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### News briefs

#### Egyptian Electrical Workers

staged sit-ins in late February to protest corruption and also to gain better job security. They have created a Facebook page to communicate with fellow workers in their sector.

**Israeli Social Workers** gained close to 5,000 followers within two weeks after launching its Facebook page in preparation for a strike in March.

**Public Workers** should not be stripped of collective bargaining rights, say 62% of respondents in an NBC News / Wall Street Journal poll. And a New York Times / CBS News poll found Americans oppose weakening the bargaining rights of public employee unions by a margin of nearly two to one.

**A Facebook-Powered Protest** in Portugal could draw tens of thousands of people if the 37,000 Facebook fans who pledge to take part actually show up. The protest by Portugal's "Desperate Generation" was slated for March 12.

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union questions at:  
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# Utility Reporter

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## Fighting Back

### Local 1245 joins solidarity rallies

**L**ocal 1245 members rallied in support of public workers in Wisconsin and elsewhere in what has become the largest American labor uprising in a generation or more.

Fourteen Local 1245 members were among some 3,000 rallying at the state capitol in Sacramento on Feb. 22 in a rousing show of solidarity. Graciela Nunez, a union activist at the Fresno Call Center captured the spirit of it in a Facebook post immediately afterward: "It was very inspiring—we are one!"

#### Public employees under attack

On Feb. 21 Local 1245 members joined a support rally in Carson City, NV that drew about 400. "Today was a great showing of union solidarity!" said Local 1245 Retiree Club activist Rita Weisshaar in an e-mail after the Carson rally. "Several from the state workers, teamsters, teachers and other unions spoke on the importance of collective bargaining and the importance of the services state workers provide."

Several members of the Nevada legislature came out and stood with the union members in support of collective bargaining rights.

"Senator Horsford furnished pizza to the people in the crowd saying he would rather give than take away from the state workers," said Weisshaar.

Rallies were held in all 50 states on Feb. 26, a remarkable groundswell ignited by events in Ohio, Indiana, and espe-

*continued on page 19*



Local 1245 staff members (from left) Eileen Purcell, Fred Ross Jr. and Landis Marttila join the noise at a San Francisco rally Feb. 26 in support of Wisconsin public workers.



#### Local 1245 Leadership Training

Gracie Nunez (PG&E), talks union with Mike Gomes (MID), left, and Ryan Morris (NV Energy) at the Leadership Training conference in Berkeley.

## What Change Looks Like

**T**wenty young Local 1245 members gathered at Berkeley City College Annex on Jan. 24 to engage in one of the union's most pressing priorities: building leadership for the future.

They came from PG&E and NV Energy, from Sacramento Regional Transit and Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts, many in their 30s, some in

their 20s, all of them serious about the challenges facing the union.

Leadership training is absolutely essential, said Business Manager Tom Dalzell, "to cultivate the next generation of Local 1245 and build our union as we confront one of the most challenging economic times in our history."

Many of the participants have already

*continued on page 14*

## Under the microscope

### Nevada utility faces investigation

**T**he Public Utilities Commission of Nevada on Feb. 25 officially ordered an investigation into workforce aging or "graying" issues at Sierra Pacific Power Co. The investigation will focus on whether the company is facing graying workforce issues and, if so, whether the company is taking adequate measures to assure the reliability of its service going forward.

Sierra Pacific Power is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NV Energy, serving customers in northern Nevada. Its workforce is represented by IBEW Local 1245, which filed the petition seeking the investigation.

"It's now up to the regulators to determine if this utility is acting re-

*continued on page 4*





**Tom Dalzell**  
BUSINESS MANAGER

## Brothers and Sisters: Wisconsin worries me. I hope that it worries you.

Free societies have free unions. Totalitarian societies don't. It is that simple. Look at the historic role that unions played in freeing Poland in the 1980s. At the time, President Reagan recognized the key role that unions played and called free trade unions "one of the most elemental human rights."

How is it possible to turn America's true heroes—hard-working, middle class workers who repair our bridges and roads, who tend our parks, who provide us healthcare and fire protection and law enforcement, who treat our drinking water, who provide our electricity, and who teach our children—into our enemies? How is it possible?

## Unit updates

**Unit 3314**, formerly **South Lake Tahoe**, has been renamed the **CalPeco** unit. This unit will now serve Local 1245 members working for CalPeco, which recently took over NV Energy's service territory in California. The North Lake Tahoe Unit has been disestablished. Meetings will be on the third Wednesday of the month, starting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting location will alternate between a North Lake location and a South Lake location. The next meeting, March 16, will be at the North Lake location: Las Casona restaurant, 930 Tahoe Blvd. #601, Incline Village, NV. A location for the meetings in South Lake has not been found yet. We'll keep you posted.

**Unit 3316, Fallon**, has a new meeting time effective immediately: 4 pm. Meeting location is still 2655 Country Club Dr. in Fallon. Next meeting is April 12.

**Unit 3317, Winnemucca**, has a new meeting location effective immediately: Round Table Pizza. Meeting time remains 7 p.m. Next meeting is April 13.

*Randy Osborn, Business Representative*

**Unit 3213, Burney**, has a new meeting location effective immediately: Gepetto's Pizza, 37227 Main Street, in Burney.

*Kit Stice, Business Representative*

**Unit 3511, Auburn**, will still meet at the pizza place on Auburn-Folsom Road, but it is no longer called Round Table Pizza. The restaurant has changed its name to Pizza Express. Meeting dates and time remain the same.

*Phil Carter, Business Rep.*

When the tea party came on the scene two years ago, there was clearly a populist element in its message. The message of the tea party today is far different than the first-generation populist façade. It is the message of millionaires and billionaires whose agenda is defined by self-interest and greed. They have turned their elected officials against working people, against the little guy. And they have done so with a frightening totalitarian twist.

Governor Walker in Wisconsin is not alone in doing the bidding of the ultra-wealthy while wrapping himself in the flag of the common man, but his hypocrisy and brazen assault on workers have made him the new anti-common man face of the Republican party and the tea party.

We have seen examples of this anti-worker sentiment in our jurisdiction, most notably in the City of Redding, where a majority of the City Council is intent on enacting a long-term anti-worker agenda instead of working

responsibly with the city's unions to address short-term financial shortfalls. We have seen unprecedented attacks on workers, retirees, and even customers by the current leadership of NV Energy. And we are certain to see anti-worker and anti-union legislation introduced in California and Nevada in the coming months.

There can be no mistake about this. The corporate rightwing of the Republican party has either taken over the tea party or has taken its name and turned the power of billions of dollars against workers and unions. But we have a greater power. There is a line from the great old union song "Solidarity Forever" that rings true: "In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold." We are willing to work with management in hard times, and to get through hard times we are willing to make concessions that we don't like. But we'll be damned if we are going to let them destroy all that we have worked so hard for so long to build.

## IBEW 1245 Solidarity Action Network

Public workers in Wisconsin are in the fight of their lives. Local 1245 is battling anti-union forces in Redding, Roseville, Modesto and elsewhere. Our opponents are preparing ballot initiatives to erode or abolish our negotiating rights.

*We will not stand idly by.* We will defend our union and the standard of living we have achieved through collective bargaining. Stand up for your rights! Join the Local 1245 SOLIDARITY ACTION NETWORK. When help is needed, we will let you know the time and place. Marches, rallies, maybe just making a simple phone call. Stand with your brothers and sisters who believe the time for united action has arrived.

Sign up on-line at [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com), or e-mail your name, home/cell phone number, and personal e-mail address to: [AJJ3@ibew1245.com](mailto:AJJ3@ibew1245.com). (Your personal information will be used ONLY in connection with official Local 1245 alerts.)

## Delegates to IBEW Convention

As noted in the last issue of Utility Reporter, nominations for delegates to the IBEW Convention in Vancouver (Canada) occur in March. The convention will be held Sept. 19-23, 2011. Balloting for delegates will be in June. To qualify as a candidate for

Delegate to the International Convention, a member must have at least two years' continuous good standing in the Local Union immediately prior to March 1, 2011, and must have tendered his or her dues for January 2011.

## Local 1245 Hires Brian Kapaun

Local 1245 has hired long-time union activist Brian Kapaun as business representative, effective Jan. 1.

Kapaun's initial assignment is to represent PG&E General Construction members in the North Valley area.

Kapaun, who was initiated into Local 1245 in 1979 after hiring on at PG&E a few months earlier, resigned his position on the Local 1245 Advisory Council to accept the job on the union staff.

"It's like a dream come true," said Kapaun of his new job. "It was an offer I couldn't refuse."

In addition to serving as a union steward since 1982, Kapaun has been a member of the last several bargaining committees during negotiations with PG&E, including talks in 2008, 2003 and 1999.

"My main goal is to educate and unify the GC members, increase their awareness and participation in the union," said Kapaun.

Representing GC members has always been a challenge to the union because they spend so much time away from home, making them harder to contact.

"I hope the new on-line form for submitting bargaining proposals will help give GC guys a bigger voice in bargaining by making it easier for them to participate. Being on the road so much can make it hard for those guys to get to a union meeting," Kapaun said.

Welcome aboard, Brother Kapaun!



**Brian Kapaun**

## CALENDAR

**Mar 11:** Service Awards, Chico/Marysville

**Mar 12:** Outside Steward Training, Vacaville

**Mar 22:** Leadership Training, Modesto

**Apr 8:** Service Awards, Bakersfield

**Apr 8:** OSHA 10 ET&D Training, Vacaville

**Apr 16:** Service Awards, Reno

**Apr 22:** Service Awards, San Jose

**Apr 30:** Advisory Council, Vacaville

**May 6:** Service Awards, North Bay

**May 20:** Service Awards, Salinas/Monterey

**May 21:** 1245 Soccer Tournament, Livermore

**May 21:** Service Awards, Fresno

**May 28:** Service Awards, Merced

**Jun 18:** Zimmerman Golf Tournament, Vacaville



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# Frontier offer accepted

Members of IBEW Local 1245 at Frontier (Shingletown/Colusa), voting on Jan. 12 and Jan. 14, narrowly approved the company's "last, best, final" offer.

The members had rejected similar terms in the past. This time around, the vote was 6 to 4 to accept the "last, best, final" rather than authorize the union to seek strike sanction.

The company slightly sweetened the last, best and final by offering a \$100 signing bonus and increasing wages an additional .25 cents per-hour if the employees ratified by midnight Jan. 14.

"The employees weren't impressed with the offer, but they understood it was the best deal we could get following some four months of negotiations," said Local 1245 Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas.

## APPOINTMENTS

### CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

**IBEW Construction Conference**  
Mike Cottrell, Aaron Elmore  
Dean Evans

**AFL-CIO Young Worker Advisory Council**  
Lorenzo Arciniega

**CLUW NEB Meeting and Leadership Development Academy**  
Anna Bayless-Martinez  
Cecelia De La Torre, Chris Habecker  
Natalia Jonas

**IFEBP Health Care Management**  
Gary Bailey, Lloyd Cargo IV  
Graciela Nunez

**TURLOCK Irrigation District 2011 Bargaining Committee**  
Aaron Baker, Ken Gross  
Rich Lane, Michael (Pat) Patterson

**MERCED Irrigation District Political Action Committee**  
Jerrid Fletcher, Charley Souders

**PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC 2011 Benefits Education Committee**  
Donna Ambeau

Anna Bayless-Martinez  
Lloyd Cargo IV, Bryan Carroll  
Cecelia De La Torre, Jack B. Hill  
Graciela Nunez, Ron Moon  
Mark Newman, Michael Scafani  
Raymond Shepherd

### 2011 Physical Bargaining Committee

Linda Jurado, Dan Mayo  
Mike Scafani, Lou Mennel  
Casey Barker, Steve Russell  
Bob Gerstle, Ken Amaral  
Dave Sankey, Anthony Brown  
Gary Maschio, Ron Moon  
Pat Duffy



## Peer-to-Peer at SMUD

By Ralph Armstrong

The Peer-to-Peer lineman safety program was rolled out at SMUD on Feb. 3. Dean Gurke has been instrumental in meeting and making contact with the employers and pulling this program together, which is a huge task.

