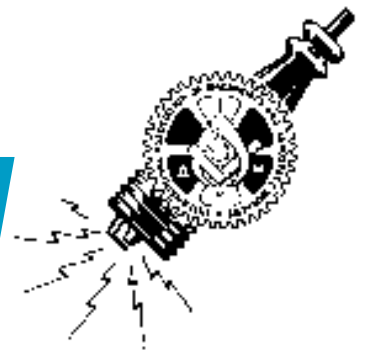


# The IAM District 190 Sparkplug



VOL. 2, NO. 2

February/March 2000

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190



**Why did I vote for union representation at Wesgo? Three answers: Pension. Pension. Pension.**

**Gary Rech  
Wesgo Ceramics**

**D**istrict Lodge 190 won more awards for organizing than any other district at the last Western Regional IAM conference.

That comes as no surprise to Directing Business Representative Mike Day. "We put 30% of our resources into organizing," Day says, "because organizing is the future of our union."

District Lodge 190 has six organizers on staff, working out of Modesto, Sacramento, Oakland, San Jose and Concord.

In 1999, the District gained 25 new shops for a total of more than 350 members. Of the National Labor Relations Board elections held, the District won 17 and lost only two, which is far higher than the nation average of 52%.

## Winning can be a fight

At some shops, union recognition is achieved fairly easily, with a card check campaign and voluntary recognition.

At others, the fight is more intense. District organizers have faced down many union-busting consultants who encourage the employers to hold captive audience meetings, buy off individual employees, and take illegal actions that turn people against the union.

Informational pickets have been instrumental in helping secure con-

## District 190 leads west in organizing

tracts when employers refuse to listen to the will of their employees who voted for union representation.

One indication of how organizing and picketing pays off is that for the first time in 15 years, Local 1414's contract cycle for 1999 saw no strikes, no shops going non-union and negotiations were generally smooth and successful.

"This is no coincidence," says Don Crosatto, Area Director. "Employers see that the union won't hesitate to put informational pickets in front of their shops to make a point."

### Getting first contracts

Most of the shops organized last year are not yet under contract. First contracts take much longer to con-

clude than renewal contracts, because you're starting with a blank slate.

"Right now we're concluding agreements with companies that organized in 1998 and early 1999," said Crosatto. "For instance, we just ratified a contract with Microphor. Last April we won the first successful union election in Mendocino County in 10 years and now we have the first new contract there."

"Over the past 18 months I've won elections at six new shops," says organizer Mike Munoz. "I'm proud of that record and look forward to building on organizing whole new industries."

"Organizing will be an integral part of our program for years to come," Day concluded.



**I voted for the union because the company's open door policy only worked one way.**

**Conrado Sevilla  
Wesgo Ceramics**

## Why organizing makes sense for current members

"When employers see that we're strong and that we're organizing their competition, that helps to even the playing field for them," Directing Business Representative Mike Day explained. "Without ongoing organizing, we cannot maintain good contracts for our current members"

Area Director Don Crosatto agrees. "Organizing doesn't just bring in new members, it's critical to our current members" for many reasons:

- 1) More union shops means more job opportunities for current members, where you can change jobs and maintain your benefits and pension investment.
- 2) When employers see that the union is aggressive and willing to take on fights, they'll be less willing to try to go non-union during negotiations.
- 3) More members means greater strength for the pension plan and greater clout for health and welfare benefits."

"If we don't show our strength and organize, it sends a signal to the employers that we're vulnerable," says Day.

## Announcing big increases in pension benefits

Whether or not you pay attention to the phenomenal growth in the stock market, your pension trustees do. And they're making the most of it to benefit you.

About 90% of District Lodge 190 members are in either the Automotive Industries Trust or the IAM National Pension Trust. Both Trusts are pleased to announce many benefit improvements.

The following information may sound legalistic but please read the information about your Fund carefully because it may affect how much money you'll be receiving.

### National Pension Fund

The National Pension Fund Trustees negotiated a wide range of pension improvements, including

increased benefits, new benefits for survivors, and easier eligibility for unreduced pension benefits.

A 5% increase in benefit values for all years of future service credit is in store for all participants who retire on or after January 1, 1999 and have at least 600 hours of service in 1998 or later.

Going forward, years of vesting service, including predecessor plan service in a qualified company savings or pension plan, will count as credited service in determining eligibility for both 30 and Out and the unreduced pension at age 52 for participants with 20 years of service. This means more members qualify for higher benefits.

**continued on page 5**

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IAM District Lodge 190  
7717 Oakport Street  
Oakland, CA 94621

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# CALENDAR

## Local 801

c/o D.L. 190, 7717 Oakport Street,  
Oakland, CA94621

### Membership Meeting

Third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m.

All meetings held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno

February 17 • March 16 • April 20

## Local 1101

1150 So. Bascom # 23 San Jose, CA95128

### Executive Board Meeting

First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

February 3 • March 2 • April 6

### Stewards Meeting

First Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m.

February 3 • March 2 • April 6

### General Membership Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

February 10 • March 9 • April 13

## Local 1173

1900 Bates Ave., # H, Concord, CA 94520

### Membership/Shop Stewards Mtg.

Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

February 17 • March 16 • April 20

### Executive Board Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

February 10 • March 9 • April 13

### Retirees Club Meeting

Call Local for current meeting times

## Local 1414

150 South Blvd., San Mateo, CA94402

### Shop Stewards Meeting

First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

February 3 • March 2 • April 6

### Executive Board Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

February 10 • March 9 • April 13

### General Membership Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

February 17 • March 16 • April 20

## Local 1528

713 16th Street, Modesto, CA 95354

### Executive Board Meeting

First Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

February 2 • March 1 • April 5

### General Membership Meeting

First Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

February 2 • March 1 • April 5

## Local 1546

10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94621

### General Membership Meeting

First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

February 1 • March 7 • April 4

### Shop Stewards Meeting

First Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

February 1 • March 7 • April 4

## Local 1546 (cont.)

### Executive Board Meeting

Thursday preceding membership meeting at 6:30 p.m.

