follows:

- Retirees and Surviving Dependents: Oct. 23- Nov. 5
- Active employees and LTDers: Nov. 6-19

Please watch for further information from the company and the union as these dates approach.

Joint statement on PG&E meals policy

Editor’s note: The following is a joint statement by IBEW Local 1245 and PG&E concerning Meals Policy. It was issued in late July.

IBEW Local 1245 staff met with PG&E on July 20 to discuss the company’s Meals Policy. PG&E attendees included Bill Hayes, Kirk Johnson, Mike Swanson, Meri Issel, Steve Rayburn, Carol Pound, Sarah Speakman, Donna Rodella and Bill Levins. Union attendees included Sam Tamimi, Bob Choate, Ken Ball and Mike Haentjens.

The company emphasized that it has not established a hard cap on the cost of meals and acknowledged that there had been some miscommunications that may have confused the message and the intent. The company has asked supervisors to review all meals that are over \$30 to ensure they are appropriate. The \$30 is an arbitrary threshold and is not meant to signal a limit. Title 104 of the Physical Agreement addresses meals and is purposely ambiguous in order to accommodate all of the various circumstances that may evolve during overtime and emergency work. Employees are being asked to prioritize restoration to the customer whenever possible and use good judgment in all aspects of pursuing and consuming a meal. Supervisors have been asked to use good judgment and consider the job site, the availability of nearby res-

taurants and menu alternatives.

Both parties agreed that most employees exercise good judgment in making menu selections and that it is appropriate to address those occasions where employees incur excessive costs. The company and union noted that it’s a common practice for employees to choose to work through their meals and accept an in-lieu meal allowance. The company stated that it deeply values the dedication and service orientation of PG&E employees in responding to emergencies and restoring service to our customers.

The company noted that it planned to conduct Meals Training for its supervisors to ensure they understand the Meals provisions and Meals Clarification and will preview the proposed training with the union staff. They further committed to addressing any inconsistencies in previous communications and ensuring tight coordination of messaging in the future.

If you have any questions about the Meals policies and provisions please contact your supervisor or shop steward.

—Tom Dalzell for IBEW, and
Bill Hayes for PG&E

Two-man crews at PG&E

Questions have arisen on the circumstances in which a two-man crew may be used in Electric T&D at PG&E.

The answer to this question is found in two places, the Lineman Job Description and LA R2-05-45. (You can find a link to this Letter Agreement from the IBEW Local 1245 website.)

In the Lineman Job Description, the Company and Union agree that **“It is the intent that the use of a light line crew as the basic work unit in the Overhead Section of the Electric Transmission and Distribution Department be continued.** While one and two-man units with a Lineman as the highest classification will be utilized, it is not the intent of the Lineman definition to use other than a line crew on hot primary line construction and maintenance work. Further, **it is not the intent to eliminate crews or accomplish the above work or any other line work which cannot practicably or safely be accomplished by a one or two-man unit by combining two or more such units.”**

The Job Description then identifies work which one or two-man units will not be required to perform:

1. Set poles under the following conditions:
 - a. In primary which has not been cleared and grounded; or
 - b. Over 50 feet in length; or
 - c. Under heavy or congested traffic conditions; or
 - d. Where the pole is top-heavy to the extent that weights are required on the butt-end; or
2. Perform any work on energized primary (taking voltage or current readings is not considered working on energized primary); or
3. Perform any substation switching; or
4. Perform line switching except to de-energize a line for work and to energize same at completion of work; or
5. Perform wire stringing with special lift equipment, except where the two-man unit consists of two journeymen, not to perform such work above or below and parallel to energized primaries on the same pole line.

LA R-2-05-45 establishes two-person rubber glove work procedures. As part of that letter agreement, the Company and Union agreed to the answers to 48 frequently asked questions, including:

16. Are we going to define specific work tasks a 2prg can or cannot perform?

We will leave it to the journeymen on site.

The LA specifically states:

1. The committee recognizes there are currently lost opportunities for two-person crews to perform work under de-energized conditions. Revisions to the Job Definitions and Lines of Progression will address those lost opportunities. The parties agreed to continue to work on the updating of Exhibit VI-L, last updated in July 1993.
2. The two-person line crew will be the minimum crew size.

The Company and Union have not agreed to any revisions to the Job Definitions and Lines of Progression.

In summary:

- 1) The light line crew (three persons) is the basic unit; a two-person line crew is the minimum crew size;
- 2) It is not the intent to combine two two-person units to accomplish work that can’t be done safely by two persons;
- 3) There are five enumerated tasks that a two-person unit may not be required to perform;
- 4) Only the journeymen on site will determine what tasks will be performed using two-person rubber glove work procedures.

Safety, staffing, democracy top agenda



Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer, flanked by the Executive Board, reports on meals issues at PG&E, drawing comments (and possibly wisecracks?) from Dan Mayo (top left) and Lee Thomas (top right).

The continuing plague of serious workplace injuries cast a shadow over the July 25 meeting of the Local 1245 Advisory Council.

"In the last month we've had a fatality and two very serious injuries which points to how dangerous our work is," said Business Manager Tom Dalzell, who suggested the union might need a "safety offensive to remind people of what's at stake."

The fatality occurred when Manuel Ventura-Gonzalez, a line clearance tree trimmer working for Mountain Fire Enterprises, fell 50 feet while working in a tree in Sonora, CA on July 13. The two serious injuries—a cable splicer burned in a flash and a lineman burned in a smart meter change-out—apparently involved lapses in work procedures and in proper use of Personal Protective Equipment.

Responsibility for safety is shared by the union and the employers. The union

knows of four recent instances where employees have refused to work in dangerous situations, and in some cases, Dalzell said, "they were disciplined for refusing to perform unsafe work."

Recent trends in hiring at Pacific Gas & Electric suggest that the company is failing to maintain proper staffing levels. Over the past several months staffing has fallen for both gas and electric.

"They're going to create a problem 2-3 years from now if they don't keep bringing people in," Dalzell said.

Other issues reviewed by Dalzell included recent efforts by PG&E to impose a cap on the cost of meals, and the on-going challenges facing the union's public sector members during the current economic recession.

The effects of the recession are also reflected in the work performed by Local 1245 members, according to Lou Mennel, who represents the Sacramento area on the Advisory Council. Mennel said that one-third of the gas workforce in his area "spend the day shutting off gas meters" of customers who can't pay their bills.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Sam Tamimi reported to the Council that PG&E appears to be using "Positive Discipline" in a punitive rather than a positive manner. The company has



Thelma Dixon reports on issues with the Call Center Gas Leak policy at PG&E.



Lou Mennel, left, has a word on the side with Mike McKay, who reported that US Bureau of Reclamation has "belatedly" discovered that 80% of its skilled staff is, or will be, eligible to retire within the next five years.

Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran in a light-hearted moment.



Lauren Bartlett reports on preparations to begin negotiations with Sacramento Regional Transit.

Will Durinick, right, reports on PG&E San Francisco Division and General Office. Karan Matta, left, reported on the announced closure of Transcanada's Portland office.



Al Fortier reports on a proposed two-year contract extension at Alameda Municipal Power.



Michelle Ramsey reports that NV Energy didn't have its proposals ready on the first day of bargaining.



The Local 1245 Advisory Council.



Stu Neblett reports on his Advisory Council jurisdiction, which includes Shasta Division of PG&E, City of Redding, Lassen Municipal Utility District, Shasta Dam Area Public Utility District, and Bella Vista Water District

been losing discipline grievances in arbitration, he said, including a decision that restored a meter reader's job with back pay after 3-1/2 years off.

"The Positive Discipline system is designed to correct behavior. When you give 4-5 steps of discipline in one sitting there's no chance to correct behavior," Tamimi said.

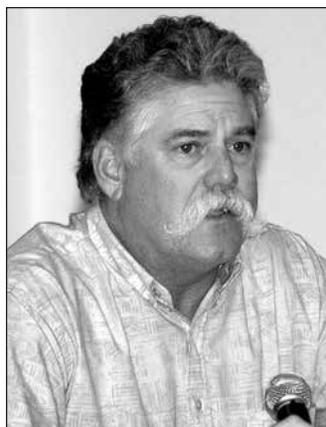
Michelle Ramsey, representing members in Nevada, reported retirement medical would be a major issue in negotiations underway with NV Energy. She also reported on a push by the City of Roseville to force a 5% wage reduction, as well as a recent attempt by the Nevada Legislature to push Truckee Meadows Water Authority and Washoe County toward a possible merger, in whole or in part.

Karan Matta, representing members at TransCanada, reported that the company has decided to close its Portland office and relocate some personnel to Houston, TX. Morale was at an all-time low, she said, as members waited to "find out how much longer our jobs will last." It is believed that four bargaining unit employees will be affected by the Portland closure.

Pete Ely, recently appointed to the Council to represent tree trimmers, said unit-pricing in the line clearance tree trimming industry had put Local 1245 members "under more and more pressure to trim more and more trees."

"Our tree members would appreciate IBEW 1245 letting PG&E know that unit-based pricing in line clearance is endangering the employees," Ely said.

continued on page 8

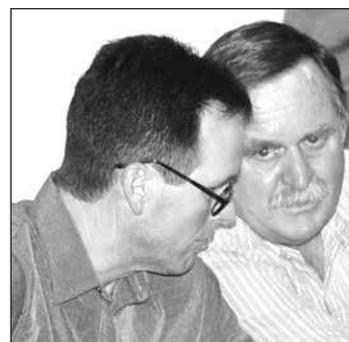


Ron Harty, attending as an alternate, was subsequently appointed to represent Stockton and City of Lodi on the Advisory Council.

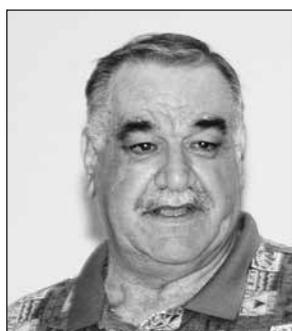


Jay Greer reports on Outside Construction, standing in for Bubba Avery.

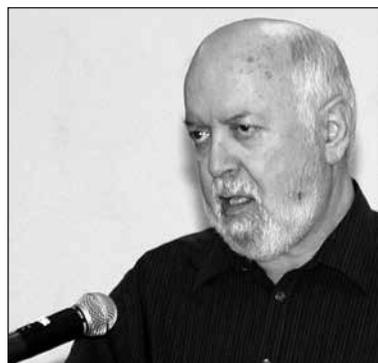
Staff members Ray Thomas, left, and Carl Lamers confer on line clearance tree trimmer issues during the meeting.



Pete Ely raises concerns about the practice of unit pricing in the line clearance tree trimming industry.



Assistant Business Managers Dorothy Fortier (left) and Bob Choate (right) report on Clerical issues and return-to-work respectively.



Marty Finnerty (top right), Mike Jessen (bottom right) and Ken Amaral (bottom left) raised issues during Sam Tamimi's report on PG&E contracting in Hydro.

Debate on voting

Motions by two units to have any future dues changes voted on by mail ballot rather than at unit meetings prompted a vigorous debate at the Advisory Council in July.

The matter came before the Advisory Council after the Executive Board voted to "non-concur" with the unit motions. Under the Local 1245 by-laws, the Advisory Council has the power to overturn Executive Board decisions. But in this case, there was overwhelming support for the Executive Board's position that voting procedures ought to remain as they are.

Lauren Bartlett, representing members at Sacramento Regional Transit, made a spirited defense of the unit motions, noting that members working shifts had trouble making it to unit meetings in order to vote. But a large majority of Council members staunchly defended having the vote conducted at unit meetings.

"One of the reasons for having unit meetings is so people can hear both sides of the discussion," said Dennis Thompson. "Debate is important—that's why we need to have those meetings."

"If it matters enough, you can find a way (to attend a unit meeting)," said Lou Mennel, noting that members could attend any unit they want, not just the one in their area.

Changing dues "is going to be a contentious issue whichever way you go," said Mike McKay. "A unit meeting is where you go to try to get an understanding of what needs to be done. This needed to be done."

Ken Amaral said members will find a way to get to the unit meeting if they are "passionate enough" about an issue, a view echoed by Thelma Dixon.

Business Manager Tom Dalzell acknowledged that voting by units isn't a "perfect" method, but noted that the union did have special meetings at various locations to give shift workers additional opportunities to vote. He also recounted a conversation he once had with union founder Ron Weakley about the union's early days.

"The founders saw two things as very democratic about Local 1245. One was the Advisory Council, which has the power to overrule the Executive Board," said Dalzell.

The second issue Weakley and the founders cared about, Dalzell said, was voting at unit meetings.

"Boy did he believe in that, and in passionate debate. You don't get passionate debate in a mail ballot. And passionate debate can change minds," Dalzell said.



President Mike Davis moderates a discussion of voting procedures.

Agenda, from page 7

Despite the on-going concerns expressed at the meeting about member safety, there was a glimmer of light offered by Dan Mayo, representing San Joaquin Division, who noted that a recent pole-top rescue training was “the best I’ve received in 35 years.” He said it was important to practice these procedures on a regular basis.

The issue of democracy found its way onto the agenda when the Advisory Council considered an appeal of an Executive Board ruling on voting procedures. The Executive Board recently rejected a proposal by two units that voting on any change in dues structure be conducted by a mail ballot of the entire membership instead of voting at unit meetings. The Advisory Council, which has the power to overrule the Executive Board, debated the issue at length before agreeing with the Executive Board that voting practices should not be changed. (See related story, “Debate on voting”, page 7.)

