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# Utility Reporter

Victory at Sunoptics! - page 11

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Volume 63 No.1 • Jan-Mar 2014

UNITY IS STRENGTH

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



Putting the response in "responsive" — IBEW 1245 members get it done in Nevada City. See page 18.





Tom Dalzell  
BUSINESS MANAGER

## Ready for 2014

**I**BEW 1245 worked hard in 2013 for the things we value: safer workplaces, better contracts, an engaged membership, respect in the community. Every year brings new challenges for our members, but I believe we have been making ourselves ready for whatever comes our way in 2014.

Safety remains our top priority. While we had serious accidents, our members worked more than 50 million hours in 2013 without a fatality. Much of the credit for this goes to our three Peer Safety groups and our Safety Stewards for gas, electric, and trees. Under Rich Lane's leadership, these members are showing that we can be proactive on safety.

After years of playing defense in the public sector, we are finally turning the corner. The gains we are making in a number of contracts are a credit to those of you who serve on these negotiating committees. Negotiating a first agreement at the City of Lompoc was a tremendous achievement by our newest members, who ratified that agreement 89-0.

Lompoc wasn't the only place where workers said "yes" to IBEW 1245. On January 10th, manufacturing workers at Sunoptics voted 48-29 for IBEW representation. Together with 9 contracts that we recently picked up from IBEW 2131, we have a growing presence in manufacturing—a sector where unions traditionally have been strong and need to be strong again.

Our staff members in Outside Construction continue to organize large numbers of workers at non-union companies that had been doing work at PG&E for years. In the past year we also organized the largest non-union line clearance tree trimming subcontractor.

Our long-standing concern over workforce levels at PG&E seems to finally be getting some traction. The

company surpassed agreed-upon hiring levels in gas, with 516 new workers. The company also hired almost 70 journeymen on the electric side, enabling the company to reduce the use of contractors in 2014. We also pioneered with PG&E a training program for traffic control flaggers, which we hope will bring this work back in-house at PG&E, and perhaps set a precedent for bringing back other work.

My hat goes off to the many dozens of PG&E stewards and active members who volunteered for training and then conducted more than 300 meetings with fellow members to explain how to be smart users of PG&E's revamped medical benefit. These members certainly proved the truth of the old saying that members ARE the union.

Our members are taking IBEW 1245 to some new places, with extremely positive results. In 2013, dozens of unit meetings throughout our jurisdiction reached out a helping hand to local communities. Our units sponsored blood drives, fishing derbies, youth sports teams, and contributed to schools, hospitals, hospice organizations and many other community groups. We've always kept the lights on, but now we are also helping keep spirits up and hope alive. In a similar vein, we've just recently organized a group where IBEW 1245 veterans can help each other as well as other veterans.

In 2013, our members found still more ways for making a difference in the world. We helped union members fight back against an anti-union campaign in Alaska, helped fellow IBEW members win an NLRB election in Illinois, and successfully campaigned to elect some new leadership to irrigation districts where our members work.

In Nevada, our members negotiated and ratified a four-year agreement at NV Energy with solid improvements in medical and the best-ever Paid Time Off provisions. But we recognize that big new challenges are in store in Nevada, where MidAmerican Energy just acquired NV Energy. That's why we took the initiative to create a new alliance with six other IBEW locals that have contracts with MidAmerican. If the MidAmerican chief, Warren Buffett, decides to go after our hard-won wages and benefits, we intend to be ready for him.

In California, our biggest challenge in

2014 could be excessive zeal by the CPUC when it finally decides how much to fine PG&E for the San Bruno disaster. A fine that cripples PG&E's ability to make needed repairs and maintain safe service would be counterproductive—and harmful to our members. We are taking steps to make sure that our members' interests are defended as this process unfolds.

Our successes in 2013 didn't happen by magic, they were the product of hard work by our staff and members. I hope that all of you will help IBEW 1245 meet the challenges of 2014 in exactly the same way.

Work safe. Be safe.

## APPOINTMENTS

### CITY OF UKIAH

2013-2014 City of Ukiah Negotiating Committee

Rodney Huffman  
Ben Keffler  
Jim Lazano

### AC TRANSIT

2013-2014 AC Transit Negotiating Committee

John Seeto

### CONFERENCES

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference

Michael Musgrove  
Miguel Pagan  
Anthony Seemster  
Veronica Rivera

EWMC National Conference

Donna Ambeau  
Anna Bayless-Martinez  
Harold Blackshire, Jr.  
Tom Cornell  
Mike Davis  
Cecelia De La Torre  
Cloudell Douglas  
Art Freitas  
Chris Habecker  
Cal Olguin  
Michael Patterson  
Pete Sandoval  
Mike Scafani  
Stan Zamora

## CALENDAR

- Jan 17 Service Awards, North Bay (Petaluma)
- Jan 22 PG&E Steward Conf, San Francisco
- Jan 24 Service Awards, San Francisco (Pacifica)
- Jan 31 Organizing Stewards Conference
- Feb 1 Advisory Council, Vacaville
- Feb 21 PG&E Steward Conf, Chico
- Feb 21 Service Awards, Redding
- Feb 22 Service Awards, Chico/Marysville
- Feb 22 "Change the Narrative" training, Vacaville
- Feb 26 PG&E Steward Conf, North Bay (includes North Coast)
- Feb 28 Service Awards, Merced
- Mar 14 Service Awards, Fresno
- Mar 14 PG&E Steward Conf, Fresno
- Mar 21 Service Awards, Salinas/Monterey
- Mar 25 PG&E Steward Conf, Stockton
- Mar 28 Service Awards, Stockton
- Apr 4 PG&E Steward Conf, San Luis Obispo
- Apr 4 Service Awards, San Luis Obispo
- Apr 5 Clay Shoots, Dunnigan and Newman
- Apr 11 Service Awards, Eureka
- Apr 12 Soccer Tournament, Merced
- Apr 12 Service Awards, Ukiah
- Apr 16 PG&E Steward Conf, Sacramento
- Apr 18 Service Awards, Sacramento
- Apr 23 PG&E Steward Conf, East Bay
- Apr 25 Service Awards, East Bay
- Apr 26 Soccer Tournament, Fairfield
- Apr 26 Advisory Council, Vacaville
- May 2 Service Awards, Bakersfield
- May 2 PG&E Steward Conf, Bakersfield
- May 16 Service Awards, Reno
- May 17 Stieffer Motorcycle Rally
- May 22 PG&E Steward Conf, San Jose (includes Salinas area)
- May 23 Service Awards, San Jose

## Unit meeting changes

Recent changes to the unit meeting schedule:

**Unit 3611**, Marysville, has changed its meeting start time to 5:30 pm. Effective Nov. 6, 2013, meetings are held at Pizza Round-up, 2004 Covillaud Street, in Marysville. Meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month.

Brian Kapaun, Business Representative

**Unit 4424**, the new unit for **Trees Inc. (SMUD)**, began meeting on Dec. 5, 2013. Meetings will be on the first Thursday of every month. Meet time is 5:30 pm. The location is 3005 Freeport Blvd. in Sacramento.

Junior Ornelas, Business Representative

*The complete IBEW 1245 unit schedule for 2014 can be found at [http://www.ibew1245.com/unit\\_meetings.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/unit_meetings.html).*

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### UtilityReporter

January – March 2014  
Volume 63 No. 1  
Circulation: 22,500



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

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

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

Single copies \$1. Subscription by arrangement. Have you moved recently? Please send complete new address and your Social Security Number (by U.S. Mail) to: "Address Change" IBEW Local 1245 P.O. Box 2547 Vacaville, CA 95696.

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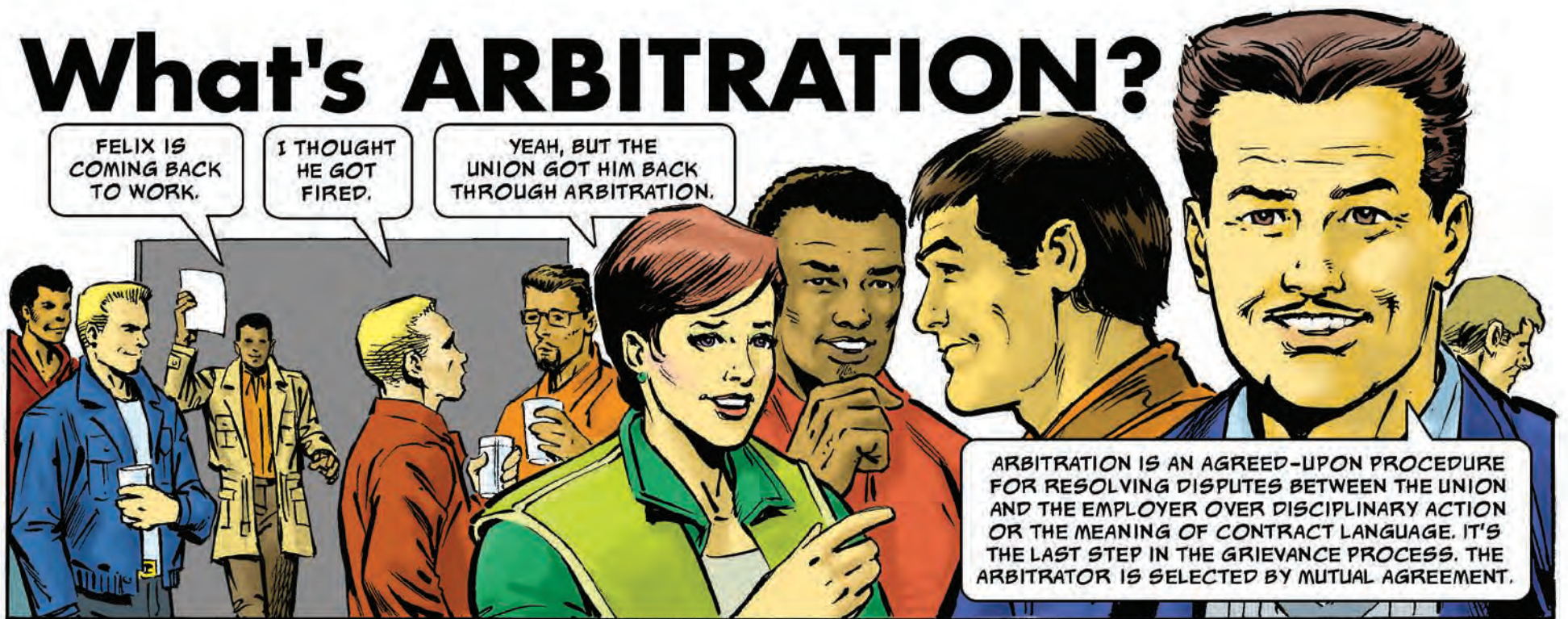
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# What's ARBITRATION?



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Second in a series of informational posters by IBEW 1245.



# Lineman's Club finds new home at 1245

By Eric Wolfe

Cheers erupted as a flash of neon split the night in Vacaville on Oct. 26 and the Lineman's Club rose from the ashes of history to start a new career at IBEW 1245.

An Oakland watering hole once popular with PG&E workers, the Lineman's Club closed its doors many years ago. But its bold neon sign got a new lease on life when its rusting remains were rescued, restored, and relocated to the union's Vacaville headquarters. The lighting ceremony was the concluding act in a party celebrating the 10th anniversary of Ronald T. Weakley Hall.

"This is a great piece of lineman history," said Business Manager Tom Dalzell, who spotted the sign hanging darkened and forlorn at an Asian market earlier this year. "We decided it deserved a new home."

The sign is a pretty good likeness of a utility pole, complete with cross-arm and insulators—all of it outlined in brilliant red, green and blue neon.

Gathering in the union hall's parking lot for the lighting ceremony were members of the Advisory Council, along with current and former staff and Executive Board members. Throwing the switch for the ceremonial lighting was Michele Fassio, whose father Russ ran the Lineman's Club when she was growing up in Oakland.

"My dad would be so thrilled," she said.

## "Draft Beer was 50 Cents"

Russ Fassio acquired the Lineman's Club in 1954—the year Michele was born. As children, Michele and her brother helped their dad with chores at the bar.

"We used to clean the bar on Sunday mornings at 6 a.m. for my dad. We'd sweep the floor, clean the sink, dust the bottles," she said. "Draft beer was 50 cents and a tall one was 75 cents. Well liquor was a dollar and call liquor was a buck and a half."

The prices were right for the IBEW 1245 members who came over regularly from the local PG&E yard.

"There would be at least nine or ten

of us in the afternoon," recalled lineman and former IBEW 1245 Business Representative Veodis Stamps. He and his co-workers would get off at 4:30—or maybe a tiny bit earlier, if you want to be completely honest about it—and head to the bar.

"By a quarter to five we'd be there. On Friday nights, we'd stay 'til 2:00 because we didn't have to work the next day," said Stamps, who was partial to Singapore Slings.

The Lineman's Club wasn't their only watering hole, of course. Back then, it seemed like there was a bar on every block throughout the city, according to Stamps.

"There was nothing but bars all the way up Telegraph," he said.

But the linemen favored the bar whose name and sign celebrated the work they did: the Lineman's Club.

It was the place,

Stamps said, that "we'd always gravitate to."

## "Cops, Hells Angels, Everybody"

Michele Fassio said her brother called it the United Nations.

"There was every kind of person you could imagine, every color, creed, cops, Hells Angels, everybody used to go to that bar. Everybody got along," Michele said.

More often than not, customers were personally served by Russ himself. He worked most days and came in on Sunday to do the books. He stayed open on Thanksgiving and served dinner to the regulars who didn't have any place else to go. For them, Michele said, the Lineman's Club was home.

On other holidays, including Christmas, he invited customers to his house for dinner. On New Year's, "he would throw a big party for everyone and have prime rib and all kinds of food so people would have a place to go," she recalled.

When Michele was pregnant, they held the baby shower at—you guessed it—the Lineman's Club. All the regular patrons were there for the celebration. "They were really part of our family, too," she said.

Michele's daughter Megan learned to walk well before she reached her first

*continued on next page*



Russ Fassio, proprietor of the Lineman's Club in its heyday. Photo courtesy of Michele Fassio.



Photos by John Storey



Executive Board member Tom Cornell and former Advisory Council member Jim Findley.



Current and retired PG&E personnel joined the party, too. From left: Margaret Short, Stacy Campos, Frances Wilder-Davis, Carol Pound, Steve Rayburn, Kathy Price, Doris Spingola, John Moffat.



## Headquarters History

IBEW 1245 occupied many different buildings before settling down at Weakley Hall in Vacaville in 2003. See some of the places the union called home at [www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/WeakleyHall\\_11-14-13.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/WeakleyHall_11-14-13.html)



IBEW 1245 staff members Eileen Purcell, Gail “Party Animal” Varner and Mike Saner.

birthday. This precious feat was first accomplished, of course, at the Lineman’s Club.

### Beacon of Fellowship

But the party couldn’t last forever. After a battle with cancer, Russ Fassio died in 1985.

“My brothers and stepmother tried to make it work, but really, the bar was my dad. So we ended up selling it,” Michele said.

The years passed. The Lineman’s Club disappeared, its customers dispersed. An Asian market set up shop in the building. But outside, the Lineman’s Club sign clung to life,



President Mike Davis and Trustee Leroy Foster.



IBEW 1245 Archives

Ron Weakley at the Grand Opening of Weakley Hall in 2003.

barely—a rusting memory of an era when beers were 50 cents, tall ones were 75, where linemen arrived at 4:45 p.m., and regulars could get Thanksgiving dinner if they didn’t have anywhere else to go.

From its new home at IBEW 1245, the Lineman’s Club sign is still a beacon of fellowship, the red arrow still pointing the way inside. You’ll be disappointed if you come looking for Singapore Slings or 50-cent beers, but you may just find something else inside that the Lineman’s Club always represented: a place where working men and women are welcome.



Veodis Stamps was a regular at the Lineman’s Club, back in the day.



Celebrating the lighting of the sign are Business Manager Tom Dalzell, Michele Fassio and Megan Fassio.



# Organizing Stewards

IBEW 1245 will install its first class of organizing stewards in early 2014. The position was created by the Executive Board last year to acknowledge and formalize the work of IBEW 1245 “members-organizers” who have energized the union’s organizing mission.

“Organizing stewards are going to stand and represent the union and say, ‘This is why we fight, this is why we exist—we’re going to protect our voice, and we’re going to protect our wages, our benefits and our working conditions,’” said IBEW 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell, speaking to a gathering of about 30 member-organizers last fall.

IBEW 1245 has always been a strong “bread and butter” union, able to negotiate good wages and benefits for its members, Business Manager Tom Dalzell told that same gathering. But with the onset of the Great Recession, attacks on wages, healthcare and retirement security have escalated—at NV Energy, at PG&E and throughout the public sector.

This cold economic reality has made it necessary to rethink how the union fulfills its mission to protect members’ economic interests.

The union began experimenting with new forms of member engagement in 2009, when younger members were recruited to serve on PG&E bargaining committees and to engage members in a fight-back campaign against PG&E attacks on Clerical wages and benefits. About the same time, the union helped retirees at NV Energy raise some hell over cutbacks in retiree medical benefits.

By 2011, the union was recruiting young (and not-so-young) members to help sister unions defend collective bargaining laws in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Florida. More recently, the union has dispatched members to fight similar battles in Alaska and Illinois, and assisted workers fighting abuses at Wal-Mart.



These members helped lay the groundwork for the position of organizing steward by participating in numerous campaigns that helped them gain organizing skills.

“We send people out and they come back trained and experienced,” Dalzell said, noting that the AFL-CIO, the California Labor Federation, and the International Office of the IBEW have all recognized IBEW 1245’s leadership development program as one of the most effective in the country.

It’s a strategy that has enabled IBEW 1245 to make a difference in fights affecting its own members. In 2012, IBEW 1245 deployed dozens of volunteers in the successful campaign to defeat California Proposition 32, a frontal assault on the rights of workers. In the process, IBEW 1245 has been winning a reputation as a union that gets things done.

Like the shop steward and the safety steward, organizing stewards will play their own unique role in the union.

“Shop stewards are the backbone of our organization,” said Purcell. “You defend our coworkers, you defend the contract, you deliver the representation

that people expect when they pay dues. It’s a core function of the union.”

The safety steward, too, has a unique role—increasing safety awareness through peer-to-peer interaction on the job.

The organizing steward’s role will be equally important to the success of the union and its members.

“The organizing steward will be educating, training and agitating coworkers around issues that matter, whether it’s right there in the workplace, or solidarity campaigns, community building, raising money for charities—it’s putting the face of labor out there in the community in a positive way,” said IBEW 1245 Organizer Fred Ross Jr.

## The Power of Solidarity

PG&E Operating Clerk Kevin Krummes, who most recently worked on the campaign to defend workers’ rights in Anchorage, Alaska called the organizing steward a “novel idea.”

“It really shows the power of solidarity when you’re working with other unions and how powerful you can be and how you can affect an outcome,”

said Krummes, pointing to labor’s smashing defeat of Proposition 32.

Many IBEW 1245 member-organizers initially had doubts about their ability to pick up the phone, knock on doors, talk to legislators, speak up at a meeting, or organize a letter writing campaign—the nuts and bolts of organizing.

