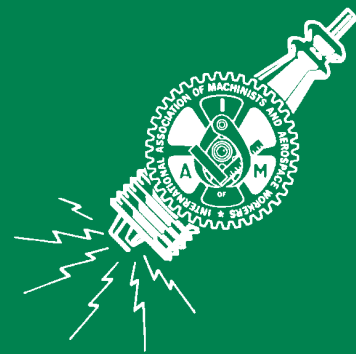


# The IAM District 190 *Sparkplug*



VOL. 3, NO. 5

August/September 2001

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190

## State of the district

By Jim Beno, Directing Business Representative

First, I want to express my thanks to the staff of District Lodge 190 and to the delegates who elected me to serve as DBR. I've worked with District Lodge 190 in various capacities for over 25 years and I feel confident that we can build an even stronger union from the solid foundation that Mike Day and his predecessors created.

Here's where we are now. District Lodge 190 is composed of nine Local Lodges which represent more than 18,000 active and retired members from San Jose and Modesto to the south, going north to the Oregon border. The smallest lodge, Local 801 in Nevada, has about 100 members. The largest, Locals 1414 and 1546 both have more than 5,000 members each. Our local lodges represent very diverse industries, which include Aerospace, Automotive, Manufacturing, Machining and Tool and Die, Trucking and the Public Sector to name a few. We represent more members in the Automotive sector than any District in the nation.

We currently have 21 Business Representatives, in addition to myself, whose job is to negotiate contracts and handle grievances for our active members at close to 900 shops—ranging from 2 to 400 people per shop. And we have a 5-person organizing team who follow up on leads, run union representation election campaigns and help our new members gain their first contract agreements. It's a huge job, but one of Mike Day's greatest legacies is the fantastic team he left behind. We can't work miracles, particularly as the economy downshifts, but we can and will continue to work hard on behalf of all of our members.

**Organizing:** Four years ago, this District decided to put significant resources into organizing and that commitment has paid off. In that time, we have won 40 representation elections and brought in another 24 companies through recognition — for a total of more than 500 new members. We're still working on getting first contracts at another nine companies.

As we move forward, our commitment to organizing the unorganized has not faltered. The collective bargaining agreements negotiated by our representatives in both the Automotive and the Machine and Manufacturing divisions are at the forefront of these industries. These contracts provide our organizers with the tools they need to demonstrate to the unorganized worker just what a union contact can offer. Pensions, Health and Welfare Plans and industry leading wages are but a few of the benefits guaranteed by a Machinists Union contract. But to keep these benefits, we must constantly demonstrate to our union employers that we are organizing their competitors.

**Communications:** Education and communication with our staff, officers and members are vital roles provided by the District Lodge. We must keep pace with the ever-changing world of technology and telecommunications. We're close to launching the District Lodge 190 website to provide quicker access to services and benefits. The Automotive Industries Pension Fund recently went online at [www.aitrustfunds.org](http://www.aitrustfunds.org) and it provides accurate and up-to-date information to participants and pensioners about their pension accounts. And of course, we will continue to publish the award-winning *Sparkplug* on a bi-monthly basis.

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## Drum roll, please!

The District 190 web site will be open for business on September 1. You'll find information about the union, links to pension and benefits info, and lots of other useful resources. Also, all of the back issues of *The Sparkplug* will be on the site. Check it out:


[www.iamdistrict190.org](http://www.iamdistrict190.org)