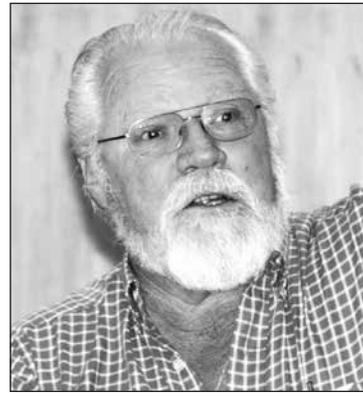
Business Manager Dalzell took a few minutes to express his thanks to members serving on the PG&E Benefits Committee. He noted that nearly all of the committee members had spent all

of 2008 serving on the committee for general bargaining with PG&E, and had come back and spent the first half of 2009 negotiating over benefits, and then spent part of the summer on the road, away from their families, explaining the tentative agreement to members throughout the system.

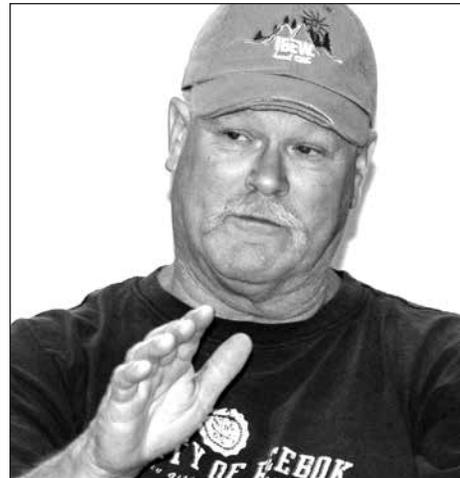
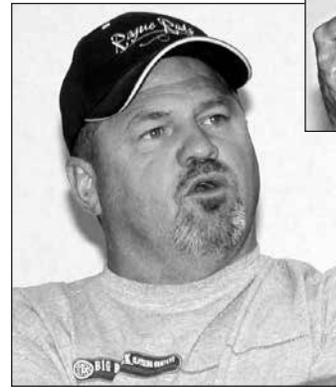
The day-long meeting began with President Mike Davis swearing in the newest member to the Advisory Council, Willie LaBarbera, who will represent members working for Irrigation Districts. The meeting ended with a moment of silence for members who have recently passed away.



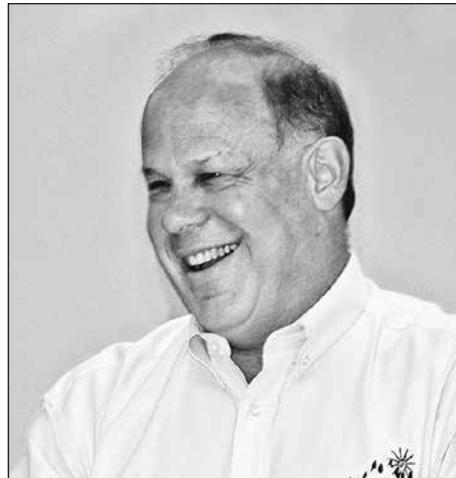
Peggy Daniel reports to the Advisory Council on PG&E Pipeline Operations.



Ralph Armstrong, chair of the Safety Committee (above right), listens to comments on grounding safety by Todd Wooten (bottom left) and Jim Findley (top left).



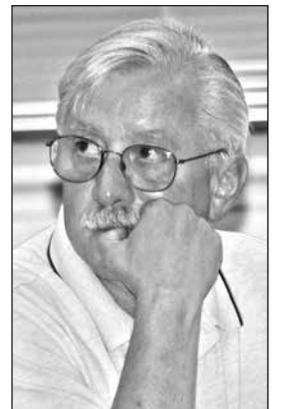
Russ Blacker represents PG&E General Construction on the Advisory Council.



Tom Dalzell lightens the mood a bit after a sobering report earlier in the day on safety.



Executive Board Members Mike Cottrell (bottom left), Anna Bayless-Martinez (bottom middle), Mike Jacobson (bottom right), Tom Cornell (left) and Recording Secretary Chris Habecker listen to reports from Advisory Council members.



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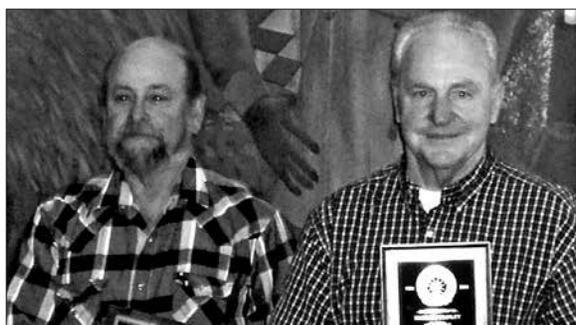
Willie LaBarbera, who will represent Irrigation Districts, is sworn in by President Mike Davis at the July Advisory Council meeting.

SERVICE AWARDS

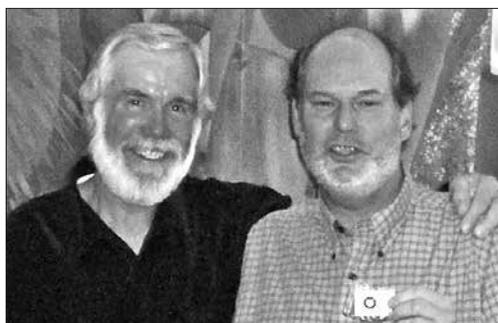


Chico, CA

May 1, 2009



Lotta Years: Dennis Newton, left, is recognized for 40 years in the union. Richard Manley, right, is honored for 45 years.



Michael Albert, left, and Craig Sweeney are recognized for 35 years

THE HONOREES

45 Years

Manley, Richard

40 Years

Newton, Dennis
Retallack, Thomas
Tardiville, Arthur
Weeks, Ronald
Wood, Kenneth

35 Years

Albert, Michael
Andes, Gary
Belmont Jr., Jack
Brum, Douglas
Brutlag, Martin
Carter, Luckey
Day, Russell
Jones Jr., George
Keller, Jay
Llapitan, Jacinto
Lucero, Robert
Parsons, Michael
Pompati, Richard
Ramirez, Mark
Ricardy, Richard
Rojas, Francisco
Slawson, Randall
Sweeney, Craig
Whitley, Darrell
Williams, Douglas

30 Years

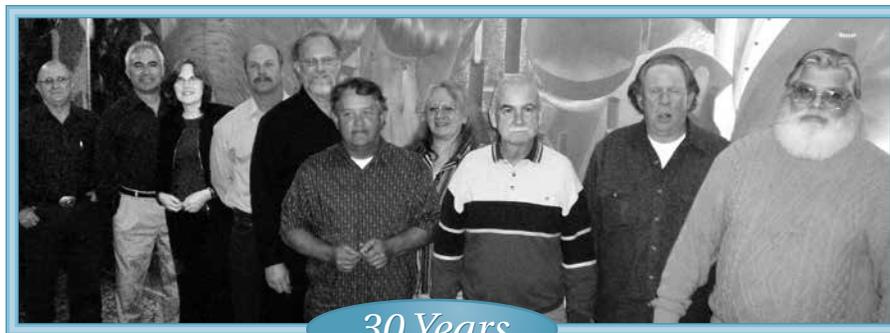
Abella, Dennis
Anderson, Mark
Bell, Rex

Bowman, Timothy
Brown, Wayne
Bryan, Craig
Bryant II, Howard
Buck, Byron
Carey, David
Chin, Donald
Churchill, Deborah
Clark, Robert
Connelly, James
De Long, Dwight
Dion, Michael
Harvey, John
Hutcheson, Mike
Johnston, Kenneth
Kennedy, Ronald
Kuersten, Neil
Mack, Kenneth
Marley, Marcia
McNary, R L
Moore, Kevin
Mowry, Scott
Murillo, George
Navarro, Donald
Penland, Monte
Rogers, Matt
Rudick, Lawrence
Secord, William
Simmons, H.Gene
Thomas, Robert
Van Fleet, Aaron
Wilson, Jeffery
Warren, Richard

25 Years

Abbott, Sharee
Ballew, Robert

Barnes, James
Bentler, Richard
Childs, Noal
Christianson, Roy
Cisneros, Joe
Clark, Kenneth
Dysthe, Dennis
Erickson, Thor
Fowler, Joe
Gentry, Jerry
Hill, Craig
Hill, Timothy
Howard, Karen
Ihle, Jim
Johnson, Ronald
Kepus, John
Leppard, Randall
Lococo, James
Maiocco, Marty
Martini, Gregory
Parmenter, Daniel
Parnell, Richard
Pendergrass, Jack
Phillips, Robert
Pyle Jr., Jimmie
Rapozo, Joseph
Reeson, Henry
Saldivar, Eloy
Sciarrotta, Janice
Shattuck, Chris
Souza, Greta
Susee, Lawrence
Thayer, Michael
Tidwell, Margie
Urmann, Tim
Watson, Robert



Former IBEW rep carves a reputation for himself in retirement

Editor's note: This story by Kristofer Noceda appeared June 5, 2009 in *The Daily Review*. It reports on retirement activities of Joel Ellioff, a long-time business representative for Local 1245.

Reminders of some of Joel Ellioff's most interesting experiences can be found on his collection of walking sticks.

Ellioff, 66, spends endless hours carving stories and random designs into the sticks. His work has been displayed in various area exhibits, with some of his recent pieces featured last month at the Kenneth C. Aitken Senior and Community Center's Art Gala.

"It's kind of a thing you can just pick up and do at any given moment," he said.

Ellioff, a Castro Valley resident, first came across carved walking sticks in 2003 during a trip to South Carolina. When he returned home, he had a case of insomnia.

"I couldn't sleep because I was thinking about the sticks," he said. "So I got out of bed and started carving at 3 a.m."

Before that moment, he had never taken woodcarving seriously.

Six years later, he now has 35 carved sticks in his collection, spending about 100 hours or so on each piece.

"He enjoys it and it's his form of relaxation," said his wife, Wendy Ellioff, 63. "Joel has always been very artistic, and the woodcarving is a natural way for him to express himself."

Ellioff's favorite piece is one he made based on a trip to Italy and Vatican City. At the top of the stick is a carving of the Vatican. Other carvings of memories from his trip include a church where his friend serves as a priest. "Designs are made to tell a story on each stick," he



Joel Ellioff and one of his creations.

said. And for that simple reason, he says, he can never sell off his work despite many requests from art enthusiasts and admirers.

"It's all about my personal growth, and I don't want it to be compromised by other people's ideas," Ellioff said. "This is something that's sacred to me."

He plans to enter some of his carvings in this summer's Alameda County Fair.

When Ellioff isn't working on a carving, he's volunteering his time at both the Aitken center and the Hayward Senior Center.

Earlier this week, Ellioff spent time in the senior center's wood shop, where he imparted his self-taught expertise on carved walking sticks to about eight seniors.

"Joel never gets to finish his things because he's always busy helping other people, including me," said Tom Evans, who has worked with Ellioff in the wood shop class for many years. "He's a nice guy, and the woodcarving gives us something to do and get out of the house."



Story and photos by Eric Wolfe

Impoverished West Oakland probably isn't the first place you'd look for ways to rejuvenate America's battered economy, let alone solutions to global warming. But a look inside the Cypress Mandela Training Center might give you a change of heart.

Located in an old Emporium warehouse, Cypress Mandela is putting boots on the ground in the journey to a stronger, greener economy. It's a cavernous building, sectioned off into rooms where unemployed young people gain the pre-apprenticeship training needed to get a construction job, and learn the "life skills" needed to hold onto it.

See photos of IBEW members at work for Underground Construction Co. in Oakland, pages 12-13.

For David Stewart, the training was a direct route to his current job with Underground Construction Co., helping to build an underground transmission line between two PG&E electric substations in Oakland.

"It's a very incredible program," Stewart says of the Cypress Mandela Training Center. "The trainers are so equipped, they have such passion for

their trade. It rubbed off on me—the level of integrity they bring, and how to approach this craft."

Stewart is one of 16 Cypress Mandela graduates currently working on the Underground Constructors job. IBEW Local 1245 wants to help others follow in Stewart's footsteps by serving as a bridge between Cypress Mandela and the union's signatory employers.

"Green jobs may be good for the planet, but we need union standards for the people doing work in the electrical field," said Ron Cochran, an Assistant Business Manager at Local 1245. "Green jobs aren't going to help rebuild the middle class unless workers get some of the green."

"Out of the Rubble"

The Cypress Mandela Training Center, at Poplar St. near West Grand, stands near the route of the old Cypress structure of the freeway whose upper deck collapsed in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, killing 42 people.

Community leaders hoped that reconstruction in the wake of that disaster might produce a local job boom. But it was not to be. Most west Oakland residents lacked the required training and skills.

"Cypress Mandela is what rose out of the rubble," says Executive Director Arthur Shanks.



Learning the basics of making a straight cut is trainee Camren Rice.

Shanks is an energetic man absorbed in his mission of bringing the program's message to the wider world. He believes that concerns about global warming could create a job boom in green technologies, including energy efficiency and renewable electric generation. This time around, he wants to make sure that west Oakland shares in the boom.

When the City of Oakland launched the Oakland Green Jobs Corps with a



Karim Chavez, left, a recent graduate, assists trainee Vincente Magana with squaring up the edge with a speed square.

\$250,000 grant in the fall of 2008, Cypress Mandela assumed a leading role in all phases of the program: recruitment, basic skills training, "green" construction training, and paid work experience.

It's no accident that Cypress Mandela was in the thick of things. From the beginning, the program has focused on forging alliances with people who know construction inside out: the men and women of organized labor.

"Being a union person, I wanted collaboration with the building trades," says Shanks, who spent 35 years as a union tradesman with the Carpenters and the Cement Masons. Over the years, he says, by turning out students who were proficient, "we began to get recognition."