“I thought it was scary,” said Donchele Soper, who worked on the campaigns in Wisconsin, Ohio and Florida. “I didn’t know how to talk to people, especially strangers. It was very new to me.”

But she quickly found that people are just people.

“You get a sense we’re all the same, even if we come from different backgrounds. We all want success, we all want our fair share, we’re not asking for too much, we just want to live, to have freedom.”

The campaigns offered a chance to be “engaged in the community,” she said, “and I feel like when we left, a part of us was still there with them.”

Rey Mendoza, who works at PG&E’s Fresno Contact Center, had a similar experience working in Fresno on the



*“We send people out and they come back trained and experienced.”*

Business Manager  
Tom Dalzell

Photos by John Storey



Aaron Baker, Turlock Irrigation District (left), and Rodrigo Flores, Merced Irrigation District, discuss efforts to reshape the Turlock Irrigation District Board of Directors.



From left: Rey Mendoza, PG&E Fresno; Veronica Rivera, NV Energy Reno; Rachel Ramirez Hill, PG&E Stockton.





*“The organizing steward will be educating, training and agitating coworkers around issues that matter....” Organizer Fred Ross Jr.*

campaign for justice for Wal-Mart workers.

“It was my first experience dealing directly with strangers, trying to communicate an idea,” Mendoza said. “Speaking with a stranger, there’s really no connection there, so you have to find one ... so they can feel comfortable around you discussing their problems at work.”

## New Model for Action

IBEW 1245’s new model for action is beginning to tear down the wall that has insulated collective bargaining from the outside world.

For example, when Merced Irrigation District stonewalled the union at the bargaining table, IBEW 1245 fought back using the tools of democracy. Member-organizers Rodrigo Flores and Craig Tatum successfully mobilized volunteers to unseat two of the District directors when they came up for reelection, replacing them with new people who better understand the workers’ legitimate right to fair bargaining.

Similar tactics were used to influence two races for Modesto Irrigation District, and also to mount a challenge at Turlock Irrigation District.

With other challenges looming large on the horizon, organizing stewards will have new opportunities to put their skills to work. These include upcoming negotiations with PG&E, which could be under a severe financial strain from penalties imposed in the wake of the San Bruno explosion. A confrontation is also possible down the road with billionaire Warren Buffett’s Midamerican

Energy, which recently acquired NV Energy.

## Flipping a Switch

What makes an IBEW 1245 member decide to become engaged in these important battles, to become an organizing steward?

Dalzell acknowledged it’s a bit of a mystery. At the fall gathering he singled out Georgette Carrillo, a PG&E Customer Service Representative who had not been involved in the union at all until the IBEW 1245 leadership conference last spring.

But over the next several months, Dalzell said, Carrillo led the successful campaign against Measure G in Fresno, participated in the Our Wal-Mart summer campaign, and led a workshop at the IBEW International RENEW conference in September – all in a period of just 9 months.

Dalzell said it was like someone had “flipped a switch,” creating an organizer.

The task ahead, he said, will be to connect in that way with other members, to get them engaged in community and political action to defend their rights.

“What started as five young people four years ago, has grown to all of you here in this room,” said Dalzell. “And we’ve only just begun.”

Attending the Oct. 5 conference at Weakley Hall were members from PG&E, NV Energy, Frontier Communications, Davey Tree, Trees Inc., Merced Irrigation District, and Turlock Irrigation District.



Workers celebrate union victory

**IBEW 1245 members help power organizing drive in Illinois**

# Victory at Greenlee!

The campaign to organize a Greenlee tool manufacturing plant in Rockford, Illinois reached a dramatic climax on Oct. 30 when employees voted by a 2 to 1 margin for union representation.

The campaign got a huge lift from IBEW 1245 members Jammi Juarez and Casey Salkauskas, who spent nearly three weeks in the state knocking on doors and encouraging employees to stand together.

“Just going door to door talking to 15- to 41-year employees and finding out the things they have to put up with day to day (was) one of the most moving and emotional, one of the greatest tasks I’ve ever undertaken,” said Salkauskas, an electrician and 13-year IBEW member currently employed by PG&E.

He cited the example of a 59-year old worker, with 41 years of service at the company, who was forced onto a night shift.

“He was always the quiet one, always came to work on time, did his job,” said Salkauskas. When his job was moved to another state, the employee was assigned a different job and told he had to work nights.

When the employee objected, Salkauskas said the plant manager just shrugged his shoulders and said, “That’s too bad. Seniority only counts in a union shop.”

“To overlook 41 years of dedication and say that only counts in a union shop, they pushed him over the edge with that comment,” Salkauskas said.

“Having one-on-one conversations with these workers was life-changing,” said Juarez, a 7-year IBEW member and operating clerk for PG&E. She cited the case of an employee who was passed over for promotion because she spoke with an accent.

“We talked with every single worker on the list. They never griped about their wages,” even though they hadn’t had raises in six years. What they resented, Juarez said, was being “treated with such a lack of respect.”

## “Completely Blew Me Away”

Charlie Laskonis, a business rep/organizer for IBEW 364, was facing an uphill battle in the drive to organize the Greenlee workers when he called IBEW 1245 and asked Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas for a letter of support.

“He calls me back and says, ‘We’re going to send you a letter of support—and we’re going to send you two organizers,’ ” said Laskonis. “It completely blew me away. It tripled our resources. It was just going to be me going door-to-door.”

But to hear Juarez and Salkauskas tell it, they benefitted from the experience just as much as the Greenlee employees.

“It was overwhelming, it was very emotional” to see the employees gain hope, to realize “they’ve got somebody on their side now,” Juarez said.

“They just want basic rights and dignity,” said Salkauskas. “I wanted to do everything I could to get these folks organized so they could have a contract and representation.”

Laskonis said that the IBEW 1245 organizers did the bulk of the door-to-door work during the campaign.

“A lot of those workers were really blown away—here are two guys from California helping us organize,” he said. “That’s tangible. It was an integral part of the win. Your two people here—I never thought in my dreams I’d ever have a resource like this.”

## Hope Won

Greenlee waged an anti-union campaign that featured professional union busters holding captive audience meetings in which they disparaged the union. It was a campaign built on fear. The IBEW campaign was built on hope.

Hope won. The final vote was 44-22.



Organizer Jennifer Gray, a veteran of many IBEW campaigns, chaired the meeting.



From left: Tanny Hurtado, Davey Tree; Cruz Serna, PG&E; Walter Carmier, Frontier.



AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

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

- The grant will be as follows:  
  
Five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per year, up to four (4) years, as long as a C (2.0) average is maintained and the parent maintains their membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
- In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in (the year of the contest). A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 2014 must be attached to your scholarship application.
- The Scholarship Grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full-time in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the Local Accrediting Association.  
  
Responsibility of Scholarship Recipient: Scholarship winner must begin their studies in their next term or, at the very latest, in January of the following year.
- Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245 or by calling the Union Office or by using the form

printed in the Utility Reporter or downloaded from the Local's website (www.ibew1245.com).

- Checks will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.
- All applications shall be accompanied with a written essay, not to exceed five hundred (500) words, on the subject designated by the Executive Board.
- Essays should be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and doubled spaced with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay.
- Applications and essays must be mailed to I.B.E.W., Local Union 1245, P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, California 95696, by REGISTERED CERTIFIED MAIL ONLY, and be postmarked no later than the first Monday in March of each year (March 3, 2014).
- Each year the scholarship shall be presented at the Advisory Council meeting in April/May; the Judge and a guest and the recipient and parents shall be invited, at Local Union expense, to present and receive the Scholarship Award.
- A suitable trophy or plaque shall be purchased by the Local Union to be presented to the scholarship recipient.

**NOTE: The topic for the 2014 Al Sandoval Memorial Competitive Scholarship essay is: "Using the BART strike as an example, under what circumstances should a Union strike in this day and age?"**

LOCAL 1245 TRADE AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRANT

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

- The grants will be as follows: Five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per year, for up to two years for two candidates, as long as a passing grade is maintained, and a parent maintains membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
- In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a daughter or son, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in the year of the contest. A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in the year of the contest must be attached to your application.  
  
Additionally, a letter of recommendation from your vocational teacher, department head, or school principal must accompany the application.
- Applications may be secured by addressing the Recording Secretary of Local Union 1245, by calling the Union Office, or by using the form printed in the Utility Reporter.
- The grant will be made only to a candidate who intends to enroll in any industrial, technical or trade school, other

than correspondence schools, which are accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACC SCT).

- Applications must be mailed to IBEW, Local Union 1245, P. O. Box 2547, Vacaville, California 95696, by registered mail or certified mail only, and be postmarked no later than the first Monday of April of each year.
- Two names will be drawn by the Judge of the Competitive Scholarship Contest from those submitting applications. These two will be recipients of the grants.
- Checks will be paid directly to the school upon presentation of tuition bills to the Local Union.
- Presentation of awards will be made to recipients at the unit meeting nearest his residence following the drawing.



APPLICATION FOR THE AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Sponsored by  
LOCAL UNION 1245  
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AFLCIO  
P.O. Box 2547 • Vacaville, CA 95696 • Telephone: (707) 452-2700

I hereby make application to enter the Competitive Scholarship Contest sponsored by Local Union 1245, I.B.E.W., AFLCIO:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Initial)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Name of Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Work Location \_\_\_\_\_

I graduated or will graduate from \_\_\_\_\_ High School

Which is located at \_\_\_\_\_

I expect to attend \_\_\_\_\_ College or School

Location \_\_\_\_\_

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

This is to certify that the above named candidate is currently enrolled as a student at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.  
(School Name) (Month and Year)

\_\_\_\_\_

Official's signature and position \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that I am a member in good standing of Local Union 1245, I.B.E.W. and the Candidate, whose name is signed to this application is my \_\_\_\_\_  
and graduated during the term ending \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Parent's Signature and Card No.) \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICATION FOR THE LOCAL 1245  
TRADE & VOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRANT FOR MEMBERS' CHILDREN  
ENROLLING IN TECHNICAL, INDUSTRIAL, OR TRADE SCHOOLS  
Sponsored by Local Union 1245 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFLCIO  
P.O. Box 2547 • Vacaville, CA 95696

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

High School \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address of High School \_\_\_\_\_

What school do you expect to attend? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is it located? \_\_\_\_\_

What Trade or Craft will you be studying? \_\_\_\_\_

Why this particular Skill? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

STATEMENT OF MEMBER/PARENT

Name of Member/Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I am a member in good standing of I.B.E.W. Local Union 1245, that Candidate named above, \_\_\_\_\_ is my \_\_\_\_\_  
and that the Candidate will graduate from high school during the term ending \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

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

This is to certify that the above named candidate is currently enrolled as a student at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and has or will be graduating in \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.  
(School Name) (Month and year)

Official's signature and position \_\_\_\_\_



Richard Aston offers moving lesson on unionism

# “Labor unions transformed the lives of millions of people”

*The late Helen Gan, a 52-year IBEW 1245 member, won top honors in the International Labor Communications Association contest in 2013 for her editorial and video opposing Proposition 32 in 2012. Her husband, Richard Aston, accepted the award on her behalf at the Oct. 25 Advisory Council meeting in Vacaville. His moving remarks about the value of labor unions are reprinted below.*

I appreciate this award for several reasons. I was born in ... Wales. In the 1920s Wales was the biggest coal shipping port in the world. The coal mines were owned by...the richest man in England.

In the late 1920s, depression came, the mines closed down. Unemployment in South Wales was 80%. At that time there was no such thing as medical insurance, no such thing as unemployment insurance, no benefits whatsoever. Both of my grandfathers, my father and innumerable uncles worked as coal miners. When those mines closed down, they lost their jobs.

One of my grandfathers was lucky in

that he got a job as coal trimmer. The coal trimmer works on a ship. The coal comes down a chute in the center of the ship. The trimmer, with a shovel, distributes the coal around to make the load even. The trimmers knew the job was dangerous. What they knew, but what the coal companies refused to admit, was that the greatest danger was inhaling the coal dust.

It wasn't until the 1980s that coal companies in England said yes, there may be an association between coal dust and black lung disease. Up until then they refused, there was no compensation whatsoever.

Six months before I was born, in 1933, my grandfather coughed his lungs up, literally according to my mother, who remembered the blood-soaked bed. My father was temporarily lucky. When he could no longer work, [he got] a parttime job training his lordship's racing greyhounds. That only lasted a short while. My father was too sick to do that. When I was six years old, my father died in the same manner as



Richard Aston addresses Advisory Council on Oct. 25.

Photo: John Storey

my grandfather.

There was no such thing as pensions for miners, no such thing as any kind of compensation. My mother did get the state widow's pension. It was the equivalent of \$1.20 a week. That amount had been set in 1869. It was 1/6 of an average worker's wage. By 1933 that was meaningless. The rent on our small apartment that had no electricity, no hot water, no bathroom, an outside toilet, was \$5 a week, so the \$1.20 was meaningless.

When I came to America in 1949 I arrived in New York with \$60 in my pocket. After that I was a member of the Cooks and Waiters union, the Teamsters union, the Sailors Union of the Pacific, IBEW 1245, and the teachers union. In all of those jobs I had benefits from the union.

When Helen and I got together we

had a good life. She had 10 days of sick leave, holidays off, vacation pay, unemployment insurance, health benefits—when she got sick 5 years ago she had a major operation. The bill for that was \$100,000, if we had to pay it. Luckily we belonged to Kaiser, because of the union, and we paid \$10 per visit—a miniscule amount.

So all along the way are lives benefited by the union. In just one generation, labor unions transformed the lives of millions of people, giving them benefits their parents couldn't even dream would exist. So my appreciation goes out to all union workers because you've made life better.... All I can say is, I appreciate this as an expression of your thanks, and I also want to say my thanks to all of you, to all union workers, for the things you have provided to millions upon millions of people.

## Cruz Serna to represent new members

# IBEW 1245 picks up manufacturers

IBEW 1245 has picked up nine new signatory employers in the manufacturing sector. IBEW 1245 member Cruz Serna has been hired to the union staff to represent the new members at these locations.

Serna, formerly a Service Rep at PG&E's Call Center in Fresno, has been among the most active of IBEW 1245's member-organizers over the past year. He worked on the successful campaign to defeat the anti-union Measure G in Fresno and traveled to Alaska to help fight an anti-union initiative in Anchorage.



Cruz Serna

Organizing manufacturing workers is part of IBEW 1245's charter, but the local has not had any members working in manufacturing for decades. The last employer the union represented in manufacturing was Lynch, a former telephone manufacturer in Reno, NV.

The IBEW Ninth District office made the decision to merge IBEW 2131 into IBEW 1245, effectively bringing the 315 IBEW members at the nine manufacturers into IBEW 1245. Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas is coordinating the merger of the two locals as well as contract negotiations for the new members, who are currently working under contracts negotiated by IBEW 2131.

Serna, 38, will represent the new members in day-to-day matters and introduce them to IBEW 1245's structure and method of operating. Members

at these locals will be entitled to a representative on the IBEW 1245 Advisory Council, where the manufacturing seat has been vacant for over two decades.

These new IBEW 1245 members, working in plants from Sunnyvale to Richmond, are engaged in a variety of industrial processes, from manufacturing residential floor lamps to the machining of graphite heaters, molds, and crucibles. They include journey-level workers ranging from electricians and machinists to painters and maintenance personnel.

The nine employers are Advanced Carbon Products, Inc., Ansaldobreda, Inc., Borden Lighting, Jacobs Technology, Inc. and Sierra Lobo, Inc. (under one collective bargaining agreement), Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, NorthropGrumman Corporation, Trayer Engineering and Delta Star, Inc.

The largest of the IBEW-represented workforces is Delta Star, with 150 IBEW members. Delta Star manufactures electrical transformers and mobile electrical substations.

Members at Lockheed Martin Space Systems—perhaps the most recognizable of the employers—design, develop and test systems related to national security and also human space flight.

Business Representative Serna, who was initiated into IBEW 1245 in 2009, said he was happy about this opportunity to work for the union and represent its members.

Welcome aboard, Brother Serna! And welcome aboard members of IBEW 2131!



President Mike Davis, right, administers the oath to, from left: Mike Jesson, Craig Tatum, Cory Armstrong, Tanny Hurtado, Logan Jonas, and Jim “Hammer” Hayes.

Photo: John Storey

## Taking the oath

President Mike Davis administered the oath of office to several new Advisory Council members who were unable to attend the July meeting.

**Craig Tatum**, a 22-year IBEW member working at Merced Irrigation District, represents Irrigation District members.

**Cory Armstrong**, a 16-year IBEW member working at PG&E, represents members in PG&E Coast Valleys Division.

**Tanny Hurtado**, a 10-year IBEW

member working at Davey Tree, represents line clearance tree trimmers.

**Logan Jonas**, a 7-year IBEW member working at PG&E, represents members in East Bay Division of PG&E, Materials Distribution Department of PG&E, and Foster-Wheeler.

**Jim “Hammer” Hayes**, a 29-year IBEW member working at PG&E, represents members at Diablo Canyon Nuclear Generation Station.

**Mike Jesson**, a 22-year IBEW member working at PG&E, represents members in the De Sabla Division of PG&E.



The people who stand up for us at the bargaining table



IBEW 1245 negotiators gather at Weakley Hall.

Photos by John Storey

IBEW 1245 brought together union negotiators from many employers in November to discuss general strategies for bargaining.

“Professional representation is what members expect from the union in contract negotiations, and IBEW 1245 maximizes our expertise in negotiations by including both staff and rank-and-file members on bargaining committees,” said Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas.

“Bargaining has been very challenging in recent years, especially in the public sector, and we decided that bringing together the union negotiators from all these various employers would be a good way to share the latest information and get everyone on the same page,” Thomas said.

Senior Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer stressed to the negotiators the importance of remaining united as a bargaining committee.

“When you buy into being on a bargaining committee you buy into that

group and you support that group. You are one,” said Seyfer, who has been involved in negotiations for three decades, first as a union member at SMUD and later as a member of the IBEW 1245 staff.

Bargaining committee members will have particular interests and issues they will promote within the committee, Seyfer said, “but when the decision’s made ... nobody knows it was ever an issue because you are one when you walk outside of that room.”

A second critical issue, according to Seyfer, is note-taking. Enforcement of the contract, he said, often comes down to figuring out “the intent of the language from the last bargaining.”

“The way we figure that out at the end of the day is to pull out our notes. So you can pretty well imagine what that looks like if you didn’t take notes,” he said.

The notes of bargaining committee members are crucial if the union ends up in an “unfair labor practice” dispute

with the employer. They are also important in the event a new manager comes in and is unfamiliar with the bargaining that led to particular contract language. That new manager, Seyfer said, “has no historic reference” and can construct a new interpretation of the language,

rather than what was originally intended at the bargaining table.

“That’s problematic for us. So it’s paramount, we need to take notes,” Seyfer said. Even though the notes by one individual bargaining committee member may be incomplete, combined

Bill Bryan and Chris Harmon, Frontier Communications, and Gerry Campbell from the City of Willits.



Kenny Lawson, Frontier Communications, gives it some thought.



D.J. Miclette, left, and Chris Christianson, Resort Improvement District #1, Shelter Cove



Jeff Torres, City of Redding Electric



with the notes of other members the union can construct a good picture of the intent of the bargaining.

