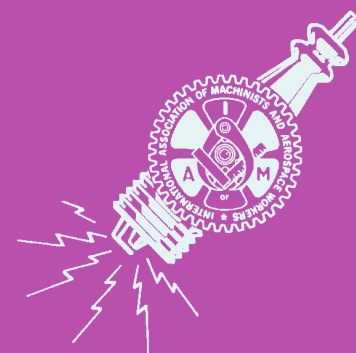


The IAM District 190 Sparkplug



VOL. 5, NO. 3

April/May 2003

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190

Unions promote 'pay or play' solution

Union health plans pay the price for the uninsured

Last year, more than 41 million Americans—men, women and children—had no health insurance. That's a jump of more than 1.4 million from the previous year. Some 30 million additional citizens have gone without health coverage at some point during the past two years.

"These statistics border on the criminal. How can the richest, most powerful nation on the face of the Earth allow this to happen?" asked IAM International President Tom Buffenbarger. "Health care for all Americans must be viewed as one of those inalienable rights our Founding Fathers outlined. Health care is not a bonus for the privileged few. That's just wrong."

Lack of affordable health care means that children and their parents go without the critical care they need. Soaring health care and prescription drug costs and employers who refuse to pay their fair share mean that being uninsured is not just a problem for the unemployed.

The California situation

Right now, paying medical bills is no big deal for members of our union. We have negotiated health insurance plans that provide outstanding health care to members and their families and retirees at little or no out of pocket cost.

But our members are far from immune from the effects of rapidly increasing costs of health insurance. These increases have pushed one in five Californians off the insurance rolls.

That's why the IAM and all California unions, are supporting Senate Bill 2 sponsored by State Sen. John Burton (D-SF). This legislation—known as pay or play—will force employers to either provide health care insurance or pay into a state fund that will cover workers without such insurance.

This is important to us for a broad range of reasons.

First, because many of the uninsured are our own working children, neighbors and friends.

It is important because the cost of meeting these rising health care costs make it very difficult for our employers to compete with non-union employers who pay almost no insurance costs whatsoever. SB2



Labor rally in Sacramento calls for decent health care for all Californians. At right, State Senator John Burton, sponsor of SB2, addresses the crowd.



will level the playing field by forcing companies to step up and do the right thing.

And finally, SB2 is important because of the tremendous burden the uninsured place on taxpayers. Every time an uninsured person goes to a county hospital for care, or enrolls his or her child in the state subsidized health-family program, it amounts to a subsidy by all taxpayers to employers who don't pay health insurance.

Good union employers subsidize their competition

Unions don't object to helping the less fortunate. But they do object to subsidizing companies that unfairly compete with union employers. At a time when State and local government budgets are cutting police and fire, schools and mass transit, this is unacceptable and shameful.

The nation's health care system is built on a foundation of employer provided insurance. One in five Californians lives without health insurance—and 80% of them are members of working families. That means that employers simply aren't stepping up.

SB 2 would require employers to either provide health insurance to their workers or pay a fee to a state administered fund to purchase coverage for workers and their families. Employers who provide decent and affordable health insurance can continue to do so, without any change.

Employers who don't provide coverage would pay a fee to purchase health insurance for workers and their families. The fee would be collected by the Employment Development Department, along with UI and SDI taxes and be based on an employer's payroll size.

Worker eligibility for state purchased health insurance would be based on their earnings. Workers who make a minimum amount of wages (currently \$1300 per quarter) would be eligible for coverage. They would be provided a basic health benefit plan. Workers in the state plan will be required to pay limited out of pocket costs for their health coverage.

To the extent possible, available federal funds will be tapped to help fund the state pool used to purchase workers health coverage. Families who are eligible for expanded

Healthy Families or Medi-Cal programs would still receive those benefits packages.

Other labor-endorsed health care solutions

A combination of bills (AB103-Reyes, AB1213-Vargas, and AB129-Frommer) will help contain health care costs by requiring transparency in the system.

These bills will require hospital corporations, doctor medical groups, and pharmaceutical companies to disclose specified information. This data will assist health care purchasers to make more informed decisions and will help policymakers set health policy.

Leverage to lower prices

"A decade ago, when the Clinton administration was kicking around the possibility of national health care, one effect was that the health care industry froze or reduced rates while that legislation was being discussed," says Directing Business Rep Jim Beno. "We're hoping that one side effect of this bill is that the industry takes a look at itself, and sees that it's pricing itself out of business and putting more people out of insurance."

Serving as a Vice President of the California Labor Federation, Beno helped set labor's health care agenda. "We'd love to see a 'Single Payer' system, but that's just not in the cards right now. Pay or play will go far to insuring the uninsured and relieving our employers from unfair competition. It's just basic justice."