Although weather has caused some delays as crews were needed for restoration work, Dean continues working with all the reps to arrange meeting dates and times in an effort to get members to attend one of these meetings. Dean is also working with Local 396, Las Vegas to put together a joint program for NV Energy.

Full implementation of the program will require the appointment of "Excellence Stewards" in the field to provide support for when dealing with safety issues.

These stewards' assignments for the



Ralph Armstrong

union will be different than a current shop steward's assignment and so will the process for selecting them. Criteria for the selection of the lineman peer-to-peer stewards will be the same for all other work groups when programs are established. Training is also required for these stewards. The Ninth District has committed to help in the development of steward training for our safety stewards.

Criteria for these stewards are:

- Must hold the classification of the designated peer group
- Credible
- Well-respected by members
- Able to interact effectively with management
- Good interpersonal skills
- Not afraid to stand up on difficult or controversial issues
- Dedicated to promoting a safe work culture
- Willingness to attend steward training sessions
- Act as a mentor to new apprentices and young linemen
- Appointed and removed by the Business Manager

Until all the stewards are in place Dean Gurke and I will be the resource persons for the program on safety issues.

## Serious Accident Communication

On January 12, at approximately 10:30 a.m., a journeyman lineman from Yosemite Division with 14 years of service sustained burns from an electrical contact and/or arc flash. The incident occurred in the town of North Fork while the employee was in the process of moving a de-energized 12 kV under-built conductor below an energized 70kV transmission line.

Energy Delivery, Engineering and Operations, Safety Engineering & Health Services, Human Performance and IBEW employees are partnering on this serious incident investigation.

The employee was released from hospital on Jan. 14.

## Cranes and Derricks

On Jan. 20 Ron Cochran and I attended the CalOSHA public hearings in San Diego pertaining to CalOSHA's proposed new crane standard. The new standard is mandated by Fed OSHA, which in November of 2010 implemented its own crane standard for the construction industry.

There were several concerns prior to this hearing stemming from CalOSHA's current standard structure being all-inclusive. It did not distinguish between maintenance versus construction, the use of digger derricks and the addition of boom-mounted personnel platforms added to section 5004 of the CalOSHA standard pertaining to suspended platforms.

Most of the concerns were addressed prior to the public hearings. I spoke on behalf of our concerns about the boom-mounted platform being treated the same as a suspended platform.

I asked the standards board to please reconsider this language for the safety of our members. The standards board has directed the standards committee to move to consider all the comments presented and to move to add the new standard to the construction orders and leave the current crane regulations for the general industry. Over the next couple of months we should start to see how these new standards will impact our industry since the state has 180 days from the implementation of the Fed standard.

## Find IBEW 1245 on Facebook

IBEW Local 1245 is now on Facebook.

And it's about time, some would say. The Facebook social network has more than 600 million active users, including 135 million unique visitors per month in the US as of last October.

"1245 needs a Facebook page. It's a new way to reach people," said Graciela Nunez, a PG&E customer service representative at the Fresno Contact Center. "It's worldwide—people can come and look what 1245 is doing. It's a way to get information to people quickly."

"We're appealing to the new social media era—trying to keep up with new technology, because a lot of our members demanded it," said Lorenzo Arciniega, a PG&E customer service representative in San Jose. "We have to find ways to keep information flowing quickly."

Arciniega and Nunez, who helped design the union's Facebook page, also serve as the page's administrators, along with co-designer Jennifer Gray, a

customer service representative in Sacramento, and Angela Jacobson, a Local 1245 Administrative Associate.

Additional assistance is provided by Local 1245 Technology Director Leslie Asher, Organizer Eileen Purcell and Communications Director Eric Wolfe.

## Ready for the Ride

Early traffic reports suggest that Local 1245 members are ready for the ride.



Preparing to launch the Local 1245 Facebook page are (seated, from left) Angela Jacobson, Lorenzo Arciniega, Jennifer Gray, and (standing, from left) Eileen Purcell, Leslie Asher, Eric Wolfe and Graciela Nunez.

facebook

A week after its launch and minimal promotion the page had 454 visits, according to Jacobson, with the average view for individual posts in the 200 range.

Jacobson, who jumped into Facebook about six years ago, is convinced the union's page will accelerate communication between members.

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sponsibly to fulfill its obligation to provide reliable service in the face of significant workforce reductions and looming retirements," said Local 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell. "We are pleased that the PUCN has taken this historic step."

While utility commissions generally have the authority to address staffing concerns, it is unusual for a state utility commission to involve itself in the staffing issues facing the companies it regulates. However, the stakes are particularly large when the issue at hand is the reliability of electric service, and the problem is workforce graying—which has been widely recognized by compa-



nies and federal agencies alike as a significant threat to reliable service. In its Feb. 25 order, the commission categorically affirmed its legal authority to undertake the investigation and its intention to do so.

Sierra Pacific Power urged the Commission to reject the union's petition for an investigation, but the Commission rejected the company's opposition and chose to move forward with the investigation, declaring:

"The Commission shall open an investigatory docket to investigate the following matters: (1) the extent to which SPPC is facing an aging workforce; (2) if Sierra Pacific is facing a significant aging of its workforce (compared to past experience), SPPC's efforts to identify and address the concerns or issues raised by a significant aging workforce; and (3) whether, how, and the extent to which SPPC's potentially significant aging workforce might affect the reliability of SPPC's service."

Local 1245's request for an investigation was bolstered by considerable supporting data, including evidence that the company has significantly reduced its workforce in recent years, has eliminated crews in several areas, and has reduced crews in other areas.

The next steps in the conduct of the investigation have not yet been specified. However, Local 1245 anticipates that the Commission will soon schedule a conference so that the parties can discuss scheduling and other issues.

A recent survey of utilities by J.D. Powers found that SPPC's parent company, NV Energy, came in dead last in customer satisfaction compared to all other utilities in the mountain states.

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and "like" us on Facebook!

# Rein in NV Energy, Nevadans say

## Support found for creating Citizen Utility Board

A telephone survey of 1,000 likely Nevada voters conducted in early December showed that 82% of respondents support a plan to form a citizen utility board to advocate for consumers before the NV Public Utilities Commission. Just 10% of respondents oppose this plan.

The results were published Jan. 16 by Nevada journalist Andrew Barbano in his award-winning Barbwire column and in the Sparks Tribune.

The professionally-conducted survey, requested by IBEW Local 1245, also found strong support for two other proposals – a plan to require shareholder approval of top executive compensation at NV Energy and a plan to create a public utility agency for electricity and gas services similar to those that provide water in Reno and Las Vegas.

The proposal to require shareholder approval was supported by 63% of respondents, with 21% in opposition. The proposal to create a publicly owned utility was supported by 54% of respondents with just 18% opposed.

The telephone survey was conducted in tandem with an online survey. The online survey results mirror the findings of the telephone survey. In total, 846 Nevada residents responded to the online survey. An overwhelming 86% of these respondents indicated support for the citizen utility board, 74% for

the shareholder approval of executive compensation and 65% for a publically-owned utility.

An earlier phase of survey research, conducted in October 2010, found deep dissatisfaction with NV Energy among Nevada consumers. The survey data indicate the company would have trouble mounting credible opposition to any of these plans. This first phase of polling found that 75% of respondents are very concerned that NV Energy customers pay the highest residential utility rates of any Mountain state.

That survey also found that 64% of respondents had a great deal of concern about NV Energy CEO Michael Yackira earning \$4.5 million.

Phase III of the research, according to the union, will be a series of professionally-conducted focus groups throughout the state to test voter support for the three potential initiatives.

## Retirees write NVE chairman

Local 1245 retirees at NV Energy have written a letter to NV Energy Chairman Phillip G. Satre, asking him to restore their health benefits. You'll find the letter on Page 17.

The focus groups will gauge the extent of voter anxiety about increasing rates, cuts in customer service and broken promises to both current employees and retirees. The in-depth focus groups will also seek to explore the reasons behind the strong support for these three potential initiatives.

To date the data indicate that Nevada voters are so concerned with the corporate misconduct of NV Energy that they will embrace an initiative solution that gives consumers more protection from rising rates and diminishing service.

## CalPeco talks

Local 1245 will begin negotiations with CalPeco on March 16-17.

This will be the first contract negotiated with the company since it took over NV Energy's California service territory, which is centered in the Tahoe area. Local 1245 members have been working under the terms of the existing agreement with NV Energy in the meantime.

Local 1245's North Lake Tahoe unit has been consolidated with the South Lake Tahoe unit and renamed the CalPeco unit. Meetings will be on the third Wednesday. See "Unit Changes" on Page 2 for additional information.



Rita Weisshaar

IBEW 1245 file photo

# Retiree v. Senator

Local 1245 Retiree Club officer Rita Weisshaar took advantage of a town hall meeting on Feb. 24 to ask U.S. Senator John Ensign a pointed question about NV Energy's treatment of its retirees.

My name is Rita Weisshaar; I am vice-president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1245 Retirees Club, the Reno/Sparks Chapter.

What are you doing to stop large corporations like NV Energy and their CEO Michael Yackira from preying on elderly retired senior citizens who have given their lives to better our state?

In October 2009 NV Energy decided to disregard 60 years of collective bargaining contracts and pass on 100% of all medical increases to the retired workers. This was an increase of almost \$150 to my medical premium this year from 2010. Other retirees saw larger increases.

When we retired our pensions were set with no cost of living increases. We retirees are worse off than the state workers in Wisconsin where Gov. Walker is trying to limit their collective bargain-

ing rights. We have no bargaining rights at all. These companies don't care how much they are hurting us and making us make some really hard choices when we have little resources left.

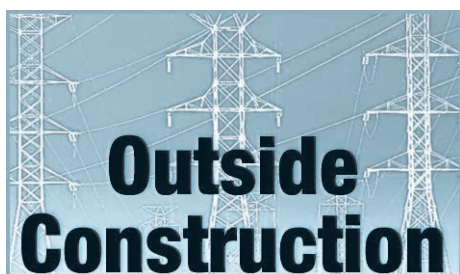
And there is no reason economically for NV Energy to do this. NV Energy is a highly profitable company with profits in 2009 of over \$180 million and recently announced a 2010 profit of \$227 million. And they paid CEO Michael Yackia \$4.5 million dollars in compensation.

It is clear to us that NV Energy by breaking their promises is using their retired workers to increase their profits. It's a prime example of pure corporate greed!

My question is: what are you doing to help and protect senior citizens who are at the mercy of companies like NV Energy who break their promises to their retired workers and leave them out in the cold?







## Outside Report

**W**e have had discussions with several of our contractors who are expecting work real soon and are claiming to be bidding several projects from transmission, substation and solar projects. We have seen some calls for the last couple of weeks, but we expect a much larger increase in the next month or two when these projects are awarded.

Cupertino was awarded the solar work in the Fresno area and is expected to start mobilizing the week of March 1 with a very aggressive time frame for completion.

There are several contractors that have been assisting PG&E on storm work. In addition to the crews who were already in the jurisdiction we have had crews from Washington and Oregon as well a Southern California brought into the area to assist. We have also dispatched about a dozen calls for storm work.

### Training Opportunities

OSHA 10 ET&D will be held several times at the union hall from 6 pm - 10 pm on Fridays and 8 am - 4:30 pm on Saturdays: April 8/9; July 8/9 and October 7/8.

Outside Line Shop Steward Training is scheduled for March 12 in Vacaville. This training will be limited to 40 members.

### Injured Worker Fund

As of Jan. 31, 2011 the balance of the fund is \$184,511. One benefit payment was paid out. The fund was audited and we are awaiting the results.



The Apprenticeship Graduation Dinner celebrated the achievement of the graduates.

We are currently working with Western Line to get notification out to several contractors who have not been deducting the \$.05 an hour from the employee's paychecks for this fund. It appears with some contractors the issue involves a signature from the employee to have the monies withheld from their pay. When a member takes a referral from 1245 it states on the referral slip that the employee signs that they are authorizing this deduction.

Hopefully we will have this issue resolved soon. We have already had two different situations where a member could have benefited from the fund, but the contractor was not withholding the funds as required by the trust document, making these employees ineligible.