 <h1>UNION MEETINGS</h1>	
<b>Local 801</b> c/o D.L. 190 7717 Oakport Street, Oakland, CA 94621 800-655-2182	<b>Membership Meeting</b> <i>Third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m.</i> August 16 • September 20 • October 18 <i>Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.</i>
<b>Local 1101</b> 1150 So. Bascom # 23 San Jose, CA 95128 408-291-2550  <i>All meetings held at Lion's Blind Center: 101 North Bascom Ave. San Jose</i>	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.</i> August 2 • September 6 • October 4 <b>Stewards Meeting</b> <i>First Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m.</i> August 2 • September 6 • October 4 <b>General Membership Meeting</b> <i>Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.</i> August 9 • September 6* • October 11 (*Note: September General Membership meeting is merged with Stewards Meeting on 9/6 at 8:00 p.m.)
<b>Local 1173</b> 1900 Bates Ave., # H Concord, CA 94520 925-687-6421	<b>Membership/Shop Stewards Mtg.</b> <i>Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.</i> August 16 • September 20 • October 18 <b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.</i> August 9 • September 13 • October 18 <b>Retirees Club Meeting</b> <i>Call Local for current meeting times</i>
<b>Local 1414</b> 150 South Blvd. San Mateo, CA 94402 650-341-2689	<b>Shop Stewards Meeting</b> <i>First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.</i> August 2 • September 6 • October 4 <b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>Second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.</i> August 9 • September 13 • October 18 <b>General Membership Meeting</b> <i>Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.</i> August 16 • September 20 • October 18
<b>Local 1528</b> 713 16th Street Modesto, CA 95354 209-529-9210	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>First Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.</i> August 1 • September 5 • October 3 <b>General Membership Meeting</b> <i>First Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.</i> August 1 • September 5 • October 3
<b>Local 1546</b> 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-638-6705	<b>General Membership Meeting</b> <i>First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.</i> August 7 • September 4 • October 2 <b>Shop Stewards Meeting</b> <i>First Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.</i> August 7 • September 4 • October 2 <b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>Thursday preceding membership meeting at 6:30 p.m.</i> August 2 • August 30 • September 27 <b>Senior's Luncheon</b> <i>First Wednesday of each month at 12 noon</i> August 1 • September 5 • October 3 <b>Alcoholics Anonymous</b> <i>Every Saturday, 9 a.m., at Local 1546</i>
<b>Local 1584</b> 8130 Baldwin Street Oakland, CA 94621 510-635-2064	<b>Membership Meeting</b> <i>Third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.</i> August 16 • September 20 • October 18 <b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>Preceding Monday at 7:00 p.m.</i> August 13 • September 17 • October 15 <b>Retirees Club</b> <i>First Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.</i> August 7 • September 4 • October 2
<b>Local 1596</b> 4210 Petaluma Blvd. No. Petaluma, CA 94952 707-795-0085 <i>All meetings: Lucchesi Community Center: 320 N. McDowell Blvd., Petaluma</i>	<b>Membership Meeting</b> <i>Third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 p.m.</i> August 21 • September 18 • October 16 <b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>Third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.</i> August 21 • September 18 • October 16
<b>Local 2182</b> 967 Venture Court, Sacramento, CA 95825 800-458-9200	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>Second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.</i> August 14 • September 11 • October 9 <b>General Membership Meeting</b> <i>Second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.</i> August 14 • September 11 • October 9 <b>Retirees Club - VISTA CLUB</b> <i>Third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.</i> August 15 • September 19 • October 17

Second Annual

Labor Day Car Show

and Benefit for Guide Dogs of America



Monday, September 3, 2001  
Car Show: 9am to 4pm  
Vehicle Set-Up: 8am to 10am  
Judging: 11am to 2pm  
Awards: 3pm

Consumnes River College

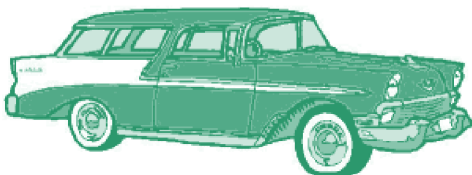
8401 Center Pkwy • Sacramento, CA

Take the Calvine Rd exit, off Hwy 99, and follow the signs

General Public Admission: \$2.00

Children under 12: FREE

Food, refreshments, music and raffle



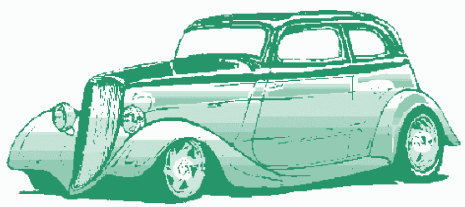
\$25 registration fee – first 200 entries receive a free car show T-shirt. All entries receive a dash plaque

Set of ARE Wheels to “Best of Show”

Classifications:  
40 & older; 41 to 50; 51 to 60 and 61 to 72  
• stock and modified within each category above)  
• plus 72 & older Trucks and Pro-Street classes  
Classes may be added or changed

Prizes:

Peoples Choice:  
~ \$100 and trophy  
Best of Show:  
(chosen by exhibitors)  
~ \$100 and trophy  
1st prize in each class  
~ \$50 and plaque  
2nd and 3rd place in each class ~ plaque



The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers founded the GDA over 50 years ago, and are the sponsors of this event.


Call 916-985-8101 for more information


Moving?

If you plan to move or have moved already, please notify your Local Union office immediately. Use the mailing label on this newspaper, or write your name, local number, and address clearly and send it to your Local.  
See calendar on this page for your local union's address.

The IAM District 190

Sparkplug





INTERNATIONAL LABOR COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION  
ILCA  
WILCA  
WESTERN LABOR COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION

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Beagle & Bleiweiss Communications • Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor



## AROUND THE LOCALS

### LABOR ACTION

#### Quick strike in San Jose

One week after Sonic Automotive took over Capitol Ford from long-time dealer Sy Kleinman, the company found its unionized workforce out on the sidewalk walking a picket line.

On May 14, the members started what is going down in Local 1101's history book as "the fastest strike ever." Forty minutes after the strike started, Business Representatives Jim Schwantz and Steve Pape were at the bargaining table. Within two hours the strike was settled and all techs were back to work.

The Local agreed to a 90-day interim deal that kept all payments going into their pension and union health and welfare fund, with wages at about 50 cents over the Motor Car Dealers contract.

"Once we determined that Sonic would maintain a majority of the bargaining unit, we tried to hammer out a deal," explained Area Director Steve Pape. "It was unfortunate that this had to happen. We've always had a great relationship with this corporation—negotiations are now back on track."