March 2 • March 30 • April 27

### Senior's Luncheon

First Wednesday of each month at 12 noon

February 2 • March 1 • April 5

*Alcoholics Anonymous* meets every Saturday, 9 a.m., at Local 1546

## Local 1584

8130 Baldwin Street, Oakland, CA 94621

### Membership Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

February 17 • March 16 • April 20

### Executive Board Meeting

Preceding Monday at 7 p.m.

February 14 • March 13 • April 17

### Retirees Club

First Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.

February 1 • March 7 • April 4

## Local 1596

4210 Petaluma Blvd. No., Petaluma, CA 94952

### Executive Board Meeting

Third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

February 15 • March 21 • April 18

### General Membership Meeting

Third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 p.m.

February 15 • March 21 • April 18

All meetings held at Lucchesi Community Center: 320 North McDowell Blvd., Petaluma

## Local 2182

967 Venture Court, Sacramento, CA95825

### Executive Board Meeting

Second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

February 8 • March 14 • April 11

### General Membership Meeting

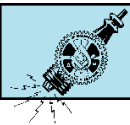
Second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

February 8 • March 14 • April 11

### Retirees Club - VISTA CLUB

Third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m. at Sacramento Hall

February 16 • March 15 • April 19



# POLITICAL CLOUT

## Working families make the difference in California's March 7 primaries

On January 6, more than 600 elected delegates representing more than two million California union members voted to make endorsements for the March 7 primary election.

Prior to this meeting, local central labor councils and committees of rank and file union members held endorsement interviews with all candidates from all parties. They reviewed candidates' answers on questionnaires about issues the impact California working people. And they sent their recommendations to the California Labor Federation. After thoroughly reviewing the list, it's obvious that all the candidates chosen are Democrats. So, take that into consideration as you go to vote in March.

Because there are so many State Ballot Initiatives, and because they tend to be so confusing, we have listed the Labor Federation's recommendations on these.

If you're on the web, check out the California Labor Federation's full endorsement list at [www.calaborfed.org](http://www.calaborfed.org). Also, the California Voter Foundation's site contains a wealth of information about the candidates, the ballot initiatives, and district maps: [www.cavoter.org](http://www.cavoter.org)

## State Ballot Propositions

- |    |  |                          |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 1A | Gambling   | .....YES                 |
| 12 | Bond: Parks, water & coastal protection            | .....YES                 |
| 13 | Bond: Safe drinking water                          | .....YES                 |
| 14 | Bond: Public library construction                  | .....YES                 |
| 15 | Bond: Forensic laboratories                        | .....YES                 |
| 16 | Bond: Veterans' homes                              | .....YES                 |
| 17 | Lotteries: Charitable raffles                      | .....YES                 |
| 18 | Murder: Special circumstances                      | ....No Recommendation    |
| 19 | Peace officers                                     | .....YES                 |
| 20 | State Lottery: Cardenas Textbook Act               | .....NO                  |
| 21 | Juvenile crime                                     | .....NO                  |
| 22 | Limit on marriage                                  | .....NO                  |
| 23 | None of the above ballot option                    | .....NO                  |
| 24 | Reapportionment                                    | .....Removed from ballot |
| 25 | Election campaigns, contribution & spending limits | ..NO                     |
| 26 | School facilities, bonds & local majority vote     | .....YES                 |
| 27 | Elections, term limits, Congressional candidates   | ....NO                   |
| 28 | Repeal of tobacco surtax enacted by Proposition 10 | ..NO                     |
| 29 | Indian Gaming Compact                              | .....No Recommendation   |
| 30 | Insurance claims, practices, civil remedies        | .....YES                 |
| 31 | Insurance claims, civil remedies, amendments       | .....YES                 |

The IAM District 190  
**Sparkplug**



The Sparkplug (USPS 007966) is published bi-monthly for \$3 per year by District Lodge 190, International Association of Machinists, Oakland, Calif., a non-profit organization. Periodicals postage paid at Oakland.

The Sparkplug is the official publication of District Lodge 190 and its affiliated local lodges and notification of any meeting or election in this paper shall constitute official notice per Article B, Section 4 of the IAMAW Constitution and Articles V and VII of District Lodge 190 By-Laws.

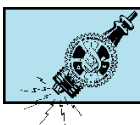
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IAM District Lodge 190  
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Oakland, CA 94621



Beagle & Bleiweiss Communications  
Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor





## AROUND THE LOCALS

### First contracts get settled at two shops

Getting a first contract is never easy because every possible issue is on the table.

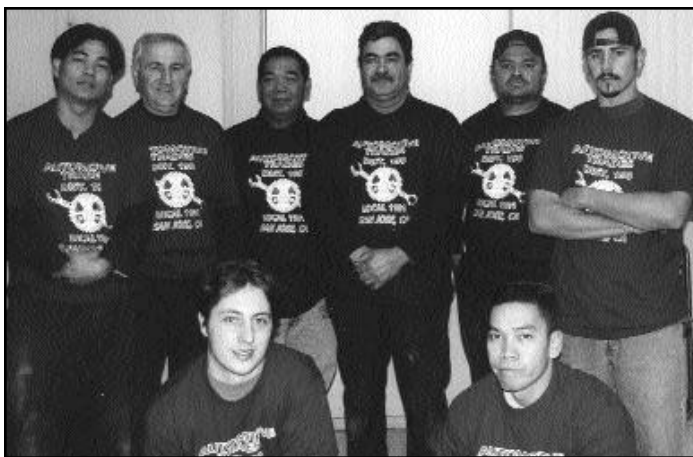
More than the financials—wages, benefits and pension—the company and union have to agree to grievance procedures, work rules, and issues like seniority.