### Upcoming Events

- 1st Annual Soccer Tournament – May 21, Livermore
- Annual Golf Tournament – June 18, Vacaville
- 1st Annual Clay Shoots – Nov. 12, Dunnigan

### Apprentice Report

Currently we have 249 apprentices registered in the California – Nevada Outside Line program and 15 utility employees from various area.

In 2010, we indentured 91 new apprentices. We have indentured 12 new apprentices so far this year. In addition, we graduated a total of 62 apprentices to Journeyman Lineman status in

2010. As of this report we have graduated a total of 5 apprentices for 2011. We had a total of 16 utility apprentices complete the curriculum in 2010/2011.

We have 21 apprentices registered in the Traffic Signal program with many expected to complete in the near future. Difficulties with the California State Electricians test have stalled the completion rate. The reason is the state requires 8,000 for a Journeyman Electricians and the Traffic program is a specialized 6,000 course.

The JATC is working to start a Substation Technician Certification program. The curriculum for the first and second year is complete and the committee is working on the third year. There will be a test developed for Journeymen Linemen and Wiremen to

challenge if they wish to hold the Substation Technician Certification.

We held our annual Graduation Dinner in Ontario, California on Feb. 26. It was a good event and International Vice President Mike Mowery was the guest speaker.

*Information for this report was supplied by Ralph Armstrong, Liz McInnis, and Ron Cochran.*

**Get the latest news at**

**[www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)**

## Apprentice ride-along

By Ron Cochran

**I**BEW Local 1245 is starting a new mentoring program for Outside Construction members who are interested.

The goal of this program is to expose the Outside Line apprentices to what goes on inside and outside of the union. There is a lot of work on the front-end of line and substation projects. In some cases it can involve lobbying as far away as Washington, D.C., and politicking with the utilities involved. Often there is a struggle over jurisdictional issues with the local Building Trades unions. There is a large investment in time to turn these projects into jobs for Local 1245 members.

On Jan. 18 we took our first apprentice lineman, Brian Brown for a ride-along day from California to the Reno, NV area. He sat in on a pre-job meeting for the SWIP project. Brian has been a member since 1995. He worked for Davey Tree for 14 years before becoming

an outside line apprentice.

Brian and I were in Nevada before the meeting and had breakfast with retired Journeyman Bob Cross. Bob started in the trade in 1951 in Michigan, working his way across America. He worked on lines in Nevada that were associated with the mining industry and in 1961 moved his ticket to 1245, where he has been a member ever since. Bob and Brian talked and shared information about the trade.

Before we left on our 200-mile trip back to Northern California, Brian was able to meet several NV Energy linemen, and some that had gone through California-Nevada JATC. Brian was also able to have some one-on-one time with Business Manager, Tom Dalzell and Organizer Fred Ross; both were in Nevada on other NV Energy business.

It was a very positive experience for all. We hope to continue the ride-alongs when the line apprentices are in-between job assignments.

Ron Cochran, Bob Cross, and Brian Brown



## Helicopter crash injures traveler

**D**eborah Kelly, an IBEW lineman based at Local 1547 in Anchorage, Alaska, was injured in a helicopter crash while working as a traveler in Local 1245's jurisdiction in the Sacramento area on February 4.

Her injuries were serious but not life-threatening.

Sister Kelly was working from the skid of the helicopter in a job for Wilson Construction at the time of the accident. The line construction job is a joint project by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District and the Western Area Power Administration.

Kelly gained national prominence in 2009 when she testified on behalf of IBEW at Congressional hearings on the Employee Free Choice Act.

In her remarks to Congress, Sister Kelly said:

"Thanks to my union I have a solid career with a future. I know I can work hard, earn a decent paycheck and I don't have to worry about an unexpected illness leaving me destitute. I know I will always receive equal pay and equitable treatment from my employers."

The accident is under investigation.

We wish Sister Kelly a speedy recovery.



Deborah Kelly



Tools for a successful grievance

# Getting PAID

In an ideal world, when employers do something wrong they would just come out and admit it and make things right.

But we don't live in an ideal world. When union stewards see or hear about bad behavior by employers, it's not always easy to know where to start. This can be especially true when dealing with line clearance tree trimming contractors, where the work is spread out and supervisors sometimes take an "out of sight, out of mind" view of the union contract.

In January, instructors from the National Labor College came to Weakley Hall in Vacaville with good news: you can improve your chances of winning if you are methodical in your approach.

Nearly 20 stewards, mostly tree trimmers and a few from Outside Line, spent Jan. 24 and 25 with instructors Morty Simon and Carol Oppenheimer learning what that method is.

## Getting PAID

"It's a very systematic approach," said Local 1245 Business Rep. Carl Lamers, who attended along with some of the stewards he represents. "They call it 'Getting PAID.'"

It's an especially appropriate acronym, Lamers pointed out, considering that problems with pay in the tree trimming industry are "constant and on-going."

The "P" in PAID stands for Problem. What happened? Who's been harmed and how? Who's responsible for the harm?

"A" is for Agreement. Do any sections of your labor agreement apply to the problem you've identified? For example,



Business Rep. Junior Ornelas (top, left) and Asplundh steward Roberto Hernandez take the hot seat as members dissect a grievance investigation. At right is instructor Carol Oppenheimer of the National Labor College.

El Representante de Negocios Junior Ornelas (izquierda) y el delegado de Asplundh Roberto Hernandez tratan asuntos candentes mientras los miembros analizan una investigación de quejas. A la derecha está el instructor Carol Oppenheimer del National Labor College.

are wages involved? How about safety, or discipline or work rules? Finding relevant language in the agreement puts you on firmer footing going forward.

"I" is for Investigation. How many people have been harmed? What do they want as a remedy? Has this problem arisen in the past? Are there any government agencies, or allies in the community, who might take an interest in your issue?

"D" is for the all-important Documentation. A successful grievance requires more than just your say-so about what happened. Take notes when witnesses are telling you what they know, or use a recorder if the witness is willing to be recorded. Can you take photos or shoot video of some location that would reveal more about the problem? Would it be helpful to draw a map of the area where the problem occurred?

## Trying It Out

But the instructors did more than just explain the method. They gave the stewards a chance to try it out.

"Everybody had to submit a problem

they had recently dealt with," said Lamers. "We had a list of 15 different situations that were real, and we voted on which one to work on." They chose a demotion case that is currently in the grievance procedure at one of the tree contractors. Breaking into groups, the stewards began applying the principles they had just learned to this case.

"It was definitely helpful," said Junior Ornelas, the business representative who is overseeing that grievance.

"As we got more into it we began to see that the company's case is flawed. The stewards at the conference brought up a lot more questions about the company's action, which involved the demotion of a senior employee. We began to identify major weaknesses in the company's case," Ornelas said.

These sorts of interactive exercises are used with increasing frequency at Local 1245-sponsored events, an important supplement to the usual speechifying. Experience shows that even the most interesting speaker begins to sound like a lullaby shortly after lunch.

"The stewards loved it. They thought it was very informative, they enjoyed the chance to participate," said Lamers.

The two-day conference was another in a series of recent events that seem to signal there is a change in the air: members are beginning to take greater ownership of their union.

After the first day of training, some of the stewards were joined at dinner by young union members who'd partici-

pated in a Leadership Training earlier that day in Berkeley.

"We had tree trimmers, NV Energy clerical members and gas workers, and Outside Line members," said Senior Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran. "It was very impressive to have 15 members and instructors eating together and sharing thoughts."

*"As we got more into it we began to see that the company's case is flawed...[The stewards] began to identify major weaknesses in the company's case."*

Junior Ornelas, Business Representative

Similar steward training events are also in the works for stewards at PG&E, the public sector, and Outside Construction, as well as for Tree Trimmer stewards who were unable to attend the January training.

*How many people have been harmed? What do they want as a remedy? Has this problem arisen in the past? Are there any government agencies, or allies in the community, who might take an interest in your issue?*



From left: Zoe Thompson (Outside Line), Jesse Godinez, (Davey Tree) and Benjamin Contreras (Trees Inc.) find that the serious business of defending the contract has its lighter moments.

De izquierda a derecha: Zoe Thompson (Outside Line), Jesse Godinez, (Davey Tree) y Benjamin Contreras (Trees Inc.) descubren que algo serio como defender el contrato también tiene momentos de distensión.

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Attendees:</b>  | Nathan "Cory" Higgins |
| Benjamin Contreras | Paul Dycus            |
| Brian S. Clarke    | Pete Ely              |
| Doug Dycus         | Roberto Hernandez     |
| James Hanlon       | Sergio Munoz          |
| James Lewis        | Steve Peeples         |
| Jesse Godinez      | Zoe Thompson          |
| Jim Lewis          |                       |
| Jose I. Morales    | <b>Staff:</b>         |
| Juan Cruz          | Carl Lamers           |
| Juan Espinoza      | Junior Ornelas        |
| Juan Cruz          | Liz McInnis           |
| Michael Williamson |                       |



Nathan Cory Higgins (Davey Tree), right, listens to Carol Oppenheimer. That's Sergio Munoz (Asplundh Tree) with his back to the camera.

Nathan Cory Higgins (Davey Tree), a la derecha, escucha a Carol Oppenheimer. Sergio Munoz (Asplundh Tree) está de espaldas a la cámara.





Listening, discussion, participation: all were a part of the January 24-25 Grievance Handling workshop.

Escuchar, discutir, participar: todo esto formó parte del taller de Manejo de Quejas el 24 y 25 de enero.



## Herramientas para un proceso de quejas exitoso Delegados de Limpieza de Líneas y Poda de Árboles

# Cómo lograr PAID

En un mundo ideal, cuando los empleadores hacen algo mal, simplemente lo admitirían y corregirían su error.

Pero no vivimos en un mundo ideal. Cuando los delegados del sindicato escuchan u observan un comportamiento incorrecto por parte de los empleadores, no siempre es fácil saber por dónde comenzar. Esto puede ser particularmente cierto cuando se trata de contratistas de despeje de líneas y poda de árboles, pues el trabajo está disperso y los supervisores a veces tienen una actitud de “ojos que no ven, corazón que no siente” en lo que se refiere al contrato del sindicato.

En enero, un grupo de instructores del National Labor College se presentó en Weakley Hall en Vacaville con buenas noticias: usted puede aumentar sus probabilidades de ganar si utiliza un enfoque metódico.

Casi 20 delegados, la mayoría de ellos podadores de árboles y algunos de Outside Line, estuvieron el 24 y 25 de enero con los instructores Morty Simon y Carol Oppenheimer aprendiendo sobre dicho método.

### Cómo lograr “PAID”

“Es un enfoque muy sistemático,” comentó Carl Lamers, Representante de Negocios del Local 1245, quien asistió junto con algunos de los delegados que él representa. “Se llama ‘Lograr PAID’.”

Es un acrónimo muy apropiado, (ya

que PAID en inglés significa “obtener un pago”), señaló Lamers, si se toma en consideración que los problemas de pagos en la industria de la poda de árboles son “constantes y continuos”.

La “P” de PAID significa Problema. ¿Qué sucedió? ¿Quién sufrió daños y cuáles son? ¿Quién es responsable por el daño?

La “A” corresponde a Acuerdo o Contrato. ¿Algunas de las secciones de su contrato de trabajo aplican al problema que usted ha identificado? Por ejemplo, ¿se refiere a salarios? ¿O se refiere a seguridad, disciplina o normas de trabajo? Encontrar las frases relevantes en el contrato le da una base más sólida a futuro.

La “I” es de Investigación. ¿Cuántas personas sufrieron daños? ¿Qué remedio o solución están solicitando? ¿Ha sucedido este problema anteriormente? ¿Existe alguna agencia gubernamental, o aliados en la comunidad a quienes les puede interesar conocer su problema?

La “D” se refiere a la muy importante Documentación. Un procedimiento de quejas exitoso requiere más que solamente su palabra sobre lo que sucedió. Tome notas cuando los testigos le expliquen lo que saben, o utilice una grabadora si el(la) testigo está de acuerdo en ser grabado(a). ¿Puede tomar fotos o grabar un video del sitio que sea útil para obtener más información sobre el problema? ¿Sería de alguna ayuda dibujar un mapa del área

donde sucedió el problema?

### La Prueba

Pero además, los instructores fueron más allá de simplemente explicar la metodología. Les dieron a los delegados la oportunidad de ponerla a prueba.