### CONTRACTS

#### First contracts coming

First contracts are always the hardest, because you have to start from scratch on every issue. But Organizing Director Mike Munoz reports that the union is close to achieving agree-

### Going to Brown the IAM way



*Marika Clark receives one of 14 IAM scholarships. (L to R): Local 1584 President Mike Mellow, Secretary-Treasurer Marge Kolb, Marika Clark, Administrative Assistant Herman Howell and IAM Grand Lodge Representative Don Whitaker.*

On June 21, Berkeley High School graduate Marika Clark received one of 14 IAM scholarships which she'll use to go to Brown University in Providence, RI. Marika's father, Richard, works at Caral Manufacturing in Albany and is a long time member of Local 1584.

IAM Grand Lodge Representative Don Whitaker made the presentation. "We had 745 applicants throughout the U.S.," he explained. "The Machinists Union is proud to offer you this scholarship. We ask, when you go through life, that you never forget that the dues money from hard working men and women contributed to this \$4,000 scholarship."

"On behalf of the Local," said Administrative Assistant Herman Howell, "I wish you much success."

ments at several shops where elections were recently won. These include Pepsi in Union City, ATC/Vancom in Chico and Swissport at the San Francisco Airport.

#### San Francisco deal

About 450 members who work for the City and County of San Francisco will get a 10% raise over two years. "They didn't get many other

improvements," says Local 1414 Area Director Charles Netherby, "but the employer initially proposed lots of take-aways, and they didn't get any of those, either."

#### Economic Woes

"We are starting to see layoffs, particularly in manufacturing, due to the recession and to high energy costs," reports Local 1596 Business Repre-

sentative Tom Brandon. "We hope it picks up by the end of the year, but it's making bargaining even tougher."

### ORGANIZING WINS

#### Rollins workers now union

When Penske bought Rollins Truck in June, big changes were in store for the 21 mechanics. Penske recognized the IAM to serve as the bargaining agent for the 21 formerly non-union workers.

"This definitely shows the benefits of union membership," says Local 1546 Business Representative Craig Andrews. "Their new contract calls for immediate wage increases, elimination of the co-pay on health and welfare, and pension contributions of more than \$400 per month." Locals 1101, 1414 and 1546 welcome their new members.

#### Durham votes union: YES!

Five mechanics at Durham Transport's Hayward facility voted in June to join Local 1546. "Negotiations on a contract are already underway," says organizer Jesse Juarez.

#### Campaigns in the works

Organizer Joe Coy is working with the airplane mechanics at Cessna Citation in Sacramento; Jesse Juarez is working with mechanics at Brentwood Dodge.

"We're following up on several good leads but it's too early to put the details into print. They'll make for good stories later," explained Area Director Mike Munoz.



## BENEFITS NEWS

### New investment choices for members with California Machinists 401K

Members participating in the California Machinists Union 401(k) will have two new additions to their investment menu.

You will soon receive a mailing with a prospectus and fact sheet on the new investment options. Please carefully review this material to make your best investment decisions.

The Trustees have approved the addition of the Smith Barney Small/Mid-Cap Portfolio and the Growth Fund of America fund. The **Smith Barney Small/Mid-Cap Portfolio** is considered an aggressive growth category and will complement the style and portfolio mix of the Putnam New Opportunity fund.

The **Growth Fund of America** is considered a core growth fund and holds companies of varying sizes that the manager believes to have superior growth prospects. This fund is similar to Putnam Voyager but should be more diverse in the size of the companies in the portfolio and may have less volatility.

Some members have given feedback on the complexity of creating a balanced portfolio. To address this issue, the plan's Financial Advisors have created five **asset allocation models** corresponding to the investor profiles in the enrollment materials. These go from Conservative to Aggressive with three models in between.

Each model is like a fund of funds and is comprised of differing percentages of the various funds available in the plan. Choose a model and your contribution will automatically be allocated to the number of different funds in the model.

To see the specific breakdown by percentage of each model, please visit the California Machinist 401(k) website at: [www.kandg.com](http://www.kandg.com)

### Health and Welfare changes for Automotive Industries

The overall AI Health and Welfare rate is increasing approximately 8.8% (\$43.85). While this increase is currently paid by most employers, it will obviously have a major impact on negotiations as we look to employers to absorb the higher costs.

Of the total increase, medical is going up about \$26 and prescription drug coverage goes up \$18.25, which is approximately one-third higher than it was.

#### Plan Changes

**PacifiCare:** Members with PacifiCare will have a \$10 per doctor visit co-pay. However, when they have reached 12 visits per family, they can submit their receipts to the Trust Fund to be reimbursed. PacifiCare had come in with a 42% rate increase, which the AI Trustees were able to bargain down to a 25% increase. We initiated the co-pay to cover this—but will protect members with large families.

You may also continue to choose the fund percentages yourself. However, at this time, the system will not allow you to mix using model and making individual choices.

The investment markets have been very volatile in the past year. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Financial Advisors to the Plan at 510-486-2486.