And with each employee having their own particular priorities, it's a challenge for the union to keep the solidarity strong and help everybody focus on the big picture.

So getting a good first contract is something to crow about.

#### Big wage increases at Laidlaw

Local 1101 was pleased to initiate the new members from Laidlaw Paratransit in San Jose. After winning their election by one vote in



New Laidlaw members at Local 1101's December initiation

February, this 10-person unit got its first contract in December.

"This company fought the union drive tooth and nail," said Business Representative Andy Mattos. "But when we won the election, they brought in a decent guy who came to the table ready to put a deal together."

The company had been paying less than the legal minimum for people who

provide their own tools, so the first item settled was securing back pay. "One guy got \$13,000. In total the company paid out \$38,000 in back pay settlements," said Mattos.

"The union priorities for this contract were wage increases—because they had been so out of line—and getting a 3-year agreement." One person got a \$200/week increase, while

everybody else is set to get 50¢ per hour more immediately and 50¢ each year.

"The company is committed to paying more as the mechanics increase their skills, so we gave them access to our training programs. It's a win-win for the members, the employer and the union," explained Mattos.

#### Macro contract at Microphor

In November, the 39 new members of Local 1596 who work at Microphor ratified their first contract. They had voted for union representation in April.

Microphor, based in Willits, manufactures septic systems and toilets for railroads and yachts.

Local 1596 was able to get a two-year agreement—even though the company pushed hard for a one-year

pact. Over the life of the contract, every employee will get a 6% wage increase, 3% each year starting with the first pay period. (During the campaign, the company gave 9% increases to some of the employees.)

The agreement contains new job security language. Employees will no longer be at-will—the company will need to show just cause for termination.

New benefits include bereavement leave, and more sick time off.

"These new members had to miss a 49er game to get this contract ratified," says Business Representative Tom Brandon. "But the contract passed by an 18-7 vote when the 49ers lost by the same amount that day."

Congratulations to the negotiating committee and welcome new members!

#### Silgan San Leandro closing

Due to a loss of two major customers, Silgan Container in San Leandro announced on January 7 that it will close its doors on May 1, 2000. The Silgan facility in Los Angeles will also be closing.

The union is currently in severance pay negotiations, and is hopeful that some of the 46 employees could be hired at other Silgan facilities.

"This is a tough hit," said Herman Howell, Administrative Assistant. "I came out of this facility, and know these employees. Many were loyal to this company for more than 25 years."

#### Bright contract at Sun Valley Ford

In December, Local 1173 got a good contract for the 78 people at Sun Valley Ford. This is one of the local's biggest shops.

By the end of the four-year agreement Sun Valley employees will be at \$300 in pension contributions, going from \$215 to \$285 the first year, and then getting \$5/year thereafter. They'll also get a 60 cent wage increase each year and maintenance of health and welfare benefits for the life of the agreement.

#### CCCTA completes contract

The 25 bus mechanics at the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority ratified their contract in December. By completing the contract two months early, they get two extra months of higher wages and benefits.

#### Welcome back metal men

Magnusson Auto Body in Walnut Creek had been union until it was bought up many years ago and the owners busted the union. When the metal guys there didn't want to fight to keep the union, Local 1173 had to walk away from the shop.

But the Painters got the union for their members. And now they've returned the jurisdiction to the Machinists. So Local 1173 is pleased to welcome back the metal men at Magnusson Auto Body.

#### If it ain't yours. . .

We don't usually want to crow about losses, but this one is instructive.

A long-time member of Local 1173 at Lucky Stores was caught in possession of company property and

fired. Due to a range of extenuating circumstances, the union took the case up, from grievance to arbitration.

But when the arbitrator's decision came down, there were no if's, and's or but's. The arbitrator ruled that there's no excuse to be in possession of company property that's not yours, no matter what it is.

Whether or not this case gets appealed, the lesson stands: If it's not yours, don't put it in your locker or tool box, even for safe keeping.

#### Sea change at Sea-Land

The union reached agreement

with Maersk following their purchase of Sea-Land in November.

In the memorandum of agreement, the new employer taking over the contract (PMMC) will honor the contract for the remainder of the agreement for at least 75% of all employees.

Over the next few months, they will evaluate their needs and may have to lay off up to 20 people in Long Beach, four people in Oakland and 8 people in Tacoma.

Those who are laid off will get 25 weeks pay, equal to about \$30,000 and retirement benefits paid for one year.

#### A tribute to stewards



Ted Hinckley, left, accepts Local 1546's Steward of the Year award from Area Director Don Crosatto at the union's annual stewards banquet December 11.

"This past year was particularly hard in negotiations," Hinckley said, "But we have a great bunch of guys at Hayward Dodge and we hung together. We couldn't have made it without that unity, and I'm very grateful."

The banquet, held at the Willow Park Country Club in Castro Valley, drew about 200 stewards and their guests for an enjoyable evening of dinner, dancing, and hardly any speeches.

### Standing with striking Teamsters

Local 1173 members joined a soggy demonstration and civil disobedience action in December to support the 750 Teamsters who have been on strike at Basic Vegetable in King City since July.

The demonstration at Basic's Walnut Creek headquarters was called by the Contra Costa Labor Council and the Teamsters. The rain was heavy but spirits were high as more than 200 union members—construction, hospital, hotel and garbage workers—put out the message that the company's been unfair.