“Cada uno tuvo que presentar un problema que habían tenido que manejar recientemente,” comentó Lamers. “Teníamos una lista de 15 situaciones distintas, y sometimos a votación cuál situación usar como ejemplo.” Ellos seleccionaron un caso de democión que actualmente está en el proceso de quejas de uno de los contratistas de árboles. Se separaron en grupos y los delegados comenzaron a aplicar a este caso los principios recientemente aprendidos.

“Definitivamente fue una gran ayuda,” dijo Junior Ornelas, el representante de negocios que está super-visorando esa queja.

“A medida que profundizamos más en la queja comenzamos a ver que los argumentos de la compañía eran débiles. Surgieron más preguntas por parte de los delegados presentes en la conferencia sobre la actuación de la compañía en referencia a la democión de un empleado con antigüedad. Comenzamos a identificar las principales fallas en los argumentos de la compañía,” comentó Ornelas.

Cada vez con mayor frecuencia usamos este tipo de ejercicios interactivos en los eventos patrocinados por el Local 1245, y son un complemento

importante a los discursos de siempre. La experiencia nos ha demostrado que aún los presentadores más interesantes empiezan a sonar monótonos inmediatamente después del almuerzo.

“Los delegados estuvieron encantados. Consideraron que era muy informativo, y disfrutaron de la oportunidad de participar,” comentó Lamers.

*“A medida que profundizamos más en la queja comenzamos a ver que los argumentos de la compañía eran débiles...[Los delegados] comenzaron a identificar las principales fallas en los argumentos de la compañía.”*

Junior Ornelas, Business Representative

Esta conferencia de dos días fue otra oportunidad entre los eventos recientes que parecen indicar un cambio en el ambiente: los miembros están comenzando a asumir más responsabilidades en su sindicato.

Después del primer día de entrenamiento, unos jóvenes miembros del sindicato que habían participado más temprano ese mismo día en una conferencia de Entrenamiento de Liderazgo en Berkeley, se unieron a algunos de los delegados para cenar.

“Había podadores de árboles, personal administrativo y trabajadores de gas de NV Energy, y miembros de Outside Line,” dijo Ron Cochran, Gerente Asistente de Negocios Senior. “Fue muy impresionante tener a 15 miembros e instructores cenando juntos y compartiendo ideas.”

Se están planificando eventos similares de entrenamiento de delegados en PG&E, el sector público, y Outside Construction, al igual que para aquellos delegados de Poda de Árboles que no pudieron asistir al entrenamiento de enero.

*¿Cuántas personas sufrieron daños? ¿Qué remedio o solución están solicitando? ¿Ha sucedido este problema anteriormente? ¿Existe alguna agencia gubernamental o aliados en la comunidad a quienes les puede interesar conocer su problema?*



Business Rep. Carl Lamers, foreground, asks a question.

El Representante de Negocios Carl Lamers, en primer plano, hace una pregunta.

Utility Reporter

#### Asistentes:

Benjamin Contreras  
Brian S. Clarke  
Doug Dycus  
James Hanlon  
James Lewis  
Jesse Godinez  
Jim Lewis  
Jose I. Morales  
Juan Cruz  
Juan Espinoza  
Juan Cruz  
Michael Williamson

Nathan “Cory” Higgins  
Paul Dycus  
Pete Ely  
Roberto Hernandez  
Sergio Munoz  
Steve Peebles  
Zoe Thompson

#### Personal:

Carl Lamers  
Junior Ornelas  
Liz McInnis



Members from the Leadership Training conference in Berkeley and the Grievance Handling workshop in Vacaville shared experiences over dinner.

Miembros de la conferencia de Entrenamiento de Liderazgo en Berkeley y del taller de Manejo de Quejas en Vacaville compartieron sus experiencias durante una cena.



## Tree Trimmer Report

# Gold Cup Soccer Tournament

We are getting a great deal of interest in the IBEW 1245 First Annual Gold Cup Soccer Tournament. The tournament will take place in Livermore on May 21, 2011 and will include a family picnic.

The tournament will be held at Independence Park off of Highways 680 & 84. This is an 8-team tournament. The number of players per team is 14 maximum. Team captains must take charge and form their team. The first eight teams to complete their roster list with contact information will be guaranteed placement in the tournament.

Bring your family, hang with your friends, go!

We are still gathering cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses from members in line clearance tree trimming. We are already at 70%, but we need members' assistance to complete this task. Many members have dropped their home phones and we have no way to communicate with them.

Remember: communication is the key to building strength. We have negotiations at the end of this year! We plan on launching a Facebook page for our tree trimming and vegetation control members.

## NORTHERN AREA

### Davey Tree Surgery

Davey Tree has a "Critical Violation" policy in place. This policy has enhanced discipline for violations. A first offense results in a two-day suspension and a second offense results in termination.

We have agreed that safety should have the highest priority but disagree with the accelerated discipline. Originally the company forwarded a list of "Critical Violations" to the union. Recently the company has added to the list but failed to inform the union, and more importantly, has not adequately notified the employees.

In late February a 70-foot aerial lift truck near Forestville tipped over with a man in the basket. The individual was hospitalized with several broken ribs, bruised lung and a concussion.

Investigation of the accident continues but it seems that the outrigger sank into the ground causing the truck to topple.

### Trees Inc.

Seasonal hiring for the spring has begun in the Vegetation Control Department. Most of these folks will work until October and many will be returning from last year's layoff.

## SOUTHERN AREA

### Asplundh Tree Expert

In the Yosemite Division we have had an abundance of emergency work due to the recent snow activity in the moun-

tainous areas. Crews have been doing storm work in Sonora, Mariposa and Oakhurst. All the San Joaquin crews have been called up for action.

### Davey Tree Surgery

The next OSHA hearing regarding the 2008 Lucas fatality will be in Oakland on May 10. All witnesses are being required to testify.

### Mountain Enterprises

Crews were called up from Placerville to work the storms in Yosemite Division in Sonora alongside the Asplundh Tree crews at the same PG&E service center.

Local 1245 is encountering problems with progressions in pay with the company. We are also being told employees are having problems with their medical coverage for their families. The union has been informing the employees that communication is the key in getting proper representation. We need phone calls from these members when they have any issues or concerns.

We now plan on holding a labor-management meeting with the company after the storm work in March to discuss all open matters.

### Trees Inc.

Due to the recent storm work in Yosemite crews have been getting into the action in Jackson, Angels Camp, and Oakhurst.

The medical contribution is causing heartache with the membership. Many members are having problems with the medical due to the PPO coverage. The majority of the membership had been accustomed to the HMO type coverage like Kaiser.

### Windy Tree

Windy Tree crews got into action in Sonora due to the snow storms. This was the first time Windy had been called for storm work. This is Asplundh Territory in Yosemite Division. The company has still been working reliability work for PG&E in the system.

There is strong interest here in the upcoming soccer tournament.

*Junior Ornelas, Carl Lamers and Ron Cochran contributed to this report.*

## Informe de los Podadores de Árboles

# Torneo de Fútbol "Gold Cup"

Hemos recibido muchas muestras de interés para el Primer Torneo de Fútbol "Gold Cup" del IBEW 1245. El torneo tendrá lugar en Livermore el 21 de mayo de 2011 e incluirá un picnic familiar.

El torneo se llevará a cabo en Independence Park, a la salida de las carreteras 680 y 84. Éste es un torneo donde participarán 8 equipos. El número máximo de jugadores por equipo es 14. Los capitanes de los equipos son responsables de formar su propio equipo. Los primeros ocho equipos que completen su plantilla de jugadores, incluyendo la información de contacto, tendrán garantizados un lugar en el torneo.

¡Traiga a su familia, venga con sus amigos, participe!

Continuamos recaudando información de números de teléfonos móviles y direcciones de correo electrónico (e-mail) de los miembros del despeje de líneas y poda de árboles. Ya alcanzamos el 70% pero necesitamos la ayuda de los miembros para completar esta tarea. Muchos miembros han cancelado las líneas telefónicas de sus hogares y no tenemos forma de comunicarnos con ellos.

Recuerden: la comunicación es la clave para fortalecerlos. ¡Tendremos negociaciones a finales de este año! Está planeado lanzar una página en Facebook para nuestros miembros de poda de árboles y control de vegetación.

## ÁREA NORTE

### Davey Tree Surgery

Davey Tree tiene en vigencia una norma de "Infracción Crítica". Esta norma ha resultado en un incremento en las sanciones por infracciones. La primera infracción resulta en una suspensión de dos días y una segunda infracción resulta en despido.

Estamos de acuerdo en que la seguri-

dad debe tener la más alta prioridad, pero no estamos de acuerdo en que se hayan acelerado las sanciones. Originalmente la compañía enviaba al sindicato la lista de "Infracciones Críticas". Recientemente la compañía ha agregado infracciones a la lista pero no ha mantenido informado al sindicato sobre esto, y más importante aún, no ha notificado de manera apropiada a los empleados.

A fines de febrero, un camión canasta de 70 pies cerca de Forestville se volcó con un hombre en la canasta. La persona fue hospitalizada con varias costillas fracturadas, un pulmón lesionado y una contusión.

La investigación del accidente continúa pero al parecer el estabilizador se hundió en la tierra, ocasionando el volcamiento del camión.

### Trees Inc.

Comenzó la contratación de personal para la primavera en el Departamento de Control de Vegetación. La mayoría de estas personas trabajarán hasta octubre y muchos estarán regresando después de la reducción de personal del año pasado.

## ÁREA SUR

### Asplundh Tree Expert

En la División de Yosemite hemos tenido abundante trabajo de emergencia debido a las recientes nevadas en las áreas montañosas. Las cuadrillas han estado ejecutando trabajos por las tormentas en Sonora, Mariposa y Oakhurst. Todas las cuadrillas de San Joaquin han sido llamadas a trabajar.

### Davey Tree Surgery

La próxima audiencia de OSHA en referencia al deceso de Lucas en 2008 se llevará a cabo en Oakland el 10 de mayo. Se ha exigido a todos los testigos que presenten su testimonio.

## Mountain Enterprises

Las cuadrillas fueron llamadas desde Placerville para trabajar durante las tormentas en la División de Yosemite en Sonora junto con las cuadrillas de Asplundh Tree ubicadas en el mismo centro de servicios de PG&E.

El Local 1245 ha encontrado problemas con los pagos por promociones dentro de la compañía. También se nos ha informado que los empleados tienen problemas con la cobertura médica para sus familias. El sindicato ha estado informando a los empleados que la comunicación es la clave para obtener una representación adecuada. Necesitamos que estos miembros nos llamen por teléfono cuando tengan algún problema o inquietud.

Actualmente estamos planeando una reunión sindicato-gerencia en marzo, después del trabajo por las tormentas, para discutir todos los asuntos pendientes.

### Trees Inc.

Debido al reciente trabajo por las tormentas en Yosemite, las cuadrillas han estado participando en actividades en Jackson, Angels Camp y Oakhurst.

La contribución médica está ocasionando problemas entre los miembros. Muchos miembros tienen problemas con los gastos médicos debido a la cobertura PPO. La mayoría de los miembros estaban acostumbrados a la cobertura tipo HMO como Kaiser.

### Windy Tree

Las cuadrillas de Windy Tree estuvieron trabajando en Sonora debido a las tormentas de nieve. Ésta fue la primera vez que se solicitó a Windy que participara en trabajos por tormentas. Éste es territorio de Asplundh en la División de Yosemite. La compañía continúa trabajando en trabajos de confiabilidad para PG&E en el sistema.

Aquí existe un gran interés por el próximo torneo de fútbol.

*Junior Ornelas, Carl Lamers y Ron Cochran contribuyeron a preparar este informe.*



# USA's 1st Annual Northern California Sporting Clays Shoot



**Saturday  
November 12, 2011  
Dunnigan, California**

California's IBEW Locals 1245 and 180 would like to invite you to enjoy a day packed with fun and brotherhood. Our goal is to fill this event with our IBEW brothers and sisters from across the region. Arrangements have been made with the event facility for overnight camper/trailer parking and there are plenty of local hotels to choose from, so come out and treat yourself to a weekend getaway with the USA!