**RxAmerica Drug Plan:** For people with the RxAmerica Drug Plan, the AI Trust is instituting a "formulary." This means that people who request a drug that has a generic equivalent will have to pay \$35 toward the name drug. If there is no generic equivalent, then the current charges apply: \$10 for name drugs and \$5 for generic drugs.

The Kaiser prescription drug plan costs the Fund \$41 per member; the Rx plan costs \$100. Instituting the formulary is an attempt to get some of these costs under control.

**Dental Plan:** Direct Pay Dental Plan pays off of a schedule which has not been upgraded since 1996. The trustees agreed to upgrade that to a 2001 schedule. This means, people should have a higher percentage of their dental claims paid. As a result, the cost for the dental plan went up by \$7.





# AUTO CONTRACTS

## Dealerships do it again

After 12 negotiating sessions between Local 1546 and the East Bay Motor Car Dealers Association, a contract affecting about 230 workers at seven dealerships was finally settled. It includes many improvements, and “for the first time in history, we got wage increases of over \$1 a year,” reports Area Director Don Crosatto.

The four-year contract calls for a \$6 increase for wages and health and welfare over four years—\$1.50 immediately, with \$1 each July and 50¢ each January. Installers with two or more years of seniority get a \$3 wage increase and for the first time, members get funeral leave.

“Although we didn’t completely eradicate the hated two-tier pension,” reports Crosatto, “we got a step system, so people can work their way up to the top rate.” This contract was ratified by a vote of 107-55 on August 1.

Crosatto also reports similar contracts at Val Strough and Negherbon. “And they both add money for ASEs and when efficiency targets are hit.”

Business Rep Craig Andrews reports that Local 1546 members now have a six-year contract with the new owner of Fremont Ford, and five year contracts at Codoroli Ford, Dublin Buick, Groth Brothers Chevy and Albany Ford, with 5% wage increases each year, maintenance of benefits, pension increases of up to \$100/month, and premium increases for being ASE- and smog-certified. “Most important,” Andrews says, “we finally eliminated the two-tier pension. These are excellent agreements.”

Local 1596 Business Representative Tom Brandon reports slow-going on his negotiations with Hansel Ford in Santa Rosa. “I have to learn patience. They’re just waiting to see what the East Bay Motor Car Dealers end up doing.”

# State of the Union — a report from the new DBR

continued from page one

**Jobs on the Waterfront:** Over the years, labor unity has been our strongest weapon in furthering the rights of workers. However, our members on the waterfront find themselves in a position of fighting against a union that was once one of our strongest friends and allies — the ILWU.

Jurisdictions and jobs that our members have performed for years are coming under attack by the ILWU in their misguided attempts to expand their membership. District 190 stands united with our brothers and sisters in all West Coast ports in our battle to protect our contracts and our members’ jobs. These contracts are among the best in the industry and we plan to keep them that way.

Our District is banding together with a coastwide committee composed of port representatives from Seattle-Tacoma, San Francisco-Oakland, Los Angeles-Long Beach and our International Union staff to address these jurisdictional issues.

It’s a sad commentary that we have to take such drastic actions against another labor organization, especially the ILWU, with its strong history of brotherhood and labor solidarity. However, they have given us no alternative but to fight off their efforts to claim long-held Machinist Union jobs.

As we celebrate what would be ILWU founder Harry Bridges’ 100th birthday, we recognize his historic efforts to unify all waterfront workers. We salute

Harry and hope that the ILWU’s current leadership will reconsider their actions before it is too late.

**Getting the Valley back:** As I commute daily from my home in Lodi to the District office in Oakland, I sit in traffic next to hundreds of union members who also commute daily to the Bay Area in order to provide a decent standard of living for their families. Many of our members live in Tracy, Manteca, Stockton and Modesto but spend hours each day on the road.

One of my goals is to reorganize the Automotive and Trucking industries in the Valley. By providing contracts with union scale wages, benefits, pension and working conditions at local shops, our members can begin to obtain good union jobs closer to home. I personally know the toll that a long commute can take on a person’s family life and I hope we can start to reverse this trend.

**Visiting Locals:** In future months I will attend the monthly membership meetings of our Local Lodges. By meeting with the leadership and the members I hope to better understand the challenges each Local faces to ensure that the District Lodge is providing adequate levels of service and resources.

Over the coming months and years, I look forward to meeting many more members and building the strongest possible union.