A More Productive Future

When you break down the phrase "green construction," here's what you get: "green" is the word that provides all the sex appeal and attracts all the press. But without good old-fashioned construction skills, green is nothing more than a pretty color.

At Cypress Mandela, they start with construction basics. The 16-week pre-apprenticeship curriculum includes tool and material identification, site surveying, and blueprint reading. Students learn the basics of plumbing, carpentry, electrical and ironwork. They're introduced to the forklift. They learn the fundamentals of solar power and solar installation.

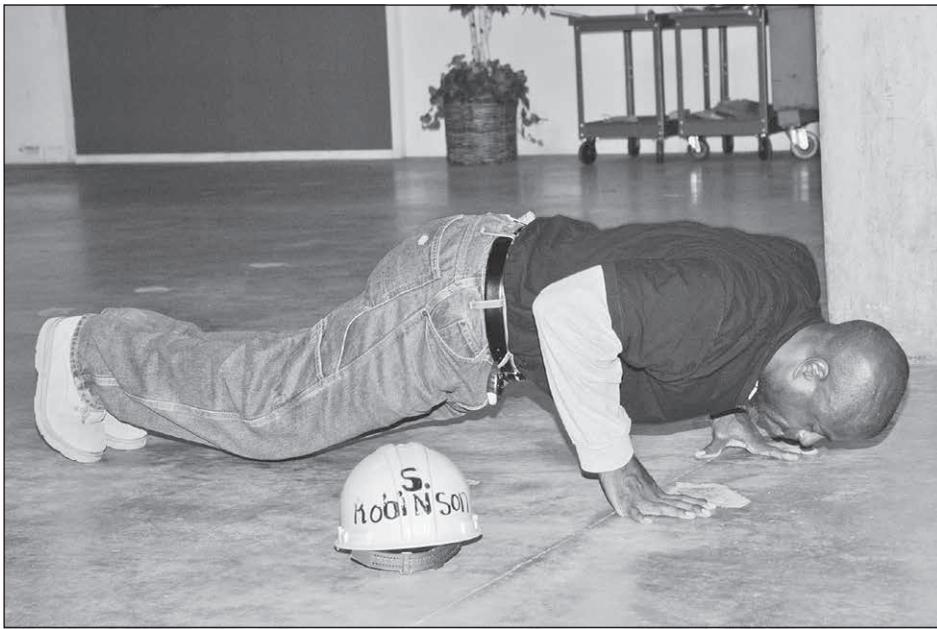
There's nothing revolutionary about teaching these skills. Society has always needed people with construction skills, and the need could be especially acute in the future as young people opt for jobs that are less physically taxing and vocational education programs fade in popularity. The genius of Cypress Mandela is that it recruits tomorrow's con-



Arthur Shanks, executive director of the Cypress Mandela Training Center, left, greets Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran during a tour of the facility.



Cypress Mandela Training Center graduate David Stewart now works for Underground Construction Co.



Sometimes trainers require push-ups to make sure a trainee gets the message about appropriate behavior, as Samuel Robinson discovers.



Delency Parham, standing center, gets his point across with a little body language during a discussion of Life Skills, led by instructor Eric Shanks, standing left.

struction workforce from a population that has been written off by much of society.

Instructors at Cypress Mandela understand that some of their recruits come from dysfunctional families, or have problems in school, or a history of substance abuse, or trouble with the law. The program has an extensive, week-long vetting process to make sure that applicants, whatever their past, are committed to building a more productive future for themselves.

Terrill Millhouse, 20, never finished high school and was pursuing a GED degree without much enthusiasm when he learned about Cypress Mandela through his church.

"It's wonderful," he says. "They help me keep my mind on the right track. I'm learning how to do math, how to use a saw and hammer and learning about different nails."

The experience has also renewed his interest in pursuing the GED. "They motivated me to do it, to see that it's really beneficial," Millhouse said.

Ramon Hall, 23, admits to a checkered past, but he's convinced that Cypress Mandela will help him achieve a different sort of future.

"I like it, I like working with my hands, I like the way the teachers are," he says. "I like the way they help us. They're

straight-forward, no beating around the bush."

Calling the instructors "straight forward" is putting it mildly. If you're accepted into the program, you can expect military-style discipline. The training rooms echo with students shouting "Yes, sir" in unison. There are push-ups for those who veer off course. Respect for authority is a central tenet of the program.

At first glance you might think this is merely a way to keep students "in line." But Cypress Mandela instructors are trying to do something more. Respect authority, yes. But also respect yourself, and respect each other.

Students are taught "life skills," like time management, budgeting, nutrition, job survival skills, mentoring, team building and personal relationships. These are new concepts for some of the students, concepts that must be mastered in order to gain a foothold in the workforce.

Students also receive instruction on avoiding some of the hazards along life's road, like chemical dependency and sexual harassment. And there are rules to prevent you from becoming distracted from your lessons. No jewelry, long hair, baggy pants, cell phones, pagers, or drugs, for example.

continued on page 14

Taking the Oath

Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran administered the oath of obligation to about 80 Underground Construction Co. employees at an after work meeting on Aug. 19.

Taking the oath helps focus new members on the strength that comes from unity, and on the role the IBEW plays in securing union-scale wages, safety protections, and fair treatment on the job.



Among the 16 graduates of the Cypress Mandela Training Center taking the oath that day were, from left, Thomas Bickham, Cedric Phillips, David Stewart and Deandre Britton.

Circuit Reliability

IBEW members add transmission capacity

Greater circuit reliability will mean better service for PG&E customers when a new 115kv underground transmission line connects two electric substations in Oakland this fall.

The project, managed by Black and Veatch, was well underway this summer, with IBEW members at Underground Construction Co. digging approximately three miles of trench, laying the conduit, and backfilling

with special thermal cement to dissipate heat once the line is in operation. Cable will be pulled in by another contractor.

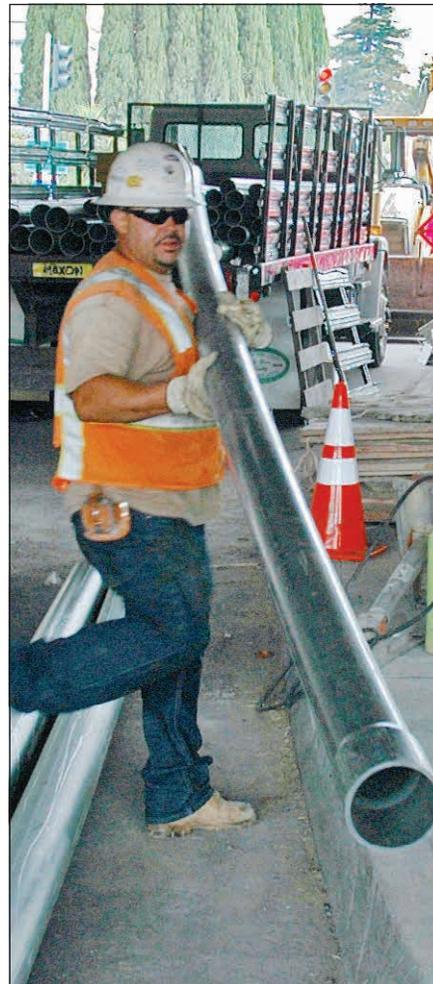
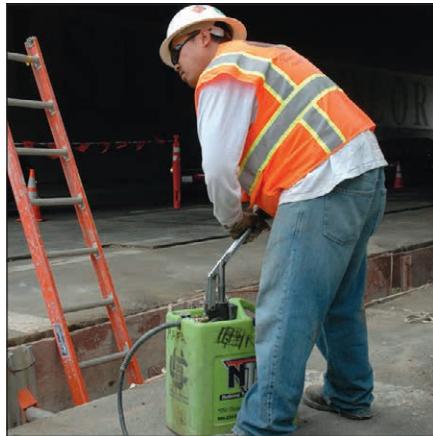
Sixteen recent graduates of the Cypress Mandela Training Center have been working on the project and performing well, according to Project Engineer Brian Old.

Underground Construction's part of the job is expected to wind down toward the end of the year.

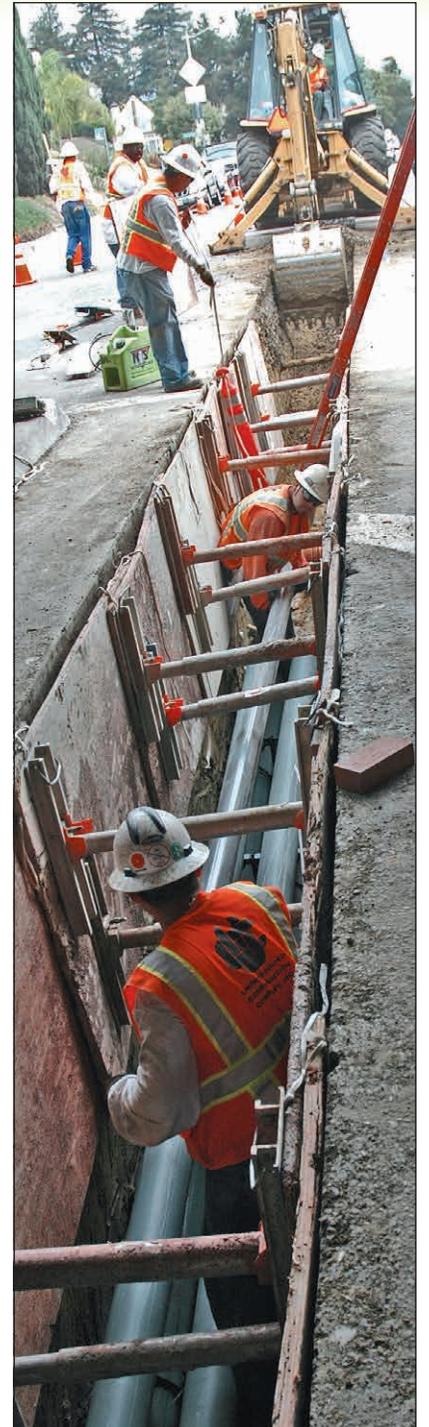


Equipment Man Del Schellenger digs the trench with the excavator. Technician Rosendo Herrera stands ready with the shoring.

RIGHT: Technician Sam Seaturn pumps shoring fluid into the trench jacks while others (not pictured) position the trench jacks in the excavation.



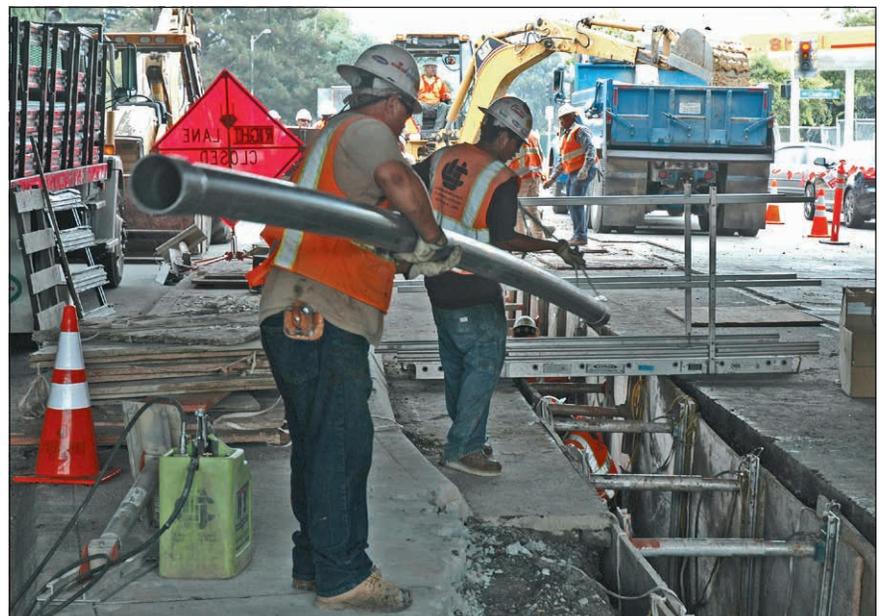
Technician Douglas Castillo unloads a length of conduit.



Positioning the conduit in the trench are Technicians Efrain Nava (closest to camera) and Luis Villafan.



The shoring is lowered into place.



Technicians Douglas Castillo, left, and Juan Caro feed conduit into the trench.

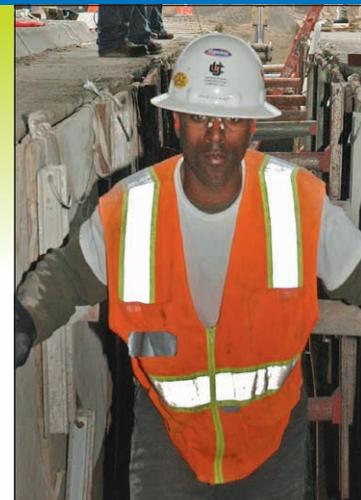


The trench is shored and the conduit laid as the job progresses up Park Blvd. in Oakland. In the distance, the excavator extends the trench under Interstate 580. Pouring a specially designed thermal cement that will help dissipate heat generated by the electricity in the cable are, from left, Technicians Daniel Wheeler, Tonisha Tizeno, and Douglas Castillo (bending down).