Local 890 went on strike at this dehydration plant when the company demanded takeaways in their



Local 1173 members support King City strikers.

health care and pensions, and reduction of hours, effectively cutting their wages. Recently

the company announced that they permanently replaced these workers.

"The strikers at Basic Vegetable do any union proud," said California Labor Federation Executive Secretary-Treasurer Art Pulaski. "This is a cold day, but I feel the strength of solidarity from working people across the Bay Area."



Just a reminder:  
What it's like to work non-union

Do you remember what it was like before you worked in a union shop, or before the shop you're in was organized? Some members start their careers in union settings and don't know how it could be any different.

The mechanics at one Fairfield dealership are in the midst of an organizing drive, and they've got a lot of gripes. At press time, the election hasn't taken place yet and the dealership hired the notorious union-busting law firm Littler Mendelson. We talked with one mechanic who we'll call Ryan, keeping his real name secret to guard against employer retribution.

"It's hell," says Ryan. "The wages are pretty good here because it's the outskirts of the Bay Area. But we don't get any pension. There's supposed to be profit sharing, but the boss hasn't put anything into it in last five years. Zero. Zilch. And we have to pay into our medical to the tune of \$345 per month.

"This dealer gets high dollar for labor and can't even pay guys in the shop equally. Mechanics get \$17 to \$24 to do the same work, and one porter is getting \$6.00 an hour. And the dealer is charging \$83/hour for labor.

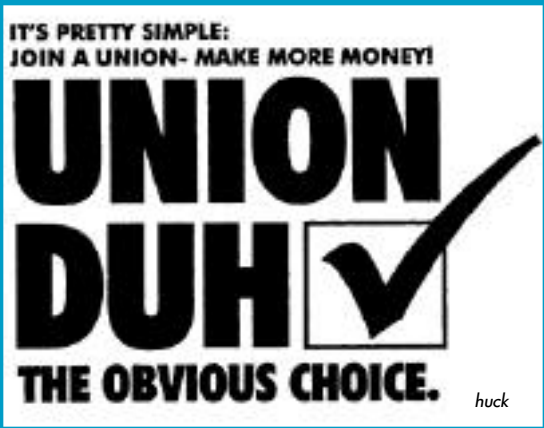
"I've seen so many techs come and go here. If we got a union, maybe we could get some long-term, really skilled

employees in here too. Then we could reach the boss' labor goals and not have comebacks.

"We just got our quarterly pension statements. It looks like we're averaging \$100 a year. I know guys in the union getting \$300 a month.

"Two guys got fired right before Christmas, and weren't given a reason. They had no recourse. No grievance process. There's just no security in a non-union shop.

"I'd say the main reason we want union representation is to help us fight for decent medical benefits, a pension, and equal raises for everybody," Ryan concluded.



Technicians at another Fairfield dealership, Woodard Chevrolet, voted last summer to join Local 1173. Contract negotiations have been under way since November. We spoke to one mechanic about what inspired the members there to vote union—Yes!

"The mechanics here hadn't seen a raise in three years.

"But health and welfare was our biggest concern. Benefits were going down while the premiums just kept going up. In the last year alone, premiums went from \$120/month to \$270.

"We were told that the dealership had an open door policy—you could leave at any time and they could get rid of you at any time. No explanations.

"This dealership is flat rate. It hurts us quite a bit. Employees in body shop were making a \$20 or \$21 hourly wage.

When they went to flat rate, the mechanics kept their previous rate, but they dropped everyone in the body shop to \$17 straight across the board.

"I would just like a decent journeyman wage, whether it's hourly or a flat rate.

"A lot of terminology that we're trying to get into the contract is still hard for Woodard to swallow. They're bitter. You can tell in their demeanor.

"I think everybody will breathe a sigh of relief once we settle the contract. Let's get it behind us."

Wesgo employees tell why they vote



**Bob Hisel**  
Job protection from aggressive management.



**Tung Nguyen**  
Transfer rights are important. I want to be considered before a new hire.

Bringing union strength to high tech industry

On November 29, the 110 employees of Wesgo Ceramics in Belmont voted to join Local 1414.

Wesgo makes ceramic parts for the computer industry. Their clients include the biggest names in Silicon Valley, such as Applied Materials and Siemens. "This is cutting edge stuff. The union has to be reaching new industries; hopefully this victory will be another stepping stone into this one," organizer Mike Munoz said.

"The organizing drive started in June," Munoz explained. "They had heard that the workers at LTD Ceramics organized, so they called us. We held several meetings for the folks on all three shifts and had very good attendance. We made house calls and were at the plant gate several mornings at 5 a.m. passing out handbills. People there were really positive."



**Gary Duncan**  
I drive from Modesto every day—I'm looking for flex-time so I can avoid traffic.



**Ray Sevilla**  
I want to be able to move up in the company and be fairly compensated for my skills.

SHOP TALK: With the 2000 elections approaching, how important is it for the union to be involved in politics?



**Chester Lessor**  
Hopkins Honda Local 1101—Sunnyvale  
"The union can provide important information to us about the candidates. I don't want to make the wrong choices."



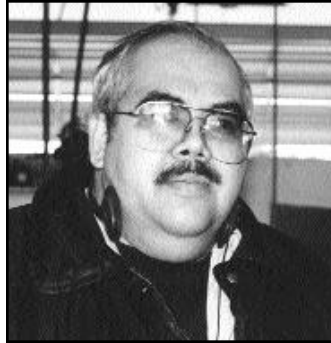
**Dean Thomas**  
City of Sacramento Local 2182  
"If unions don't get involved with politics, the unions will be gone."