## **You're Cordially Invited**

**to participate in this special event as a sponsor, as an individual shooter, or by sponsoring a group of four from your organization.**

Awards will be given for the highest scoring teams (organizations) and top individual shooters. *First time shooters are welcome and encouraged to participate.*

All proceeds from this event support the USA and national & local conservation efforts.

**WHEN: SATURDAY, November 12, 2011**

Registration- 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. (donuts & coffee provided)  
Shotgun start- 9:30 a.m.

**WHERE: Raahauge's Pheasant Chukar & Sporting Clays  
25835 County Road 8  
Dunnigan, California 95937 • 530-724-0552**

**DETAILS:** Cold beverages and a buffet-style lunch for every attendee along with awards and drawings for guns and gear.

## **NATIONAL PARTNERS**



**Download the registration form at:**

**[www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Clay\\_Shoot\\_Registration.pdf](http://www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Clay_Shoot_Registration.pdf)**

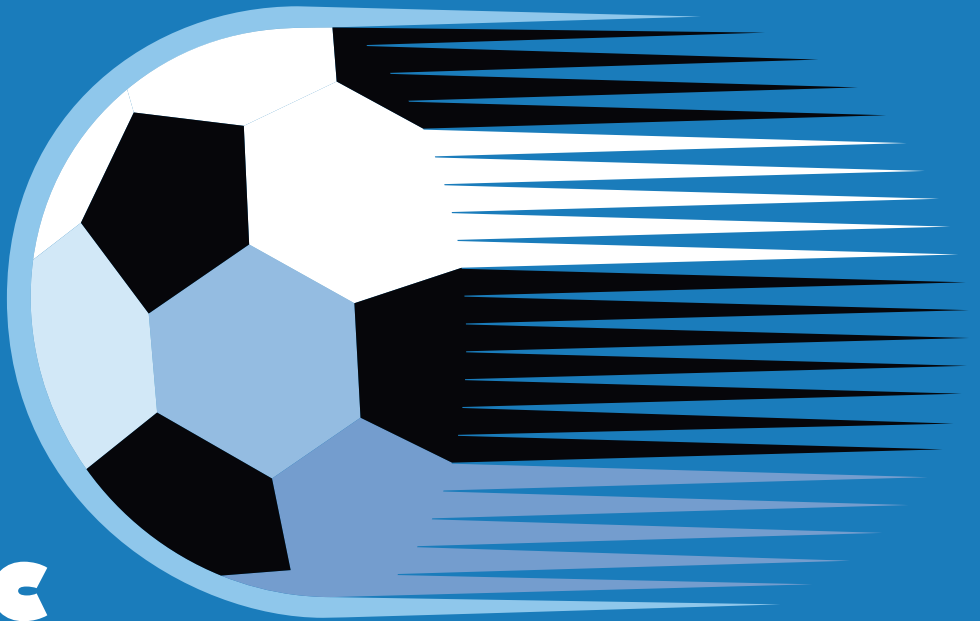


**Contact Nate Whiteman at [NateW@unionsportsmen.org](mailto:NateW@unionsportsmen.org) or Heather Tazelaar at (877) 872-2211 for more information.**



**IBEW 1245  
LINE CLEARANCE  
TREE TRIMMERS**

**GOLD CUP  
SOCCER  
TOURNAMENT  
& FAMILY PICNIC**



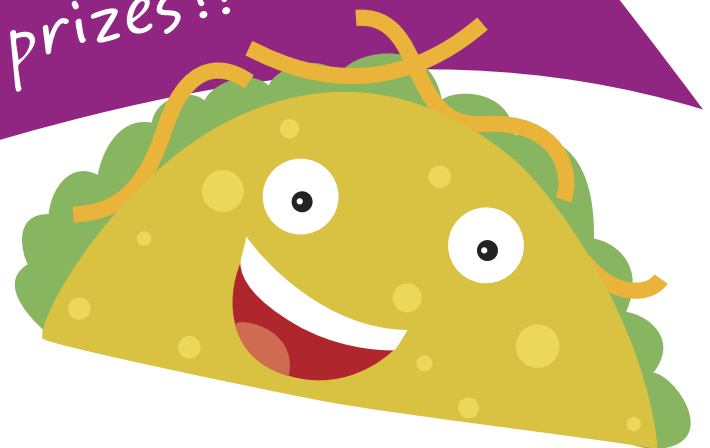
**SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2011**

8:30 – 9:30 AM registration, coffee and rolls;  
10:00 AM games begin; 3:45 PM presentation of awards

**INDEPENDENCE PARK**

**2798 HOLMES STREET  
LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA 94550**

Bring the whole family for a day of soccer, games,  
A TACO TRUCK, beverages and prizes!!



**Pre-Register with Junior or Carl by March 18th.**

**For more information contact:**

**Junior Ornelas: 707-372-4305, JXOG@IBEW1245.COM**

**Carl Lamers: 707-357-0175, HCL2@IBEW1245.COM**

**Sponsored by: IBEW 1245**



**IBEW 1245  
PODADORES DE  
ARBOLES PARA  
DESPEJE DE LINEAS**

**PRIMERA  
COPA DE ORO  
de FUTBOL  
& PICNIC FAMILIAR**



**SABADO, 21 DE MAYO, 2011**

8:30 – 9:30 AM registracion, café y pan dulce;  
10:00 AM inicio de los juegos; 3:45 PM presentacion de premios

**INDEPENDENCE PARK**

**2798 HOLMES STREET  
LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA 94550**



*Traiga toda la familia para un dia de futbol, juegos,  
premios, tacos, comida y bebidas!*



**Pre-registrar con Junior o Carl antes del 18 de Marzo.**

Para mas informacion contacte a:

**Junior Ornelas: 707-372-4305, JXOG@IBEW1245.COM**

**Carl Lamers: 707-357-0175, HCL2@IBEW1245.COM**

**Patrocinado por: IBEW 1245**



# CSI: the IBEW way

Defending members in the cyber era

Local 1245 Librarian Lita Clark, front left, worked for nearly a year-and-a-half scanning documents for the new electronic Contract Section Index. Also working on the project were Jennifer Edwards, front right, and (back row, from left) Primrose Librado, Ron Cochran, Leslie Asher and Elizabeth McInnis.

Photo by Scott Kollman



## Contract Section Index

### The PG&E Contract Section Index is now on-line.

- Every document can be called up with a tap of the mouse
- More than 8,000 decisions at your fingertips—available instantly
- Includes all Pre-Review Committee, Review Committee, Arbitration Decisions
- Includes all Letter Agreements

### Multiple ways to find what you need.

- Search the CSI by contract section
- Search the CSI with Google search tool
- Search alphabetical list of all documents

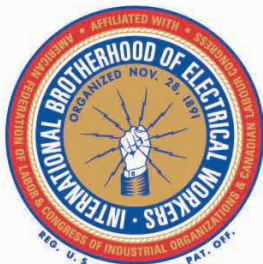
### Put relevant documents to immediate use.

- Read them on-line
- Print them out for your LIC meeting

### Strengthen your hand in defending workplace rights.

- Use the Power of Precedent to enforce the contract
- Fight unfair discipline
- Decisions based on the contract, not supervisor's whim
- Fulfill the union's mission: empowering workers

[www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com)



**IBEW Local 1245:**  
Bringing You the Power of Knowledge

By Eric Wolfe

## CSI.

To most people CSI conjures up images of the popular TV crime drama where methodical Las Vegas investigators use physical evidence to solve grisly murders.

Here at Local 1245, CSI means Contract Section Index rather than Crime Scene Investigation. But sometimes it feels like the same thing. Union stewards are the investigators, and they use all the clues they can find to track down violations of the union contract, then use the grievance procedure to see that justice is done.

One of the chief arguments stewards have in defending the rights of union members is this: "The company tried that before, but we won a grievance over it."

That's called a "precedent." Finding a good precedent is the union steward's holy grail.

But when the company is PG&E, stewards face a big problem. Sixty years of negotiations, grievances and arbitrations have produced a mountain of official documents related to the union contract. To be exact: 8,463. And more are being produced every month. How on earth do you find the handful of documents that might help you defend a member?

With the unveiling of our new electronic Contract Section Index, the process has just gotten a lot easier, as I'll explain in a minute. But first, let's look at how things worked up until now.

The place you start your research is a big thick binder, the hard-copy version of the CSI. Maintained by Local 1245 Librarian Lita Clark, the CSI describes every document that relates to the contract, broken down by section.

So you have a beef about eligibility for a leave of absence? The CSI lists 16 Letter Agreements, Review Committee



decisions and other documents—from 1971 to 2006—that clarify a member's eligibility for leave of absence, along with a one-sentence description of each.

Unfortunately, your work is just beginning. First you try to figure out which of those 16 documents will actually help you. Then you have to actually get your hands on the documents. That means you have to physically get your butt out to the union hall in Vacaville (not so easy if you are a steward in, say, Bakersfield, or Eureka), pick your way through way more than a dozen file cabinets full of documents, and make copies of what you need.

Or it means that Lita has to photocopy the documents you want and mail or fax them to you. If you're dealing with Arbitrations, or Letter Agreements on job definitions, which can run to 50 pages or more, it can rapidly turn into a nightmare for everybody involved.

Even for stewards who like nothing better than to go toe-to-toe with management over a missed meal payment or unjustified discipline, getting hold of the documents you need can be a demoralizing experience.

But no more. On February 17, 2011 the union rolled out its new electronic Contract Section Index. Brothers and sisters, those 8,463 documents are now at your fingertips.

## WALKING DOCUMENTS

You could say that the whole project got started because Lita Clark got tired of original documents "walking" out of the union's library.

"The Pre-Review Committee, Arbitration and Review Committee cases are all originals in the library," she said. "Sometimes those originals would disappear when people were doing research."

Making duplicates of 8,000+ documents would require a platoon of new filing cabinets. There'd be no place left for members to sit down and study all the materials the library has to offer and sneak candies from Lita's well-stocked candy jar.

The solution, Lita realized, was to make electronic copies of the files. When people needed documents, she could just e-mail them electronic versions rather than spending time at the copy machine and mail room. Lita began her massive scanning project in October 2009.

About this same time I was in the middle of redesigning the Local 1245 website. We already had the Contract Section Index on-line, so you could see a line-item list of documents that might be helpful to you but there was no way to get that on-line CSI to cough up the documents themselves.

The next step was obvious but it took me a while to see it. Since the documents were being scanned anyway, why not put them on-line? Then members and stewards could retrieve them as

needed. My plan was to equip our site with a Google search tool and then turn our members loose among our 8,000 documents and let them look for what they needed.

I incorporated this search function into the new website design unveiled in December 2009, along with about 4,000 or so documents that Lita had scanned so far.

Excited by my own brilliance, I shared this development with Leslie Asher, the union's Technology Director. Leslie is a man who chooses his words carefully. As I recall, he sat back in his chair, perhaps raising his eyebrows a little bit, and said: "Uh-huh."

Or maybe it was "Hmm."

It definitely wasn't: "Gee Eric, that's really brilliant."

Instead, he said:

"Perhaps it would make sense to link all those documents directly to the Contract Section Index." Or words to that effect. Followed by more eyebrow raising.

## POWERFUL TOOL

He was right, of course. The CSI already gives members a powerful tool for identifying documents relevant to their grievances. Rather than a hit-or-miss search with a Google tool, why not empower members to go directly from the CSI to the documents?

But easier said than done.

First of all, there's the scanning. Heading into 2010, fewer than half of the 8,463 documents had been scanned. Jamming was a big problem: Documents with staples. Documents with punch-holes. Documents with curled edges. In many cases, Lita had to photocopy the documents before they could be scanned.

Sometimes the scans came out blank, for no apparent reason and a whole document would have to be redone.

Privacy was also an issue. Some of the documents had grievants' names or, worse, their Social Security numbers. She used a black marker to cover up the private information (on the copy to be scanned.)

Meanwhile, there were other logistical issues to contend with. We needed to reduce the number of Microsoft Word tables contained in the existing CSI documents. The documents also needed to be converted into "htm" format to make them more widely accessible and easier to read on-line.

And the thousands of links between entries in the CSI and the actual contract documents? All of them had to be created manually.