# District 190

Local 1596  
*Marin & north*  
Members work at auto dealerships and in manufacturing—from air brakes and commercial dishwashers to liquid waste separators and parking meters.  
Tom Brandon — BR

Local 1173  
*Contra Costa, Napa & Vallejo*  
Members are primarily automotive—at dealerships and independent repair shops.  
Vern Dutton - AD  
Mark Hollibush — BR  
Jesse Juarez — Organizer

Local 1584  
*East Bay*  
Machine and manufacturing from Fremont through Richmond.  
Herman Howell — AD  
Chris Rasmussen — BR

Local 1546  
*Alameda and West Contra Costa Counties*  
Members work at dealerships, parts and independent repair houses, as well as maintenance in the food industry, sanitation and cleaning and on the waterfront.  
Don Crosatto - AA &  
Craig Andrews — BR  
David Asplin — BR  
Mike Cook — BR  
Pat Woodward — BR  
Mike Munoz—AD for Organizing

Local 1414  
*San Mateo, SF & Marin*  
Members serve the public—at San Francisco Muni, SF Port Commission, Golden Gate Bridge and Ferry District, SFO—as well as at car dealerships and manufacturing plants.  
Charles Netherby — AD  
Don Barbe — BR  
Manny Francis, Jr.—BR  
Glenn Gandolfo—BR  
John Moran—BR  
Pedro Mendez — Organizer

Local 1101  
*San Jose*  
80% of the auto dealerships in the Santa Clara Valley as well as several machine and manufacturing houses.  
Steve Pape — AD  
Jim Schwantz — BR

AA—Administrative Assistant  
AD—Area Director  
BR—Business Representative  
O — Organizer

# How many years have you been in the Machinists Union? Has it been worth it?



**Ray Enos**  
Retired  
Local 1584

“Same union 56 years. It’s worth gold. I have a beautiful pension. The union’s been nothing but good to me. Folks who lost their jobs last December still get their pension and H&W.”



**Ken Wolter**  
Lasher Auto Group  
Local 2182

“15 years. The working conditions, benefits and salary that I’ve achieved have always been at an acceptable level. And, you work on the same playing field as everyone else.”



**Jimmy Rodriguez**  
Amot Controls  
Local 1584

“18 years. Yep—I’ve still got a job. I don’t even want to test the waters without a union.”



**Walt Giles**  
Great Valley Auto  
Local 2182

“24 years in the union. The benefits that you reap from the amount of dues you pay are excellent. Especially when compared to what non-union folks pay for H&W. And we get support from the union.”



**Ernest Smith**  
Retired  
Local 1584

“I’ve been in the union almost 30 years. I recommend anyone to be in the union. The pension is because the union follows you where you go, and the union takes care of you.”



**Brian Be**  
Lasher Auto  
Local

“10 months, though around. Having keeps the wages you can live on the employers



Staff

Jim Beno

g Business Representative

Herman Howell

Assistant for Machine & Manufacturing Division

Don Crosatto

Assistant for Automotive Division

Local 801

Vallejo  
y in  
ships  
air  
Reno, Sparks & Fallon, NV  
Members work at diverse facilities including the Naval Air Station, UPS, Greyhound, Rainbo Baking, and at TWA and Southwest Airlines.

Howard Hays - AD  
Mark Martin — BR

Local 2182

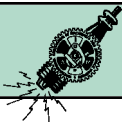
Sacramento, Chico, Redding, Roseville & Stockton  
Members work in auto, truck, bus and forklift businesses, as well as public sector, food industry, electronics, sanitation, recycling, waterfront and machine/manufacturing.

Howard Hays - AD  
Mark Martin — BR  
Skip Hatch — BR  
Joe Coy (O)

Local 1528

Modesto & Stockton  
Members work primarily in machine and manufacturing.

Howard Hays — AD  
Gilbert Gonzalez — BR  
George Tomassi — O



UNION PEOPLE

New man at the top: Jim Beno

“This is an incredible team” says Directing Business Representative Jim Beno. “Anybody moving into this position couldn’t ask for a more qualified and professional staff. I’ve received total cooperation from the staff. From that aspect, it’s been an easy transition.”

“But now, it’s trial by fire,” he continued. “You just have to pick it up and do it.”

Mike Day had talked about handing Beno the reins when he was ready to retire. “But under the circumstances, the calendar got moved up quickly,” Beno says.

A union career

Beno says that he grew up in the Machinists Union. He started at the City of Sacramento, working in the police garage as an equipment service worker. “We had an employees association, but I and others felt that the skilled trades weren’t adequately recognized,” he says. “We were falling behind the private sector.” So in 1976, Beno helped the unit organize into the IAM and get their first contract.

He soon became recording-secretary of Local 2182 and in 1979, was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

In 1981, the International union asked him to come on to their staff as Grand Lodge Special Representative covering the 6 southwestern states. But in 1983, several members of the International staff got laid off when union membership in the aerospace industry took a big hit.

In 1984, Beno was offered a position as Business Representative for the Stockton local of District Lodge 190, and has been on the District staff ever since.

Beno was named Area Director in 1996 for Locals 2182, 1528 and 801. In 2000, he was named Administrative Assistant for the Automotive Division, and in April was elected to the position of Directing Business Representative, upon the death of Mike Day.



Jim Beno takes the helm

Just like a mechanic

“Never think you know everything,” Beno advises. “There’s always a new and different twist. Just like a mechanic, you have to go in with an open mind, analyze the problem and solve it.”