**Carlos Khouri**  
Hopkins Honda Local 1101—Sunnyvale  
"The union should be involved in everything. The more involved, the more power we have."



**Booker T. McCoy**  
City of Sacramento Local 2182  
"No. The union should leave politics alone and do right for the people here."



**Peter Yhip**  
Hopkins Honda Local 1101—Sunnyvale  
"The union is a good guiding light to put everyone in the right perspective. It can give us good ideas."



**Moe**  
City of Local  
"Union involvement helps us out with contracts—something we need to weight out."



o join the union.



**Christian Espirtu**  
*Fairness and money. I want to be able to advance in the company.*

## 1 to a new amics

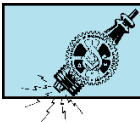
loys a highly skilled workforce, are Filipino, Vietnamese and Lati-, who have worked at Wesgo for

### for younger workers

that led to the organizing drive in eight years, at-will employment, with the company pension fund and turnover that led to inconsistent employees. a strong desire by the older workers ig to retire to leave the younger omething more,” Munoz explained. hank Conrado Savilla, Bob Hisel i, Charlie Russell and Bob Ulloa. organizing team, and we couldn’t out their persistent hard work and Munoz added.



**Surinder Bakshi**  
*I voted for the union so that we could have a fair seniority system.*



## BENEFITS NEWS

### Good pension news for new year continued from page 1

Changes will broaden benefits for survivors of eligible participants who die before retirement, making a difference in three ways:

- Beneficiaries of vested unmarried participants will be eligible for a monthly preretirement death benefit equal to the normal pension amount, payable for 60 months, if the participant dies at any age on or after January 1, 2000. The substantial improvement is in addition to the current lump sum payment of \$200 times the number of full years of future service completed at the time of death.
- Beneficiaries of married participants aged 55 or older

who die before retirement will now be eligible for the one-time lump-sum pre-retirement death benefit of \$200 times the number of years of future service. It will be payable in addition to the 50% spouse pre-retirement death benefit. The change applies to beneficiaries of participants who die on or after January 1, 2000.

- For married participants who die on or after January 1, 2000, the 50% spouse pre-retirement death benefit will be payable immediately even if the participant dies before age 55. It will be calculated as if the participant had reached this age.

## AI Pension Fund increases

The Automotive Industries Pension Fund trustees are pleased to announce the following benefit improvements:

### Change in benefit accrual rate

For retirements effective on or after January 1, 1999, the individual factors for determining the amount of the Normal Retirement Benefit have been changed. Benefits have been increased from \$7.71 to \$10.00 for each year of Credited Past Service. Benefits for Future Service Credit on or after September 1, 1955 and before January 1, 2005 have been increased from \$4.90 to \$5.00 for each \$100 of contributions made to the Fund on your behalf. For service on or after January 1, 2005 benefits will continue to be payable at the \$4.24 factor.

### Retiree Increase

All Pensioners and Beneficiaries who were in pay status on both December 1, 1998 and December 1, 1999 (or whose benefits were suspended because they were working in Covered Service and contributions were made to the Fund on their behalf on those dates) will receive a 2% increase in their monthly benefit amount effective January 1, 1999.

### Extra Benefit Check

Pensioners and Beneficiaries with a pension effective date prior to January 1, 1999 and who were in pay

status on both December 1, 1998 and December 1, 1999 should have received in January, 2000 a one-time “extra” check equal to the amount of their monthly pension check for December 1998. If a Pensioner’s benefit is being allocated between two or more people, the “extra” check will be allocated in the same manner.

### Joint & Survivor factors

For retirements effective on or after October 1, 1999, the individual factors for determining the Automatic Joint and Survivor Benefits and the Full Joint and Survivor Option are as follows:

#### Automatic Joint and Survivor Benefit

The adjustment factor for determining the Automatic Joint and Survivor Benefit for a Regular, Unreduced, Early and Rule of 85 Pension will be 95% of the amount that would otherwise be payable for the Participant’s lifetime only, if the Participant and Spouse are the same age.

The Adjustment factor for determining the Automatic Joint and Survivor Benefit for a Disability Pension will be 85% of the amount that would otherwise be payable for the Participant’s lifetime only, if the Participant and Spouse are the same age.

#### Full Joint and Survivor Option

The adjustment factor for determining the Full Joint and Survivor Option for a Regular, Unreduced, Early and Rule of 85 Pension will be

85% of the amount that would otherwise be payable for the Participant’s lifetime only, if the Participant and Spouse are the same age.

The Adjustment factor for determining the Full Joint and Survivor Option for a Disability Pension will be 70% of the amount that would otherwise be payable for the Participant’s lifetime only, if the Participant and Spouse are the same age.

In each of the above cases, if the Participant and Spouse are not the same age, the adjustment factor will be increased or decreased by .3% for each full year that the spouse is older or younger than the Participant.

### Required beginning date

The Required Beginning Date is the April 1 following the calendar year in which a Participant attains age 70-1/2. Once such Participant attains the Required Beginning Date, the Fund must begin payment of the Participant’s pension benefit. After the Required Beginning Date such Participant will receive pension benefits without restrictions on the type, duration or location of the work being performed.

NOTE: Pensioner’s whose monthly benefits are limited by Internal Revenue Code §415 may not be entitled to the above improvements or may receive an adjusted benefit amount based on their individual benefit limitation for the year.

## union to be involved in politics?



**Dennis Maro**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

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sements.”



**Salvador Cortez**  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

“We need to get people in office who will help out the little people rather than big business. We must support those who support us.”



**Randy Au**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

“We’re damned if they do and damned if they don’t. It makes it harder for the little guy, but we do want friends in office.”