Utility Reporter

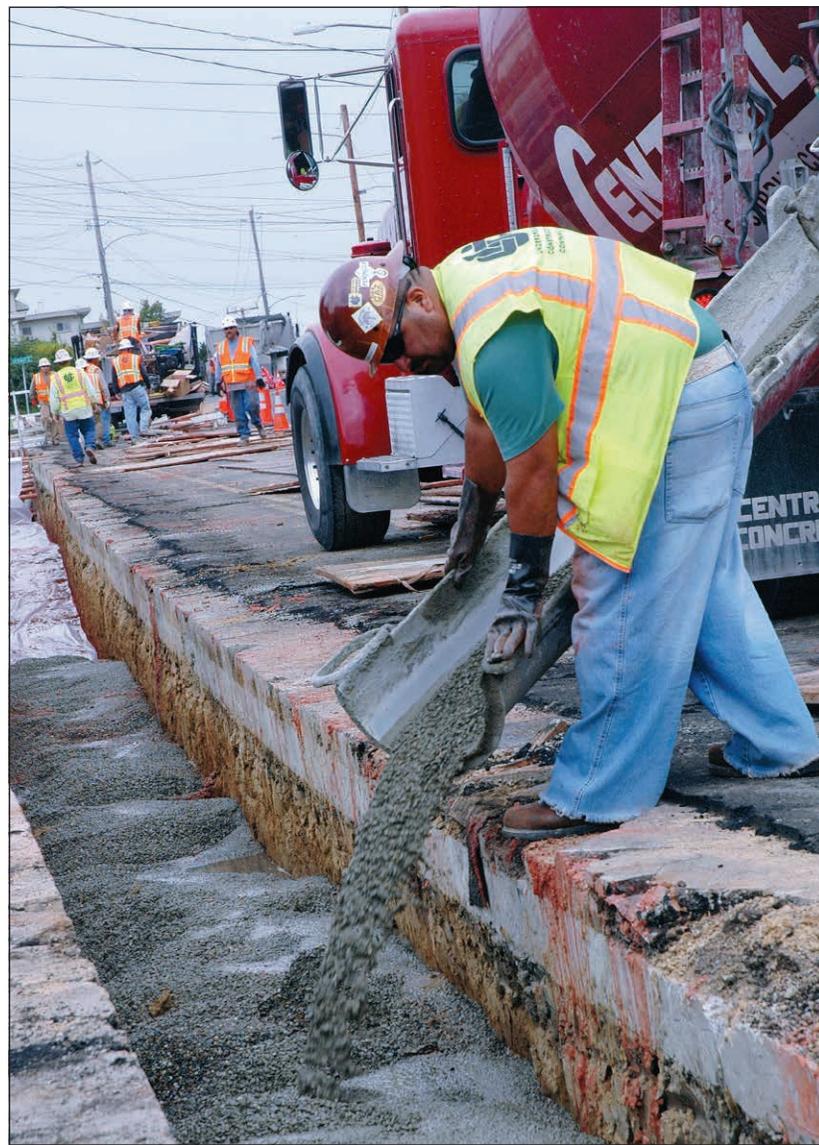


Technician Efrain Nava, with conduit in the trench.



After serving his pre-apprenticeship at Cypress Mandela Training Center, Technician David Stewart is at work in the trench for Underground Construction.

Photos by Eric Wolfe



After the thermal cement is poured, the trench is topped off with thermal backfill by Foreman Alfredo Escobedo.



Luis Villafan, Technician



Del Schellenger, Equipment Man



Dejanae Crayton, seated at right, role plays a corporate executive as the trainees role play interviewing for a job. Standing next to her is instructor Eric Shanks.

Green Jobs, continued from page 11

In one “life skills” exercise, a student sits at a desk in the front of the room and plays the role of a boss. The other students play the role of prospective employees and try to figure out how to make a favorable impression.

This is practical education. At Cypress Mandela, they’re not just teaching you how to do the work. They want to show you the elements that go into being a successful person.

First Step

Will there be jobs waiting for these students on the other end of their 16-week Cypress Mandela training?

“Nearly everyone accepted into the program graduates. There’s about five percent attrition,” says Shanks. “And about 3 out of 4 graduates find jobs in construction.”

For David Stewart and 15 other recent graduates, Cypress Mandela not only provided the training, but worked in close cooperation with PG&E and Underground Construction to pave the way for jobs on the transmission line in Oakland. IBEW Local 1245, which has a contract with Underground Construction, sat in on the interviews, and is now the union representative for these workers.

“It’s the ground floor, the first step of many possible steps,” says Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran.

That first union job could lead the Cypress Mandela graduates in many different directions. Some may eventually sign the books at the union hiring hall, getting in line for future work. Others may try to seek an apprenticeship at PG&E or another utility. Some may catch on with other trades. Still others might beef up their green credentials at Oakland’s Laney College, which offers training in Building Performance and Energy Efficiency.

“We’ve been working with IBEW for a long time,” says Shanks, whose program enjoys assistance from various crafts within the building trades. “Getting 16

people on (the Underground Construction job), that was a great thing.”

Shanks says he wants “to magnify our relationship” with IBEW. “This is a union program—we want people to know that.”

This emphasis on unions helps Cypress Mandela graduates understand and identify with the role of unions in protecting wage and benefit standards. Local 1245 reinforced this connection one afternoon in mid-August by administering the IBEW oath to about 80 Underground Construction employees,

including Cypress Mandela graduates.

Bringing union principles to the green economy won’t happen by waving a magic wand. It will happen when unions like IBEW reach out to new workers and explain the power they can have when they stand together.

Donald Jones, after taking the oath, explained its meaning as directly as anybody could: “It’s about the Brotherhood, sticking with the Brotherhood.”

Out of the Gate

Green jobs are definitely in the works.

President Obama signaled this loud and clear by appointing an “energy czar,” Carol Browner, to deal with the twin issues of energy and climate change. On her first solo field trip after taking office, Browner made a bee-line for Oakland.

“It is so impressive what you all are doing,” Browner said, speaking at Cypress Mandela. “I work for a president who absolutely believes that at the heart of our economic recovery, our economic future, are green jobs.”

Clearly the Obama administration is counting on these jobs to be an engine of economic growth and job creation—“good homegrown domestic jobs that can’t be exported,” as Browner put it.

OK, time for a reality check. It’s easy enough for government officials with fancy titles like “czar” to provide good quotes for the news media. But to figure out what’s really going on, it’s usually a good idea to follow the money.

Obama’s American Recovery and Reinvestment Act—the economic stimulus package passed by Congress last February—contains \$500 million for green-jobs training. Not earth-shaking, but not chump change, either. The law targets billions more toward projects that will utilize the skills produced by that training, including the expansion of weatherization programs and the extension of tax incentives to encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Show us the money

The energy provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, signed into law by President Obama on February 17, will create more than 500,000 jobs, and accelerate deployment of smart grid technology, provide energy efficiency funds for the nation’s schools, offer support for the nation’s governors and mayors to tackle their energy challenges, and establish a new loan guarantee program to keep our transition to renewable energy on track during the economic downturn. Here are some numbers, courtesy of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi:

Smart Grid: Including investments in new power lines that can transmit clean, renewable energy from sources throughout the nation. **\$11 billion**

Renewable Energy Power: Loan guarantees for renewable energy power generation and electric transmission projects that begin in the next two years. **\$6 billion**

State and Local Energy Programs: Helps state and local governments make investments for innovative best practices to achieve greater energy efficiency and reduce energy usage. Encourages states to align their utility regulation with energy efficiency goals and to adopt updated energy-efficient building codes. **\$6.3 billion**

Energy Efficient Appliance Rebates: Provides consumer rebates to buy energy efficient appliances to replace old ones to lower energy bills. **\$300 million**

Energy Research: Spurs energy efficiency and renewable energy research, development, demonstration, and deployment activities at universities, companies,

and national laboratories to foster energy independence, reduce carbon emissions, and cut utility bills. **\$2.5 billion**

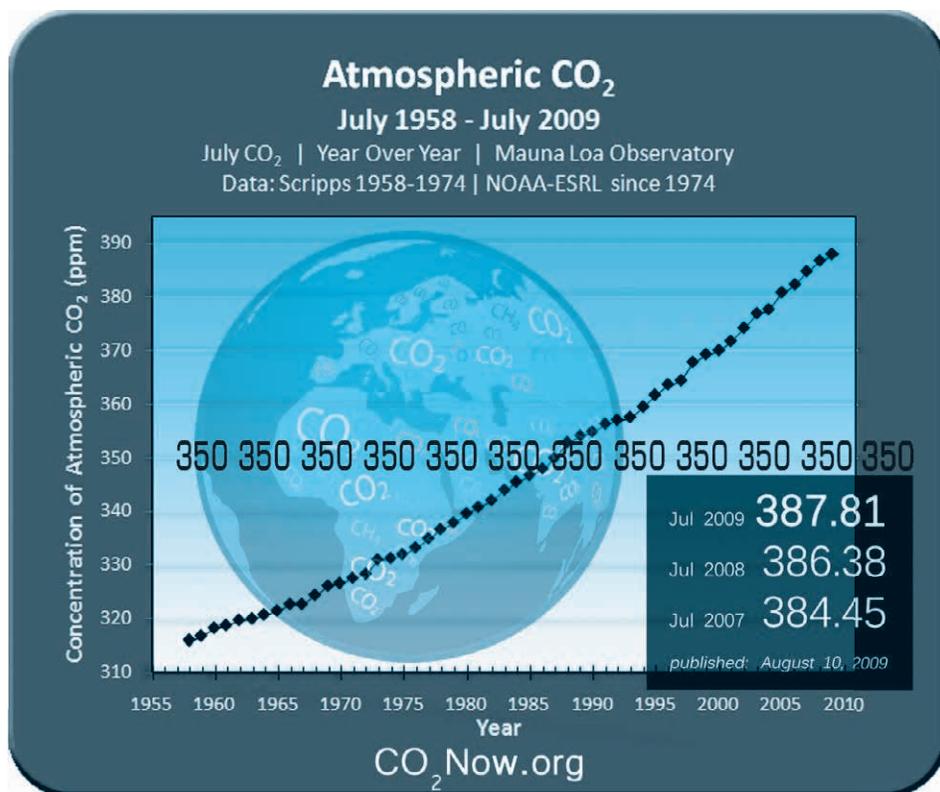
Carbon Capture & Sequestration: Makes key investments in demonstration projects to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide emitted from industrial facilities and fossil fuel power plants. **\$3.4 billion**

Training for Green Collar Jobs: Invests in training workers. **\$500 million**

Weatherization: Improves the energy efficiency for up to 1 million modest-income homes through weatherization, saving modest-income families on average \$350 per year on heating and air conditioning bills, while creating up to **90,000 jobs**

Tax Incentives to spur energy savings and green jobs. **\$20 billion over 10 years**

Modernizing Federal Infrastructure & Housing to lower energy costs . . . **\$10 billion**



The Act also aims to provide long-term savings for taxpayers by improving the energy efficiency of federal buildings. Considering that the federal government is the world's largest consumer of energy, this investment will have a direct and significant impact on carbon emissions while creating a large number of green jobs. (See sidebar, "Show Us the Money," on previous page.)

And then there's electric transmission.

The Oakland transmission project where David Stewart and other Cypress Mandela graduates landed jobs isn't actually a "green" job at all. The 115kv underground project, which is managed by Black and Veatch, will link two PG&E substations to help achieve the important goal of increasing circuit reliability.

But new transmission will almost certainly be a source of green jobs in the future. Obama has repeatedly emphasized the need to increase transmission capacity to connect areas of high energy demand with areas rich in renewable energy potential—especially the nation's windy heartland. His economic stimulus package contained \$11 billion for investments in "Smart Grid", including funds to build new power lines to "transmit clean, renewable energy from sources throughout the nation," according to a summary on House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's website.

The Apollo Alliance, a coalition of labor, business, environmental, and community leaders, including the IBEW, calculated that the law contains \$86 billion altogether in clean energy and green-collar job programs.

Green may not have rounded the first curve yet, but it is definitely out of the gate.

Climate Change: How Bad?

This series of Utility Reporter articles began in 2007 with a look at the alarming report released that year by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which predicted dire conse-

quences for humanity if we cannot rein in the carbon emissions that are heating our planet.

Unfortunately, in the two years since the IPCC report was issued, the outlook has grown even bleaker. Carbon emissions have exceeded what the panel projected. Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere continue to increase. The loss of Arctic sea ice is ahead of what the IPCC predicted. Recent satellite mea-

surements of Greenland's mass show that it is losing about 52 cubic miles per year, and that the melting is accelerating.

The IPCC's projection that sea level would rise 16 inches this century also appears to be way too hopeful. A more likely figure, according to a global consortium studying the Arctic, is one meter—about 39 inches. Such a rise in ocean levels would inundate coastal communities, causing unfathomable social dislocation and economic loss.

Scientists are feeling greater urgency for immediate action because of bad news on another front. The amount of carbon locked up in Arctic permafrost is now thought to be three times greater than earlier projections—about 1.6 trillion metric tons. That's about twice the amount of carbon in our atmosphere at present.

These alarming new findings are echoed by scientist Chris Field, a member of the IPCC panel that came up with the 2007 report. Field points to recent studies showing that, if we stay on our present course, higher temperatures will not only melt the Arctic tundra but also ignite tropical forests—releasing billions of tons of greenhouse gas that could raise global temperatures even more.

Field, a professor of biology and of environmental Earth system science

at Stanford and a senior fellow at Stanford's Woods Institute for the Environment, told Science Daily in February that "we don't want to cross a critical threshold where this massive release of carbon starts to run on autopilot."

Giving Up Not An Option

The threat is so immense, and our carbon economy so entrenched, there is a very real danger that people could just throw up their hands and give up. But giving up is not an option.

Does anyone really want to tell their children and grandchildren: "We flooded the coasts, burned the forests, destroyed the food supply and caused mass extinctions because we didn't want to change our ways. Sorry about that."

It's too late to prevent the planet from heating up by a few degrees. But scientists believe there's still time to prevent the worst effects if we take steps immediately to curb carbon emissions.

Many of the young people who find their way to Cypress Mandela are at the bottom of the economic ladder. But they have made a decision to acquire skills that can help them succeed in a new green economy. They have taken that first step.