## Best Alternative

The conference gave attendees an opportunity to refresh their skills in many aspects of general contract negotiations, including the process of determining the “best alternatives” when there is conflict between employee and employer contract proposals, Thomas said.

A session led by Thomas focused on federal and state constitutional law relevant to all of the union’s bargaining units. Thomas also updated attendees

on recent State Assembly legislation, both pending and already signed into law.

Members had opportunities to network with one another during the conference, allowing them to discuss and compare bargaining issues they face, or may face, with their respective employers. The conference included 75 attendees from various public sector employers, as well as the private sector employers under Seyfer’s purview.

Negotiating committee members affirmed their desire to hold future training sessions to help them stay informed of the latest developments.



Eric Ohlson, Sacramento Regional Transit



(Right) Tami McCollum, Truckee-Donner Public Utility District



Ray Thomas gives a legislative update.



Chuck Gazso, Truckee-Donner Public Utility District

## Sunoptics workers choose IBEW 1245



Sunoptics workers and IBEW organizers celebrate the election victory.

Photo: Eileen Purcell

## Victory!

In a classic union representation election that pitted anti-union managers and consultants against an energetic organizing team, workers at Sacramento-based Sunoptics chose to be represented by IBEW Local 1245.

The vote, conducted under the supervision of the National Labor Relations Board on Jan. 10, was 48-29.

“The feeling is indescribable,” IBEW Organizer Jennifer Gray said after the vote results were announced. “I feel like justice has been served.” Gray, an active member-organizer at IBEW 1245 before joining the IBEW’s International staff, assumed leadership of the Sunoptics organizing drive in October.

The drive was triggered by two Sunoptics employees who contacted the IBEW last year after learning that their parent company, Acuity Brands, had IBEW-represented employees at five other locations around the country. Their issues, Gray said, included safety, frequent schedule changes, lack of training, and “a complete lack of respect.”

## “We’ve actually done this”

With assistance from IBEW 1245 Organizers Fred Ross Jr. and Eileen Purcell, Gray began assembling a Volunteer Organizing Committee (VOC) of Sunoptics employees. One of them was Pam Pendleton, a swing-shift welder for the company who spent hours campaigning on her lunch break and making house visits during the day. Her main concern was “mistreatment of everyone, including myself.”

“I felt something I hadn’t felt before,” she said of the election victory. “I got really emotional, we’ve actual done this, this is actually happening. I’m excited about what’s going to come after this victory.”

Another employee active on the VOC was Todd Davis, an assembler with two-and-a-half years at Sunoptics.

“One of the things we’ve been fighting for is representation and respect,” he said. One of his major concerns was the company’s “arbitrary and discriminatory policy on wages.” He said he looked forward to the union having a place at the table “and negotiating for what we need: respect and a livable wage.”

The VOC was the primary vehicle for spreading the word about the IBEW. VOC members circulated authorization cards among fellow employees during all three shifts. In all, 77% of the workforce signed cards.

When the company refused to recognize the union voluntarily, Gray and

Ross filed a petition for election at the San Francisco office of the National Labor Relations Board on Nov. 26.

The VOC continued to grow as more employees ignored management threats and threw themselves into the campaign by distributing union leaflets—in Spanish and English—and talking to fellow employees. Over 50 employees wore IBEW shirts at work.

## Organizing Stewards

The successful campaign reflects a conscious strategy by IBEW 1245 over the past several years to recruit and train “member organizers” who can provide crucial legwork during organizing drives. Member organizers—now officially known as organizing stewards—have provided assistance to unions under attack in several other states. The Sunoptics campaign gave many of them a chance to help their own union in a campaign closer to home.

“I’m so proud the workers got what they deserved,” said Organizing Steward Jammi Juarez after the vote count was announced.

“It’s a hard feeling to describe, and I think no matter how many times you go through it, it’s undescribable,” she said. “It’s just joy.”

The victory was made sweeter by the hard work that went into achieving it, including house visits, weekly general meetings, weekly VOC meetings, and countless shifts leafleting outside the plant. Organizing stewards active in the campaign, among others, were Rene Cruz Martinez and Harold Blackshire Jr. of PG&E, Eric Sunderland of SMUD, and Cruz Serna, formerly of PG&E and now an IBEW 1245 business representative.

“I am extremely proud of the hard work our organizing stewards put into this campaign,” said Business Manager Tom Dalzell. “This victory is not only great for the workers at Sunoptics, it shows that our focus on organizing is making us a stronger union.”

Although face-to-face contact was the heart and soul of the campaign, the union also used social media. When management spread laughably false information about the union, IBEW 1245 posted factual documents – in English and Spanish – on a specially-created “Sunoptics Workers United” webpage and on Facebook.

Leadership was also provided by IBEW Ninth District Representative Bob Brock, who came down from Montana twice to consult on the campaign.

Truth won out in the end, when a majority of employees rejected management’s scare tactics and decided they wanted to face the future together—as a union.



## News roundup

We have been dealing with wage progression, transfer, layoff and equipment issues with most of the tree trimming companies. It is hard to understand why the companies allow these issues to persist since they know that morale plays an important role in productivity.

We have distributed the 2014 soccer sign-up sheets and are well along in planning for the 2014 tournaments, which will be held in Merced on April 12 and in Fairfield on April 26. With each year the tournaments have improved, as well as the satisfaction expressed by the participants.

**Asplundh Tree Expert:** The final Grievance Review Committee (GRC) meeting has yet to be determined. All open matters are being handled directly with Mike English, Vice President.

**Davey Tree Surgery:** The last GRC meeting was held in Pinole on Dec. 4, 2013, and also one in Benicia. All matters are being worked out through the Committee. We are expecting responses regarding all open matters.

The company informed us of the loss of the Transmission contract on PG&E with the exception of the North Bay work. All Golden Gate, Peninsula, Mission, East Bay, De Anza, Santa Clara, and Central Coast will be performed by Wright Tree Service from Iowa. All impacted members have rights to follow that work. All remaining paid time off (PTO) has been paid to all employees system-wide; now all employees will have vacation time calculated from their hire dates.

**Mario's Tree Service:** Mario has been doing some work for Wright Tree Service in the Lake County area. He says work is slow but he is hanging in there, hoping for a better year.

**Martinez Utility Services:** Has laid

off its work force due to cessation of the PG&E ORR Program. We are getting complaints that vacations were not paid off correctly, underpaid Thanksgiving holiday pay, incorrect pay rates and strange deductions on pay stubs. The layoff occurred Dec. 30. We are investigating and raising issues with the company as we verify them. The company claims they are pursuing other work and hope to bring back as many as possible as soon as possible.

**Mountain Enterprise Inc.:** The company agreed to move all personnel work on Liberty Energy property to the Master Agreement. During the month of December the company informed us of acquiring the Transmission contract in the Sacramento Valley on PG&E. This change will put those members into the Master Agreement.

**Osmose Pole Test & Treat:** We have an upcoming arbitration set for late January. The company work picture has continued to pick up. Crews are currently working throughout the entire system.

There have been a few issues regarding vacation and holidays paid. These issues were taken care of; otherwise everything is pretty quiet.

**Synergy:** We have been in contact with crews in the San Jose area and it looks like they are starting to receive their medical insurance cards from Lineco. Right now the company is contracting out to Utility Tree Service in San Jose and Bay Area.

**Trees Inc.:** The SMUD South Unit meeting is being held as scheduled on the first Thursday of each month. Officers have been nominated and are now seated. A GRC has been scheduled for Jan. 10 in Sacramento. All open griev-

ance matters will be discussed at this meeting.

It also looks like Trees Inc. kept all of their areas or contracts of unit work on PG&E properties. They lost the Transmission work in their area, about 13,000 units. There are a couple of grievance issues to take care of regarding wrongful layoffs and terminations. We will be addressing these issues with management in January.

**Utility Tree Service:** The work picture has continued to hold strong in Yolo, and Solano. Vacations are once again being honored system-wide with the New Year. The overtime has halted due to the targets being hit from last year. All work is now being performed in close proximity in the Valley and the Bay.

We had some layoffs in Bakersfield area; about seven crews were laid off for lack of work because it's the end of the year. The work should pick up as the new year begins and hopefully the people that were laid off will be brought back to work.

**Wright Tree Service:** We held Grievance Review Committee in Sacramento.

## Soccer/ Fútbol 2014

Merced: April 12

Fairfield: April 26

## Resumen de noticias

### Podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas

Hemos estado manejando asuntos relacionados con los ascensos salariales, transferencias, despidos y problemas con los equipos, con la mayoría de las compañías de poda de árboles. Es difícil comprender por qué las compañías permiten que estos problemas persistan, sabiendo que la moral de los empleados juega un papel importante en la productividad.

Hemos distribuido las hojas de inscripción de 2014 para el fútbol y se ha

avanzado bastante en la planificación de los torneos de 2014, los cuales se llevarán a cabo en Merced el 12 de abril y en Fairfield el 26 de abril. Los torneos mejoran cada año, al igual que el nivel de satisfacción de los participantes.

**Asplundh Tree Expert:** Aún no se ha definido cuándo se llevará a cabo la última reunión del Comité de Revisión de Quejas (GRC). Todos los asuntos pendientes están siendo discutidos directamente con el vicepresidente Mike English.

**Davey Tree Surgery:** La última reunión del GRC se llevó a cabo en Pinole el 4 de diciembre de 2013 y también hubo una reunión en Benicia. Todos los asuntos se están manejando a través del Comité. Estamos esperando respuestas para todos los asuntos pendientes.

La compañía nos informó sobre la pérdida del contrato con PG&E, con excepción de los trabajos en North Bay. Todos los trabajos de Golden Gate, Peninsula, Mission, East Bay, De Anza, Santa Clara y Central Coast serán ejecutados por Wright Tree Service de Iowa. Todos los empleados que se vean afectados por esto, tienen derecho a continuar con esos trabajos. Todo el tiempo libre con pago (PTO) que estaba pendiente ha sido pagado a los empleados a lo largo del sistema; de ahora en adelante las vacaciones de todos los empleados se calcularán en base a la fecha en que comenzaron a trabajar.

**Mario's Tree Service:** Mario ha estado ejecutando algunos trabajos para Wright Tree Service en el área de Lake County. Dice que el trabajo ha estado lento pero que continua en el sitio y espera que este año sea mejor.

**Martinez Utility Services:** Todos los empleados han sido despedidos ya que finalizó el Programa PG&E ORR. Hemos recibido quejas de que las vacaciones no se pagaron correctamente, que el pago correspondiente al Día de Acción de Gracias fue menor de lo que correspondía, que hay tarifas de salarios incorrectas, y que aparecen deducciones extrañas en los talonarios de pago. Los

## Shop Steward Training

### Outside Construction / Line Clearance Tree Trimming



Shop stewards give up a Saturday to sharpen their skills in representing members.

Photos by John Storey



Carl Lamers, business rep for Line Clearance Tree Trimmers.

From the basic question "What is a union" to specific pointers like "Avoid favoritism," IBEW 1245 shop stewards in Outside Construction and Tree Trimming got a refresher course on representing members during a training conference on Nov. 16 at Weakley Hall in Vacaville.

Business Manager Tom Dalzell kicked things off with his perspective on the "state of the

January – March 2014



despidos se realizaron el 30 de diciembre. Estamos investigando y haciendo preguntas a la compañía mientras verificamos los despidos. La compañía sostiene que están buscando más trabajo y esperan contratar de nuevo a la mayor cantidad de empleados posible, lo más pronto posible.

**Mountain Enterprise Inc.:** La compañía ha acordado que todo el trabajo de personal en las propiedades de Liberty Energy se transfieran al Acuerdo Maestro. En diciembre, la compañía nos había informado que ganaron el contrato de transmisión de PG&E en Sacramento Valley. Con este cambio, esos miembros estarán ahora bajo el Acuerdo Maestro.

**Osmose Pole Test & Treat:** Se ha programado un arbitraje para finales de enero. El panorama de trabajo de la compañía continua mejorando. Actualmente las cuadrillas están trabajando a lo largo de todo el sistema.

Ha habido algunos problemas en cuanto a las vacaciones y a los días festivos con pago. Estos asuntos ya han sido resueltos. De resto, todo está en calma.

**Synergy:** Hemos estado en contacto con las cuadrillas en el área de San Jose y aparentemente han comenzado a recibir sus tarjetas de seguro médico de Lineco. Actualmente la compañía está subcontratando a Utility Tree Service en San Jose y Bay Area.

**Trees Inc.:** La reunión de la Unidad SMUD South se llevará a cabo tal como

fue planificada, el primer jueves de cada mes. Los delegados han sido nominados y ya han sido designados. Hay un GRC programado para el 10 de enero en Sacramento. En esta reunión se discutirán todos los asuntos pendientes

También parece que Trees Inc. logró mantener todas las áreas o contratos de trabajo unitario en las propiedades de PG&E. Perdieron el trabajo de transmisión en su área, unas 13000 unidades. Existen algunos reclamos pendientes sobre despidos injustificados. En enero discutiremos estos asuntos con la gerencia.

**Utility Tree Service:** El panorama de trabajo continúa robusto en Yolo y Solano. En el nuevo año, las vacaciones nuevamente se están cumpliendo a lo largo del sistema. Se ha suspendido el sobretiempo ya que se alcanzaron las metas programadas del año pasado. Actualmente todos los trabajos se están ejecutando en las cercanías del Valley y Bay

Ha habido algunos despidos en el área de Bakersfield; unas siete cuadrillas fueron despedidas por falta de trabajo ya que es fin de año. Los trabajos deberían comenzar a aumentar con el nuevo año y esperamos que se contrate de nuevo a las personas que fueron despedidas.

**Wright Tree Service:** Se llevó a cabo una reunión del Comité de Revisión de Quejas en Sacramento.



IBEW 1245 members Juan Cervantes and Jeff Rubino worked along Rancho Road in Stockton last fall, clearing trees from PG&E power lines. Both men are foremen for Trees Inc. Cervantes is an 11-year IBEW 1245 member and Rubino is a 17-year IBEW 1245 member.



Juan Cervantes



Jeff Rubino



*Figone recognized for 25 years of IBEW membership*

Michael Figone, left, receives a watch from Business Rep Junior Ornelas in recognition of his 25 years of service to IBEW 1245. Figone works for Davey Tree Surgery Co. The award was presented at the regular meeting of Unit 4417, Placerville Davey Tree.



International Rep Charles Randall discusses IBEW structure.

union.” The roles and responsibilities of shop stewards were covered by Organizer Eileen Purcell and Business Reps Carl Lamers, Junior Ornelas and Abel Sanchez.

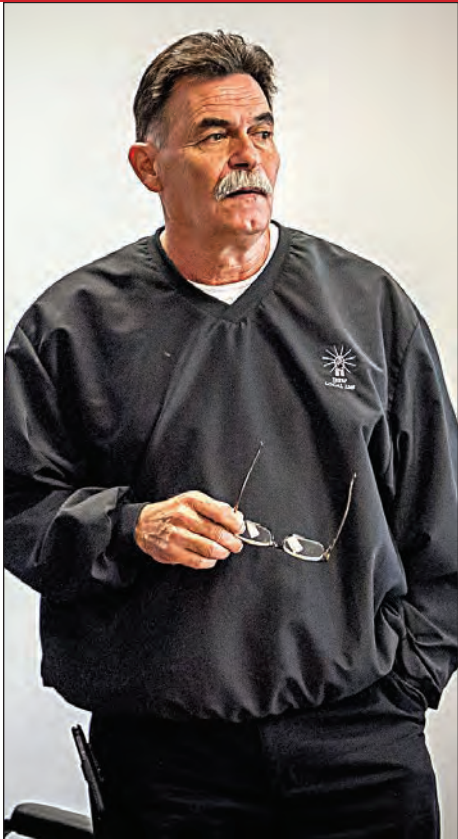
IBEW International Representatives Charlie Randall and Tracy Prezeau discussed key issues concerning grievances and legal rights, including the Utility Reporter

“seven tests” for determining if discipline is for “just cause,” and the Weingarten Right to representation by a union steward in a disciplinary situation.

IBEW 1245 staff members Ralph Armstrong and Liz McInnis discussed the importance of knowing the contract, and attorney Alex Pacheco discussed

techniques for conducting interviews, including drilling into the “five W’s” (who, what, when, where, why) and the importance of good note-taking.

Mike Cottrell explained the role of the IBEW 1245 Executive Board in union affairs. The program was moderated by Senior Assistant Business Manager Ron Cochran.



Abel Sanchez, business rep for Line Clearance Tree Trimmers.



## Members honored for valor

Two IBEW 1245 members at the Lassen Municipal Utility District were recognized on Nov. 20 for their unique contributions to the community.

Receiving the honors were Craig Lima, a troubleman with LMUD and 36-year IBEW member, and Cindy Elliott, a fieldman with LMUD and 38-year IBEW member.

LMUD praised the employees for going “above and beyond their everyday job duties” and giving “selflessly to the community they serve.”

Craig Lima was presented with a certificate of appreciation from the Susanville City Council and the Susanville Police Department for his part in helping to apprehend three armed robbers.

On the afternoon of Oct. 18, three men armed with a handgun attempted to rob a local Susanville retailer, said Susanville Chief of Police, Tom Downing.

Lima was in his LMUD service truck and listening to the scanner when the 911 call came in. At the same time a vehicle matching the description with three men passed Lima, who turned his truck around and gave pursuit.

He called 911 and informed dispatch that he was following the suspects, giving details about their location. According to Chief Downing, it was Lima’s quick thinking that led the police to the suspects.

“If it hadn’t been for Craig, I believe these guys would have gotten away—we have him to thank,” Downing said. The suspects were arrested and have since pleaded guilty to armed robbery.

Lima was presented with a certificate that reads:

“In recognition of your outstanding

performance in assisting the Police Department in locating the suspects who committed the robbery on October, 18, 2013 at a local retailer. We, the City Council of the City of Susanville, offer our sincere thanks for your quick thinking and responsible action for the benefit of public safety.”

Elliott received the honor of Susanville Volunteer Firefighter of the Year from the Veterans of Foreign Wars/American Legion – Thomas Tucker Post 204. Each year the organization honors local law enforcement and first responders for their service to the City of Susanville.

Elliott was chosen for her exceptional service to the citizens of Susanville. Elliott, who has been a volunteer firefighter for the past 8 years, said she was humbled by the award.

“It’s such a wonderful honor. I was very surprised by the award,” Elliott said. “I feel the whole fire department shares this with me.”



(Left) LMUD Fieldman Cindy Elliott, left, receives honor from Lt. Scott Head of the Susanville Volunteer Fire Department. Photos courtesy of LMUD.

(Right) LMUD Troubleman Craig Lima, center, is honored by Susanville Mayor Rod DeBoer, left, and Susanville Chief of Police Tom Downing.



## First agreement wins approval 89-0

After seven months of negotiations, City of Lompoc employees gained their first labor agreement under the IBEW 1245 flag.

On Nov. 20 the employees voted 89 to 0 to ratify the agreement that was negotiated by the employees’ new bargaining committee, assisted by IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager Ray Thomas and Business Representative Pat Duffy. On Dec. 17, the Lompoc City Council approved the Memorandum of Understanding, as labor agreements are referred to in the public sector.