**Paul Weisgarber**  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

“Like any special interest, it benefits the union to get people elected. But whoever I vote for always loses!”



**Sharkey Schwartz**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

“The more influence you put out, the greater the benefits you can reap. It certainly can’t hurt.”



**Sharkey Schwartz**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

“My question is ‘who makes the decisions about who the union endorses?’ Who’s accountable?”



# Goodyear keeps on rolling

A few Goodyear shops in the bay area are union shops, although many are not. If you're in Walnut Creek (1400 E. Newell Ave.) or Santa Rosa (2021 Cleveland Ave.) and need new tires, shop at the union stores.

*The Sparkplug* visited the Walnut Creek Goodyear shop. Here's what a few Local 1173 members had to say.

*I've been here four years. Sure we have to pay union dues, but I know that if we ever have a crisis or a lay-off here, the union will back us up.*

John Sadiq  
Local 1173



*I've been doing this for two years. I got into it because my dad taught me about cars—just like a lot of the guys. But it's still really hard being a woman in this field. I have to prove myself ten times over. A lot of men don't even want me working on their car.*

Shawna McLean  
Local 1173

## Official notice for District Lodge 190 members Nomination and Election of Delegates

This notice will serve as **Official Notice** of a Special Order of Business at the April and May regular meetings of each Local Lodge regarding Nominations and Election of Delegates and Alternate Delegates to represent each local at the 35th Grand Lodge Convention. (See dates below.) The convention is being held in San Francisco in September.

In accordance with Article II, Section 3 of the IAM Constitution,, absentee ballots shall be made available to members who reside in outlying districts more than 25 miles from the designated balloting place, members who are either confined because of verified illness or on vacation, or on official IAM business approved by the Local Lodge, or on an employer travel assignment or reserve military leave. Before the absentee ballots are opened and counted, the inspectors of election shall determine the eligibility of members to vote by that method, as defined in the IAM Constitution. Any member entitled to receive an absentee ballot shall make written request therefore to the Recording Secretary of the Local Lodge, by delivering in person or mailing such request not later than 10 days before the election.

Local Lodge	# Delegates	Nominations	April 11 Elections
801	1	April 20	May 18
1101	7	April 13	May 11
1173	6	April 20	May 18
1414	up to 18*	April 20	May 18
1528	up to 7*	April 5	May 18
1546	18	April 4	May 3
1584	6	April 20	May 2
1596	up to 7*	April 18	May 18
2182	up to 8*		May 16

\* Exact number to be determined by members at Feb. or Mar. meeting

## INDUSTRY NEWS

The following article was submitted to *The Sparkplug* by Peter Yhip at Hopkins Honda in San Jose. Yhip and his fellow mechanics said that their employer is having great difficulty filling technician slots, and something will have to give. It's especially expensive to live in Silicon Valley, and the young people here would rather go into computers than the trades.

### Wanted: skilled auto mechanics

Bay Area residents have long heard high-tech's employment woes.

But another industry is experiencing an urgent need for help, an industry where the work is as demanding but less glamorous, an industry that doesn't have whiz kids making their first million by 25.

Auto mechanics, a profession that's been around since the first Model-T, are disappearing from the work world. Ford Motor Co. in August warned that the industry was facing "a potentially devastating shortage of talent."

*Ford warns that the industry is facing "a potentially devastating shortage of talent."*

Many repair shop owners believe the shortage is already a reality, one that could end up costing consumers more to have their vehicles serviced as repair shops are forced to shell out higher wages to keep their workers.

"It's almost impossible to keep a qualified technician for a long time," said one Moraga dealer. "The national average for a mechanic to stay where they are is 13 months. They know that if they quit at noon, they'll have two offers to work somewhere else by 5 p.m."

People working within the automobile industry believe the only hope of finding more workers is to overcome what they say is a negative image of the auto repair profession and show that it can be a stable and handsomely lucrative line of work.

#### No more grease monkeys

The reason good auto technicians are so marketable is because, as many technicians explain, it's not

just a grease monkey job anymore.

As vehicles became more and more sophisticated, servicing them became a more technical job.

Automobile manufacturers and repair shops are fishing for new recruits at the high school level, but in many cases, are coming up dry.

"A lot of them will take it because it's an elective and they're interested in cars," said auto repair instructor

Ron Sykes at Concord and Mt. Diablo high schools. "But they don't make it a career."

Sykes doesn't blame the students for choosing

other careers as much as he blames the educational system. "The whole mentality of the system has been geared away from the trades."

Another deterrent to entering the profession is the expense auto technicians incur in building up their tool boxes. A technician invests \$15-20,000 of his own money in tools over the first few years of his career.

But skilled technicians are highly compensated, something employers are trying to publicize through school visits and want ads.

In Northern California, an apprentice, someone with less than two years of experience, can earn \$15 an hour, according to local shop owners. The typical hourly wage for a journeyman, who has five years of experience and several certificates, is about \$25 an hour. Masters, those with 10 years of experience and all pertinent certifications earn about \$30.

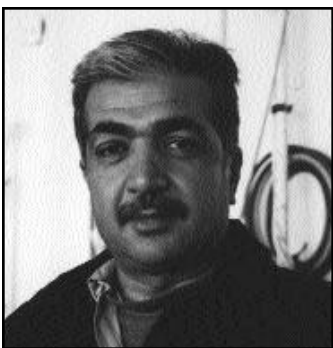
—By Teena Massingill  
Contra Costa Times

## SHOP TALK: Should the union be involved in politics?



Chris Wheeler  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

*"We must be involved locally to negotiate for better wages and benefits. We need to put our money where our mouth is."*



Reza Roostan  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

*"If they're involved in politics, will that do anything for us? We're low on the totem pole as it is."*



Rod Kirby  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

*"Politics are very important. The people who control decisions, like the mayor, have a direct effect on our lives."*



David Sobodos  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

*"The political process is run by special interests, so there should be a balance. If we bow out to be courteous, will Republican groups bow out too?"*



Robert Miller  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

*"We should be in with the community leaders for support so they know what working people have to go through."*



## Summit Logistics—Keeping Safeway on the road

In May, 1992 Safeway closed its facilities in Richmond and Sacramento, and merged its operations into a new “state of the art” facility in Tracy. This meant layoffs or early retirement for many people. Those who stayed on had to move or commute.