Beno believes that the union’s primary job is to provide service to the people who pay us membership dues

Skip Hatch has reaped the union benefit

Newly named Business Representative for Local 2182, Harold “Skip” Hatch was a mechanic at A. Teichert & Sons in Sacramento for more than 16 years, and served as shop steward for about 9 years.

“I worked from a service truck, chasing mixer trucks around the city,” he says.

Hatch has been an IAM member for 25 years. He had a brief withdrawal when the company he worked for was sold and went non-union.

“I came back to the union after less than a year,” he says. “It offers better pay, good health benefits and a better working environment.”



Skip Hatch joins District staff

every month. “We’ve got to take care of contracts and grievances,” he says.

“Our strength is our membership,” he explains. “We need to continue organizing the unorganized. This makes us stronger and enables us to achieve better contracts.”

Beno has a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering from CSUS in Sacramento. He has served as president of the California Conference of Machinists, is a trustee on the AI Pension Fund and the AI Health and Welfare Fund and was Secretary-Treasurer of the San Joaquin and Calaveras Labor Council from 1990-1998.

Beno is married and has one daughter, one step-daughter and one step-son. He also has 4 grandkids, 2 cats, 2 dogs and 2 birds. Rico, the Amazon Parrot, will be at the Oakland office on occasion. “Come and visit,” Beno offers, “but remember, she can attack on command.”

Hatch says he had planned on retiring out of Teichert, but Business Representative Mark Martin planted the union bug. “I was looking for something less physically detrimental—but still challenging and meaningful. And I figured if I was going to make a change, now was the time.”

Skip’s goals are to “make a good difference in terms of benefits, working conditions and pay. I’ve reaped the benefit of a good contract and want to help others.”

Skip lives in Sacramento. He has two daughters, one son, one granddaughter, and two grandkids on the way.

t to pay all those union dues?



R.J. Beckham  
to Group  
2182

is time  
g the union  
es up so  
and it keeps  
honest.””



RJ Beckham  
Lasher Auto  
Local 2182

“15 years in the union. It keeps the wages up and keeps us into benefits. Non-union shops base their package on what union shops get. And, if I don’t pay my dues, Mark will come after me!”



Bill Costa  
Riverview Int’l Trucks  
Local 2182

“Almost 30 years in the union. All the benefits—retirement, medical plan, support when you need it from a business rep. Solidary—it’s there too. I’ve been on strikes, and they’ve been worth it.”



Jim Cleary  
A. Teichert & Sons  
Local 2182

“12 years in the union. Any time you get in trouble, you need the union. Mark has been fabulous. They tried to dock me, but he helped me get my day’s pay. All the benefits—you can’t beat it!”



Larry Huff  
A. Teichert & Sons  
Local 2182

“3-1/2 years. I worked in the same trade for 20 years—self-employed and non-union. I made ends meet but didn’t have a future. Being part of the union with a good company makes everything work.”



Sue Drost  
IAM/Local Office  
Local 2182

“20 years in the union. Because I’m a single mom, the benefits have been worthwhile. The work environment and the job security are wonderful.”

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## Making grease ... Rendering at Darling Int'l

There used to be several slaughterhouses in San Francisco and their leftovers were shipped to one of many rendering houses. But that's all changed in the last 50-60 years. And so has the business.

Founded in San Francisco as Royal Tallow in 1908, this facility merged into Darling International—an even older company—many years ago.

The San Francisco plant processes in excess of two million pounds a week—that's before they evaporate out the water.

Due to mad cow disease in Europe, the market for meat and bone meal has decreased significantly. And U.S.-produced tallow is facing competition from cheap Malaysian palm oil. "Also, we used to pick up product from across the city for free," explains General Manager Gene Hanson. "Now we charge for pick-ups."

### The rendering process

"We start with trim from butcher shops and outdated 'condemned' meats and offal from slaughterhouses," explains Plant Manager John Albertoni. "We render that down in cookers to cook out all the moisture. We can cook 20,000 pounds an hour. It's a continuous cycle—you put the raw product in the back, cook it until



Plant Manager John Albertoni and General Manager Gene Hanson explain the business.



IAM member Walt Kittel with one of the trucks in his fleet

it gets to between 270-290° and it comes out the front, sterilized and bacteria-free."

They call this slurry "wet cracks." They run it through a screw press to press out the oil. Then they run the oil through a centrifuge to take out the impurities. This clean oil goes into a storage tank, where it gets tested and graded daily. From there it goes to customers by ship, truck or rail, who use it as feed fat, soap tallow or for tire bonding.

The solids that come out of the press are called "cracks." They're run through a hammer mill, over a shaker and then ground down to a meal which is exported overseas for use in poultry feeds. "Everything gets used here," Albertoni adds.

### New directions

"We're moving more into the business of picking up waste oils from restaurant fryers" explains Hanson. "We're introducing 'clean start units' into Bay Area restaurants. Rather than having to have an employee carry the fryer grease to an outside storage unit, the restaurant can dump it into an indoor container which is plumbed outside. It's good for the restaurant, because it's safer; and it's good for us because we can install a filter, making for a cleaner oil."