“We could not have achieved this first Memorandum of Understanding at the City of Lompoc without the leadership of both Chief Shop Steward Jaime Tinoco, and Business Representative Pat Duffy,” said Thomas. “Along with incredible support from our negotiating committee members, Jaime and Pat kept the employees updated every step of the way during negotiations.”

Employee representatives on the union’s negotiating committee, in addition to Tinoco, were Shop Stewards Shawn Wynne, Gary Silbaugh, Travis Kalin, and Dave Paretti, along with Adrienne Boyd.

After seven years of work furloughs, no salary increases, and CalPERS employee contributions, City of Lompoc employees finally received some help from the City in the 18-month MOU, which is effective July 1, 2013 to the end of 2014. Items obtained through bargaining included:

- 1% COLA
- 5% increase in base pay in exchange for 6% EPMC

continued on next page

## Taking democracy seriously

## Members influence irrigation district races

IBEW 1245 members took the democratic process seriously in recent elections for board members at the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts in Stanislaus County.

Some of the incumbents at MID and TID have shown little respect for the union members who keep the lights on in those communities. IBEW 1245 aimed to change the current dynamic by supporting candidates with a greater appreciation for the work performed by the Districts’ employees.

IBEW 1245 campaigners worked the phones and went door to door, making a difference in the Modesto race and putting Turlock board members on

notice that they can’t take their seats for granted in the future.

In Modesto, three new members were elected to the MID board: Jake Wenger, John Mensinger and Paul Campbell. IBEW 1245 endorsed Wenger and several IBEW 1245 members volunteered for his campaign. Wenger easily won the race for the District 4 seat.

IBEW 1245 was also heartened by the election of Mensinger. The union met with him during the campaign and helped him obtain the endorsement of the local labor council. Mensinger won easily in District 2.

IBEW 1245 did not campaign on

behalf of any candidate in the District 3 race that was won by Campbell, a retired banker.

Two incumbents at Turlock Irrigation District won re-election. The union will continue to reach out to District board members who show a willingness to take a reasonable approach to IBEW-represented employees.

Voter turnout was well below 20% in these two Stanislaus County contests, suggesting that a handful of votes can decide the outcome in such elections and that individual IBEW 1245 members who get involved can have a significant impact.



IBEW members mobilize for local irrigation district elections.



## Service Award: David Corn

Dave Corn, right, received his IBEW 1245 25-year service pin and watch at the regular meeting of Unit 3218, US Bureau of Reclamation. Presenting the award, left, was Unit Chair Murray Janisse.

“Dave has expressed that he would like to still be a dues-paying member, even now as a GS employee. What a champ,” said Janisse. “We could all learn from his example of a team player.”



## Lompoc, from page 14

- No more furloughs (84 hours per year)
- Doubling of stand-by pay (2 hours pay for every 8 hours of stand-by)
- Increase in meal money (from approximately \$9 to \$20)
- An additional holiday for Landfill personnel

- Increase in allowed banked ATO (accumulative time off) to 80 hours
- Increase in accumulative holiday time to 80 hours
- Ability to sell excess vacation of 40 hours
- Boot allowance every 12 months (was 18 months)
- New language on Union Steward release time

- New FLSA "Week Averaging exemption in order to benefit Shift Employees"
- Removal of the punishable sick leave language
- Sick leave will be counted as work hours under the FLSA work week
- New Agency Shop language

In another development, the IBEW

1245 Executive Board approved the appointment of Chief Steward Jaime Tinoco to a newly-created seat on the Advisory Council.

Congratulations to our new IBEW 1245 members at the City of Lompoc on their persistence in seeking IBEW representation and their unanimous ratification of their first IBEW labor agreement.



(Left) Gary Silbaugh, left, and Dave Paretti signed people in and handed out ballots for the ratification vote.

(Right) Susan Sitzler, left, John Daniel, middle, and Steve Mickelson were the two tellers and judge respectively who tallied the ballots and documented the official vote.

Photos: Pat Duffy



## Second chances make a difference

# The Path I Have Walked

By Phil Alleman

I am employed as an Electrical & Instrumentation Technician and know the Union has made a difference in my life as well as the lives of the employees where I work. I have participated in nine contract negotiation committees, which I believe have improved our working conditions and our employee benefits, and have made our place of employment a better place to work.

I will be retiring in 2014 after 37 years working as an Electrician. I have had some great opportunities working in this trade and have learned a lot from some of the best people in the trade. I am grateful to all of them and the time I spent with them in learning the electrical trade. I am also thankful to those individuals who took the time to look beyond my faults and shortcomings and gave me a second chance.

What do I mean by that? Let me explain.

Right out of high school in 1966 I volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army. By the end of that year I had orders for Vietnam. I lasted just two months in

country before being evacuated on a stretcher to the U.S. Army Fitzsimmons General Hospital in Denver. After four months of recovery I was given an Honorable Discharged and shipped out to the VA Hospital in Long Beach, CA for another four months of recovery.



Alleman speaks up at a Stewards Training Conference in Vacaville in 2013.

By the end of 1967 I was back in my home town and was seen as just another Vietnam Vet with anger issues. I did have issues which caused me a lot of trouble and got me in trouble with the law. And I paid for it.

Second chances come because there are individuals that see something in you that you don't see in yourself. They take a risk on you and believe you are worth it. They opened doors to me that I could have never opened myself. Never discount those small acts of kindness and the interest you take in those around you. Those acts really do make a difference when a man needs a second chance or just an encouraging word and you are that one person who believes in them more than they do themselves. It was just such an individual that took me on as an apprentice when others would not. He helped me to learn, in my opinion, the best craft there is.

We don't get through this life by ourselves. We might try – I know I did. A few years ago I asked for help from the VA in dealing with the PTSD from Vietnam I was never willing to admit. Again it was an individual who took an interest in me, who saw that help was needed and there was nothing in it for him, just the desire to help.

Such are the people of IBEW Local 1245 that I am proud to know and be a part of: those who are willing to stand

*Phil Alleman, who retires in January, is a 25-year IBEW member who has served as shop steward and bargaining committee member at Bella Vista Water District for over two decades. The union invited Brother Alleman to share his reflections on the union, life, and "second chances."*

next to you in good and bad times and call you "brother" and see you get a second chance to validate the trust they put in you.

I am going to continue my membership in IBEW Local 1245 when I retire by paying non-working dues just to stay in touch with the people and the craft I

enjoyed working in. I also plan on volunteering in my community with organizations that are on the lookout for those individuals who need someone to believe in them. I want to offer the same help to them that I received.

Second chances do make a difference; take the time to offer one.



Alleman visits a lighthouse, in his union jacket of course.

## Lighthouses: Guide through the Storm

I am a big Lighthouse fan. The mechanical and electrical systems are amazing and the craftsmanship back in the 1800s was first class and today's craftsman can admire and respect the work they did back then.

What is even more important is what the lighthouses were designed to accomplish: "Guide you through the storm to safe harbor." I know that is one of the reasons I am so in to them. I was one of those ships tossed by the rough seas of life and headed for destruction when I saw the light from individuals who cared enough to help me and guide me to a better life.

It is one of my plans in retirement to visit every lighthouse on the West Coast, and there are a lot of them. While I am at each one it is my goal to reach out to a complete stranger who is visiting the lighthouse and encourage them in any way I can and let them know how important they are. It is because of the "second chance" I received that I do this.

—Phil Alleman



Alleman test-runs a pump motor at one of Bella Vista's Pump Stations.

Utility Reporter



# Steep fines cloud future

**P**GE has made big strides in improving the safety of its natural gas system, but potentially steep fines stemming from the 2010 San Bruno explosion could jeopardize future progress.

That was the sobering assessment offered to IBEW 1245 members at Weakley Hall by Nick Stavropoulos, Executive Vice President for Gas Operations. The Nov. 18 meeting with over two dozen IBEW members and staff was the latest of several that he has held to hear the views of people working in the field.

"The first time I came here," Stavropoulos said, "it was fabulous. You laid out for me all the problems we were having. And I tell people, about 80% of the stuff we had to do and fix came out of that very first meeting that we had."

He cited several areas in which progress has been made in the company's natural gas system. He noted that in just two years the company had moved from the bottom quartile to the top quartile in its emergency response. The company has also reduced the backlog of Grade 2 leaks in the distribution system from 8,000 to about 500 in just 24 months, replaced 80 miles of transmission pipe, and verified the safety of 580 miles of pipe through hydro-testing or locating "traceable, verifiable records."

One problem the utility faces, he noted, is that less than a third of its gas transmission system can be inspected by in-line tools, a process commonly referred to as "pigging." That percentage is low by industry standards.

"Our goal is to make a significant portion of our line 'piggable,'" he said.

But the problems with PG&E's natural gas system have accumulated over a period of 30 years, he said. "I can't fix it overnight."

## BOARD SUPPORTIVE

Gas Crew Lead Welder and Advisory Council member Steve Segale asked if there had been pressure from within the company to cut back on the repair program in gas. Stavropoulos said there had been no cutback "in what we think we want to do."

Stavropoulos said the company's request for funds for gas work in the upcoming General Rate Case at the CPUC was "huge" compared to what the company had been spending annually three years ago, and "pretty much in line" with the increased spending levels of the past two years.



Adrianne Franks tells Stavropoulos that more Clerical training is needed.



George Unsworth, foreground, discusses training. Turning around to listen is Jack South. At the table in front, from left, are John Higgins, Kevin Knapp, Nick Stavropoulos and Jesus Soto.

Photos by John Storey



Dave Stout, left, discusses mobility within PG&E. Looking on, from left, are Mike Adayan, Craig Moeller and Travis Oglesby.

"To date the Board has been very supportive," said Jesus Soto, a Senior Vice President in Gas Operations who accompanied Stavropoulos to the Weakley Hall meeting. "So far there's been lots of internal support and the mission remains the same."

That mission, however, could be jeopardized by CPUC proceedings now underway to determine the size of the fine PG&E will face in connection with the San Bruno explosion in 2010 that killed 8 people and destroyed 38 homes.

Stavropoulos said PG&E already had \$2.4 billion in shareholder money "on the table," with the possibility that some of that could be offset by past and future company investments in upgrading the system. But some regulators have suggested levying penalties of up to \$4.4 billion.

IBEW 1245 Business Manager Tom Dalzell warned in a Monterey Herald op-ed piece in September that penalties of this magnitude would "set back badly needed job-creating investments" and delay or even derail steps needed "to modernize our energy system."

Under Stavropoulos, the company has ramped up hiring in a dramatic fashion, a necessary step long advocated by the union. In the past two years, over 400 IBEW-represented employees have been added to the gas department. But

it's difficult to see how this effort could be sustained if the CPUC ultimately adopts a \$4 billion penalty.

"We're not the government so we don't print money," said Stavropoulos. "We don't have \$4 billion cash in the bank."

A tentative decision by the CPUC staff is expected in January, with a final decision by the CPUC commissioners coming toward the end of the first quarter of 2014.

## TRAINING CONCERNS

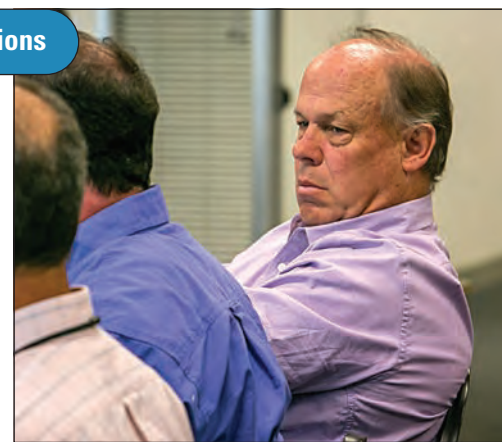
In a give and take that lasted some three hours, IBEW members weighed in on several issues. Training was a big concern.

"On the Clerical side, we have no training," said Adrianne Frank, a Senior Operating Clerk 1 and 34-year IBEW member. Supervisors, she said, are "trying to get information for us, but the people who are trying to train them are not knowledgeable about everything we do on the Clerical side."

"There's nothing that could be more supportive to the whole group—and certainly making the supervisor's life easier—than a well-trained clerk," Segale chimed in.

Gas Crew Foreman Jack South said that Clerical members drive a lot of the work at PG&E. The company may have one person trained, he said, but there's





Business Manager Tom Dalzell listens.

Jesus Soto: "The mission remains the same."

## Attendees

Sharon Clifford, Corrosion Mechanic  
 Dave Stout, Fitter  
 Mike Newsome, Gas Crew Foreman  
 Steve Segale, Gas Crew Foreman  
 Jack South, Gas Crew Foreman  
 Scott Sheridan, MEO  
 George Unsworth, Welder  
 Mike Adayan, GSR  
 Craig Moeller, GSR  
 Mike Scafani, M&C Coordinator  
 Jerry DeBaca, M&C Coordinator  
 Travis Oglesby, MEO  
 Mark Bailey, Gas Control Tech  
 Kevin Center, Gas Control Tech  
 John Blaylock, Gas Crew Foreman  
 Mike Robertson, Working Foreman A  
 Berta Aceves, Operating Clerk  
 Adrienne Franks, Operating Clerk  
 Keith Center, Gas Dispatch  
 Nuria Moss, Gas Dispatch

Steve Segale talks about the value of well-trained clerical workers. Looking on are John Blaylock, immediate left, and Steve Rayburn.



Putting the response in "responsive" – see page 18



Berta Aceves: "There are a lot of good clerks out there that teach the newer supervisors a lot."

"no backup" if the clerk is on vacation. In some cases people are bidding into local yards without the necessary background in the work.

"It's not their fault," said South. "They need a good training program."

Stavropoulos noted steps the company was taking to improve workforce training. One problem the company faces, though, is "churn."

"Only 25% of welders hired 4 years ago are still welders today," he said. "It costs a lot to train them, so keeping them in place is important."

That prompted a response from David Stout, a gas crew lead welder: "My generation gets bored. They don't like being stuck in the same constant job."

Stavropoulos acknowledged the importance of allowing people to develop in the company. He suggested one way to reduce churn was for the company to do a better job of assessing people coming in to make sure they were getting properly matched to "the type of work they want to do."

PG&E executives leading the meeting, in addition to Stavropoulos and Sota, were John Higgins, Senior Director Field Operations, Kevin Knapp, Vice President Gas T&D Operations, and Industrial Relations Director Steve Rayburn and members of his staff.

## On-line testing to accelerate PG&E hiring process

Human Resources is leading the PG&E transition to Internet-based testing for several selection tests used in the hiring and job bidding and transfer processes. The Physical Test Battery (PTB), Clerical Test Battery (CTB), Industrial Skills Test (IST), and the Work Orientation Inventory (WOI) are now being administered online.

These tests are taken by external applicants for employment and by current employees who may be bidding or applying to positions that require these assessments. Internet-based testing makes the testing process more accessible and will be more cost effective than the current paper-based testing process. The tests will be taken online through third-party websites, and the test results are confidentially maintained.

Outside applicants will be sent a test invitation by Recruiters as part of the hiring process. PG&E employees will continue to sign up for testing via My Learning and should complete the test(s) at work on a PG&E computer.

## New Health Account Plan starts at PG&E

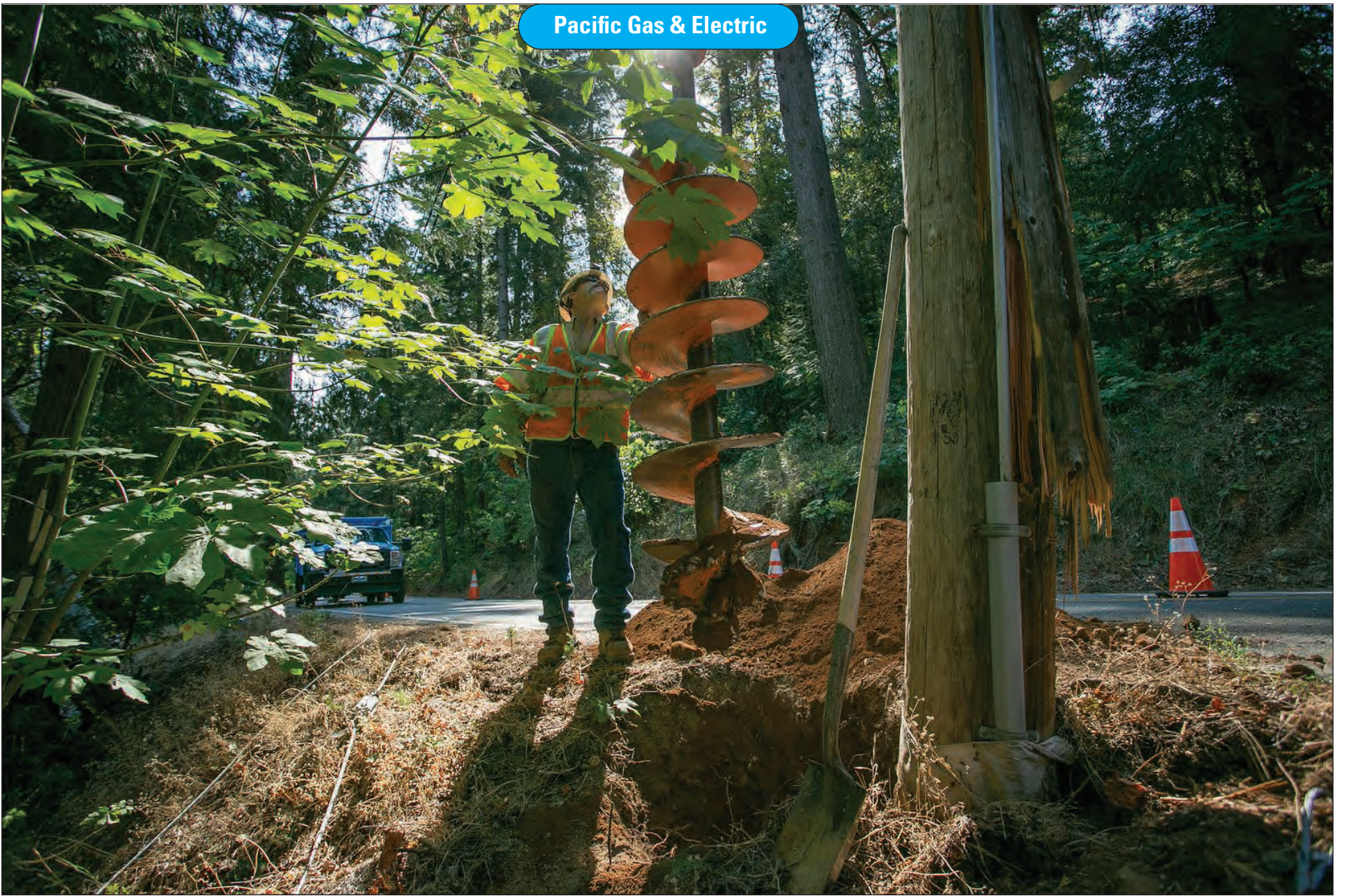
IBEW members at PG&E on Jan. 14, 2014 will begin their new Health Account Plan (HAP) through Anthem Blue Cross or Kaiser. Members who have questions are reminded to utilize the resources available through Provant to help navigate the new health plan.