Safeway’s Northern California distribution facility was initially

managed by SDMI. Summit Logistics took over operations in 1997. Frankly, none of the 21 mechanics miss SDMI.

These members of Local 1546 repair and maintain 185 tractors and 650 trailers.

The contract expires in September. The members look forward to coming together in the spring to brainstorm priorities for improvements.



Charlie Deguara

Charlie’s been with Safeway for 26 years, since the Richmond days.

“It’s not like the Bay Area, but it’s getting better. We took a cut in pay to keep our jobs but we’re still doing better than most people in the Valley. Unfortunately, we’re probably not doing as well as non-union folks in the Bay Area.

“I saw my cousin Howard in the last *Spark - plug*. I haven’t seen him in 20 years. Hi Howard!”



John Fletcher

“I’m going to retire at 52 with a full pension,” says John Fletcher.

“To the young guys, I say ‘Stay union.’ Thanks to the union, we’ve got good jobs. We’re getting better and stronger all the time.”

Joe Gutierrez started as a driver at Summit in November, 1992.

“The best thing about being a steward is keeping an eye on my fellow workers and management to match the roles of the contract.

“My advice to union members is to participate. Try to attend meetings to see how things work.”



Joe Gutierrez, Steward



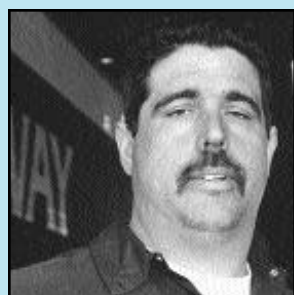
Virgil Andrea

Virgil Andrea started at Safeway in Richmond 35 years ago and for the past eight years has commuted from Pinole.

“I look forward to retiring in the next 2-3 months. When I leave, I won’t look back.

“I look forward to fishing up at Antelope Lake and doing yard work. I’ve got enough projects to last 4-5 years.

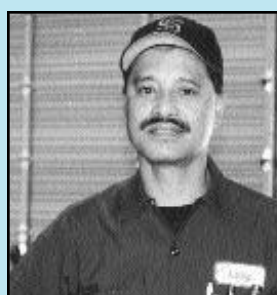
“Overall it’s been a pretty good job and a good trade. The union benefits are real good, too. It’s been a good life for me but it’s time to let these younger guys have it.”



Manuel Ferreira

Manuel works on the trailers as a working foreman. “The trailers are mostly new, but we find the old ones and get rid of them.

“This is my first union job. I like it.”

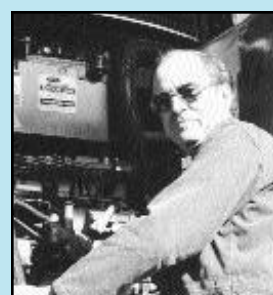


Larry Acaya

Larry Acaya started in the warehouse when the facility opened in 1992.

“I was lucky to become a mechanic trainee. I maintained seniority and kept moving up the ladder.

“This is a great job, because I’m constantly learning.”



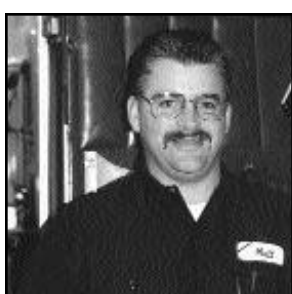
Howard Schafer

A reefer mechanic for nearly 33 years, Howard Schafer started with Safeway in Sacramento.

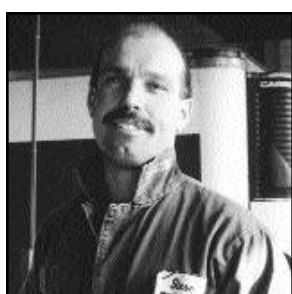
“It’s not the same as before. They built a brand new facility here, but didn’t install heaters—they were too cheap. But it works out for us all right.”

At Summit since 1993, Matt Sweet is now a working foreman, “which means that I fill in when the boss isn’t around and handle road calls.

“I can’t complain—at least not any more. There were problems with the other management company, but now it’s not too bad.”



Matt Sweet



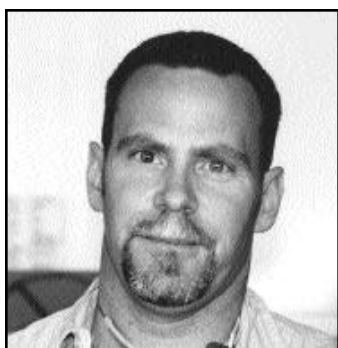
Steve Burdick

Known as “the best in reefers,” Steve Burdick has been at Summit for three years. “It’s 10-fold better than my last job in terms of wages and work pressure because fleet maintenance puts on much less pressure than retail.

“I started doing reefer repair out of a service truck. I told them to put me on the payroll, so I could get more and they would pay out less. And they did.

The Machinists are a good union. I plan to be here until I retire, in 15 years.”

## SHOP TALK: Should the union be involved with politics?



**Paul Gaudette**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

“Politics should not be a priority. I think the union should focus on employers and benefits and stuff.”