Leslie and I thought we might do that ourselves in our "spare" time. The plan was perfect, except it would have taken us until about 2016 to finish.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran decided that was too long. Other Local 1245 staff were conscripted for the project. Office Associate Jennifer Edwards helped scan. Organizer Liz McInnis began the laborious process of get-

ting rid of those unwanted tables, and then handed over the task to temporary worker Primrose Librado, who also created the thousands of links needed to bring the CSI to life—one by one.

There was more to it, but you get the idea. Now that it's over, Lita has a justifiable sense of pride.

"I had fun doing it because I feel like I accomplished something. It's like you are really helping the union."

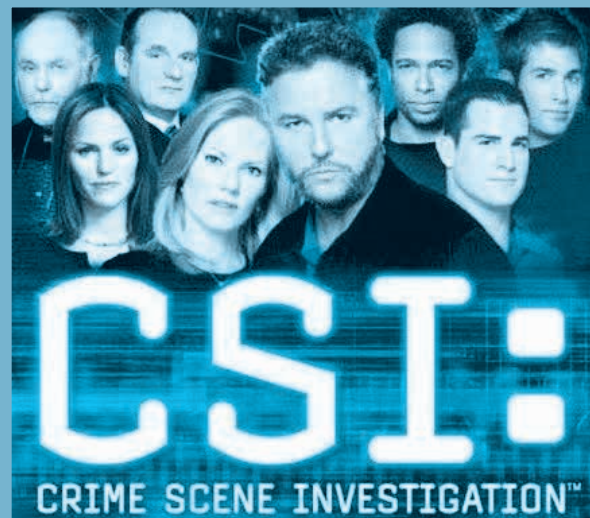
But her work's not done. Lita will continue logging and linking every new letter agreement, every new PRC, RC and arbitration decision, keeping the CSI up to date for Local 1245 stewards—and

for anyone else who wants to check out the legal scaffolding of our rights in the workplace.

Over the past year, I occasionally got e-mails from Local 1245 stewards, wondering where certain documents could be found on-line. I explained that everything was going to be on-line and that we were shooting for a 2011 launch date. The response was always some version of: "I'm looking forward to that."

You can stop looking. The electronic Contract Section Index is here. We hope it has been worth the wait.

*Eric Wolfe is Communications Director, IBEW 1245*



## True Crime

CSI. It's a crime drama. Malfeasance. Mayhem. Murder.

Then there's the Local 1245 version of CSI, which isn't about murder at all.

Except when it is.

Union founder Ron Weakley related this story to me in the fall of 2007, a few weeks before he died. It concerned the death benefit the union had just put in place for its members.

"I was quite proud of that, it was something people got from their dues. It will help solidify the members," Weakley said.

"I trumpeted that at a (unit) meeting once down south, I think in Fresno, and a guy got up and said, 'Big deal, you gotta die to get it.'"

The death benefit was a thousand dollars, payable of course to the survivor.

Weakley continued:

"Once we got a call from a woman in Salinas wanting a thousand dollar check. She said she was the wife of a (member) who just died."

Weakley told the woman that the union would need a death certificate.

"She said, 'I don't need any proof because I shot the guy last night.'"

It took Weakley a while to stop laughing so he could finish the story.

"She was calling from jail. And we paid her the benefit. I think they may have amended the plan later, but we had to pay her because she was the guy's wife and he was dead."

—Eric Wolfe



Ron Weakley



stepped up to take more responsibility by participating in bargaining committees, supporting labor allies in the 2010 general election, and laying the groundwork for Local 1245's Facebook page, which rocketed onto the Facebook scene in late February.

Many of them traveled last summer with Local 1245 Organizer Elizabeth McInnis to Washington DC for the AFL-CIO's groundbreaking "Next Up!" Conference, and then came home to organize their own Youth Engaged in Solidarity (YES) conference last September in Vacaville.

Like the young people who are now roiling the political waters in the Middle East, Local 1245's young organizers understand that true leadership isn't about giving orders and having people obey them. True leadership requires the imagination to see a better way and the courage to reach out to others and help them see it, too. Martin Luther King Jr. had no power to command, but he had a dream and inspired millions to action. He was just 34 years old when he gave his famous speech.

## PERSONAL STORIES

You don't have to be Martin Luther King to inspire people to share your vision of the future and move forward with you. Change doesn't begin with an historic leader; it begins with each of us.

"One way you inspire others is explaining to them why you're inspired," said Robert Reich, the former U.S. Secretary of Labor who joined the Local 1245 members in Berkeley to talk about change and how it is made. "There's no better way of communicating passion and commitment than your own story."

Reich is a widely-read blogger about economics, justice, power and change. He is also Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at U.C. Berkeley, and an occasional economics advisor to President Obama. ("I don't think he listens to me," Reich ruefully admits.)

Reich shared some of his own sources of inspiration with the Local 1245 mem-

bers. They include his childhood friend Michael Schwerner, the civil rights activist murdered by the Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi in 1963. And they include a student he mentored and befriended at Harvard who went on to win election to Congress. Her name is Gabby Gifford.

Important as personal stories are, it takes more than that to move people to action, Reich said.

"You inspire others because you give them a view of the big picture. You allow them to see why this is important not just to you, but why it's important for the future, for America."

## SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Reich's view of the big picture contained some sobering numbers about the growing power of the rich—and the economic decline of just about everyone else. (See box, "Stinking Rich"). But the Leadership Training was about more than just listening to Robert Reich.

Leadership is about finding ways for everyone to become involved. Each person at the training shared stories about the people who had inspired them growing up.

For Ryan Morris it was his father, a small business owner who worked 12-hour days but always found time to attend Ryan's sports activities. For Lloyd Cargo it was his grandfather, who taught him how to focus. For Trach Thanh it was his father, an immigrant from Vietnam who started at minimum wage but ended up putting three kids through college.

Sarah Stevenson credited her grandmother from Louisiana, who "turned all lemons into lemonade." Veronica Rivera said her immigrant parents "taught me if you fall down, get up and fight harder."

Peter Guimond said his pastor "taught me everything: honesty, integrity, accountability, trying hard."

Tim Crisman's grandfather passed down his work ethic. Denise Miller's parents "taught me to fight for what I believe in." Eddie Moreno's immigrant father worked in the fields and "fought for what was right."

## STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL

Leadership training isn't just a passing phase for the union, said Dalzell. It is a strategy for making sure the union survives to continue its mission to protect the rights of workers.

Dalzell praised young members who had already stepped forward to take leadership roles, like Aaron Baker, 31, who recently became the unit chair for the union at Turlock Irrigation District. Dalzell also acknowledged the young members who played inspirational roles in mobilizing for Clerical negotiations at PG&E last year, and the recent contract show-down in Nevada with NV Energy.

"This is what we're finding out," said Dalzell. "If you give people a chance to lead, they are going to rise to the occasion."

Although the focus is on youth, new leaders can arise from any age group.

The PG&E Clerical campaign gave rise to over a hundred worksite volunteers—some not as young as others. The NV Energy battle has supercharged a group of retirees who last saw age 60 or 70 disappearing in the rearview mirror. The effort to build leadership includes not just young unit leaders like Aaron Baker, but "old lions" like Rich Lane, 56, who helped organize the Turlock unit in the first place and recruited Baker to take his place as unit chair.

## "ENERGIZE AND EMPOWER"

Anthony Brown, a PG&E Gas Service Rep in Oakland, falls somewhere in the middle. He turned 40 the day before the Leadership Training. What's needed, he said, is to bring younger members on board, "energize them and empower them with leadership skills they can build on to lead the union into the future."

You don't have to be Martin Luther King Jr. to make change. You don't have to have an enemy as nasty as Libya's Muammar Gaddafi to make change. What you have to have is a willingness to sit down with another human being and talk about what's real.

And that's what happened next at the Local 1245 Leadership Training. The participants broke into groups of two for the simplest of tasks.

"We wanted to practice holding conversations," said Local 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell, who helped design the day's program. "People continued the discussion we had been having about workplace issues, the economic advantage that unions provide, and also some of the myths you hear about unions."

Unlike role-playing, which sometimes feels like "performing" in front of an audience, these informal conversations resemble the sort of one-on-one encounters that you find in almost every workplace every day.

## BASIC TOOLS

"Our goal is to give people some basic tools they can take right onto the job," said Fred Ross, Jr., a veteran organizer who has energized the union's

# Stinking Rich

**Source:** Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez, "Income Inequality in the United States, 1913-1998," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 118(1), 2003. Updated to 2007 at <http://emlab.berkeley.edu/users/saez>.

In America, the rich aren't simply getting richer. They're getting stinking rich.

They include overpaid CEOs who get big bonuses even when they drive their companies into the ground. They include Wall Street financiers who make fortunes playing with funny money but never create anything of value. They include corporations that offshore production and jobs and often find ways to avoid paying any taxes at all.

The result is a steady flow of money to the top, and a steady drain on middle class Americans. This chart shows the movement of money to the top over the years.

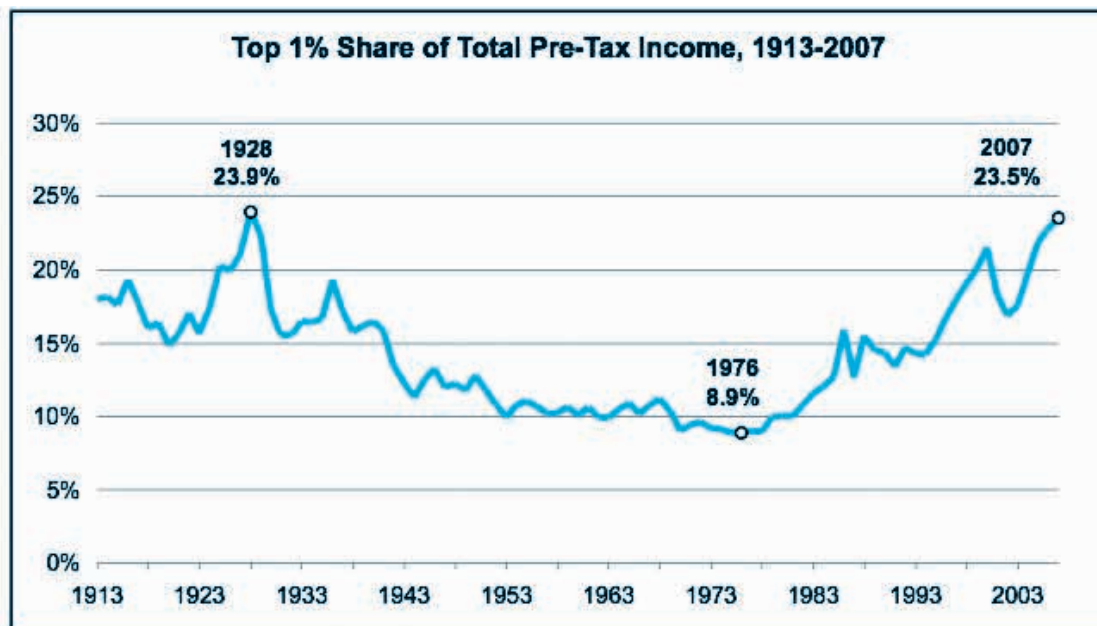
## Growth and the deficit

"Whenever anybody says to you, 'We have to worry about the national deficit,' I want you to remember what I am about to say. The deficit number means nothing," Robert Reich told Local 1245 members at the Leadership Conference.

The real issue in our current economic slump is getting people back to work. The annual federal deficits—and the accumulated national debt—will only get smaller when the economy begins to grow. If the national economy isn't growing, Reich says, then people won't be buying and the debt will keep going up.

And the only way to get the economy growing again is to get people back to work and get some money in their pocket.

"And the best way to put money in people's pockets," he says, "is to get more people unionized so they have more bargaining power."





organizing efforts since joining the Local 1245 staff in 2009. “Organizing isn’t some mysterious thing that can only be done by experts. It’s just people talking to each other about what they need and how to go about getting it.”

Ross handed out bi-lingual copies of “Axioms for Organizers,” a short publication written by his father, the noted labor organizer Fred Ross Sr., who in the 1960s helped mentor a young organizer named Cesar Chavez.