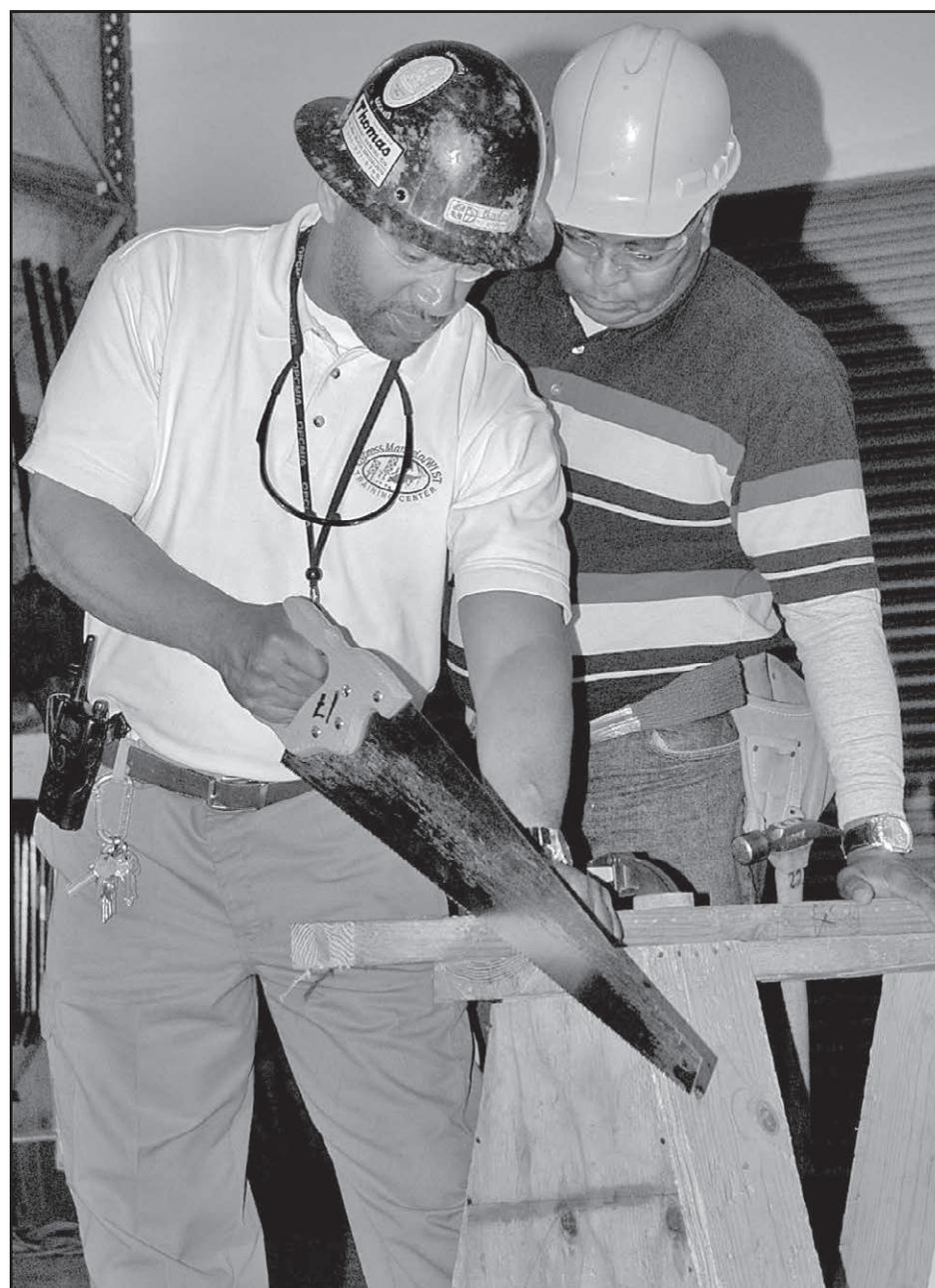
The rest of us also have a "first step" that we must take. That first step is to look at our own behavior and ask whether we are going to keep contributing to the global warming problem, or start contributing to its solution. Do we, any of us, have the courage to confront this challenge?

It's clear what the trainers at Cypress Mandela would expect us to say:

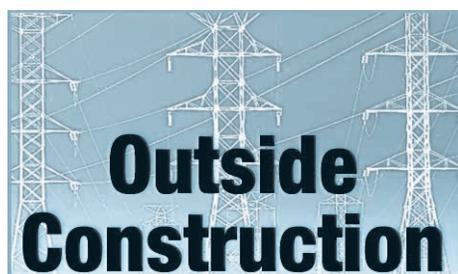
"Yes, sir!"

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Instructor Charles Simmons, left, demonstrates proper sawing technique to trainee Michael Jackson.



Negotiations in progress

Republic ITS Contact Negotiations: The Republic ITS contract has been finally completed. We reached the wage & benefit settlement 18 months ago, although there was a language issue over portability. These issues have all been resolved.

San Francisco NECA Trolley Agreement:

We have a tentative agreement with SFNECA Chapter manager. We will meet again on September 3rd to finalize the CBA after SFNECA contractors have reviewed and signed. This contract was completely reformatted per the International office direction with minor language changes. This will be one year agreement, with the thought we will role this agreement into the Western Line NECA agreement as an Appendix. All parties are considering this idea. The wages will be flat this year; there has been no work under this agreement for several months.

Northern California Underground Agreement: This agreement expires October 31, and we are already in talks with NECA. There are less than fifty members working under this agreement at this time.

Underground Construction Agreement:

This agreement expires October 31, and we are already in talks with UGC. There are about 105 members currently working under this agreement. We are also actively trying to negotiate a first Outside Line Agreement with UGC. They have an interest in the substation sub-surface work, bolts down.

Henkels & McCoy Outside Line Agreement: We finalized the H&M agreement in late August. The highlights are a three-year agreement: 3.25%, 3.75%, 3.75% wage increases and hold the line on the Health & Welfare. New contract booklets should be completed by early September.

Canus Corp Agreement: We are currently negotiating two first time specialty agreements. The first agreement will cover maintenance work performed to maintain all the AMI transmitter and collector sites (hardware). There may be some RF work involved. The second agreement would cover meter panel issues as result of the AMI process, which PG&E is responsible for. We are hoping this will create dozens of

new jobs. Canus currently employs nearly 200 of our members.

MSTI: We are actively negotiating a first agreement with MSTI, a gas inspection company that has been working for PG&E. We will be meeting MSTI again in early September. We are very near a final agreement. We're very sad to report Mr. McDaniel of MSTI succumb to an illness during these negotiations. Our relationship with Mr. McDaniel's was short, but we found him to be of the highest integrity. He was a real stand up gentleman that treated us with a lot of respect.

SWIP Project: We are currently meeting with LS Power to negotiate a project labor agreement for the Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP). This project is mostly permitted and LS Power is securing their financing now. They hope to kick off the project in the first quarter of 2010. More detailed information can be found at www.swipos.com.

UPA: We have been meeting with Utility Partners of America and negotiating a first agreement. UPA was the successful bid winner on the SMUD AMI project. SMUD will replace 558,000 electric meters starting in October 2009. The fall pilot will require 40,000 electric meters to be replaced. In the March-April time frame UPA will ramp to full deployment. We expect 15 jobs in October 2009 and are told the job will ramp to 58 in April. We will meet UPA on September 10 & 11 to finish this agreement.

Shimmick: We have been meeting Shimmick to negotiate a first agreement. We did sign Shimmick to a one job PLA using the SFNECA Trolley agreement. We think this will be a good start to a good relationship. Shimmick has won a bid in San Francisco to rebuild underground circuits that power some trolley lines

KV Structures: We have been meeting with KV structures and negotiating a first agreement. They have signed the Outside Line agreement. They are currently pouring footers for the Delevan 230 KV line extension.

Silverwood Energy: Silverwood Energy recently signed and is now calling members off the books to work on the first phase of 250MW of solar farms PG&E is developing.

CMSH Electric: We will be meeting

with one of the owners of CMSH, Mr. Joe Baker after September 11 to negotiate a first agreement. CMSH is signatory with Local 340 and comes with high recommendations.

NECA-Outside Line Agreement: We will be reopening the OSL negotiations as grievance settlement between Local 47 and Western Line NECA. These negotiations will need to start before November. The only section that will be re-negotiated is 6.10.

PLA'S: We have few PLA's in the works.

Injured Worker Fund

The Injured Worker Fund continues to increase. We are very near \$90,000 in reserves. There were three payouts in the past month. All are recovering from their injuries and health issues.

We have been working with the attorney to get the Death Benefit increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000, as well as required filing with the IRS. It's our vision to someday get that fund Death Benefit increased to \$25,000.

We also will be accepting donations from contractors over the next 12 months, with pledges up to \$87,000. Some of these donations will be realized in this month's balance statement. We are learning a tremendous amount of information regarding the tax code involved in operating a trust fund. From conception, this fund was to help our own members through a self funded payroll deduction. This is a modern day pass the hat fund.

Zero Tolerance on Safety

There has been a stance made by many utilities and contractors that has zero tolerance for workers who violate safety policies and refuse to wear the required personal protective equipment (PPE). Utilities are firing whole crews over some of these violations.

Utilities look closely at accidents and incidents by contractors performing work on the utilities' property. It is important that we all follow safety procedures as well as wear all the required PPE. Failure to do so can and will lead to termination with not much we can do to help.

Other News

We currently have less than 238 Outside Line Apprentices in the Cal-Neve JATC program. We are not planning to interview again until September of 2009, if needed. We have only 19 working in Northern California; 220 are working in Southern California and 1 working in Nevada. We currently have a few unemployed.

We continue to have jurisdictional disputes. This continues to be a bigger problem each month as the economy cools. It feels like it a full time job at this point just holding onto our work from the other Building Trades.

There are Summery Plan Changes in effect for Lineco. We recently went to the appeals committee for a member and were successful in helping the member.

There is a government subsidy program for our unemployed members for COBRA payments. The government will pay up to 65% of the person's COBRA payments for a nine-month period.

Ralph Armstrong and Liz McInnis both now have expanded assignments. Ralph continues to work on the Local's safety program and different FR clothing programs. Liz has four new utility assignments in the Oakland, CA area. We are also participating in staff training. We recently have taken some Microsoft Excel software training and are currently taking Spanish lessons in the evenings after work. We have a growing Spanish-only speaking membership in several of our work groups.

Accidents and Injuries

Journeyman Lineman, Local 1245, involved in a 480 volt meter explosion. 2nd and 3rd degree burns to face and arm. One week in hospital at home recovering

Second step apprentice, Local 1245, working in Local 47, hit on head with 5-foot piece of pole top that was thrown from a stowed bucket. Fractured skull and shoulder. A little over 2 weeks in hospital and was going home to recuperate.

Journeyman Lineman, Local 1245, was involved in a serious motor vehicle accident while on his way to work down in Local 47 jurisdiction.

Meter tech, involved in a serious motor vehicle accident. Ran into a chain link fence where the top rail of the fence penetrated the windshield and part of Jeff's arm. The post was removed at the site. He is recovering from his injuries.

Ron Cochran is Assistant Business Manager, Local 1245

Lineco info – on-line!

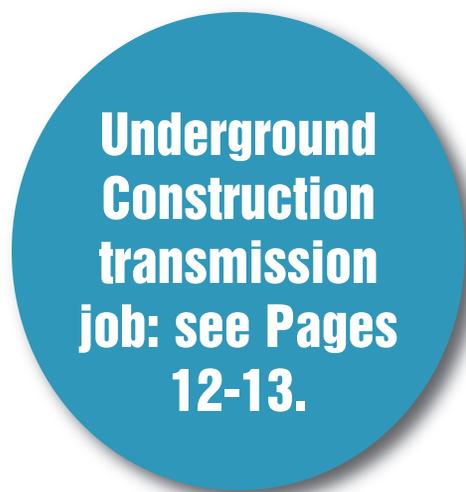
Lineco plan participants can now get valuable information on-line at www.lineco.org. Plan participants can view personal information such as:

- Current eligibility
- Employee hours worked
- Claims history, including explanation of benefits (EOBS) and all deductibles and plan maximums satisfied year to-date for both medical and dental.

When you register to gain information on-line, you will be asked for your unique ID number that is listed on your Lineco card.

Get the latest news at

www.ibew1245.com





Working around lightning

Cal-OSHA address inclement weather and electrical storms, as follows:

- Subchapter 5. Electrical Safety Orders
- Group 2. High-Voltage Electrical Safety Orders
- Article 36. Work Procedures and Operating Procedures
- §2940.3. Inclement Weather.

Work on or from structures shall be discontinued when adverse weather, such as high winds, ice on structures, or the progress of an electrical storm in the immediate vicinity, makes the work hazardous, except during emergency restoration procedures.

Personal Protective Equipment and Lineman Climbing Equipment

The subject of Personal Protective Equipment and Lineman Climbing Equipment has been addressed previously by the Local 1245 Safety Committee, following the issuing of a standard by the federal OSHA in November of 2007. The heart of the problem in California has been that Cal-OSHA did not release a similar standard, so many utilities and Municipalities have taken the position that it is not required here.

Cal-OSHA has stated that the federal standard posed no new duty upon Cal-OSHA, based on long-standing case law in California to address employer payment for required safety equipment and protective clothing. This stems from the Bendix Decision wherein the California Supreme Court held that the California Labor Code requires that employers

Pole Top Rescue: what's the time frame?

Is there a requirement to perform pole top rescue within a 4-minute time frame? This question recently came before the Local 1245 Safety Committee.