**Scott Dennis**  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

“We have to keep our finger on the politicians, and those who impact the union’s existence. We need to be heard.”



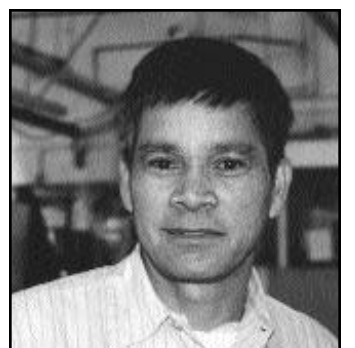
**Hai Dang**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

“The union should be involved. A good president will help the economy and help jobs.”



**Chris Corrington**  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

“It’s very important to be involved. The mayor was instrumental in getting capital to improve our department—that got me my job as it improves city services.”



**Ramon Bella**  
Hopkins Honda  
Local 1101—Sunnyvale

“Retirement is a key issue. The union should be involved to ensure that we can get good benefits.”

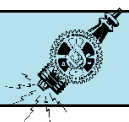




## Behavioral Health

### Helping you navigate life's challenges

PacifiCare Behavioral Health makes it easy to get confidential help with problems interfering with your work. Problems like stress, drug and alcohol abuse and family and marriage concerns. A dedicated team is available 24 hours a day to get you to the care that is right for you and your family. For more information, call toll-free, 1-800-491-3334. All calls are strictly confidential. We can help make things better.



## Union People

### Union member flexes muscles in national trials

By day he works at Soscol Auto Body in Napa. In his spare time, Steve Barnett is a grappler preparing for his first tournament: the Pan American Trials being held in San Diego on January 30.

Grappling is where wrestling meets the martial arts. The Grappling Arts are a mixture of take-downs, throws, submission wrestling, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, sambo, and judo. The focus is on wrestling to submission.

"This is the most realistic hands on form of self defense you can get into," says Barnett.

"I've studied grappling for over three years at the Lions Den Submission Fighting Academy, in Napa."

According to Barnett, many world-famous champions came out of this school "They produce a lot of tough guys."

"I've got to mention my instructor, Jerry Bolander. He's an ultimate fight champion."

#### The grappling difference

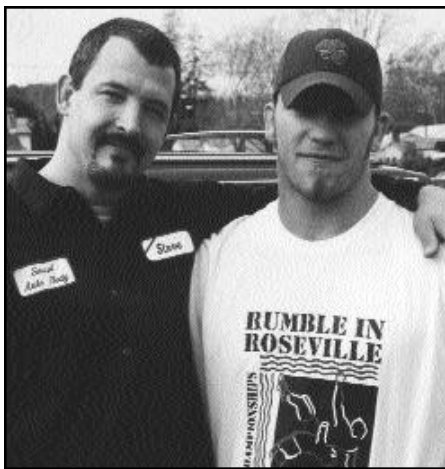
"With karate or tai kwon do, you end up on the ground," Barnett explained. "Here, you've got to bring the person to your level. You take the person to the ground so you

can equalize the situation better.

"I competed in judo, jiu-jitsu, and karate tournaments," Barnett continued. "But this is the best form of self defense fighting than I've done, and I've had better results."

Barnett has been in Local 1173 for a year and a half and is currently enrolled in the apprentice program.

"This shop happened to be a union shop and the people are great," Barnett says. "Now I'm benefiting from it. The union sends me to school. It helps me and my employer out, he gets a trained skilled employee and I get all the skills."



Steve Barnett, at left, with his grappling instructor Jerry Bolander.

This tournament is being put on by Kenny Shamrock, one of the biggest names in ultimate fighting. The winner of these

games will go to the World Games in Australia.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity," Barnett says. "But, I'm just trying to get past the first tournament."

"My girlfriend Susan has been wonderful and supportive. If it wasn't for her putting up with all my training all the time, I couldn't be here," Barnett is quick to say.

### Reflections on 40-plus years in the IAM



Daniel Borrero moves on and stays active

Back in 1959, Daniel P.L. Borrero joined the IAM when he got a job at National Can in San Leandro.

Forty-one years later, after being fired and reinstated five times throughout his 27 years of employment, and after serving as a Business Agent three times under four Directing Business Representatives at two Districts, he's finally said 'enough.' Sort of.

Since 1991, Daniel has represented Machinists in Oakland with Local 1584 and in Stockton and Modesto with Local 1528. "The most enjoyable part of being a business representative is helping and educating the rank and file and the shop stewards."

"I found that the biggest prob-

lem between the members and management is that they don't sit down and listen to each other. I would try to get them to understand each other first and then to work together to achieve a common goal.

"The other thing I enjoyed was being educated by all the secretaries in the union."

In a moment of reflection, Borrero said "I appreciate what the union's done for me and American workers by creating the middle class. If not for the American labor movement, there would only be the awful rich and the awful poor."

"Back in the 20s and 30s, unions changed society. Since the PATCO firings in the 80s, we've been adapting to 'society.' It's time to be aggressive again, and make society adapt to us."

Daniel looks forward to taking it easy and working around his Hayward home. With plans to stay active in the union, he plans to get back into fish breeding and may even have time to take that new computer out of its box.

Good work, Daniel. You'll be missed!

**Moving?**  
Inform your  
local union!

If you plan to move or have moved already, please notify your Local Union office of your new address as quickly as possible to ensure that you receive important union notices. (See calendar for local union addresses.)

# ATPA

## ASSOCIATED THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATORS

ATPA is the administrator for the  
Automotive Industries Pension and Welfare Trust  
Funds and Machinist Health Plans  
(Active and Retiree).

You can contact us at 510-836-2484.