You can tell in a second that the axioms aren’t written for philosophy professors. They are nuggets of practical advice to workers who want to motivate other workers to make change happen. Some samples:

“The duty of the organizer is to pro-

vide people an opportunity to work for what they believe in.”

“To inspire hope you have to have hope yourself.”

And, “Don’t tell the people. Ask them.”

Creating real change is always a tall mountain. But the climb doesn’t seem nearly so steep after you’ve taken the first step. Union members of all ages understand it’s time for Local 1245 to get serious about the journey.

The union is scheduling additional leadership trainings at various locations over the next several months. Contact a Local 1245 organizer if you’d like to play a role in building the union of the future:

Fred Ross: fgr1@ibew1245.com

Eileen Purcell: emp3@ibew1245.com



Practicing one-on-one conversations about strengthening the union and making change in the workplace.

## The Four Impediments

If you inspire people, they can make change, says Robert Reich.

But people can find a lot of reasons to do nothing instead. There may be real barriers to change, but people carry around a lot of those barriers inside themselves. Reich calls this the “impediments” and says there are four big ones:

The first impediment is **denial**, denial that there is a problem. “People don’t want to see a lot of problems. You’ve got to explain them and they have to feel them,” Reich said.

The second impediment is **escapism**. People will say, “Yeah, there’s a problem but it’s not my problem.” Says Reich: “You have to help them see that it’s their problem, it’s their family’s problem, their friends’ problem, their children’s problem, their grandchildren’s problem.”

The third impediment is **scapegoating**, which Reich describes this way: “Oh yeah, I know it’s a problem. I certainly understand it’s my problem. But it’s because of them.” If you can find a convenient enemy to blame, you never have to look at any of the deeper reasons that things aren’t all they could be.

The fourth impediment is **cynicism**. Reich calls this the biggest obstacle to change. “People say, yes I know it’s a problem, I know it affects me, I know it’s not because of ‘them’, but nothing’s going to change. Nothing’s ever changed.”

Help people get over these impediments, Reich says, and you’ve laid the groundwork for inspiring people to change the world.

### Leadership Training Roster

Jammi Angeles  
Lorenzo Arciniega  
Aaron Baker  
Anthony Brown  
Lloyd Cargo  
David Carter  
Tim Crisman  
Michael Gomes  
Jennifer Gray  
Peter Guimond  
Francesca Kenney  
Denise Miller  
Edgar Moreno  
Ryan Morris  
Graciela Nunez  
Pat Patterson  
Tim Ramirez  
Veronica Rivera  
Jeff Simmons  
Sara Stevenson  
Trach Thanh

### Guests:

Richard & Jackie Lane  
Michael Farmer  
Robert Reich

### Staff:

Tom Dalzell  
Dorothy Fortier  
Sheila Lawton  
Fred Ross  
Eileen Purcell

*“One way you inspire others is explaining to them why you’re inspired. There’s no better way of communicating passion and commitment than your own story.”*

–Former U.S. Labor Secretary  
Robert Reich



Local 1245 members with Robert Reich at the Leadership Training.





## Retiree chapter launched in Yerington

Those Nevada retirees are at it again. Just a year and a half after launching a highly-successful Reno-Sparks Chapter of the IBEW Local 1245 Retiree Club, they are launching a new chapter in Yerington.

The group will meet at the Casino West, 11 Main Street, in Yerington. The start time will be 11:30 a.m.

Meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Tom Bird, who had been serving as vice president of the Reno-Sparks Chapter, has been elected president of the new chapter. Chuck Rader was

elected vice president and Alyce Reese will be secretary of the new unit.

"We officers are just shy of 90 accumulated years of service with Sierra Pacific Power Co., now known as NVEnergy," said Bird. "We will be working with IBEW Local 1245 and the IBEW International for recognition, and also applying for a charter with Nevada Alliance for Retired Americans, hopefully by the convention in Las Vegas in August."

Bird said the Yerington chapter will provide a closer and more convenient meeting place for IBEW retirees in Hawthorne, Tonopah, Austin, Fallon, Silver Springs, Dayton, and Smith Valley.

"Also, with the new Yerington chapter being the second IBEW 1245 Chapter in Northern Nevada, I hope it inspires other communities such as Carson City, Winnemucca, and Elko to start their own chapters as well," said Bird. "I can tell you after helping start two chapters I would be more than happy helping start two or three more!"

Bird said his travels on behalf of IBEW retirees over the past year and a half "has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, the smiles on the retirees faces has made it all worth while."

March 2, 2011

Phillip G. Satre  
Chairman of the Board  
NV Energy, Inc.

Dear Mr. Phillip G. Satre,

As lifelong workers for NV Energy, we dedicated ourselves to providing Nevada with safe and reliable power – regardless of whether it was dead of night or dead of winter.

We were the first-responders when hazardous weather threatened our community. It was a commitment we were honored to keep – even when decades of bone-chilling conditions caused painful injuries, chronic conditions and forced many of us into retirement.

But, after a lifetime of service, NV Energy is breaking its promise to us – over 600 of your retirees – by slashing our hard-earned health care when we need it most.

We did our part for NV Energy. We have even given up raises in exchange for promises of greater security when we retired. Now NV Energy is breaking those promises by telling us that slashing our health care is necessary – even after reporting over \$225 million in profits last year alone, collecting \$134 million in federal bailout money and paying CEO Michael Yackira over \$4.5 million in compensation. And now, we are being forced to pay up to 20% of our health care premiums – all on a fixed income.

As you know, NV Energy continues to refuse to reconsider its unilateral decision to slash our medical benefits and has refused to meet with our representatives for over eighteen months now. Right now, Wisconsin's working men and women are making headlines throughout the country as they fight to protect their right to collective bargaining. It is with their struggle in mind that we ask you, on behalf of your 600 retirees, to respect our right to collective bargaining by meeting with us to hear our grievances and to reinstate our health care.

We are proud to have dedicated our professional life and to have sacrificed our well being for our community and NV Energy. But, as we have helped the company enjoy healthy profits, pay stockholders a dividend and provide executive with generous compensation – we ask that you honor your commitment to retirees by reinstating the health care we both need and deserve.

We hope you will do the right thing.

Sincerely,

NV Energy Retirees

## Retiree Club Meeting Schedule

You can find the specific dates for each month at [http://www.ibew1245.com/unit\\_meetings.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/unit_meetings.html)

**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 every other 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, CA.

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

**Reno/Sparks Chapter:** 3rd Wednesday each month, 8:30 a.m., Denny's Restaurant, 205 E. Nugget Ave., Sparks, NV.

**Yerrington Chapter:** 4th Tuesday each month, 11:30 a.m., Casino West, 11 Main Street. Yerington, NV.



Garland C. Andoe.

*I am a 81 year old widow  
of a former long time  
P. & E. deceased employee,*

*On January, 2011, my widow's pension check  
dropped \$38.<sup>75</sup> due to a raise in my health insurance.*

*Then in February my check dropped another \$32.<sup>92</sup>  
due to a top raise. This means I now have a total  
of \$71.<sup>67</sup> drop in my income. Ouch!!! What next!!!*

*If you can check out my total amount that I have  
left to live on from my pension check, you will be able  
to see that this small check is rapidly decreasing!!!*

*Thank! For Reading This: sure wish that some-  
thing could be done...*

*Sincerely, Vida M. Andoe*

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

Michael Allen  
17 years  
Colorado Springs, CO

Louis Alves  
38 years  
Atascadero, CA

Judy Amaya  
23 years  
Vacaville, CA

Scott Anderson  
15 years  
Santa Paula, CA

Mark Belieu  
41 years  
Sebastopol, CA

Raleigh Braswell 39  
years  
Merced, CA

Jan Bullard  
23 years  
Pine Grove, CA

Miguel Cano  
30 years  
San Pablo, CA

Edward Carr  
40 years  
Discovery Bay, CA

Susan Chase  
39 years  
San Jose, CA

Robert Clary  
35 years  
Stockton, CA

Patrick Donlan  
47 years  
Novato, CA

Paul Felkins  
45 years  
Yuba City, CA

Edward Fitzpatrick  
26 years  
Lodi, CA

Ramon Gatchalian  
25 years  
Grover Beach, CA

Paul Good  
7 years  
Cotati, CA

Donald Gordy  
2 years  
Magnolia, DE

Charles Harris  
40 years  
Modesto, CA

Wanda Harris  
8 years  
Barstow, CA

continued on page 17





## Lopsided vote in Roseville

Local 1245 members at the City of Roseville on Feb. 17 rejected a package proposed by the City. The vote was 2 in favor, 115 against.

The City proposed:

- Cap retiree medical at \$720/month
- Furlough language
- Employees to pick up all future active medical premium increases
- Elimination of longevity pay

The 2-115 vote was the answer given by the IBEW members.

### Potrero Power Plant

## Gen-On implements severance

GenOn Energy, formed when Mirant combined with RRI Energy, is implementing its severance plan for the Potrero Power Plant, one of three Bay Area plants the company operates.

The decision comes in anticipation of the California Independent System Operator cancelling the "Reliability Must-Run" status for the Potrero plant.

The severance plan, negotiated between Mirant and IBEW Local 1245, will downsize the bargaining unit workforce by 22 members—the number of bargaining unit employees at Potrero Power Plant.

The plan has two components, voluntary and involuntary severance, according to Business Rep. Al Fortier.

In the voluntary phase, bargaining unit members had until Jan 14, 2011 to submit voluntary severance forms.

"Volunteers are chosen within functional groups, with preference given to Potrero employees, then most senior employees at Pittsburg and Contra Costa within functional groups," said Fortier.

Pittsburg and Contra Costa are GenOn's other two Bay Area power plants with IBEW-represented employees.

If insufficient employees elect voluntary severance within a functional group,

the involuntary severance process will be implemented. Only employees hired after March 8, 2007 are subject to the involuntary severance process.

All severed employees are eligible for an enhanced severance package based on years of service. GenOn anticipates that they will begin to lay off employees in March 2011.

"On a good note, Pittsburg Power Plant Unit 7 got a contract for three more years, with an option for two more," said Fortier.

### Merced Irrigation District

## Show of IBEW unity

Local 1245 members at Merced Irrigation District showed up in force at the Jan. 13 meeting of the MID Board of Directors to demonstrate their unity in the face of contentious negotiations.

Over 30 employees and retirees took off personal time to attend the meeting and to discuss their issues with Local 1245 Senior Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer.

Unity has certainly been required in light of the District's questionable bargaining tactics.

After some 14 bargaining sessions since last October, union negotiators reached a tentative two-year agreement with the District on Feb. 23 during negotiations at Weakley Hall—only to have

## Arbitrator at RT

Management for the Sacramento Regional Transit district and IBEW Local 1245 have settled on Alexander Cohn, Esq. as arbitrator to assist with the long-stalled negotiations for a new agreement. Two days have been set for interest-based bargaining: March 8-9.

## Customers like SMUD

For the second year in a row, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District had the highest consumer satisfaction rating for midsized utilities in the West, according to J.D. Power and Associates.

In its annual survey, J.D. Power gave SMUD high marks for pricing, customer services and corporate citizenship.

The study was based on interviews of more than 17,000 U.S. businesses and covered more than 90 utilities nationwide.

Local 1245 congratulates its hard-working members for making it possible for their employer to win this important recognition.

## Facebook, from page 3

"It gives you a way to communicate with lots of people with very little effort," she said. "Facebook made everything easier—it consolidated to one place where you can reach a bunch of people."

"We want to engage members, create solidarity among members, to connect with them," said Gray, who has had a personal Facebook page for about two years. "We'll feature videos, news stories, links to get conversations going among our members on issues that affect them."

The union's website remains the place where most information about the union originates—but the Facebook page will be a place where members can speak their minds, listen to others, learn about upcoming activities, and link to important stories and videos about working people.

"I'm excited to let people know 1245 has a page and see how many people we can get to like our page," said Nunez. "I think it will be good."

Go to: <http://www.facebook.com/IBEWLocal1245>

facebook

employee out of the general office.

The District has also posted an advertisement in the local Merced newspaper seeking general laborers for hire subject to the following condition: "A LABOR DISPUTE MAY BE IN EFFECT WHEN WORK BECOMES AVAILABLE."