Provant – a wellness provider jointly agreed to by IBEW and PG&E – will be the "one-stop shop" for health and wellness. Provant conducts on-site health screenings at PG&E locations to help identify health risks and set goals to keep you healthy.

Additionally, the health screenings earn you credits towards your Health Account, which helps offset medical expenses under the Health Account Plan. For more information on how the new plan works, medical plan billing, dental or vision plans, or questions about the health screenings and health accounts, contact Provant at 1-866-271-8144. Representatives are available to assist you Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. – 5 p.m. Pacific Time. You may also email them at [PGEsupport@provanthealth.com](mailto:PGEsupport@provanthealth.com).

PG&E also established [www.mypge-benefits.com](http://www.mypge-benefits.com) to provide details on the new health plan, including what to expect the first time you visit the doctor or pharmacy in 2014. The website has all of the free medication and lab test lists, as well as short videos on how the plan works. Family members can also view this site to help better understand how the new plan works.





Steve Bentley examines the scene where the new pole will go in, right next to the old one—a delicate operation.



Luis Sotomayor operates the boom.



Steve Bentley knocks dirt off the auger.





# Putting the response in “responsive”

Story by Eric Wolfe / Photos by John Storey

A utility’s reputation rises and falls on its ability to provide responsive service.

Meet the guys who put the response in “responsive.”

Last summer, July 25th to be exact, IBEW 1245 Linemen Steve Bentley and Anthony Albright were in the middle of a pole-set job when they were re-directed to deal with a burned and broken cutout that put 131 customers out of power.

“So we responded to that and got those customers energized,” said Bentley. In fact, they did it in less than two hours, from the time the T-man found it “to the time we got our parts and ran out there and made the repairs.”

The next day, Bentley and Albright teamed up with Luis Sotomayor, Adam Beene and Foreman Ray Fox to replace a pole that had been crippled by a wayward vehicle on a winding mountain

road outside of Nevada City.

“It’s very much a rearranged crew. Nobody’s working with their normal crew,” Bentley said.

Didn’t matter. When the call comes, you get the job done with the people you have. That’s part of what it means to be responsive. What followed was a precision demonstration of the craft.

They pulled the damaged pole back together to make it safe to work around. They augered a hole right next to it. They went up the road where the new 50-foot pole had been stashed earlier, hitched it to a truck and dragged it up close to where it was needed.

From the bucket, Albright and Beene were installing rubber so that the pole could be raised safely and not come into contact with the lines, which remained energized throughout the operation.

“We have extensive safety training

for working energized lines—our rubber glove work method,” said Bentley. He called the company’s rubber gloving safety record “historically fantastic” since the practice was first developed by the company in bargaining with IBEW 1245 in the early 1990s.

Raising the pole was a delicate operation, with Luis Sotomayor operating the grabber and the rest of the crew guiding the pole into place. Bentley described what would happen next:

“We’ll put the new cross-arm and a kingpin up on top, we’ll transfer the conductor to the new cross-arm and kingpin. The new configuration will have cutout brackets on the cutout arm, and we’ll install the cutouts on that,” he said. After that, a new transformer is installed on the pole. Job done.

That “responsive” slogan you’re used to hearing? This is what it looks like in action.



[ABOVE AND RIGHT] Anthony Albright, left, and Adam Beene install rubber.



Making sure it goes in straight, from left: Steve Bentley, Ray Fox and Anthony Albright. In back, Adam Beene.

[LEFT] Anthony Albright, left, and Adam Beene: working together in a precision demonstration of the craft.



## Rodeo partners

These IBEW members may have been working on a “rearranged” crew quickly put together for the Nevada City pole replacement, but they look like guys who’ve worked with each other their whole lives. One possible reason: Anthony Albright, Adam Beene and Steve Bentley have been practicing their skills on the rodeo circuit, competing at the International Lineman’s Rodeo in Bonner Springs, KS for the past two years, and also participating in rodeos in Hawaii and Los Angeles.

Anthony Albright, left, and Adam Beene, right, took 5th place in the Mystery Event #1, which turned out to be “Cut Hot Jumper.” Their teammate for this rodeo was Lineman Jon Paul Richard, a 14-year IBEW member. Bentley competed on another team, with George McNeill and Jim Moon.





## PG&E crews respond to Rim Fire



The Rim Fire, the third largest wildfire in California's recorded history, burned over 402 square miles. Overlapping the western boundary of Yosemite National Park, it was also one of the best-known fires in the world.

To IBEW 1245 members working for PG&E, it was a job. Working long hours under difficult conditions, PG&E crews removed damaged equipment and began the arduous task of replacing it, even as the fire continued to burn.

For additional photos from the Rim fire, go to [www.ibew1245.com/news-PGE/Rim\\_fire\\_10-21-13.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/news-PGE/Rim_fire_10-21-13.html)



## Re-enactment features grandson of one of the original builders

# Drum Powerhouse celebrates 100 years

By Bob Gerstle

PG&E's Drum Powerhouse in Alta celebrated its 100th anniversary on Nov. 26.

A small group of Title 200 hydro employees honored the occasion. Chad Mulock, hydro operator and 35-year IBEW member, performed the identical operations, at 10:30a.m., that occurred at the same time and on the same date in 1913.

What helped make this ceremony special was that Chad's grandfather, Charles Mulock, was instrumental in the construction of Drum beginning in 1912. Charles was an employee of Knight Foundry when he helped engineer and build many of the parts that made Drum the first hydro facility in the PG&E system. He later became a PG&E employee and worked at the powerhouse.

Chad has been working at Drum since 1980, and will retire early in 2014 after 36 years as an operator. Proud and

professional, his presence at Drum will be sorely missed.

The success of Drum Powerhouse paved the way for many future hydro

generation developments within the PG&E territory. It now has 5 units on line, producing 55 megawatts of electricity.



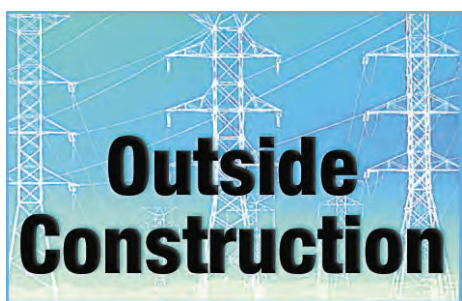
Charles Mulock (left), grandfather of Chad Mulock, is shown with his helper in 1928.

Photo courtesy of Chad Mulock



33-year member Chad Mulock throws the ceremonial switch 100 years after the plant first began operation. Photo by Bob Gerstle





## Wellington work winds down

By Ron Cochran

After 7 years of steady employment for hundreds of IBEW workers, Wellington Energy has come to the end of the Smart Meter Project on PG&E property, at least for now. They were laying off the remainder of their work force at the end of December and early January. It's hard to imagine the number of employees they kept working over the last 7 years with very few labor issues, and most of those were resolved amicably. It was a good run and a lot of our members benefited from the good jobs they provided.

There are several other large projects that have started and the overall man-hours continue to be at record level; 2014 looks to be another record year. The projected work for 2014 is on the same schedule as announced last month.

### Compliance Work

No new compliance prevailing wage work is being performed on non-union contractors performing work in our jurisdiction. We are, however, looking at non-signatory contractors performing electric only work on PGE property. The appropriate avenue to protest these awards are being followed.

### Grievances

There are no new grievances that have progressed beyond the first step which we deal with on a daily basis. Paycheck continues to be an issue when someone is let go or quits. These seem like weekly issues that continue to consume time to resolve.

The wrongful termination case with Osmose may be heading towards arbitration.

Siemens, a wrongful termination grievance was resolved.

### Outside Line Apprentice Interviews

The first week of December was spent interviewing over 900 applicants and scoring each applicant for potential apprentice positions if and when they become available in the future. This took many resources from all 3 IBEW Locals (Local 1245, 47, 396) and NECA contractors, as well as the Cal- Nev JATC. There are still approximately 100 more applicants that need to be interviewed before the application process opens up again. Those interviews should take place the first part of 2014.

The application process for Outside Utility Reporter



Ron Cochran

Line Apprentice program is usually open for one month, usually sometime in the first quarter of the year. Anyone interested in applying should check the website at [www.calnevjatc.org](http://www.calnevjatc.org).

### Organizing

In the month of December we signed the following contractors to the California Outside Line Construction Agreement:

- Americom Technology, Inc.
- National Conductors Constructors

We have been working with AccuBore to sign a Letter of assent. This was signed under Veteran Power Jan. 3, 2014. Will be making the switch sometime in January for Veteran Power to assume the civil electrical work through IBEW.

### Injured Workers Fund

The balance of the fund as of Dec. 17, 2013 was \$651,080.09. There were no claims paid out in December 2013.

### Richard Ingle

Richard Ingle returned to the Outside Line group the second week in

December and resumed the work he was doing as a Field Rep with his primary duties of performing job site visits and being a presence in the field and handling most of the issues that may come up while performing this important work.



Richard Ingle

### Apprentice Report

We currently have 354 Outside Line apprentices registered in our JATC program.

- 86 apprentices are working out of Local 1245
- 218 are working out of Local 47
- 9 are working out of Local 396
- 41 are unemployed (12 are actually eligible to work, 29 can't work: 9 on disability, 9 on leave, and 11 are suspended.)
- We have graduated 30 apprentices to journeyman lineman.
- We have indentured 92 Outside Line apprentices this year.



Outside Unit Chair Scott Hudelson, left, administers the IBEW oath to apprentices Bryce Noel, center, and Kevin Rust at the Jan. 8 unit meeting at Weakley Hall in Vacaville.

## 2014 Training Schedule and Special Events

- First Aid & CPR is the 2nd Saturday of every month at our Riverside and Sacramento facility.
- 2 Clay Shoots: Both on April 5, 2014, Dunnigan and Hilmar
- Soccer Tournament: April 12, 2014, Merced
- Soccer Tournament: April 26, 2014, Fairfield

### DISPATCH

As of December 31, 2013

	Total Calls
Lineman	71 1748
Apprentice Lineman	14 285
Equipment Man	5 254
Groundman	25 978
Substation Tech	4 76
Fabricator Tech	22 240
Cable Splicer	0 90
Total	141 3671

### OUT OF WORK BOOKS

As of January 2, 2014

BOOK #					
L-1	38	CS-1	6	F-1	3
L-2	76	CS-2	7	F-2	1
L-3	1	CS-3	3	F-3	7
L-4	164				
		GM-1	41	Sub-1	0
ES-1	11	GM-2	26	Sub-2	1
ES-2	12	GM-3	306	Sub-3	148
ES-3	17	GM-4	306	Sub-4	0

### Now on display at Weakley Hall

## Poem offers insight on the life of the tramp lineman

Bubba Avery had just arrived in Alaska, a 29-year-old journeyman lineman, when he discovered he was a poet. He'd recently finished a job in Wyoming. Being a tramp lineman, when the work went north he went north too.

"I was just sitting there and I told one of my buddies, 'Hand me a pencil.' There was a table sitting there," said Avery. And that's when he began to write. His subject was the world he knew best: "How tramp linemen think, how they are," said Avery. "I guess I just had something to say."

That was 1980. Three decades later, Bubba Avery's poem "The Tramp Lineman" occupies a place of honor on the wall of the IBEW 1245 Dispatch Office in Vacaville, where tramp linemen can still be found looking for that next job.

"Bubba is one of that rare breed of lineman poets," Business Manager Tom Dalzell told the Advisory Council on Oct. 26. "There have been cowboy poets, logger poets, oil field poets. Well, we have a lineman poet here."

Avery's poem never caught the attention of the Times Literary Supplement or Poetry Magazine, but it won quite a following among linemen who appreciated what it had to say about their lives.



Bubba Avery with his poem in the Dispatch office at Weakley Hall.

Photo: John Storey

Avery copyrighted the poem and started a business called Trampoline Enterprises. He began offering framed copies of the poem for sale. Today the poem can be found in union halls in Washington, Oregon, Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona.

He wrote another poem called "The Tramp's Wife." Both can be found in the Library of Congress. He wrote another poem about a lineman "too old to do the work anymore."

Avery—you can call him "Robert," but if you want him to answer you should stick with "Bubba"—went to

work for a contractor right out of high school making \$4.35 an hour. Back then, he acknowledged, "I didn't even know what a union was."

Later, trying to work in Houston, a contractor told him he had to be in the union if he wanted to work. "I said, 'How do I sign up?' They told me and I've been union ever since." Sticking with the union was a no-brainer.

"I went from \$4.35 an hour to \$8.02 an hour," he said. With a union, "You had good working conditions, good equipment, good rubber goods—a lot

continued on page 23



## Key organizer of epic contract fight

# Grimm honored for leadership

Union activist Mike Grimm was honored during the Advisory Council meeting on Oct. 25 for his years of service to the union, and in particular for his leadership role in the fierce contract battle with NV Energy in 2009-2010.

“He was the heart and soul of the NV Energy campaign,” said IBEW 1245 Organizer Fred Ross Jr. “He laid the groundwork on the front end and he continued to inspire workers to step up all the way through.”

Grimm served on the union’s negotiating team at NV Energy in 2003 and 2007. In 2009, when it was clear that NV Energy was pushing for brutal concessions, Grimm volunteered to help organize the union’s fight-back campaign.

Michelle Benuzzi, who served alongside Grimm as a member-organizer in the NV Energy battle, presented Grimm with a framed photo montage that recapped his career as a lineman, steward, negotiator and organizer.

“He’s an amazing man,” Benuzzi said.

## Unflappable

When the union was looking for members to help lead the charge at NV Energy, “it was Mike and Michelle who stood up,” said IBEW 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell. “They identified, recruited and mobilized the campaign action team.”

Purcell called Grimm “unflappable,” someone who could execute thoughtful strategies and serve as an “honest broker” in an environment of short tempers and high anxiety.

“It was never about his own ego,” said Purcell. “He was generous with his time, generous with his spirit, a unifying presence—that’s Mike Grimm.”



Although he might have appeared unflappable during the campaign, Grimm acknowledged there were times when his composure was challenged.

“I remember before one meeting, David Thieme said, ‘You don’t look so good.’ Eileen had to give me a little pep talk,” Grimm recalled.

“Those were tough times. People were frustrated. They were anxious. They were scared,” he said. “They needed a lot of time ... to get involved and speak their minds.”

## “A Real Milestone”

An important turning point for Grimm—and the campaign—was a rally held at the Washoe County Senior Center in late 2009. By this time Grimm had been brought onto the union staff as a temporary business representative.

“The rally was a real milestone,” he said. “We’d never done anything like that before. We didn’t know a lot about what we were doing.”



# Top finishers in Nevada gas rodeo

IBEW 1245 members at NV Energy competed in the recent National Gas Rodeo in Fairview Heights, IL.

The team was selected following a competition with other NV Energy workers in a series of timed events. They built a typical residential meter set, installed a gas service, connected it to a gas main and capped it; and performed a “speed dig” to the bottom of a 3-foot-

deep pit.

The five servicemen with the fastest combined times on those events, and selected to compete in the national Rodeo, were: Marty Kumle, a 15-year IBEW 1245 member; Mike Kennedy, 15 years; Stelios Marakis, 10 years; David Diaz, 5 years; and Kurt Davis, 4 years.

See them at the national rodeo on page 30.



IBEW 1245 members, from left, Stelios Marakis, Marty Kumle, Kurt Davis, Mike Kennedy and David Diaz won a Nevada gas rodeo competition and the chance to go to Illinois for the national competition.  
Photo courtesy NV Energy



Mike studies the poster honoring his service to the union. From left: President Mike Davis, Grimm, Business Manager Tom Dalzell, former Advisory Council member Michelle Benuzzi.  
Photos: John Storey

We didn’t know if anybody would show up.”

But people did show up—about 600 of them. With Grimm as moderator, and the entire bargaining committee on stage, and Purcell and Jim Lappin on guitar and banjo belting out ballads, the rally got people’s blood pumping.

“When you’re a negotiator you spend a lot of time cooped up in a room and you don’t have a lot of contact with the outside,” said Grimm. But the rally showed the negotiators “they had the backing of the members.”

That rally was followed in short order with the first-ever picket at NV Energy headquarters in Reno and a large rally and picket line at its Las Vegas headquarters.

## “Quiet Warrior”

“He was relentless, he was energetic, he was strategic and smart,” said Ross. “He’s a quiet warrior with a lot of guts. He wasn’t going to back down.”

Grimm knows the campaign didn’t achieve everything that the members wanted, but he believes it was important to have the fight, to make the stand.

“Even though it may not feel like you’re winning when you’re making the fight, you got to slug it out with them,” he said. Next time around, it increases

the odds that the employer will “treat you with respect.”

Grimm accepted the union’s framed gift at Advisory Council with typical modesty, thanking the union “for 35 great years.”

## Sandwiches for the picket line

*Mike Grimm’s father was a 40-year IBEW member at Reno’s Local 401. Mike shares this memory about growing up in an IBEW household:*

There wasn’t a lot of rah rah unionism, but dad always went to union meetings. There were a couple of times when he was on the negotiating committee. There’d be weeks at a time when they’d negotiate into the late hours. One time they went on strike. I remember mom in the kitchen making piles of sandwiches, and I said ‘Mom, I’m not going to eat all those sandwiches.’ And she said ‘Your dad’s on strike.’ I rode down there to deliver the sandwiches, but I had to stay in the car. I never did get to see the picket line. *MG*

## Four-year term provides security

# Members ratify NV Energy pact

IBEW 1245 members ratified a new agreement with NV Energy that provides a measure of stability for employees as the company prepared for transition to new ownership by MidAmerican Energy. The mail-ballot vote, counted Oct. 31, was 251-84.

The four-year agreement assures that contractual terms and conditions will remain in place as the new management team takes over.

The agreement provides wage increases of 2.5% in the first year, 2.5% in the second year, 2.75% in the third year, and a 2.5% lump sum payment in the fourth year.

Health benefits will change from a traditional PPO/HMO model to an HSA/HRA model of Health Savings

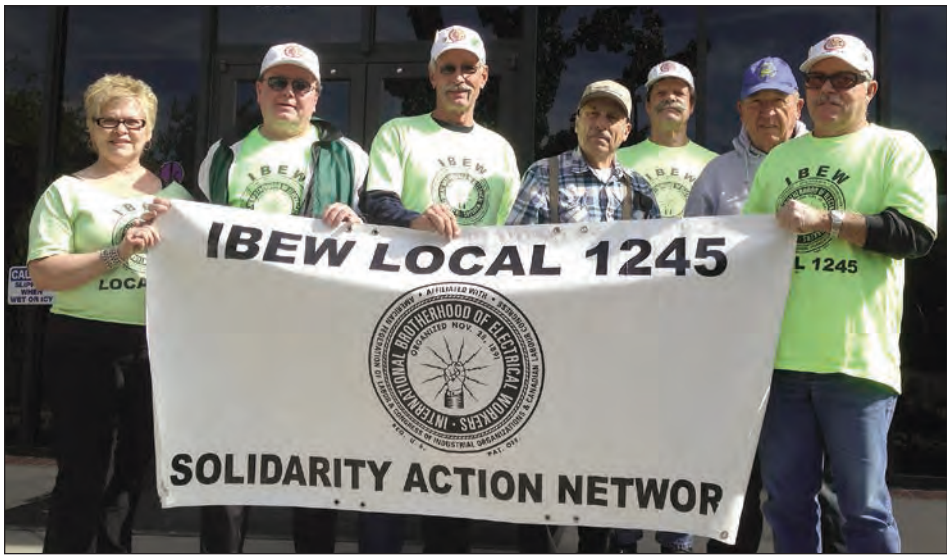
Accounts and Health Reimbursement Arrangements.