There have been situations where a utility had implemented this time-specific training requirement based on Federal OSHA interpretations of the word "prompt" as it pertains to specific standard requirements for administering first aid and/or CPR. The require-

Accident Reporting

Forms and guidelines for units to report accidents are on the website.

Units should start using them as part of their unit meeting and submit them to Local 1245 Safety Committee whether or not there are accidents or concerns. This should be a standard reporting practice at every unit meeting, every month.

All accidents reported this month on the "green" unit reporting form as well as accidents reported at the Safety Committee meeting are listed on the Local 1245 website at www.ibew1245.com/safety-section/safety-news.html.

shall provide and pay for these items.

We also expect Cal-OSHA to issue a letter addressing this subject specifically.

Next steps are to present this information to the companies that have not complied with this requirement yet. Our interpretation of the case law is that all PPE (FR, steel toe, etc.), if required for protection of the employee, is the responsibility of the employer to purchase. With the Lineman Climbing Gear it is specifically mentioned in the federal standard and backed up by two letters of interpretation.

The federal standard also mentions that there is some PPE that is required by the employer but not necessarily the employers' responsibility to pay for it. Our position, based on California case law, is that it is the employers' responsibility to purchase all required PPE.

ment is based on the possible onset of brain damage due to lack of oxygen if a person quits breathing.

One company had started using the 4 minute requirement but has since removed it due to an increase in injuries of their employees while performing their training and refresher classes. A trainer from this company called and expressed concern as well as disagreed with the company's position that the 4 minute requirement be removed. His concern was that when you are in the air working you want to make sure that the coworker assigned to act as a rescuer, if needed, be able to perform the rescue safely and in a timely manner.

A poll of Safety Committee members

Safety Vests

Safety vests have been an on-going issue with PG&E and the members for a couple of reasons.

First, there has been inconsistent information provided to the employees regarding the requirement for Class II or Class III vests. Second, employees who are now being required to wear the Class III vests all of the time have to deal with the added lack of ventilation on top of the warmer FR clothing which may be unnecessary in some instances.

It was reported at the June 10 joint PG&E/IBEW quarterly safety meeting that the company is currently updating its safety attire policy. The updated policy will include clarification around the wearing of safety vests. The revision is expected to include language that allows for some discretion by work groups based on specific circumstances.

As of this reporting we have not seen the requirement in any form and will have to wait until the company finishes the revision of the policy.



from different utilities and municipalities revealed that other than the company that used to require the 4 minute time limit, none of them had a time requirement. It is felt that the exposure to accidents by workers trying to meet this hard time limit may outweigh the benefits of achieving it in a practice setting. Most feel that in the practice setting, focus on proper rigging and procedure is important, but it is also important to avoid unnecessary injuries. Instructors should be given the discretion to grade the performance based on the individual's knowledge and ability to perform the task realizing that in an emergency setting most individuals are going to go all out.

The company in question had up until recently quit training on pole top rescue all together due to accidents in the training. This training is required by the regulations. It is important for everyone to be current.

The Local 1245 Safety Committee would like hear the members' thoughts on this topic. Let us know what your company is doing and any comments you may have on time limits in a training session for pole top rescue. Please send your comments to: RMA1@ibew1245.com

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.

Safety Committee

Members of the IBEW Local 1245 Safety Committee are Al White, Pacific Gas & Electric; Bob Burkle, City of Santa Clara; Michael Gomes, Modesto Irrigation District; Art Torres, Sacramento Municipal Utility District; Sergio Munoz, Asplundh Tree; Dan Boschee, Frontier; Darryl Rice, PG&E; and Business Rep. Ralph Armstrong.

Check out the safety information on our website at:
www.ibew1245.com/safety-section/safety.html

Retirees' Corner



In it for the long haul

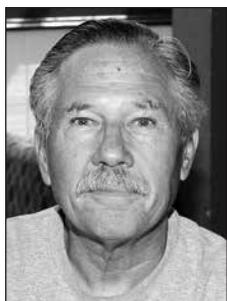
Story and photos by Eric Wolfe

It's easy to forget how far we've come. But Warren Templeman remembers.

Back in 1950, when Brother Templeman was initiated into the IBEW, the union didn't even have a system-wide contract at PG&E. Trying to get the company to pay for medical benefits for employees—or retirees—seemed about as likely as sending a person to the moon.

But Templeman, like other union-minded workers of that era, was in it for the long haul. He knew that you had to start somewhere. As the years passed, the United States did in fact put men on the moon. And IBEW Local 1245 made great strides toward employer-paid medical benefits for active and retired employees.

In fact, medical benefits for active employees at PG&E are among the best in the country. But medical benefits for retirees have eroded, and Retiree Club members pressured PG&E over the last several years to do something about it.



Ken Rawles:
"This is going to be great."

On Aug. 28, their efforts finally paid off when Local 1245 members overwhelming ratified a new Benefits package that removes the cap on PG&E contributions to retiree medical premiums and requires the company to start shar-

ing the burden of the retirees' rising medical costs.

"PG&E's share of the premium will go up," Templeman said, referring to the "inflation factor" in the Benefits Agreement that will keep the company's payments rising in step with the cost of insurance premiums.

Although voting had just begun when Templeman was interviewed, he expressed confidence that the agreement would be ratified. And as one of PG&E's older retirees, he knew he would be eligible for some additional assistance as well.

"I would get \$40 and my wife would get \$40," he said, referring to the provision in the Benefits Agreement that provides \$40 a month for retirees who retired prior to 1994 and an additional \$40 a month for the spouse.

That may not sound like much, but for retirees on fixed incomes, it can mean a lot.

Ken Rawles, who retired in 2001 as a Substation Maintenance Electrician, isn't eligible for the extra \$40, but he was a strong supporter of the Benefits package. He pays over \$300 a month toward his Kaiser premium, and that is set to rise to \$400 a month when his Retirement Premium Offset Account runs dry next February. The Benefits Agreement, starting in 2011, will increase the company's contribution toward his premium and his spouse's premium.

"For me, this is going to be great," Rawles said.



Jim Parker:
"I really appreciate this Retirees Club... I'm happy to be part of it."

"Little by Little"

Jim Parker, a communications tech who retired in 1987, knows the union has to work for improvements over the long haul. And he's seen a lot of progress since he first got involved in Local 1245 back in the 1950s.

"Health benefits (were improved) little by little, bit by bit," he said. "We did a little better on sick leave, we did a little better on vacation," and over the years these improvements began to add up.

"I remember when I first joined the retirement plan I paid a big hunk of money every month," Parker said. "It isn't like it is today."

Parker was in a good position to witness the improvements won by the union through the years: he served as a shop steward as well as vice chairman and then chairman of his unit.

"I went to a lot of meetings down at union headquarters in Walnut Creek,"

Parker said, and he was even invited to a dinner with union founder Ron Weakley—"but it got cancelled," he recalled with a laugh.

Parker considers himself fortunate compared to some, but he knows that a

lot of retirees "are really hurting economically" and that the Benefits Agreement "will make a difference in a lot of people's lives."

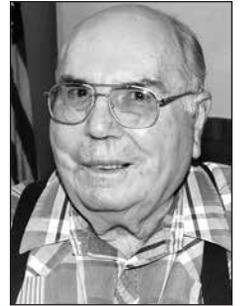
Collective Action

When you talk to retirees like Templeman, Rawles and Parker, it's clear they understand the importance of taking collective action in order to win improvements. All three men got involved in the Local 1245 Retirees Club as soon as the Santa Rosa Chapter was organized, and helped build a strong organization that has increased involvement by other retirees.

The result has been growing attendance at Retiree Club meetings. The retirees discuss many issues at their meetings, but the primary focus has been on gaining relief from medical expenses. The efforts by the five chapters have included outreach to Local 1245 unit meetings, a letter writing campaign

aimed at PG&E and political leaders, and even a demonstration last May at PG&E's annual shareholders meeting.

Warren Templeman:
"I believe if we hadn't come together like this, nothing would have been done."



"I really appreciate this Retiree Club. It's a chance to get together, a chance to keep up on what's going on back at work, and a chance to do our part to make things better for those who are going to be retired," said Parker. "I'm happy to be part of it."

Templeman remembers seeing Ron Weakley in the yards at PG&E back in the early 1950s, trying to persuade employees to vote for representation by IBEW so they could gain the power of collective bargaining. He sees the recent collective efforts by retirees to improve medical benefits as very much the same sort of effort.

"I believe if we hadn't come together like this nothing would have been done," Templeman said.

Retiree Club Meeting Schedule

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.

Santa Rosa Chapter: 1st Tuesday each month, 10 a.m., at Coco's Restaurant, 1501 Farmers Lane, Santa Rosa.

Merced Chapter: 1st Tuesday each month, 10 a.m., Merced Senior Community, 755 W. 15th Street, Merced.

The Santa Rosa Chapter of the Retirees Club had about 20 attending in August. Attendance is often even higher.



Fighting the good fight

By Eric Wolfe

It's an article of faith in the labor movement that progress is possible, that you can make things better, that it's worth the fight.

Local 1245 retirees held true to this belief in the years-long battle to get PG&E to pay more toward their medical premiums. They fought the good fight, and no one fought it better or with more tenacity than Jack Hill.

As one of two retirees on the Local 1245 Bargaining Committee, Hill spent the past 18 months in nearly continuous negotiations with PG&E.



Jack Hill protests Bush administration attacks on Social Security in 2005.

"We were at Vacaville two or three days a week, almost every week. It was a lot of nights at the Holiday Inn Express there in Vacaville," Hill recalls.

The Bargaining Committee came together in early 2008 to begin educating itself on the many complex issues that would have to be dealt with in negotiations. And no issue was more complex than medical benefits for retired members.

Since 2000, retirees have borne the cost of all increases in medical premiums. And those costs grew with frightening speed, threatening to consume a retiree's entire pension check. Temporary relief was negotiated in 2003 and 2007 in the form of Retirement Premium Offset Accounts, but as those accounts ran out of money, many retirees were staring into a financial abyss.

The topic was headed for the bargaining table again in 2008, and Business Manager Tom Dalzell knew that retirees needed a strong presence on the bargaining committee. He tapped two veterans of union negotiations: former Business Manager Perry Zimmerman and Jack Hill.

You only need to look at Hill's background to see why the union would turn to him in a pinch.

He was initiated into Local 1245 in 1966 and within months became a shop steward. Shortly after that he was



Jack Hill makes the case for retirees in a 2008 conversation with PG&E Senior Director of Labor Relations Andy Williams, Director of Industrial Relations Steve Rayburn and then-Senior Director for Business Projects Terry Morford.

involved in his first bargaining—an ad hoc committee dealing with Clerical issues. He became the Clerical-at-Large representative on the Advisory Council, and in the mid-1970s became a union business representative for two-and-a-half years.

After retiring from PG&E as a Senior Service Rep II in 1987, Hill joined the South Bay Chapter of the newly-organized Local 1245 Retirees Club. He became actively engaged in efforts in the early 1990s to gain improvements in retiree pension checks. He contacted the chairs of 15 chapters of the PSEA, an association of PG&E

involved in his first bargaining—an ad hoc committee dealing with Clerical issues. He became the Clerical-at-Large representative on the Advisory Council, and in the mid-1970s became a union business representative for two-and-a-half years.

ing General Negotiations, which concluded in the fall of 2008, the union and PG&E returned to the table in January of this year to keep trying. The obstacles were huge and there were times during the negotiations that agreement seemed impossible. There were skeptics and doubters, and some who insisted on "all or nothing." But as someone whose bargaining table experience stretches back four decades, Hill knew that you don't turn your back on an improvement just because it isn't a perfect solution.

Once a package was hammered out at the bargaining table, Hill was back on the

As someone whose bargaining table experience stretches back four decades, Hill knew that you don't turn your back on an improvement just because it isn't a perfect solution.

Congratulations newly-retired members

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

Charlie Bailon
41 years
San Jose, CA

Jackie Baker
20 years
Anderson, CA

James Buzbee
24 years
Atwater, CA

Douglas Corwin
30 years
Folsom, CA

Manny Deguzman
30 years
Union City, CA

Kathleen Dolan
29 years
Stockton, CA

Thelma Dowell
46 years
Anderson, CA

Lourdes Einer
21 years

Kathryn Emanuel,
35 years
Oakdale, CA

Kim Favors
9 years
Gig Harbor, WA

Anthony Fortune
37 years
Grass Valley, CA

Robert Fox
25 years
Madera, CA

Jennifer Gawehn
17 years
Oceano, CA

Edward Gill
29 years
Salinas, CA

Harold Haggard
18 years
Puyallup, WA

James Hemmis
23 years
Rough and Ready, CA

Dan Jefferies
38 years
Antioch, CA

Robert Johnston
12 years
Arroyo Grande, CA

Elizabeth Kemp
30 years
Riverbank, CA

Carla Larson
9 years
Stockton, CA

Richard Madron
30 years
Fresno, CA

Terrance Magner
50 years
San Carlos, CA

Kenneth Matheson
45 years
Martinez, CA

Harry McLaughlin
39 years
Placerville, CA

Frank Mendez
36 years
Gustine, CA

Jerry Meyers
34 years
Sonoma, CA

James Paulson
30 years
Fresno, CA

Donald Perry
29 years
Burney, CA

Vivian Price
29 years
San Francisco, CA

Johnnie Prior
42 years
Bakersfield, CA

Edmond Radke
21 years
Magalia, CA

John Ramirez
36 years
Auburn, CA

James Rechcygl
24 years
Millville, CA

Larry Rios
29 years
Stockton, CA

Darrell Santiago
29 years
Prynedale, CA

Alan Seely
25 years
Oroville, CA

Larry Skachenko
20 years
Cloverdale, CA

Edward Stedman
25 years
Citrus Heights, CA

Robert Stratton
24 years
Walnut Creek, CA

Congratulations Retirees!
We want you to stay connected to IBEW 1245.

stump, explaining it to the union's members. Other members of the union's bargaining committee were out there, too, of course. But none of them were 78 years old.