"The District posted this ad after the Jan. 13 Board meeting and at the same time that Merced Irrigation District's Human Resources Manager claimed that both parties were practicing good faith negotiations," Thomas said.

The District also changed sick leave utilization and SDI application requirements to be more stringent and less beneficial to employees in the IBEW bargaining unit.

The union negotiating committee consists of Charley Souders, Craig Tatum, John Ellett, and Peter Stone, along with Thomas and Business Rep. Mike Grill.

## Newly retired, from page 16

David Jacob  
8 years  
Sun City, CA

Gerry Kelly  
23 years  
Placerville, CA

Janice Lee  
26 years  
Oakley, CA

Dean Mooney  
34 years  
Asheboro, NC

Robert Quinn  
39 years  
Daly City, CA

Robert Rael  
25 years  
Daly City, CA

Judith Richter  
27 years  
Murphys, CA

David Rountree  
32 years  
Menlo Park, CA

Martin Smith  
28 years  
Tuolumne, CA

Kenny Walker  
42 years  
Antioch, CA

Leonard Wise  
33 years  
Cottonwood, CA

Dale Wong  
34 years  
Fairfield, CA

**Congratulations Retirees!**  
**We want you to**  
**STAY CONNECTED**  
  
**to IBEW 1245.**



IBEW members at Merced Irrigation District are united in the face of contentious negotiations.



# Hearings probe San Bruno tragedy



The San Bruno explosion destroyed 37 homes and killed eight people.

There was tough talk and finger-pointing as well as gestures of condolence and signs of forward progress when the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) conducted three days of hearings into the gas pipeline explosion that killed 8 people and destroyed 37 homes in San Bruno.

The tough talk came from federal pipeline safety officials who say they will step in and play a major role in determining PG&E's gas pipeline safety practices going forward, a not-so-subtle message to the California Public Utilities Commission which had been the lead regulator prior to the explosion.

The finger-pointing was mostly in the direction of PG&E, which was taken to task for not having automatic and/or remote shutoff valves on its gas transmission lines, for not knowing what kind of pipes it has in the ground, and for intentionally spiking the pressure on older urban gas pipelines like the one in San Bruno that exploded.

And then there was the bouquet of flowers and the private viewing room

reserved for families of the victims of the explosion—small gestures of condolence and a reminder that the stakes are high as new safety measures are debated.

As for signs of progress, PG&E has pledged to add hundreds of automatic shut-off valves on its gas transmission lines, a step that could reduce the damage from future such explosions. And Congressman Jackie Speier, whose district includes San Bruno, said that PG&E committed in a meeting with her to notify customers who live within 2,000 feet of a high-pressure natural gas transmission line.



IBEW 1245 Business Rep. Debbie Mazzanti at the NTSB hearing in Washington.

“PG&E is the new PG&E,” Speier told reporters. “I think it can become the gold standard for this country that all other operators will follow.”

## IBEW: A Seat at the Table

IBEW Local 1245, which represents about 11,000 PG&E employees, had a seat at the table during the hearings.

Business Rep. Debbie Mazzanti, who serves on the NTSB panel investigating the accident, called the experience “an incredible education,” if somewhat stressful.

“I felt a level of pressure with it. I have felt very alone on more than one occasion in this whole thing,” she said.

And no wonder. Each party at the hearings had their own table: PG&E, the CPUC, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, the City of San Bruno. And IBEW Local 1245.

“At every table there are at least six to eight chairs,” said Mazzanti. “At every table, every chair is filled. And then you have the IBEW table. And there I am,” said Mazzanti, who sat alone. “I guess I’m the man.”

Mazzanti said she was there mainly to monitor the proceedings, but on one occasion felt compelled to jump into the discussion. That moment came when the fire chief from the City of San Bruno testified that PG&E had never informed him that a gas transmission line ran through that part of San Bruno. Mazzanti was skeptical that PG&E should be held to blame for the fire chief’s lack of knowledge.

“We know based on testimony we got that the city enlarged a sewer line that literally ran parallel underneath Line 132 [the gas line that exploded],” said Mazzanti. “That work was done in 2008, so at least in 2008 the city must have been aware of that line. And there’s a water line that runs on top of Line 132.”

## Hindsight

In hindsight, it seemed easy to know what PG&E should have done.

The company’s practice of intentionally spiking the pressure on older urban gas pipelines was “a wrong-headed approach to safety,” according to Richard Clark, head of the CPUC’s consumer protection and safety division, which had the authority to influence that policy prior to the San Bruno explosion—but didn’t exercise it.

Although the hearings were supposed to be part of a fact-finding investigation, Mazzanti said it felt to her like there was a predisposition simply to blame PG&E.

“The piling on was there, no doubt about it,” she said.

But she acknowledges that there are legitimate questions about whether PG&E has the manpower to do the work that needs to be done on its aging infrastructure.

“You’ve got to get people back in the trenches to get this work done,” she said.

## Physical Agreement and Benefit Agreements

### Time to Bargain with PG&E

IBEW Local 1245 members began submitting bargaining proposals in March for general negotiations with PG&E.

The union is negotiating both a new Physical Agreement and new Benefit Agreements to replace ones that expire at the end of 2011.

Proposals must be submitted on unit meeting proposal forms or the new proposal forms, which are widely available from Local 1245 business representatives, shop stewards, and bargaining committee members, as well as available on-line.

Once you have filled out your proposal form, you can submit it at your unit meeting, or give it to your business rep, steward or a bargaining committee member.

Proposals can also be filled out online and submitted with the click of a button from the comfort of your own home. Go to [www.ibew1245.com](http://www.ibew1245.com), then scroll down and click the “PG&E Bargaining Update” logo.

Members should use a separate proposal form for each proposal. Be sure to check the box indicating whether your proposal is for the Physical Agreement or for the Benefits Agreement.

The Physical bargaining committee and the Benefits bargaining committee will read all proposals submitted and organize them into a unified opening package. The union and company expect to exchange opening proposals in June, study them over the summer, and begin face-to-face bargaining around Labor Day.

Members of the Benefits Education Committee are meeting with the Company now to gather facts. No proposals are exchanged during this phase of the process. In the next phase of the process the Benefit Education Committee becomes the benefit Bargaining Committee. Union members of the Committee are: Cecelia De La Torre, Gracie Nunez, Ron Moon, Anna Bayless-Martinez, Donna Ambeau, Lloyd Cargo, Bryan Carroll, Mark Newman, Mike Scafani, Jack Hill and Ray Shepherd, along with Local 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell and Senior Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, with assistance from Organizer Eileen Purcell.



Members of the Physical Bargaining Committee are Linda Jurado, Dan Mayo, Mike Scafani, Lou Mennel, Casey Barker, Steve Russell, Bob Gerstle, Ken Amaral, Dave Sankey, Anthony Brown, Gary Maschio, Ron Moon, and Pat Duffy, along with Local 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell and Senior Assistant Business Manager Bob Choate, with assistance from Organizer Fred Ross. Subcommittees are also being convened to deal with Co-Mingle Electric, Emergency Overtime, and Gas M&C.



## Sacramento *continued from page 1*

cially Wisconsin. In these and other states, public employees' legally-bargained pension benefits are being blamed for state budget deficits. For some reason the Wall Street hucksters who sold worthless junk to pension fund managers are held blameless for the resulting financial crisis that has crippled states' budgets, while public employees are being demonized for wanting to hang on to their legally-negotiated benefits.

Talk about blaming the victim! But this time the victims are fighting back.

In Wisconsin, where the protests began on Feb. 15, as many as 100,000 occupied the state capital and grounds in Madison to oppose Republican efforts to strip away public workers' collective bargaining rights.

Support for the Madison uprising has come in a very tangible fashion: pizza orders for the demonstrators have poured in from all 50 states and many foreign countries, including Egypt, where young activists still celebrating their historic revolution waved signs supporting the Wisconsin workers.

### WIDESPREAD THREAT

The threat to public employees is widespread. Tea Party supporters, who have mounted counter-demonstrations

in several states, have shown their true colors when it comes to workers' rights. At the Sacramento demonstration, about 35 tea partiers gathered across the street holding their own signs, declaring "No more free lunch!"

"I think the unions are right to be running scared. Middle America is coming after them," said Richard Woods, a retired contractor wearing a red visor with "Tea Party Patriots" stitched on the front. He was quoted in the *Sacramento Bee*.

Meanwhile, a Santa Barbara-based organization filed with the state in January to collect campaign contributions toward a 2012 ballot measure aimed at ending California public employee unions.

And in Sacramento, Assemblyman Allan Mansoor, a Republican, has introduced legislation to end collective bargaining for public pension benefits.

### DISTURBING RHETORIC

Opposition to public employees has

given rise to some disturbing rhetoric. Indiana Assistant Attorney General Jeff Cox said that "live ammunition" and "deadly force" should be used to disperse protesters in Madison, WI.

Was this a joke? In the wake of the recent assassination attempt against Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, you'd think people would want to tone down such rhetorical overkill—but apparently not. Cox's dangerous and inflammatory remark got him fired. Advocating the mass slaughter of innocent citizens apparently isn't part of the assistant attorney general's job description.

Unfortunately, Local 1245 members in the public sector are likely to hear more of this over-heated rhetoric in coming months. Right-wing media pundits are picking up the gauntlet, always ready to demonize anything associated with the government—even if it's the people who teach their kids, put out their fires, keep their power on, or nurse them back to health.

The old labor anthem "Which Side Are You On?" has been out of fashion for many decades, but it may be poised for a comeback. When state officials start trying to take away workers' bargaining rights, and even suggest that workers should be gunned down if they dare protest, the time for choosing sides may have arrived.

## This time, they've gone too far

Recent opinion polls show widespread public support for public workers now under attack in numerous states.

A *USA Today*-Gallup poll released on Feb. 22 showed that 61% of Americans oppose the kind of law Gov. Scott Walker is pushing to strip workers in Wisconsin of their rights.

A *New York Times*/CBS poll released Feb. 28 showed strong majorities backing public service workers in this fight. Nearly twice as many Americans "oppose weakening the bargaining rights of public employee unions" as support it (60-33%), and a majority oppose "cutting the pay or benefits of public employees to reduce deficits" (56-37%).

The survey also showed two to one support for raising taxes to balance budgets rather than cutting public employee pay and benefits.

A Pew Research Center survey conducted in the last week of February showed that only 31% of Americans support Walker's position in his battle with workers in Wisconsin, while 42% sided with the workers.



Local 1245 members rallying at the Capital in Sacramento on Feb. 22 included, from left, Gracie Nunez, Ralph Armstrong, Fred Ross, Darryl Norris, Liz McInnis and Ron Cochran. Attending but not pictured were Lloyd Cargo, Sheila Lawton, Joe Osterlund, Ken Ball, JV Macor, Junior Ornelas, and Eileen Purcell.



Kids got a taste of what the First Amendment really looks like during the San Francisco rally.



Suddenly every worker in the country liked cheese.



A sea of signs. Public workers were feeling the love in San Francisco.



Local 1245 member Lloyd Cargo IV joins the protest in Sacramento.



Demonstrator in Cairo, Egypt signals solidarity with workers in Madison, WI.



# Perry Zimmerman's 24th Annual **IBEW Local 1245** Golf Tournament

**Green Tree Golf Course  
Vacaville, CA**

**Saturday, June 18, 2011**

**8:00 a.m. Shot Gun Start**

Contests:  
**Longest Drive!  
Closest to the Hole!**

**Entry Fee: \$90 (includes Cart,  
Green Fee & BBQ)**

**Entry Deadline: June 10, 2011  
Limited Tee Spaces –  
First Come, First Served!**

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For information, call John Mendoza or Joe Osterlund  
(209) 329-3449 (415) 238-2898

Don't miss out! Space is limited! Send your names and checks for \$90 now!

Make check payable to  
"IBEW Local 1245" and  
mail to:  
Local 1245 Golf Tournament  
PO Box 2547  
Vacaville, CA 95696  
Attn: Gail Varner



Registration begins promptly at 6:30 a.m., Shot Gun 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 will be at Weakley Hall, 30 Orange Tree Circle, Vacaville (behind Home Depot).