The ratified agreement contains these changes from the tentative agreement that members turned down previously:

- HRA/HSA delayed from January 2014 to January 2015
- Change in the sick leave buy-back calculations
- Company agrees to meet on inequities

Serving on the ballot committee were Reto Gross, Michelle Benuzzi, Adam Weber, Chris Gillespie, Senior Assistant Business Manager Dennis Seyfer, Business Representative Pat Waite, and Executive Board member Tom Cornell.





Members of the Reno/Sparks Chapter of the IBEW 1245 Retirees Club protest at the Reno office of U.S. Representative Mark Amodei.

## Nevada retirees protest shutdown

Members of the Reno/Sparks Chapter of the IBEW 1245 Retirees Club made their voices heard at the Reno office of U.S. Representative Mark Amodei.

The retirees were part of a labor-sponsored demonstration protesting the shutdown of the federal government.

The protest, sponsored by the Nevada AFL-CIO, came a few hours before Congress finally acted to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling.

The 16-day partial government shutdown, spearheaded by House Republicans seeking to overturn the Affordable Healthcare Act, came at a

steep cost. Standard and Poor's estimated it took \$24 billion out of the economy. The possibility of a debt default spooked investors on Wall Street and hiked interest rates.



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

Craig Bailey 22 years Walnut Creek, CA	Frederic Gambrell 23 years Alameda, CA	Louis Kemp 32 years Vallejo, CA	Fred Overbey 34 years San Diego, CA	Janice Sciarrotta 30 years Rackerby, CA
Anita Baladad 39 years Vallejo, CA	Douglas Garcia 38 years El Dorado Hills, CA	Randall Lagomarsino 23 years Murphys, CA	Everlyn Parangan 42 years Daly City, CA	Gloria Silva 29 years Sacramento, CA
Stephen Barnes 36 years Hilmar, CA	Jimmie Gay 18 years Pittsburg, CA	Marc Lombre 33 years Vallejo, CA	Anthony Parsneau 29 years Clarksville, TN	David Smith 5 years Fresno, CA
Roger Beam 40 years Los Gatos, CA	Connie Gibson-Royal 42 years Vallejo, CA	Robert Long 33 years Rohnert Park, CA	James Perry 35 years Meadow Vista, CA	Kathy Stiles 35 years Alameda, CA
Samuel Brown 38 years Sacramento, CA	Patrick Goodyear 31 years Los Osos, CA	Nick Martin 43 years Bend, OR	Edwin Pontious 24 years Homer, AK	Ronald Tognozzi 34 years Sebastopol, CA
Steven Carpenter 10 years Brisbane, CA	Tommy Guerra 2 years Bakersfield, CA	Kevin Martinez 30 years Sebastopol, CA	Vincent Revino 43 years San Jose, CA	Terry Van Galen 30 years Sonoma, CA
Stephen Cozzi 42 years Danville, CA	Susan Hall 4 years Vallejo, CA	Pamela Mays 39 years Antioch, CA	Edward Reynolds 44 years Bakersfield, CA	Stephen Ward 40 years Templeton, CA
Daniel Darby 39 years Altaville, CA	Elaine Harp 10 years Chico, CA	S McDaniel 3 years El Dorado, CA	Virginia Risser 29 years Concord, CA	Stuart Weaver 32 years Morro Bay, CA
Aaron Dixon 15 years Oakland, CA	Donald Hawes 33 years Los Molinos, CA	Kenneth Mescher 30 years Shingle Springs, CA	Patrick Sanderson 18 years Saint Peters, MO	Darrell Whitley 40 years Greenville, CA
Devoir Elias 39 years Oakland, CA	Ronald Highlander 16 years Felton, CA	Louis Meyi 43 years Vallejo, CA	Guy Wierman 12 years Fresno, CA	
Gustavo Felix 34 years Paso Robles, CA	Cary Hopking 13 years Marysville, CA	Steven Moore 38 years Oroville, CA		
Guillermo Flores 38 years Roseville, CA	Charles Hula 26 years Tracy, CA	Diann Nelson 17 years Elk Grove, CA		

Utility Reporter

## IBEW 1245 at CARA Convention

IBEW 1245 stood in solidarity with retired union members at the 10th annual convention of the California Alliance for Retired Americans.

Staffing the IBEW 1245 booth were Ken Rawles of the Santa Rosa Chapter of the IBEW 1245 Retirees Club and IBEW 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell.

At the convention, delegates set priorities for 2014, including:

- Supporting efforts to win universal, single-payer health care, state and nationally
- Preserving and strengthening Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and stopping efforts to cut benefits
- Fighting to restore services and benefits in the 2013-14 California budget and work toward a fair and just budget process that includes new revenues that focus on corporations and wealthy individuals paying their fair share in 2013 and beyond.

The convention also set priorities on prescription drug benefits, long term

care, education around the Affordable Care Act, protecting pensions and retirement benefits, among other issues.



IBEW 1245 Retiree Club activist Ken Rawles, right, and IBEW 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell staff the union's table at CARA's 10th annual convention.

## Retiree Club Meeting Schedule

You can find the specific dates for each month at [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 Com-

munity, 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, 11:00 a.m. lunch, 11:30 a.m. meeting, Dini's Lucky Club, 45 N. Main St., Yerington, NV.

**Carson City Chapter:** 4th Thursday each month, 9:00 a.m., Grandma Hattie's Restaurant, 2811 S. Carson St., Carson City, NV.

**Winnemucca Chapter:** 4th Wednesday each month, 11 a.m., Round Table Pizza, 1043 W. Fourth St., Winnemucca.

## Tramp, from page 21

better than what I was used to."

Safety was another big issue for him. "When I first started the life expectancy of a contract lineman was about 7 years without being burned or killed. It was a pretty dangerous trade. Still is, but it was really bad back then," he said.

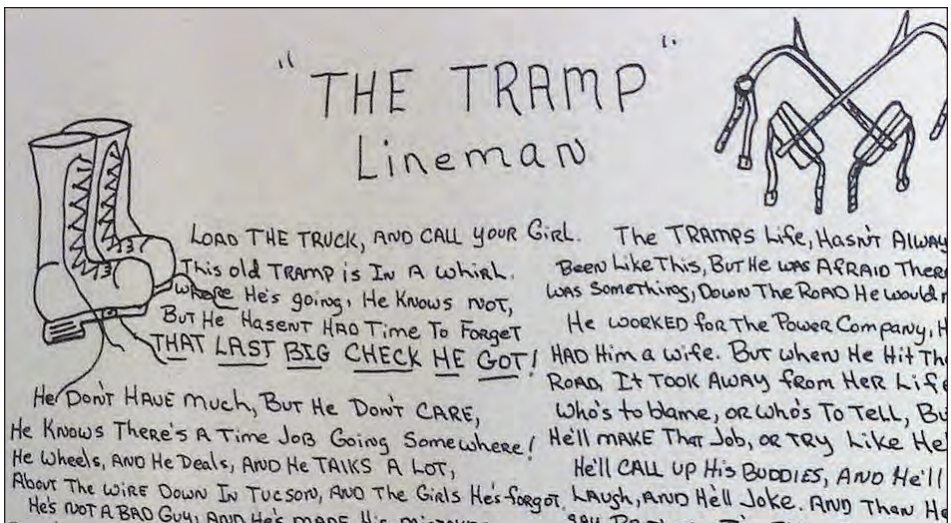
Avery was initiated into the IBEW in 1973, working out of Local 66 in Houston. Eventually he wound up with IBEW 1245, where he won election as

secretary of the Outside Unit and was later recruited to run for the Outside seat on the Advisory Council.

He's not an attention-seeking sort of guy, but he thought it was important to do his part for the union.

"Somebody's got to carry it on," he said. "We need to get people involved."

Next time you visit Vacaville, come on into the Dispatch Office, just inside the main entrance to Weakley Hall, and check out the "Tramp Lineman" for yourself.



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



# Providing hope, help, happiness

By Bryan Carroll

The Community Fund is a way for IBEW 1245 members to assist local charities and community organizations. (Political and religious causes are not eligible.) Groups are nominated by a majority vote at your local unit meeting, with final approval by the IBEW 1245 Executive Board.

## East Bay Clerical Unit 2301

Member Clara McAfee-Evans made two requests of her unit in October 2013. One was for approval of a \$250 donation request for The Mary Ann Wright foundation. The foundation has fought hunger and homelessness in Oakland since it began out of Mary's kitchen in 1980 and now works to do the same globally as well. The second request was for a donation request of \$250 for Eura-Dell's Court. The Court helps Oakland's underprivileged youth by encouraging higher education and leadership skills.

## San Luis Obispo/DCPP Unit 1220

In November, Mike Kellerman requested that \$250 be donated to Jack's Helping Hand. Jack's helps children who are facing extreme illness and disabilities by covering costs that exceed the family's financial ability. Jack's Helping Hand was founded by the Readys, parents of Jack who passed away after a 3-year battle with brain cancer in 2004. You can learn more about the many good works done by this group at [www.jackshelpinghand.org](http://www.jackshelpinghand.org)

## Susanville Unit 4012

In October 2013 the Susanville unit requested a \$250 donation to the Toys for Tots program. This famous program

provides gifts for area children whose families cannot afford Christmas presents. This donation will help Lassen County families. The unit also requested \$250 to Crossroad Ministry's annual holiday dinner and food basket program. This local group helps to feed the area's neediest residents and offers shelter as well.

## Bakersfield Unit 4724

Member Ruben Martinez, coach of the "America" soccer club, proposed a donation to the Bakersfield Youth Soccer League. The \$500 will help pay for balls, uniforms and the teams' registration. Good luck to America and Coach Ruben!

## Red Bluff Unit 4720

The Red Bluff Unit requested a \$500 donation for CareNet Red Bluff. CareNet specializes in providing care services and mentoring as well as education in life skills, finance and nutrition, for women in the Redding and Red Bluff regions. The money will go to help put on a community fundraiser for CareNet, with live music, face painting and a jump house.

## Stockton Trees Unit 4718 and Paso Robles Trees Unit 4727

Two units had the same great idea. After seeing the devastation caused by natural disasters around the world, both the Stockton and Paso Robles Trees units moved a combined \$1000 donation payable to the American Red Cross. Both motions passed unanimously! If you would like to donate individually,

please go to [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## Alturas (Frontier) Unit 4013

Member Todd Bagwell wanted to help the local Modoc High School Class of 2014 have a special and safe grad night. The unit approved his motion, and the \$500 request was approved by the Executive Board. The donation will help about 50 graduating seniors travel to Anaheim to spend a safe and sober night at Disneyland & California Adventureland. Have fun Modoc High Seniors!

## Winnemucca, Nev. Unit 3317

Member Mike Gregerson and the other unit members wanted to make sure the Chicks with Kicks truly represent Winnemucca when they travel to meet with 1500 other youth soccer players over a December weekend. They voted to request \$500 to support the team from AYSO Region 546 in their road trip to a big tournament in Foster City, CA. Have fun and good luck!

## City of Gridley Unit 4017

Mi C.A.S.A. tutoring program of Butte County was the recipient of a \$500 donation, thanks to the members of the Gridley Unit. Elisa Arteaga made the motion which was passed overwhelmingly. Mi C.A.S.A. is an after-school program that tutors and mentors K-6 children from a large labor camp community east of Gridley. High School students and credentialed teachers work with the kids on math and writing skills from 3-5pm Monday thru Friday. Learn more at [www.MiCasaeducation.com](http://www.MiCasaeducation.com)

## Concord Trees Unit 4716

What would high school be without band? The Cesar Chavez High School of Stockton won't have to live that horror anytime soon with proposals like the one John Simms of Unit #4716 made. \$500 went to the CCHS band boosters to help kids in the marching band, jazz band, guards, as well as the dance arts. The CCHS Titan bands placed either 1st or 2nd in four separate categories at the Lodi Band Review in November. Go Titans!!

## Reno Unit 3311

The Reno unit unanimously passed a motion for a \$500 dona-

tion to buy food to donate to Evelyn Mount. For years, Evelyn Mount has raised money to buy food to feed the low income and homeless around the Reno/Sparks area. Unit Chair Dan Moler and Recording Secretary Michelle Benuzzi bought non-perishable food items and hand delivered them to Evelyn.



Reno-Sparks Retiree Club President Ron Borst, right, presents a check to Evelyn Mount for community outreach. At left is Kathie Preston. Photo by Vicie Borst

## Reno/Sparks Retirees Unit

Not willing to be out done by their brother unit in Reno the retirees "passed the hat" and collected \$200 for Evelyn Mount's food bank for the needy. But that was only a start. The Reno/Sparks retirees moved to have \$500 from the IBEW Community Fund go towards the local Washoe County Meals on Wheels program. Once that motion was passed, this strong unit "passed the hat" again and raised another \$500 directly out of their own pockets to equal the donation from IBEW 1245! That's over a thousand dollars given to two local charities that feed the needy who live in their community. Thank you Reno Retirees for showing us all what the words Union and Community really mean! If you are interested in Washoe County Meals on Wheels check out [www.washoecounty.us/seniorsrv](http://www.washoecounty.us/seniorsrv)

## Selma Unit 1120

Mark Stockwell made a pitch to his fellow unit members in Selma that they knew how to hit. Mark moved to have the IBEW 1245 Community Fund donate \$500 to the Fowler High School Baseball Boosters so that they could have their team compete in a 4-day tournament in April 2014. Good luck Redcats!

## Burney (Frontier) Unit 4015

The Burney Frontier unit appreciate grade school science education and its impact on our world. That is part of the reason they passed a motion by Dan Washburn to donate three gifts of \$125 to 2nd, 3rd & 6th grade teachers at Burney Elementary School. Another \$125 donation was also made to the Small Wonders Preschool of Fall River. These donations will help purchase books and magazines for this eager group of students.

## Carson City Retirees Unit

The Carson City Retirees unit passed a motion to donate \$500 to the Douglas



IBEW members and family working on a project for Habitat for Humanity in Baypoint in November were Jose Artiga, IBEW 1245 Organizer Eileen Purcell, Business Rep Anthony Brown, Cassandra Whitcomb, Anthony Seamster, Business Reps Lou Mennel and Bryan Carroll, and Ray Capel.



County Backpack Buddies program. The program, which operates under the umbrella of the Minden Rotary Club Foundation, relies on donations to provide for in-need local children with a weekend backpack filled with food. Check out their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/notes/backpack-buddies-program/donate/585932794756432](http://www.facebook.com/notes/backpack-buddies-program/donate/585932794756432)

**East Bay Retirees**

The East Bay retirees group of Dublin did more than just talk turkey this fall. They request a donation of \$500 for the Alameda County Meals on Wheels program. The Meals on Wheels program delivers food to frail homebound seniors, helping these senior stay independent. If you are interested in learning more or donating to this group yourself, check [www.feedingseniors.org](http://www.feedingseniors.org)

**Hayward/Fremont Unit 2314**

The holiday season makes all of us take stock of how fortunate we are, and how others may not be as fortunate. That sentiment played a role with the Hayward/Fremont unit, which requested \$500 from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund for the Alameda County Food Bank. Donations provide low-income families and individuals with emergency food assistance and the most invaluable resource of all, hope. Interested in this group? Go to [www.accfb.org](http://www.accfb.org)

**Concord Unit 2316**

The Concord Unit didn't just think about their own Thanksgiving dinner, they thought about the less fortunate that have a difficult time getting dinner at all. Members made something good happen by requesting a donation of \$500 to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. If you would like to help make a meal for the neediest happen in those counties too, please check [www.foodbankccs.org](http://www.foodbankccs.org)

**Davis/GC Unit 3000**

GC Tower workers are used to seeing life from a birds-eye view. Seeing the devastation caused by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines from that perspective triggered a response from this Davis-GC unit. They passed a motion to request \$500 to support the Red Cross's Typhoon Haiyan response. If you have this same perspective, check out [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

**Napa-Trees Unit 4710**

The tree workers in Unit 4710 communicate in both English and Spanish every day. So, too, do students in the International Spanish Academy program at Harvest Middle School in Napa. This link prompted the unit's request for a \$500 donation to the dual immersion program. This special program is associated with Spain's Ministry of Education and relies on a half native English-speaking, and half native Spanish-speaking student body to help all its students learn a second language. Gracias Unit 4710!

Todos los días, los podadores de árboles de la Unidad 4710 se comunican entre sí tanto en español como en inglés. Lo mismo hacen los estudiantes del programa Academia Internacional de

Español (International Spanish Academy) en la escuela intermedia de Harvest en Napa. Este vínculo propició que la unidad solicitara una donación de \$500 para este programa de inmersión dual. Este programa especial está asociado con el Ministerio de Educación de España, y se apoya en un alumnado donde el lenguaje materno de la mitad de los estudiantes es el inglés, y el de la otra mitad es español, para así ayudar a todos los estudiantes a aprender un segundo idioma. Gracias a la Unidad 4710.

**Lakeport Unit 3715**

The Lakeport Unit passed two separate motions to support two local high school FFA (a/k/a Future Farmers of America) programs. The motions request \$250 each for Kelseyville and Upper Lake High Schools FFA programs. The FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

**Santa Rosa-Trees Unit 4719**

This unit passed a motion to request \$500 from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund in support of Atlético Santa Rosa Soccer Club with uniforms and gear. Thank you Santa Rosa Trees Unit 4719!

**Redding-Trees Unit 4419**

Unit 4419 supported their local schools and athletics in one generous gift. They passed a motion to request \$500 to get much-needed sports equipment for the Happy Valley Elementary School in Anderson. This equipment will be well used and appreciated by the 250 5th through 8th grade students.

**Sacramento Clerical Unit 3801**

During the holidays we all like to spend quality time with our friends and families. The Sacramento Clerical Unit 3801 has helped make sure that that



The Durham High School track and field team has new uniforms, thanks to Unit 3417.

quality time goes all the way until the end of life. They passed a motion to request a \$250 donation to the California Hospice Foundation. The donation will help the California Hospice Foundation work to improve access to quality end-of-life care and educate patients, families, the community and healthcare professionals about hospice and palliative care.

**Placerville -Trees # 4714**

While racing up trees and working on chain saw engines all day how would you think tree workers would want to give back to their community. Racing of course! The Placerville Tree unit #4714 has requested a \$500 donation be made to the American Quarter Midget Association. The AQMA is a program for kids ages 5-16 that teaches self-reliance, mechanics, sportsmanship and safe driving skills. These kids test these new skills out on the Prairie City OHV park in Rancho Cordova. Want more info? [www.aqma.org](http://www.aqma.org)

**Burney Unit 3213**

The Burney unit passed a motion in an effort to help seniors in their community. Their effort has secured a \$500

donation from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund to support the Intermountain Health Care Foundation to support their senior citizens center.