The day the ballots were counted in the Benefits ratification vote, Hill went out to dinner with his wife, Kathy—herself a former IBEW steward.

"As soon as we got back from dinner I got on the computer and looked at the Local 1245 website and found out what the totals were," Hill said. "Over 3,000 in favor and just 900 against. I was thrilled to death to see that."

There will be other fights down the road—justice for working people is a battle that never ends. But as long as there are people like Jack Hill willing to fight the good fight, there's always hope that things can be made better.

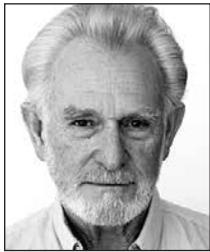


Jack Hill isn't shy about pressing his views with then-President Bill Morrow.

We must get in their face with our needs!

By Bill Wallace

I would like to thank the Executive Board for sending me to the Alliance for Retired Americans Conference in Washington D.C. The major theme at the conference was to develop a partnership between retired workers, union and non-union workers and use this strength to insure passage of the Employee Free Choice Act and passage of real health-care reform.



Bill Wallace

We need to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. Workers in 70 countries have the basic rights spelled out in the Employee Free Choice Act, yet American workers do not. The United States has fallen from a high of 35% union membership to a current 7%. We, the members of unions, need to become active and put pressure on the President and the Congress to pass Employee Free Choice now.

Healthcare reform, whether a single payer system or through a public option, is a necessity, because the current system of healthcare is unworkable, unsatisfactory and way too expensive. At the present time, we don't have a debate, we have a stranglehold by the healthcare "stakeholders". The health insurance companies goal is to fight any reform and maintain maximum profits without any regard to how it affects your and my quality of healthcare.

Currently the healthcare industry has hired over 350 former Washington insiders with the intent to influence their former bosses and colleagues to maintain the status quo. They are currently spending more than \$1.4 million *a day* in their lobby efforts for a whopping \$126 million in the first quarter of 2009. They defeated previous efforts to reform healthcare with lies and fear mongering and they have geared up for a repeat performance. We must not allow this to happen again.

As a union member, do you sometimes feel like the polar bear and her cub depicted on the T.V. commercial with the ice melting all around them? The security of the union umbrella is shrinking all around us and we need to take a proactive role in stopping the shrinkage and rebuilding to the strength unions once enjoyed. Political strength and union strength are cut from the same cloth.

Our overall strategy should be to rebuild the power of the working class. Which is another way of saying rebuilding union power. In this fight, there is no difference between the worker and the retired worker. *We* are in this together. The goal should be to build a broader labor movement that will restore our

bargaining rights, fight unfair trade policies, increase union jobs, and rebuild the middle class.

The political reality is that money is still pivotal in the decision making process of our legislatures. This fact has become more and more apparent when politicians place a greater value on corporations, insurance companies and other commercial interests based on these company's political contributions.

On the positive side, dedicated workers involved in a grass root campaign, have been proven to be very effective at times. For labor, this is important because we are in control of our

HENRY MILLER: our union was his legacy

More than a century ago, one lineman who envisioned electrical workers united in common goal of brotherhood devoted his life to make it happen.

Henry Miller's America was still a country of pioneers, only recently connected by advances like the continental railroad, the telephone and the advent of electricity. But Miller had the foresight and sense of purpose to weave his vision of a coast-to-coast Brotherhood that still thrives today.

The very success of the industries that spurred the growth of the United States depended on the work of those who erected the power poles and connected the lines, risking-and often losing-their lives in a dangerous trade. So dangerous that Henry Miller, who contributed so much to the future safety of IBEW electricians-was killed 105 years ago. In the world he set out to change in the early 1890s, the electrical workers were earning pitifully low wages as employers hired only unskilled workers, undermining the reputation of the trade. Through the 1870s and 1880s, many small electrical unions formed and disappeared.

Henry Miller

Enter Henry Miller, a local lineman working at the 1890 St. Louis Exposition, featuring "a glorious display of electrical wonders." But as he spoke informally to his fellow tradesman, they found industry wide problems and concluded that in addition to exceptionally high mortality rates, they could earn no more than fifteen-to-twenty cents an hour for 12-hour days. Wiremen fared no better. Seeking to act collectively, they turned to the American Federation of Labor and chartered themselves as the

involvement. Remember, it is the issues that are important for us to focus on, not the political party.

We need to ask ourselves a fundamental question. Is unionism important to our way of life? If the answer is yes—and it *is* yes—then we need to work together to protect our union rights and secure stronger union laws. Remember that our enemies come for us one at a time. Unions must work together to support other unions that are under attack. If we sit idly by while another union is being destroyed, you can bet they will be coming after us next. We are currently in the biggest fight to preserve unionism since the beginning of organized labor.

As an IBEW 1245 member, you hold a unique position in the community that you live in and serve. You provide a vital

service and you hold a unique geographical significance, in that Local 1245 members are able to exert influence over a large number of federal and state legislators. Because of the respect legislators have for you and your union, your voice and its message is of significant value when you speak out on a topic.

I am retired, but my job is not done. We have to make it happen. We have to see that Obama lives up to his campaign promises. Fighting for change means we must get in their face with our needs. It is time to take control of our destiny. Organized labor must regain that strength we once had and make it even greater. *Are you ready for some hardball?*

Bill Wallace is a member of the South Bay Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club. He is a former member of the Local 1245 Advisory Council.



Henry Miller

the individual; and by legal and proper means to elevate the moral, intellectual and social conditions of our members, their families and dependents, in the interest of a higher standard of citizenship."

Born humbly with a \$100 loan from the St. Louis local, the NBEW was chartered by the AFL in December 1891, giving the organization sweeping jurisdiction over electrical workers in every branch of the industry. In the early years, a group of telephone operators joined, becoming the NBEW's first women members. And *The Electrical Worker*, the Journal's predecessor, began publishing in 1893.

Through the 1890s, unsafe working conditions and substandard wages prevailed, but the adoption of an apprenticeship system promised a better future for the industry.

In 1895, when the roll was called at the Fourth Convention in Washington, DC, only 12 delegates answered. The treasury was in debt more than \$1,000. The strength and determination of the union's early officers and members were the only forces keeping the organization alive.

After Henry Miller died, when an electric shock caused him to fall from a pole on July 10, 1896, J.T. Kelly wrote of him: "He was generous, unselfish and devoted himself to the task of organizing the electrical workers with an energy that brooked no failure."

That devotion to the task of organizing, that capacity to turn plans into action, to change a dream of unity and bargaining power into the reality of the Brotherhood, leaves all union members indebted to the legacy of Henry Miller.



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS.**

900 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202.833.7000
<http://www.ibew.org>

EDWIN D. HILL
International President

LINDELL K. LEE
International
Secretary-Treasurer

May 19, 2009

TO: ALL FINANCIAL SECRETARIES

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

The Delegates of the 37th IBEW International Convention, which was conducted in Cleveland, Ohio during the week of September 11 through 15, 2006, approved amendments to Article IX of the *IBEW Constitution*. Accordingly, effective January 1, 2010, there will be an increase of one dollar (\$1.00) for the IBEW Pension Benefit Fund (PBF) contribution, which applies to "A" members only. There will be no change in the per capita that is paid to the General Fund, and therefore, the rate for all "BA" members shall remain the same. The following rates will apply to the I.O. portion of all monthly dues payments for January 2010 and thereafter:

	<u>"A" Members</u>	<u>"BA" Members</u>	<u>"FP" – fee payers</u>
Per Capita:	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Pension Fund:	<u>\$14.00</u>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Total:	\$26.00	\$12.00	\$12.00

In accordance with Article IX of the *IBEW Constitution*, \$12.00 per month from each member will be deposited in the General Fund, and the additional amount paid by "A" members (\$14.00 per month) will be deposited into the IBEW Pension Benefit Fund.

For your reference and information, all of the rate changes that were approved at the 37th International Convention are summarized below:

Effective Date:	1/1/2007	1/1/2008	1/1/2009	1/1/2010	1/1/2011
Per Capita:	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$13.00
Pension Fund:	<u>\$12.00</u>	<u>\$13.00</u>	<u>\$13.00</u>	<u>\$14.00</u>	<u>\$14.00</u>
Total:	\$23.00	\$24.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$27.00

Members who pay their dues in advance must be charged the appropriate rate.

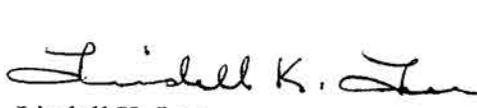
Please notify all of the members in your local union concerning this dues increase. In addition, you must also notify the employers to increase their payroll deductions. Local unions submitting electronic per capita reports must make arrangements to update their software to ensure that the most current version of the ICS-Windows or the Labor Power software package is installed. It will not be necessary to amend the local union bylaws with respect to this dues increase, because these changes were approved at the IBEW International Convention.

The payment of monthly per capita and Pension Benefit Fund (PBF) contributions to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is a duty that is required of each individual member. Moreover, each financial secretary is responsible for collecting and forwarding all per capita and PBF payments to the International Office in a timely manner.

With best wishes, we are

Fraternally yours,


Edwin D. Hill
International President


Lindell K. Lee
International Secretary-Treasurer

EDH/LKL:smw
Copy to All International Officers
All International Representatives

SMUD employees keep streak going

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District outscored all large utilities in California for residential-customer satisfaction in the latest J.D. Power and Associates survey of residential customers. It was the eight consecutive year that employees put SMUD on the top of the heap for residential-customer satisfaction.

SMUD, whose physical employees are represented by IBEW Local 1245, scored 689 out of a possible 1,000 points. Among large utilities in the West, the District ranked second, just behind Arizona's Salt River Project (696). The average score for large utilities in the region was 638. Across the continental United States, SMUD ranked seventh among 121 large and medium-size electric utilities in this year's survey.

In separate surveys, commercial customers also have given SMUD high marks, with the District ranked tops in California for five of the last six years.

J.D. Power asks customers to rate their electric utility in six areas: customer service; power quality and reliability; company image; price and value; communications; and billing and payment.

SMUD residential customers' satisfaction with price was the highest of any utility in the national survey. SMUD scored in the top 10 percent nationally for measures of power quality and reliability, billing and payment systems, corporate citizenship, communications and customer service.

For the 2009 residential-customer survey, 79,500 online interviews were conducted across the continental United States. More than 900 SMUD customers participated in the survey, with the data reflecting results of 299 interviews conducted in April and May of this year.

PSREC, from page 3

- only premium.
- Increases medical deductibles from \$100/\$300 to \$250/\$750 in-network and from \$200/\$600 to \$500/\$1500 out-of-network.
- Language to protect employees from driving long distances to get to a PPO doctor.
- Increases meal allowance by \$1 per meal.
- Allows management to perform bargaining unit duties on the Telecom side of the business for the next 18 months. No BU employees may be laid off if any duties are performed by management employees.
- General Opener prior to any layoffs.

Representing the union in the negotiations were Bruce Smith, Bryan Sherman, Susan Sessions and Business Rep. Randy Osborn.



IBEW LOCAL UNION 1245 Perry Zimmerman's 23rd Annual Golf Tournament



Where: Green Tree Golf Course, Vacaville, CA
When: Saturday, October 17, 2009
Time: 8:00 a.m. Shot Gun Start
Entry Fee: \$80.00 (Includes Cart, Green Fee & BBQ)
Entry Deadline: October 9, 2009 - Limited Tee Spaces-1st Come 1st Serve!

Prepare for the Contest!!!



LONGEST DRIVE!



CLOSEST TO THE HOLE!



BIRDIE ON HOLE #6!



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

On Saturday, October 17th, Local 1245 will hold its 23rd Annual Golf Tournament. Registration will begin promptly at 6:30 a.m. It will be a shotgun start at 8:00 a.m. If you don't have a 4-Some, we will assign you or your group to a 4-Some. BBQ and awards after the tournament at the Union Hall (30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville (behind Home Depot).

HEY, DON'T MISS OUT! SPACE IS LIMITED. SEND YOUR NAME & MONEY IN NOW!

Make checks payable to "IBEW Local 1245" and mail to:

Local 1245 Golf Tournament, P. O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696, Attn: Gail Varner

1. **NAME: (PRINT)** _____
ADDRESS: _____

2. **NAME: (PRINT)** _____
ADDRESS: _____

3. **NAME: (PRINT)** _____
ADDRESS: _____

4. **NAME: (PRINT)** _____
ADDRESS: _____

FOR INFORMATION, CALL:

JOHN MENDOZA, Chairman
[Cell] (209) 329-3449

JOE OSTERLUND, Co-Chairman
[Cell] (415) 238-2898

Retirement on the Table, *continued from page 1*

the union's website, making it possible for Local 1245 members to see exactly what is at stake in the negotiations. The opening proposals and subsequent updates can be viewed at www.ibew1245.com.

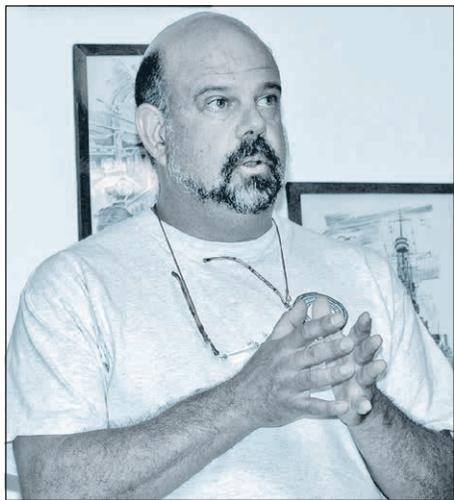
Members attending the Reno unit meeting in August voiced strong concerns over some elements of the company's opening proposals.