**continued on page 7**

## How long have you been a union member?



**E. Wayne Wheeler**  
Retired  
Local 2182

"I've been a member since 1959. Because of my union membership, I was able to retire at 55 and have gotten along real good for 17 years. It was well worth it."



**Terry Gorr**  
Amot Controls  
Local 1584

"2 years in IAM. It's absolutely worth it. Look at the recipient of the scholarship—we know how our dues are spent."



**Charles Parent**  
City of Sacramento  
Local 2182

"16 years — It's been worth it and it's fun. I have a good health and welfare package, decent wages. Definitely more plusses than minuses."



**Arvind Sen**  
Diamond Manufacturing  
Local 1584

"2 months in the union. This is the first time I've been in a company that's union. From what I hear, you have more privileges and you'll have the union behind you."



**Kenneth Lee James**  
A. Teichert & Sons  
Local 2182

"1 year in the IAM. I'm learning. I come to meetings to see what I can find out. My biggest deal is the benefits and seeing how the union supports you—they stand behind you and protect your rights."



# ... and using it wisely

## Bode Gravel goes alternative—turns to soybeans

The nation's first retail gas station to sell vegetable fuel for diesel cars and trucks opened for business in May, and San Francisco's Bode Gravel was one of its first customers.

"We're always on the lookout for alternatives to clean up our diesel emissions and work cleaner," explained Bode Gravel Operations Manager and Local 1414 member David Skokan. "So we'll be trying this out in many of our cement mixers."

Bode runs 38 mixers, 4 bulks and lots of yard equipment. Skokan said that he has looked into Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), but the gas itself is very expensive and it's costly to convert each unit. He also investigated Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), which is less expensive but not available.

Olympian opened up a biodiesel station just a few blocks from Bode Gravel's San Francisco facility. The product they sell is a mix: 80% diesel and 20% soybean oil. It runs 10¢ to 22¢ more per gallon than regular diesel, and is expected to have a 2-3% drop in performance, "but we'll need at least three months of using it before we can make any real comparisons," Skokan said.



David Skokan shows off one of Bode Gravel's mixers, now running on biodiesel.

Biodiesel is supposed to smell like popcorn or French fries when it burns, but that may be more hype than reality.

Biodiesel is not a new idea. A century ago, Rudolph Diesel designed his engine to run on vegetable oil. In a short time, with seemingly plentiful supplies of fossil fuels and little knowledge of air pollution and health risks, petroleum diesel had replaced the biodegradable kind.

The federal government estimates sales of biodiesel reached 6.7 million gallons in 2000 and will grow to 20 million gallons in 2001.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, biodiesel is being used by fleets of government vehicles. The San Francisco International Airport uses it in shuttles. Berkeley recycling trucks fill their tanks with it, as does the Department of Energy's fleet in Sacramento. The East Bay Regional Parks District is considering it.

"We expect that this change to biodiesel will effect our performance," said Skokan, "but the real bottom line is that it'll clean up the air—and that's the most important thing."

Next year, Bode Gravel will move from the 3rd Street location it's been at since 1990 to Amador Street—just across the street from Darling International. Their new facility will be completely enclosed and much lower to the ground. "We want to be good neighbors," Skokan said. "That's why we weed and always sweep the whole area and pay attention to our emissions. We're constantly on the look-out for new alternatives."

### The changing rendering biz continued from page 6

To date, the Millbrae Burger King is the first Northern California customer, but 200 such units are already installed around Los Angeles.

Four unions represent Darling's 50 employees: butchers; longshoremens, Teamsters—and two Local 1414 mechanics keep the fleet of trucks on the road. "The other plants all tell us that we pay higher rates in San Francisco, but Walt Kittel, our lead mechanic, is definitely the best man," says Albertoni.

#### Re-engineering and creating

"It's different here than at a dealership," says Kittel. "We have to be a jack of all trades and re-engineer even new products made specifically for us. I do a lot of fabricating here."

Kittel has been in rendering business since 1967—and he claims it rarely smells too bad out where he works. "But, I'm ready to go," Kittel says. "The pension is good and maybe I'll head out when our contract expires at the end of next year."

"He's a magician. I don't know what we'll do if he ever does go," says Albertoni.



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### Has paying all those union dues be worth it?



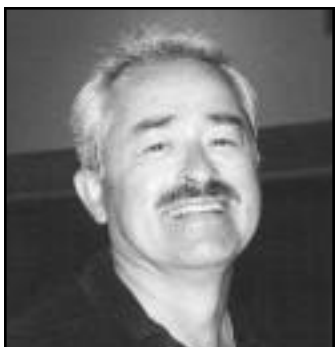
**Andrea Gorman**  
MSC Pre-finished Metals  
Local 1584

"36 years in the union. Go, be active—you get from it. Next month I get to go to Placid Harbor for leadership school. The union helped me find jobs after plant closures and still stay in the same pension plan."