**Modesto Unit 2518**

Unit 2518 found two causes they felt strongly about. After some discussion of which to support they made the easy choice and voted in favor of supporting both. The two worthy organizations they want to support: \$300 for the Modesto Girls Softball League and \$200 for the American Diabetes Foundation.

**Livermore Unit 2315**

Even with conflicts winding down for American troops, the need to support those heroes who have gone into harm's way for this country is still great. With those thoughts in mind Livermore Unit 2315 requested approval of a \$500 donation to the Disabled American Veterans Organization – Vacaville. The goal of the DAV is empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them.

*continued on next page*



Unit 3712 teamed up with the Santa Rosa Retirees Club members to support Piner football in Santa Rosa.



More information at [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)

### Buellton Unit 1221

Members of Unit 1221 have never minded hard work or getting their hands dirty. So it was not surprise when one of their own proposed a donation for a garden at Oak Valley School. The motion passed unanimously. The \$500 donation will allow for a new crop of grade school children to learn some gardening techniques, eating the food they grow, and an appreciation for getting their own hands dirty.

### Santa Maria Unit 1216

The Santa Maria unit kept in line with their group's motto (Always be prepared—with S'mores) when they approved a unit motion to request a \$250 donation to the local Boy Scouts of America for camping supplies. The donation was approved by the Executive Board and area boy scouts promise to char a marshmallow in honor of Unit 1216.

### Santa Rosa Retirees

The Santa Rosa retiree unit passed a motion to support a local high school. The \$250 from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund will be donated to the Rancho Cotate High School wrestling team. The Santa Rosa retiree unit believes that athletics are an integral part of the total high school educational experience as well as a privilege and an honor.

### Fresno – Trees # 4712

This Fresno unit passed a motion to support another in a long line of good causes supported by the IBEW 1245 Community Fund: \$250 to CVEA in support of increased awareness about breast cancer and the fight against it. Thank you Fresno Unit 4712!

### Oakland Physical Unit 2311

Earlier in the autumn of 2013 the Oakland Physical Unit made the tough decision of which local charity they were going to support with their donation from the IBEW Community Fund. They chose a \$500 gift to the Boys and Girls Club of Oakland, whose mission is to develop our community's youth into positive contributors to society. Learn more at [www.bgcoakland.org](http://www.bgcoakland.org)

### Auburn Unit 3511

The Auburn unit looked for a charity that helped their community and reflected their values. They found the answer with a \$500 donation to the Hospice of the Foothills. Hospice's mission is to affirm life and promote dignity at the end-of-life by providing professional, comprehensive and compassionate care to the patients, their loved ones and the community. You can see what else they offer the community at [www.hospiceofthefoothills.org](http://www.hospiceofthefoothills.org)

### Eureka Unit 3111

When it comes time to give back to their community the Eureka Unit 3111 does it Texas style. The unit passed a motion by member Jim Walpole to give \$500 to District 2 of the California High

School Rodeo Association. District 2 represents 7 counties, so if you come out to any of their events you will see a high level of horsemanship only equaled by the level of sportsmanship!

### Roseville SMUD-Trees Unit 4717

With the World Cup around the corner, there was no better time to get involved in the world's most popular game. The SMUD-Trees unit must have agreed, since they have requested a donation of \$250 from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund for the Roseville Youth Soccer Club. Donations to the RYSC help offset some of the expenses of running the league and keep it affordable for more

*Correction: A previous report credited Units 3012 and 3217 with supporting a Blood Drive. The actual unit numbers were 3217 and 3218.*

people in the community. Hopefully we may see a few of these players in a World Cup event in the future.

### Bakersfield Unit 1112

The Bakersfield Unit requested a donation to support children, specifically children fighting cancer. They have requested \$500 from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund to go to Foundation ThinkAgain. Foundation ThinkAgain provides rehabilitation therapies to pediatric cancer and brain tumor survivors who continue to suffer due to the neuro-cognitive late-effects of cancer and cancer treatment. Want to learn more about Foundation ThinkAgain? Check [www.thinkagain.org](http://www.thinkagain.org)

### King City Unit 1213

The members of the King City Unit requested \$500 from the IBEW 1245 Community Fund to support the Legacy United Soccer Club's League Jamboree.



Assistant Business Manager Ralph Armstrong and Organizer Liz McInnis competed in a run for Sisterhood United for Journeymen Linemen, an organization that provides support for families of fallen linemen. Read the story at [www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Sisterhood\\_Run\\_11-20-13.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Sisterhood_Run_11-20-13.html).

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## IBEW 1245 VETERANS GROUP



Become a "band of brothers and sisters," veterans who support each other and support vets outside the IBEW. The group is pursuing more companies to commit to hiring more veterans & building a partnership with other local veterans groups.

"If we help one veteran, we're a success."

Join the IBEW 1245 Veterans

Access to Other Union Veterans

Education

Fundraiser

Transition

# HEROES HELPING HEROES





## Accidents and injuries

A key part of safety is learning from past accidents—whether they involve ourselves or others. The following recent accidents should be read with this in mind. The more we learn, the safer we are.

### Fall

In early November, a PG&E T&R Gas Mechanic fell approximately 12 feet into a regulator pit station. Emergency Services were called and the trench rescue performed. The employee was evaluated at the hospital and kept overnight

for observation.

### Vehicle Accident

An apprentice lineman was traveling northbound on Highway 1 to assist a crew with an outage in San Luis Obispo County. The employee dozed off while driving.

The truck drifted across the southbound lanes onto the shoulder of the road, hitting metal and wooden fence posts, until the driver woke up and attempted to bring the truck back on to the roadway. The driver lost control of the truck, rolling onto its side, coming to rest on the passenger side. There were no injuries to the employee and no third parties were involved.

### Vehicle Accident #2

During November storms a lineman who was working as a troubleman was involved in a non-injury accident. Preliminary analysis indicates the employee said he dozed off and woke up just before hitting a tree. He said he swerved in an attempt to miss the tree. The incident was being investigated.

continued on page 30

### Peer safety initiative for line clearance tree trimmers

## Close Call/Near Miss presentations

By Rich Lane

On November 26 the Keep the Clearance (KTC) peer initiative completed a series of 16 informational meetings with Davey Tree employees. The focus of these meetings was to roll out the IBEW 1245 Close Call/Near Miss program developed jointly with Davey Tree.

Davey Tree requested that the Keep the Clearance committee be the recipient of all close call reports so that employees would be more comfortable with reporting near miss incidents that happen on the job. The KTC committee is responsible for reviewing the reports, expunging any identifying remarks, placing the reports on the IBEW website under "Safety Matters," and sending the reports on to Davey Tree to be used as safety meeting subjects.

To date there have been five reports, the most remarkable being a trimmer

who reported a co-worker being stopped from cutting himself out of a tree.

Four new members were added to the KTC committee to replace members who have left. Jose Paredes, Antonio Jaramillo, Tanny Hurtado and Carlos Rodriguez were recruited and installed at the Nov. 7 meeting. Prior to their appointment there were no committee representatives from the Southern jurisdiction. Vacated Northern and Eastern positions were also filled. Currently there are 10 peer committee members and 27 safety stewards.



### Iniciativa de seguridad entre iguales para podadores de árboles para el despeje de líneas

## Presentaciones sobre Accidentes Potenciales/Conatos de Accidentes (Close Call/Near Miss)

Por Rich Lane

El 26 de noviembre, la iniciativa entre iguales "Mantenga la Distancia" (Keep the Clearance o KTC), completó una serie de 16 reuniones informativas con empleados de Davey Tree. El objetivo principal de estas reuniones fue el lanzamiento del programa "Accidentes Potenciales/Conatos de Accidentes" (Close Call/Near Miss) del IBEW 1245, el cual fue desarrollado en conjunto con Davey Tree.

Davey Tree ha solicitado que el comité "Mantenga la Distancia" reciba todos los informes sobre accidentes

potenciales, de manera que los empleados se sientan más cómodos al informar sobre accidentes potenciales que pudieran ocurrir durante su trabajo. El comité KTC es responsable de revisar los informes, eliminar cualquier información que pueda servir de identificación, colocar los informes en el sitio web del IBEW en la sección "Asuntos de Seguridad" (Safety Matters), y enviar los informes a Davey Tree para utilizarlos como temas de discusión en las reuniones de seguridad.

Hasta la fecha se han recibido cinco informes. El más destacado fue un podador que informó cómo un com-

## Confidential interventions

One of the functions of all of the peer safety initiatives is to intervene at the request of safety stewards, business representatives, and sometimes management when employees encounter problems that are safety related.

This happens only with the agreement of the employee and in most cases behind the scenes.

When contact is made with an employee, time off is usually arranged without management knowing the purpose of the leave and a meeting takes place with the business representative, committee member or peer steward and the employee. A plan is made to address the problem and in most cases a peer steward or committee member is assigned to stay in contact with the employee and monitor the situation.

All persons involved are instructed not to share information or circumstances in order to assure the confidentiality of the process.

### Peer safety initiative for gas workers

## Control the Pressure: presentations and an accident investigation in 2013

By Rich Lane

Last year was a busy one for the Control the Pressure (CTP) peer safety committee.

During 2013, committee members conducted 11 safety presentations at the Tracy Gas Academy, six unit meeting

presentations, and three PG&E yard presentations in San Francisco, Fresno and the Yosemite Division. Committee member Ernie Pena

was requested to join an accident investigation involving a gas worker who suffered a fall and was hospitalized.



PG&E routinely makes requests for peer initiative members to attend informational meetings with PG&E management. At November's committee meeting these members were added: Lington Gordon, PG&E Santa Rosa, and Steve Lange, PG&E Chico.

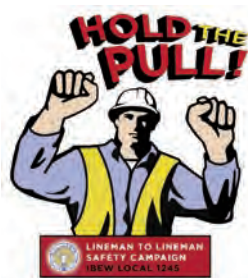
### Peer safety initiative for line workers

## Hold the Pull: trainings lined up for 2014

By Rich Lane

The Hold the Pull (HTP) advisory committee met on Nov. 12 to discuss the 2014 meeting and presentation schedule and appointed a new member, Stephen "Spike" Roberts to represent SMUD.

On Dec. 5, members of HTP gave a presentation to the SMUD line and service divisions. The purpose of the visit was to update members on past HTP activities, activities



continued on page 30

## Intervenciones confidenciales

Una de las funciones de todas las iniciativas de seguridad entre iguales es intervenir cuando así lo soliciten los delegados de seguridad, los representantes de negocios y algunas veces la gerencia, en casos donde los empleados enfrentan problemas relacionados con la seguridad.

Esto solamente sucede si el empleado esta de acuerdo, y en la mayoría de los casos se lleva a cabo en privado.

Cuando se contacta a un empleado, se hacen los arreglos para que el empleado tenga tiempo libre sin que la gerencia tenga conocimiento de la razón de la ausencia. Se lleva a cabo una reunión con el representante de negocios, un miembro del comité o un delegado, y el empleado. Se prepara un plan para manejar el problema y en la mayoría de los casos se asigna un miembro del comité o un delegado para que permanezca en contacto con el empleado y le haga seguimiento a la situación.

Todas las personas involucradas reciben instrucciones para que no compartan información ni discutan la situación de manera de mantener la confidencialidad del proceso.



# ★ ★ ★ LINEMAN'S RODEO ★ ★ ★



Dummies await rescue in the pre-dawn light.



IBEW 1245 member competing for the Liberty Utilities team of Jonathan McCue, Toak Scarlett and Kyle Hermansen.

## International Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City

# Stand Out Performances

**I**BEW 1245 journeymen and apprentices scored perfect 100s in many events at the International Lineman's Rodeo on Oct. 19 in Bonner Springs, KS.

Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Pacific Gas & Electric and Liberty Utilities all sponsored teams of IBEW 1245 members. The union itself sponsored two journeyman teams from Turlock Irrigation District and one journeyman team from NV Energy. SMUD,

PG&E and IBEW 1245 also sponsored apprentices in the competition.

SMUD apprentices were absolutely dominant in the Apprentice Pole Climb, scoring perfect 100s en route to capturing 4th (Bryan Herda), 6th (Joseph Cowley), 8th (Connor Hutchison), 10th (Richard Hall), 15th (Justin Perron), and 29th (Christopher Worth) in a field of 219 apprentices. Also scoring perfect 100s in this event were PG&E's Sean Hunt and Brandon Dance, and NV



(Left) Competing in the Hurt Man Rescue event is Keno Grigsby of SMUD.



IBEW 1245 member competing for Liberty Utilities.



# 2013 ★ BONNER SPRINGS, KANSAS



Taking first place in the Journeyman Hurtman Rescue event was the SMUD team of, from left, Todd Prangley, Cayleb Bowman and Matthew Wilson. They also placed third in the Journeyman Pole Climb event.



Taking 1st place in the Journeyman Mystery Event #1 (Cut Hot Jumper) were, from left, Chris Miles, Rorry Malia and Gregory Baird of SMUD.



Accepting the 5th place award for Mystery Event #1 are, from left, Anthony Albright, Jon Paul Richard and Adam Beene of PG&E.



Competing for SMUD are Steve Hintze, left, and Donald Larsen.

Energy's Blake McCoy.

Safe work practices are a major factor in all rodeo events. Judges deduct points for any deviation from these practices. The teams scoring the maximum 100 points in an event are then ranked according to the fastest speed to establish the winner.

Congratulations to all of our rodeo participants for demonstrating the competitive spirit of IBEW 1245 linemen, and the commitment to safe work practices that are the hallmark of the union tradesman.

For more details on how IBEW 1245 members fared in the competition, and more photos of them in action, go to [www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Lineman\\_Rodeo\\_11-18-13.html](http://www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Lineman_Rodeo_11-18-13.html).



## IBEW 1245 participants

### SMUD Team 430

Cayleb Bowman  
Matthew Wilson  
Todd Prangley

### SMUD Team 431

Steve Hintze  
Donald Larsen  
Bradley Powell

### SMUD Team 432

Christopher Fukui  
Keno Grigsby  
Jeremy Wright

### SMUD Team 433

Chris Miles  
Rorry Malia  
Gregory Baird

### SMUD Team 434

Nicholas Valdez  
Garrett Gross  
Donavan Bok

### SMUD Team 435

Alman Kerste  
Alfonzo Davila  
Michael Moore

### PG&E Team 64

Anthony Albright  
Adam Beene  
Jon Paul Richard

### PG&E Team 65

Eli Tharp  
Jud VanMatre  
Josh Turner

### PG&E Team 621

Steve Bentley  
George McNeill  
Jim Moon

### PG&E Team 622

Jerry Bryant  
Michael Moss  
Randy Patt

### IBEW 1245 (TID)

#### Team 417

Dustin Krieger  
Josh Klikna  
Steve Johnson

### IBEW 1245 (TID)

#### Team 418

Aaron Baker  
James Small  
Bill Stavrianousakis

### IBEW 1245 (NVE)

#### Team 414

Russell Morrison  
Alex Price  
Stevie Bennett

### Liberty Energy Team

#### 76

Jonathan McCue  
Toak Scarlett  
Kyle Hermansen

### Apprentices

Joseph Cowley, App.  
1428, SMUD

Richard Hall, App.  
1429, SMUD

Bryan Herda, App.  
1430, SMUD

Connor Hutchison,  
App. 1431, SMUD

Garrett McGhehey,  
App. 1432, SMUD

Justin Perron, App.  
1433, SMUD

Christopher Worth,  
App. 1435, SMUD

Brandon Dance, App.  
1068, PG&E

Ryan Boyd, App.  
1069, PG&E

Sean Hunt, App.  
1070, PG&E

Zachary Huseby,  
App. 1071, PG&E

Jared Wilson, App.  
1413, IBEW 1245

Jason Smith, App.  
1414, IBEW 1245

Blake McCoy, App.  
1415, IBEW 1245

Stephen Potter, App.  
1416, IBEW 1245



IBEW 1245 competitors, judges, and staff at the Rodeo Awards Banquet on Oct. 19.

Photos by John Storey





Participating from PG&E were, from left, Hanibal Shamoeil, Beau Danieli, Jim Lewallen, Chris Richter and Doug Lopes.

## PG&E, NV Energy send IBEW 1245 members National Gas Rodeo

IBEW 1245 members from PG&E and NV Energy competed in the National Gas Rodeo held last fall in Fairview Heights, IL. The rodeo provided gas crews from across the nation an opportunity to showcase their job skills and safety awareness in a competitive environment.



Cottonham and Witte get ready to compete.



Participating from PG&E were, from left, Jesse Cottonham, EC Carney and Rick Witte.



Participating from NV Energy were, from left, David Diaz, Marty Kumle, Kurt Davis, Mike Kennedy and Stelios Marakis.

### Safety, from page 27

#### Vehicle Accident #3

In late December, there was a serious motor vehicle incident involving a PG&E Electric Crew Foreman. The vehicle involved was a 2006 Ford F150 2X4 pickup towing a light standard trailer. The employee was part of a three person crew in route to their work location.

The employee was merging from one highway onto another. While negotiating the onramp, which is a sweeping right turn, the employee felt something amiss from the light standard trailer. The employee noticed in his driver side mirror that the light standard trailer had started to slide out to the outside of the turn.

The employee then stepped on the brakes, lost control of the truck and struck the sound wall inside of the turn. The truck spun around and came to rest on the driver side of the vehicle. No injuries occurred to employees, no third parties were involved. An incident analysis was being performed.

#### Arc Flash

A PG&E cableman with decades of company experience sustained minor burns while working on a sub-surface transformer. Preliminary indications are that the employee attempted to reset a sub-surface transformer secondary breaker during an outage when the transformer catastrophically failed.

The employee was treated for smoke inhalation and minor burns to his face and hands. The employee was admitted to hospital for treatment. A Serious Incident Analysis Team was commissioned to conduct an incident analysis.

#### Struck By

While preparing for a job, a PG&E employee was struck by a pole he was attempting to dispose of in a dumpster.

The employee was transported by ambulance to the hospital, and later released. Below is the preliminary information.

A crew was tasked with changing out a Steady State pole. The crew assembled in the Service Center and proceeded to remove materials off the trucks from the previous day's work. A piece of pole needed to be removed from the rack of a F550 power wagon.

Two lineman from the crew decided to remove the pole by hand, and positioned the vehicle alongside a wood debris container. One employee was positioned by the front driver side on the rack, the other had climbed into the bed of the vehicle. The two employees lifted the pole piece off the rack, and attempted to toss the piece into the dumpster. At this time, the pole piece did not clear the rail of the dumpster. The pole piece partially spun, striking the employee in the head while positioned in the bed of the vehicle.

Fortunately the employee was not seriously injured, and was released from the hospital.

### Hold the Pull, from page 27

going into 2014, and recognize the newly installed committee member and the three safety stewards currently in place.

Nine presentations will be conducted at Livermore Training Academy during the year 2014. Typically, teams of two HTP members give talks and interact with apprentices on subjects such as the Hold the Pull program, personal safety, working/crew dynamics and developing proper decision making. These talks usually run about one hour and have become popular with the Livermore Training Academy. Instructors do not attend these meetings so apprentices are free to voice opinions and ask tough questions.