"They're going after retirement more than I expected," said Brian Ralston, a Transmission Dispatcher in Reno, ticking off just a couple of the issues that caught his eye in the proposal: "There's no sick benefits for those who hire on after the end of this contract. The company proposal cuts out retirement medical for anyone hired after the next agreement takes effect."

During the meeting members spoke up about company proposals relating to paid time off, seniority, the electric and gas discount, retirement benefits, and working hours, among other issues.

Mike Grimm, who is serving as a temporary IBEW business representative during the negotiations, urged members at the Reno meeting to remain united and not let the company's proposals create divisions in our ranks. But members didn't seem to need the reminder.

"Last time we were scared. This time we're pissed," one member said, voicing



Mike Grimm is serving as a temporary business representative while Business Rep. Randy Osborn devotes most of his time to negotiations.



Jeff Hanson, Plant Operator: "The employees are the ones with the long-term perspective."

a sentiment that seemed widely shared.

There were also frank exchanges about past friction between Clerical and Physical, including complaints by some Clerical members that they have felt intimidated on occasion by the boisterous behavior of Physical members at unit meetings.

A member of the line department attending the unit meeting addressed these concerns directly: "The line group wants to be there for you. We want you to have a fair shake."

CLERICAL WAGES

Clerical members are keeping a close eye on the issue of Clerical wages. During the last general negotiations, Clerical employees received lump-sum bonuses instead of general wage increases, in essence freezing their base wage for the past four years.

"Our cost of living goes up but our raises have stopped," Anna Van Dyne, a Clerical foreman over the print shop, mail and records, noted in July. "That's not fair. We have the same bills (to pay) as everyone else."

She believes low pay for Clerical contributes to the company's retention problems.

"You can't keep good staff—as soon as they get settled they're looking at the job board," she said. "You could get people to stay if they were paid a little better."

Retention problems, she noted, affects the company's efficiency. "Training takes time. I fall behind because I have to continually train. We have a good team, but they're in and then they're out."

The Clerical bargaining unit, in addition to Clerical positions, includes Meter Reader, Facility Maintenance, Mail Room, and Print Shop employees.

SHORT-TERM VS. LONG-TERM

Some members, speaking in July, expressed concern about a possible repeat of the last round of bargaining, which dragged on for well over a year.

"It used to be that people would go for



Rodger Bergue, Telecom System Foreman: "The company is making so much money."

it, give a little, take a little, bang—you'd be done," said Bill Franklin, an I/C Tech at Tracy. But not anymore.

"It's not as efficient as it used to be," said Rodger Bergue, a Telecom System Foreman in Reno. "It's hard for the bargaining unit to understand why the company is being so adversarial when the company is making so much money."

Keith Light, a Telecom System Tech who works with Bergue, voiced concern about how knowledgeable management can be in bargaining when there is so much turnover in management's top ranks. "They're just coming in an out," he said.

It's a sentiment you hear a lot these days from employees at NV Energy and other utilities as well: management is so focused on short term financial objectives they lose track of the utility's larger purpose: providing safe and reliable service. It's a purpose that remains uppermost in the minds of those who are "in the trenches" providing that service day in and day out.

"The employees are the ones with the long-term perspective," said Jeff Hanson, a Plant Operator at Tracy. "We take care of the equipment because we want the equipment to last—we're going to be here even if the managers have moved on."

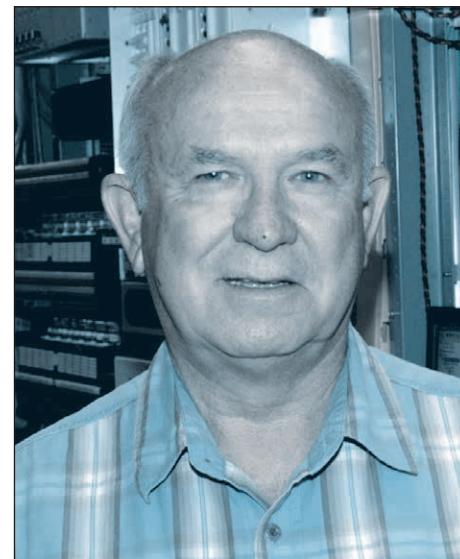
SUPPORTING THE COMMITTEE

Hanson was just one of several Physical and Clerical members over the summer who stressed the importance of supporting the bargaining committee in the negotiations now underway.

"I know it's not easy," said Hanson, noting that fellow operator Gary Bailey, who serves on the committee, keeps them posted on developments.

"I don't think the negotiating committee gets the credit they deserve. There's lots of research. I don't know if people realize how hard that work is," said Randy Bradshaw, an operator at Tracy. "It's tedious, not losing your temper, trying

continued on next page



Keith Light, Telecom System Tech: Management is just "coming in and out."

NV Energy announces closures

NV Energy on Aug. 26 announced the closure of three business offices in Elko, Yerington and Carson City effective Oct. 30.

Employees have been offered positions in Reno, which is 293, 84 and 25 miles respectively from their current headquarters. Twelve members are affected. Options are varied depending on location, age and years of service. Options include relocate, sever or retire.

These closings in the north, combined with two closings in the south, leave NV Energy with only two offices open to the public: North Las Vegas and North Lake Tahoe, CA.

More information on these developments will be posted on the union website (www.ibew1245.com) as it becomes available.

Aumentos de salarios, continuación de la página 5

2011. En el caso de que los Administradores aprueben un aumento, esta propuesta requerirá que los empleados paguen la mitad de dicho aumento, mientras que la Compañía también pagará la mitad. Actualmente, su compañía paga, y continuará pagando a LINECO \$4.75 por cada hora que usted trabaja.

Aunque no hay garantías sobre cuál sería el aumento que implementarían los Administradores de LINECO en el futuro, he aquí una lista de los aumentos pasados de LINECO, desde 2004 hasta el presente:

*Enero-01-04: Aumento de .50 centavos por hora a \$3.75.

*Julio-01-04: Aumento de .50 centavos por hora a \$4.25

*Enero-01-05: Aumento de .25 centavos por hora a \$4.50

*Enero-01-06: Aumento de .25 centavos por hora a \$4.75 (tarifa actual)

ARTÍCULO XIX PERÍODO DEL CONTRATO

Desde el 3 de enero de 2010 hasta la medianoche del 31 de diciembre de 2011
TODOS LOS OTROS TÉRMINOS DEL CONTRATO COLECTIVO VIGENTE PERMANECEN EN VIGENCIA

Por favor siga las instrucciones anexas para la votación y envíe su voto tan pronto como sea posible. Las papeletas de votación para todas las compañías deberán recibirse en el apartado postal (P.O. Box) de Vacaville del IBEW a más tardar a las 10 am del 30 de septiembre de 2009. Las papeletas de votación de las tres compañías se contarán por separado el 30 de septiembre de 2009 y los resultados de la votación serán publicados.

Solidariamente,
 Tom Dalzell Gerente de Negocios
 Local 1245 del Sindicato IBEW

Retirement, *continued from page 23*

to get your view across to an adversary—it's difficult."

"It's important for people to know the committee is there to represent all of us and have our best interests foremost in their minds," said Rita Weisshaar, a Customer Service Foreman, who served on the bargaining committee during previous negotiations. "They're not there bargaining for themselves, they're there bargaining for everyone."

"We should all get together and go to the (unit) meetings," said Bruce Dahlgren, a Distribution Operator in Reno. "We need to have a lot more people go to meetings and voice their opinions."

Troubleman Will Retzer said employees are following the negotiations closely.

"It's the only thing that's being talked about. It's on everybody's mind," he said.

"I would like to see an agreement before the end of the year so we can get people's mind back on the job. We're professionals and we show it every day. You expect the same from your employer," Retzer said.



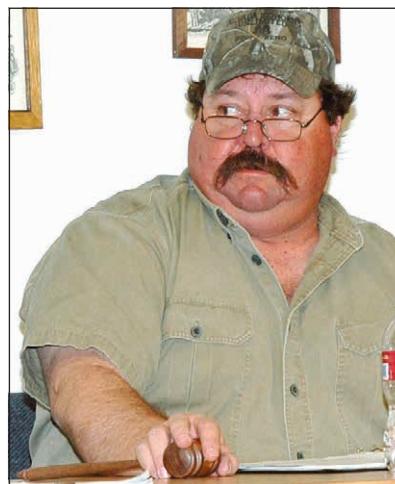
Members of the IBEW bargaining committee on July 7, preparing for negotiations. The bargaining committee consists of Reto Gross, Dan Lyday, Scott Hildebrand, Louis Kelly, Michelle Ramsey, Tom Cornell and Gary Bailey, along with Business Rep. Randy Osborn and Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer, with assistance from retired member Dale Huntsman. Business Manager Tom Dalzell has also been directly involved in the negotiations.



Will Retzer, Troubleman: "I would like to see an agreement before the end of the year so we can get people's mind back on the job."



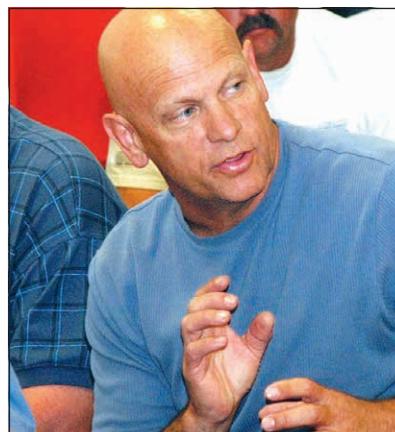
Reno Unit Recorder Michelle Ramsey takes notes at the August meeting.



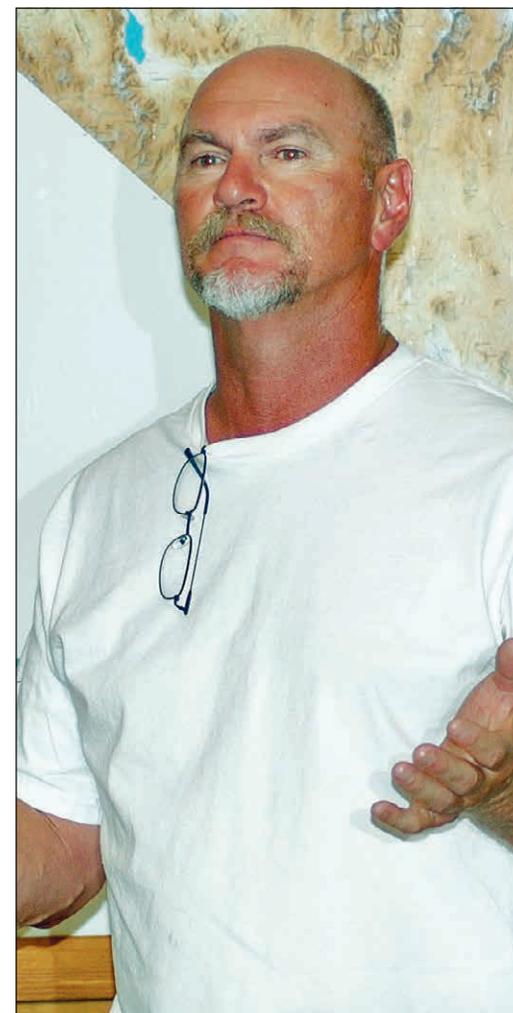
Reno Unit Chair Dana Moler, gavel at the ready, maintains order.



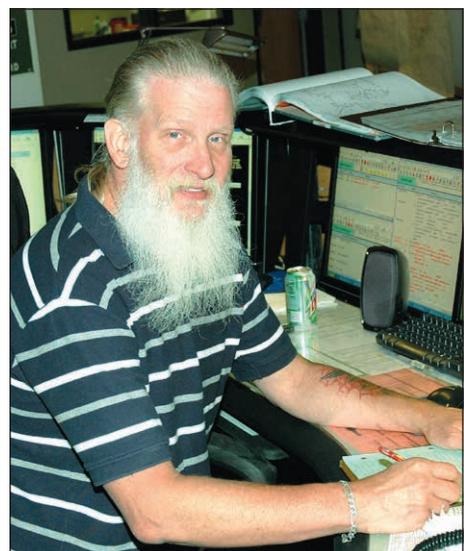
Rita Weisshaar, Customer Service Rep/Billing: "The committee is there to represent all of us."



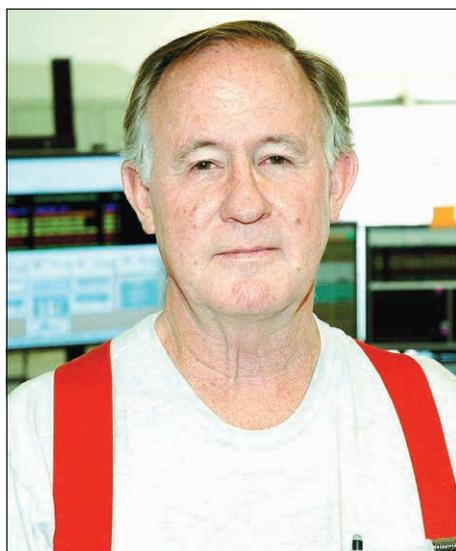
John East, a System Control Operator, offers his view at the August unit meeting in Reno.



Dan Lyday, a member of the union bargaining committee, discusses what's at stake in the negotiations.



Bruce Dahlgren, Distribution Operator: "We should all get together and go to the meetings."



Randy Bradshaw, Plant Operator: "I don't think the negotiating committee gets the credit they deserve."



Brian Ralson, Transmission Dispatcher: "They're going after retirement."