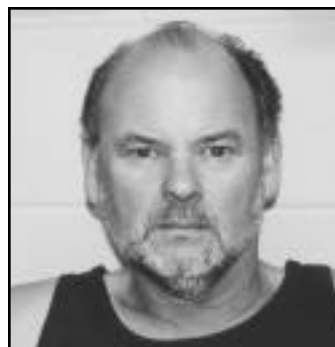
**Pinky McNeely**  
Retired  
Local 2182

"I was a member since '64. I made a good living for my family working out of the IAM—it was good to me. I started as an apprentice then worked as a painter. I'll do whatever I can to help."



**Leroy Duran**  
Rexam Beverage Americana  
Local 1584

"35 years in the union. For protection. Especially for the guys who can't stand up for themselves. Without stewards and legal representation, they'd be in trouble."



**Ken Casey**  
Crystal Cream & Butter  
Local 2182

"28 years in the union. I've raised my family—4 kids—on union wages. We've got good wages, medical, retirement. If you ever have a problem, the union's there to help. I'm a firm union man."



**Gary Woodhall**  
Pinole Point Steel  
Local 1584

"22 years in the union. I know the alternative. When I worked non-union, they'd have gotten rid of me. The biggest thing is job security—they can only look at job performance making it a level playing field."





## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

# Swedish mechanics visit District 190

Things are different in Sweden when it comes to unions—very different.

- Approximately 85% of all auto mechanics across the country are members of Svenska Metal, the Swedish Metal Workers Union—even though union membership is not mandatory.
- Vacation is 25 days per year. You can bank one week but everyone must take four weeks in a row between June and August.
- Rather than each shop negotiating its own contract, common national agreements for areas such as engineering, auto, telecom, machine tools are topped off with some local negotiations.

The staff of District Lodge 190 learned this and more when a delegation of Swedish auto mechanics visited California in May. The group was selected from among older and younger workers who are active in different companies and in the union.

Their 4-day itinerary included visits to Hayward Dodge, Oakland Truck Center, the College of Alameda's Truck Apprenticeship Program, McKevitt Volvo, and then on to Sacramento to meet Western Territories Vice President Lee Pearson, tour the State Capitol and meet politicians and air quality regulators.

At the time of this interview, the group had barely recovered from



*The Swedish delegation (L to R): Christer Persson, Jorgen Hagesveen, Anders Sodergreen, Bengt Skogert, Hakan Karlsson, Bengt Jakobsson*

their jet lag and had visited their first dealership—Hayward Dodge.

Joined by Local 1546 Business Reps David Asplin, Mike Cook, Don Crosatto and Mike Munoz, and IAM International Liaison Dennis Hitchcock, the delegation had an opportunity to share impressions and learn about how things work in the U.S.

### Making comparisons

Their impressions of the dealership were that “the shop is smaller,” and “it’s not so clean, and doesn’t have good ventilation.” On the other hand, the doors open, which would be unusual with the Swedish climate.

But where mechanics in the U.S. own their own tools, often worth

more than \$30,000, Swedish mechanics have all their tools furnished by the company.

Most dealerships in Sweden are independent franchises. Volvo and Saab together have about 45% of the Swedish market. The most popular imports are Audi and VW. Toyota is big, although its share is decreasing and you’ll find few Hondas there.

### How it works in Sweden

Sweden is a kingdom of 9 million people. Currently, just under a half-million people belong to the Metal Workers Union—the union encompasses every industry where metal is more than 50% of the product, such as steel, auto and aerospace.

The cities are clean and well-run, with great recycling programs. The tap water tastes like bottled water.

Ice hockey and soccer are the most popular sports. And many people take days off for moose hunting week in September.

The state—rather than the employer—covers medical insurance. All children go to the doctor for free. For adults, doctor visits cost \$18. If you’re hurt on the job, you get paid 80% for the first 3 months; then you’re covered for 90%.

As in California, recruiting apprentices has become a challenge. Apprenticeship coincides with high school, so young people choose their vocation based on their interest and on their grade point average.

There’s competition with the Dot Com industry, which is higher status. “But everything is higher status than mechanic,” the group suggested. “To become a hairdresser, you need a 5.0 grade point average. To become an auto mechanic you only need a 1.2. So we don’t get the cream of the crop.”

After the first year of high school, students choose to specialize in auto, bus/truck, body repair, trains or airplanes.

Before leaving Oakland, the delegation was going to visit with former DBR Frank Sousa for dinner and homemade wine. Rumors are that they’re still recovering!



## We took home three Blue Ribbons, but it's our members who really win.

When a coalition of 45 large health care purchasers evaluated more than 200 medical groups and 20 health plans in California, one stood out above the rest. Kaiser Foundation Health Plan won the Pacific Business Group on Health's (PBGH) only HMO Blue Ribbon for outstanding health care. Two more Blue Ribbons for quality and value were awarded to The Permanente Medical Group (Northern California) and Southern California Permanente Medical Group. Of course, we're honored. But we're even more pleased to know our members benefit from our award-winning care, leadership, and innovations.

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