## Walmart strikers thank IBEW 1245

Walmart workers and strikers chose a tasty way to thank Business Manager Tom Dalzell and the IBEW 1245 Executive Board for the union's extraordinary support in 2013 for the OUR Walmart campaign: a large cake inscribed "Thank You IBEW."

The gift recognized the logistical support given by IBEW 1245 member organizers to the Walmart workers' campaign to achieve better wages and working conditions. The Walmart workers also presented IBEW 1245 with a giant thank you card signed by current and former Walmart workers, including some who were terminated for striking.

Walmart is the largest employer of retail workers in the world, bringing in more than \$400 billion in revenue a year. Walmart's CEO was paid \$20 million last year, while associates make an average of \$8.81 an hour. Each Walmart store costs taxpayers around \$1.7 million a year due to impoverished associates having to depend on government assistance.



## AUSTIN LEA II: print room curmudgeon

Austin Lea, who bestrode the IBEW 1245 print and supply room like a giant for 26 years, retired Oct. 29.

If you ever dared think that IBEW 1245 squanders money on supplies, you never met Austin. Many are the business reps, including me, who have rushed into the print room for a box of pens. More often than not, our way was blocked by a glowering, bearded curmudgeon demanding to know if you really needed a full box. Wouldn't a smaller number of pens be sufficient? Like, say, two?

Surrendering, you'd hold out your hand for the two pens. That's when Austin heaves a big sigh—saddened by the fact that some people just never learn—and points to the stack of blank requisition forms. No one leaves the supply room with anything unless you've filled out the requisition form.

As you slink out of Austin's print room fortress, happy to have come away with any pens at all, he usually calls you back, an impish smile spreading across his face. "Did you hear the one about...?"

The secret truth about IBEW 1245's print room curmudgeon is that no one ever liked a joke better, or told them more often. Which isn't to say they were always good jokes. But they were Austin's way of making you feel a little better about the beating he'd just given you over the pen requisition.

For a quarter century, Austin routed mail, printed flyers and booklets, set up filing systems, and responded to any miscellaneous emergency that didn't seem to be part of anybody else's job description. You need a ladder? No problem—Austin will bring it to you.

But woe unto you if you don't bring it back.

"He's very efficient, he's very organized," said IBEW 1245 Bookkeeper Gail Varner, who worked with Austin that full quarter-century.

"One of the major things that bugged him is if you borrowed things and didn't put it back." If you transgressed one of his rules or fell short of one of his standards, Gail said, he'd let you know. "Subtly sometimes, not so subtly sometimes."

One of the most familiar sights at the union hall was the great crossword puzzle project, undertaken by Gail and Austin each day at lunch time. You'd think they were trying to solve global warming or some international financial crisis, so fierce was their concentration.

"He's good at it, and got better over time," Gail noted.

Austin was a man of many interests. When I found out he liked hats, I challenged him to a hat competition. Each week we'd come to the office wearing a favorite hat and let our colleagues judge. There weren't any rules. If I came in wearing a fancy fedora, he'd be wearing something fancier. On "weird hat" week I wore a cap that had wings stitched to the side. He came in with an entire animal on his head. That's when I realized this was a competition I could never win.

Austin loved to golf, and vacations often found him out in the wild, hunting game with a bow and arrow. I can just picture him taking aim at some big buck and muttering, "Are you going to fill out that requisition form or not?"

But the Austin Era at IBEW 1245 came to an end on Oct. 29 when a long-planned knee replacement operation suddenly got fast-tracked. The man is getting re-equipped so he can continue chasing golf balls and wild animals during a well-earned retirement.

He sent out a short e-mail just before closing time on Oct. 29, announcing, "It has been great working with all of you and I want to thank you for the privilege of working the last 26 years at IBEW."

"It was kind of a shock to all of us," said Gail. "He will be missed."



Austin at his command post.

Photo by Caitlin Ramirez

## LITA CLARK: librarian extraordinaire

IBEW 1245 has over 8,000 grievance-related documents on permanent file, and generates hundreds more each year.

If you wonder how the union keeps everything straight and error-free, look no farther than Lita Clark.

For the past 20 years she has tracked every PG&E grievance from the time it is filed by a business rep to its final resolution. If you're a steward who has ever searched for a precedent for your grievance, you are walking down a trail that has been carefully maintained by Lita, who plans to retire in February.

"She organized everything, keeps everything straight," said Assistant Business Manager Ken Ball, who has relied on her organizational skills for years. "If the company doesn't write something on time or get something to us on time, she's on their ass."

If the company happens to make a mistake on a grievance number, the union has been able to rely on Lita to catch it.

"She's so efficient about that the whole company's afraid of her," joked Ball. "I sometimes tell the company I'm going to sic Lita on them."

Ball's attack dog imagery is hard to square with the genial, soft-spoken woman who says her philosophy is to "look on the bright side."

Having an interesting job helps. That job includes updating the union's voluminous Contract Section Index every month, and shepherding new contracts through the International union's approval process. When a new business rep comes onto the staff, Lita puts together a folder documenting all the open grievances in their assignment area. When they phone in a request, she makes it her mission to assist.

But a little bit of the attack dog can be glimpsed if you happen to be a rep who fails to get documents to her in a timely manner. Put your ear to her door and you might just hear her scolding a rep for tardiness: "Don't give me those excuses!"

Dealing with so many grievance cases hasn't hardened her heart to those who run afoul of company rules. She's simply perplexed that employees would put their job in jeopardy by watching pornography on a company computer



Lita Clark, keeper of the files.

Photo by Eric Wolfe

or borrowing money from petty cash.

"It kills me they'd waste all their years of service like that," she said.

But the grievance procedure was created, in part, to ensure that all members get equitable treatment and a chance to survive their mistakes. Lita has been an integral part of that process. She's also helped that process keep up with technological developments.

"She has organized all the Fact Finding, Review Committee, PreReview Committee and Arbitration cases into searchable documents" that can be accessed on the union's website, said Assistant Business Manager Ed Dwyer. "And she's kept Kenny and me in check. When we make a mistake on a document she brings it right back. She's the reason we *don't* make mistakes."

Lita began her career at IBEW 1245 in 1988, just four years after arriving here from the Philippines. She became librarian in 1993 and it's hard to imagine the library without her. But at the end of February she plans to shelve her last folder and retire to her home in Vallejo with her husband Lee, whom she married in 2006. Later in the spring she plans to visit her son and three grandchildren in the Philippines.

"Lita has given this union many years of conscientious service," said Business Manager Tom Dalzell. "Years from now our members will still be benefitting from the order that she maintained in our library. We wish her the best."

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2014

### 3rd Annual IBEW Nor-Cal Sporting Clay Shoot

Northern California IBEW local unions invite you to enjoy a day of brotherhood with fellow IBEW union members, families, friends and other trade unions. This year the event will occur in two locations simultaneously! All proceeds will be donated to charity. For more info, please go to: [www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Clay\\_2014\\_Registration.pdf](http://www.ibew1245.com/news-Local1245/Clay_2014_Registration.pdf)





# THE TOKEN BEARERS

By Mike Cottrell

*The next installment in the lineman's novel by Local 1245 Executive Board member Mike Cottrell.*

## Chapter 11

**SKY ROCKET MEETS HENRY MILLER, THE BROTHERHOOD'S FIRST PRESIDENT. STOLEY'S DANCE HALL, ST. LOUIS, NOVEMBER 1891.**

The ladies made it around the room enticing the men for drinks and dances. The long bar covered the entire width of the hall and conveyed its majesty as the final destination following each dance. Some only drank and barked the ladies away from their presence, scolding them as whores and bar flies. Stairways led up flights on each end of the bar to rooms for meetings and gatherings of men to achieve business, play cards, or smoke and drink. The ladies only danced in the hall with the travelers or locals who were single or whose wives might have journeyed to visit in another town, leaving a good man behind who for comfort sake sought a good time out for relief from the stranglehold of marriage or job stress.

The ladies got tips and drinks and sometimes might take a man home if monetary arrangements were made and privacy obligations negotiated to mutual terms. The dance money belonged to the house and was placed in a cigar box on the bar, the contents of which were whisked away frequently by the keeper.

It was not a bordello, but a dance hall. A place to start a mischievous night out with a fine lady dressed and made up proper that might tend to lean toward wild behavior later in a hotel room for the right price with the right man. He might have spent his hard-earned dollars more wisely, but he was eager to abuse the savings and enjoy the moment of fulfilled desire she would lay before him in his time of fatigued yearning. It started in teasing fun on the dance floor for fair payment and ending in nude confrontations, wild fantasies and drunken savagery in other dwellings all approved and decided upon during one paid dance and drink after another until the night closed the dance hall and cries of foul play roared out through tearing men who had not fairly been treated by the ladies of the dance. For by the time most had danced and drank the night away, funds had been limited to only that and the fantasy was paid for before it could be successfully executed.

But this night was a little different. A small delegation of lineman and wireman had gathered at this hall for a convention to better their lives against the dogs of management who restrained and controlled their ability to achieve better wages and working conditions. The week would be a scramble to begin a union and the publicity had been overwhelming. The press awaited with delight to carry the subject to the people, and the men worked to keep the upstairs of the hall private and closed so that it would appear to the press that more had come to conquer and band together when in fact it was a small band of brothers who showed up to begin building the foundation of what would someday become the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

He sat at the bar with a look of confidence and spun the shot of whiskey easily without a spill until it felt just right in his hand and then raised it up and thrust it down in one gulp and chased it with the cool beer, foamed with a two inch head leaving suds along the side from the clean glass and stared down into the last few inches of the brew contemplating further and then said to the other three that sat with him at the bar. He spoke quietly and sure of his decision.

"What Henry, what are ye' thinkin'?"

"Well, we're gonna just make it appear tomorrow like there is more of us here than them newspaper fellas' think there is and everything will work out fine. We need the publicity and if they see it's a small group of us they'll probably write us up as a joke in all the papers so we just keep the upstairs where they can't come in there and we keep comin' down and giving information on how well the convention is coming and tellin' em' about all the progress bein' made. I hired a couple a' bouncers that work here anyway to keep both sets of stairs guarded and I'm gonna' find a kid outside in the mornin' to come back and forth to the door up there and we will send out messages to keep the reporters

interested. That's what I figure unless anybody else has a better idea. Got me?"

The word was passed on to the others and it was agreed. They all went to their hotel rooms down the street and some of them shared to save money.

In the morning, the young man had made his way over from the Mississippi river and his legs wobbled under him or so it felt as he stepped along the street by the dance hall. He had worked his way up from New Orleans on the sugar cane barge and was out on his own for the first time. He was sixteen and received his first wages on the barge. He had worked in New Orleans for fair trade from the sweet potatoes his family grew. He would trade for whatever his father had told him to trade for and was not allowed money. His Father would give him a bushel of potatoes and while he went to trade for coffee or beans or peacocks his dad would man the rest of the wagon load and sell them at the farmers market for cash and molasses or guns to his liking.

It was November 1891 and the morning air was still cold and icy upon him as he huddled against the post on the porch of the dance hall.

Henry got up before the others and went down and ate and was walking around the back of the hall to be sure the news people could not have a vantage point from any building. Everything looked good especially with the thick maroon curtains closed in the meeting room.

He came back around front and there sat the kid shivering.

Henry looked him over from a distance and approached him slowly.

"I could use some help for a couple days. Easy job, fella' could make a little money at it."

The kid looked up and then stood up and looked Henry right in the eye.

"Little money don't sound very enticing. How much money?"

"I like the way you think kid. My name is Henry Miller. What's yours?"

"Skyler Rochect, I came up on a boat from N'orlens. Worked my way up. Just got paid off and was lookin' this town over a little."

"Rochect huh? How'd you spell that?"

"With a 't' on the end mister, that's how!"

"Then kid why ain't it sounded with a 't' on the end like where I come from in Texas. If a man's name is Barnett, then that means it's Barnett not Barnay".

"I can't help it mister. It's just the way they call names in N'orlens and besides just cause your from Texas don't make you so right about anything, anyhow, ya' know."

"Well that sure could be right kid. Like my old man used to say, 'If'n you want to go to bed with nothing on your mind just read the Fort Worth Gazette before you turn in and you'll be as empty headed as you can be by the time you doze off ...

So you floated in on a barge load of sugar cane from New Orlens and that's the nature of your business."

"I got no job, they used me all they needed is what the man said and so I'll be looking for a job round here for awhile I guess."

"How would you like to grunt kid?"

"I don't have to be told when to shit mister. I took a big shit before I got off that boat this morning."

"No kid, grunt is the name of a man runs a hand line for his lineman. Sends everything the lineman needs up the pole so he can get the job done up there in the air."

Henry pointed with his bone handled Case knife toward the pole across the street and then brought it back to the plug of days work chewing tobacco he held in the other hand and in a smooth motion cut a nice chew off and folded the knife by placing the back of the blade on his thigh and pushing down on the pin stripe suit pants. He placed the plug in his vest watch pocket and low-





*See, 'bout one in two of us is killed a doin' this work. We got to start to figure out this electricity better and get the people we work for to help us so people will stop getting killed a doin' it!*

ered the knife down in his front pants pocket and the kid heard the knife hit the change with a sloshing clang.

"Lineman huh? You don't look nor' smell like any lineman I ever saw. Everyone I ever saw around N'orlens smelled like a pole cat and had them climbin' doodad's on, climbin' or stompin' round the bottom of a pole cussin' all the bystanders to get back so's not to get hurt should he fall off."

"That's called public safety kid. A lineman sometimes has to cuss the locals so they'll get back fer' enough to be in a safe place to watch. Safety has a lot to do with why we all gathered here. See, 'bout one in two of us is killed a doin' this work. We got to start to figure out this electricity better and get the people we work for to help us so people will stop getting killed a doin' it! But see it's expensive to work on something like that while the work goes unattended. You care anything about what I am sayin' ked, cause if'n you do you're the one I'm lookin' for to help me out a few day."

"Oh yeah, well if that's so and yur a lineman, how come you got that fancy three dollar Sears and Roebuck suit on then?"

"Cause we're havin' a convention here for a few days and I need a grunt to run back and forth up the stairs and report information to the press and if you can do a good job at it I'll make you my grunt all the time and you can go on the road workin' and make a livin' and if you ain't afraid of heights or climbing I'll make a lineman out of you."

Sky thought he was as strong as he ever could be working shoulder to shoulder on the same pole with Henry.

Henry raised him up so Sky would stand no pain, compromise no principle or turn his back on any man of the tools seeking refuge in the brotherhood. It was Henry's way to give the needed birth of labor the pedestal of hope and the prayer of faith often missing and always welcome in the dawn of the brotherhood.

When the first convention ended in St. Louis, Henry kept his pledge and took Skyler along as his grunt and developed him into a great force for the future of labor and a good lineman on the way. Five years before his death Henry carried Sky from one location to another doing the work of the trade and giving him the portrait of his life's work condensing into Sky's mind the future of the movement and the terms by which to carry on. Sky would shout to the heights of greed the cries of Henry's philosophy in skilled departures from the icon of the trades tomb and for the rest of his life would carry the body armor and sling the rock of confrontation at the Goliaths of management who embedded themselves in defiance to Henry's dreams.

Sky never lost his sense of wonder while watching the sacrifices Henry made for the uplifting of the brotherhood against business minds.

Committed to giving of himself for others, Henry developed the stature and sense of humor that prevails today in the mischievous behavior and fun-loving approach to the craft that tramp linemen have inherited from this great forefather of the craft.

"I been gruntin' for ya' Henry for two years and climbin' poles ever chance I get and practicin' all the while and you see me and tell me how good I do so when am I goin' to be up there with you, huh?"

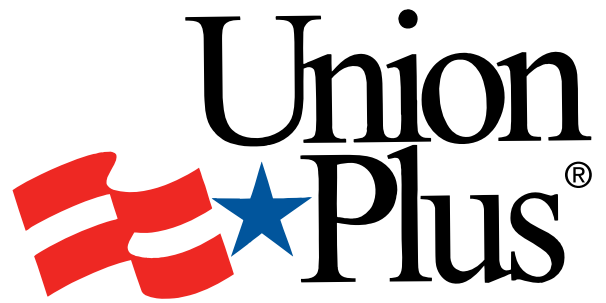
"Today, all you had to do was ask." And Henry giggled and watched Skyler kick a big rock and turn beet red.

Sky felt him in every organ and every beat of his heart. He felt him in Detroit with the gashed thigh when Fancy found him in the alley after the Pinkerton's had their way with him. He felt him in Hobbs, New Mexico when Curly and Fancy helped Sky make the head scratcher a lineman. He felt his presence at the great Kansas City cutover where he gave eulogies for the dead killed by falls and electrocution in the grip of death that haunts us all in the craft.

Every day for his entire life Skyler Rochett would awake and sport the armor of the legacy Henry left him and sling rocks at the Goliaths of management that stood to tear down what Henry and the small band of other men gathered to do in St. Louis. They had aroused the hopes of millions who would follow, taking the vows of the brotherhood.

Sky left the sugar cane barge from the docks of St. Louis to the steps of a dance hall and would carry the torch of Henry's legacy for the rest of his life.

*continued in next issue*



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# Brotherhood on the links



First Place: Pete Anchetta, Chris Qualls, Ron Qualls, and Steve Souza



Longest Drive, Women: Joyce Wert



Staffing the chow line, from the front, are: Organizer Eileen Purcell, Recording Secretary Chris Habecker, and Organizer Elizabeth McInnis.



Second Place: Mark Herbert, Grant Bungo, Rod Robinson and Eddie Williams Jr.





Photos by John Storey

IBEW 1245 members and friends met at the Green Tee Golf Club in Vacaville on Oct. 12 for the Perry Zimmerman 26th Annual Golf Tournament.

Retired Business Manager Perry Zimmerman was on hand—with teammates Mike Kollman, Chad Lavezzo, and Sam Glero—demonstrating his legendary love of the game. This longest-running annual IBEW 1245 event was renamed in his honor following his retirement as business manager in 2006.

It was a perfect day for brotherhood on the links. The competition featured 27 teams, including IBEW 1245 members and staff, as well as friends, family members, and many players from IBEW 1245 employers.

The tournament was followed by prizes and a barbecue lunch served at Weakley Hall in Vacaville.



Closest to the Hole, Women: Vicky McKim



Perry Zimmerman's team consisted of, from left, Mike Kollman, PG&E; Chad Lavezzo, PG&E; Perry Zimmerman; and IBEW 1245 Business Rep. Sam Glero.



Longest Drive, Men: Craig Imamura



Third Place: Ken Cadena, Sam Mendoza, Don Jones, and Allen Vander Bergh



Enjoying the lunch are, from left, IBEW 1245 Associate Nancy Kendrick, Business Rep Abel Sanchez, IBEW 1245 Librarian Lita Clark, and her husband Lee.



Bob Stout won the top raffle prize—a 55-inch LED television.

SEE ALL THE TEAM PHOTOS AT [WWW.IBEW1245.COM/NEWS-LOCAL1245/GOLF3\\_12-9-13.HTML](http://WWW.IBEW1245.COM/NEWS-LOCAL1245/GOLF3_12-9-13.HTML)

continued on next page



*See you next fall!*