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UNION PEOPLE

Remembering Ed Bach

Ed Bach, a dedicated union member and a poet, died on March 4 at the age of 89.

"Ed Bach was a pillar of trade union strength in the Central Valley," says DBR Jim Beno. "He went through all the wars—internal and external—and he never had a bad word to say about anyone. He will really be missed."

Bach was a union and labor activist all of his life. A member of Local Lodge 1528 since 1969, he held every office in the Local from Executive Board member to President. He was also President of the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Counties Central Labor Council for 10 years, and was named Labor Leader of the Year by the council in 1996.

The UAW sent Bach to California



Ed Bach addresses a union meeting

in the 1960s to organize Norris Industries, then known as the Riverbank Ammunition Plant. When the IAM won the election over the UAW, he was still voted Chief Shop Steward. He supervised 15 shop stewards, represented more than

2000 plant employees, and became a loyal member of the IAM.

Bach retired in 1979, but then began his second career, volunteering at Local 1528 in Modesto. He came to the union hall every day, until his health started to deteriorate in November, 2002.

As a tribute to Bach's life-long commitment to the IAM, Local 1528 will name its Modesto building after him. In addition, the union gave Bach's family the flags from the union hall.

The Building in Town

They were tearing a gigantic building down;
I stopped to watch as I went through town.
They had wrecked and torn down in a day or two
What had taken skilled workmen years to do.

So fell the great structure, how strong it had stood
With a framework of steel, the stone and the wood.
The great inlaid stairways, where feet once put trust
By workmen unskilled, must go back to dust.

I stood there awhile, then went on my way
While my memory went back to slave labor days.
How the union was started and fought to exist;
No bargaining table, just muscle and fist.

With unsafe conditions day after day,
It seemed the word "safety" was just in the way.
If we disregard safety, you can't count the cost
Of those injured bodies or lives that were lost!

Then time took its toll, bargaining came in;
Contracts were signed, by the stroke of a pen.
Then comes the unskilled to get up and say,
"What goes with my dues they take from my pay?"

Friend, you are the Union, each man plays a part;
So let your dictation flow from your heart.
But remember the moral of the building in town,
A strong mind can build what a fool can tear down.

—Ed Bach—

Long-time IAM advocate named to new state Labor and Workforce Development Agency



Matt McKinnon moves from Machinist post to Labor Agency.

Matthew R. McKinnon has been appointed Deputy Undersecretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency and will begin his new position in May.

A member of Local 2182, McKinnon has served as the Executive Secretary-Treasurer for the California Conference of Machinists since 1994. Before that, he was director of health and safety for the California Labor Federation and COPE director for the San Diego Labor Council.

McKinnon's primary responsibility in the new Labor Agency is to oversee Job Services, unemployment Insurance, Work-force Development, Apprenticeship Standards, Disability Insurance and Workers' Compensation programs.

In memoriam — Sam Avila, Sr.

Samuel Avila, Sr., an active member and elected officer of IAM Locals 1305, 1414 and District Lodge 190 for more than 50 years, died in his home after a long illness on March 13 at the age of 77.

Avila worked for the San Francisco Municipal Railway and for the Community College District as a vocational instructor.

"Sam walked lots of picket lines, in Los Angeles and San Francisco," says former DBR Frank Sousa. "He was a very active member and a true trade unionist."

Demonstration and Rally Six Flags/Magic Mountain Saturday • April 26

In November, the maintenance workers at Six Flags Magic Mountain (Valencia) voted to join the IAM. They've been negotiating their first contract with District 947, but it's going slowly. The rally will be a show of force to let Magic Mountain know that the IAM wants a good contract for these maintenance workers.

Busloads of folks are joining the rally from Los Angeles, Long Beach, Orange County and San Bernardino. District Lodge 190 wants to send a bus filled with members from Northern California.

Schedule for the Magic Mountain Rally

- The bus will leave the Bay Area at about 4 a.m. (exact time/location to be determined)
- Buses from around the state arrive at Magic Mountain at 10 a.m.
- Rally starts at 10:45 a.m.
- Buses depart at 1 p.m.

How to join in

If you are interested in attending the rally and supporting the Magic Mountain workers, contact the District Lodge 190 office (510-632-3661) as soon as possible, so we can get a head count and determine the most convenient location for the bus to depart from.

Don't wait for the next *Sparkplug* to get your union news...check out the District's new website:

www.iamdistrict190.org

Moving? The union needs to know!

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 the Calendar on page 8 for your local union's address.

The IAM District 190

Sparkplug

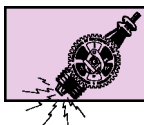


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Beagle & Bleiweiss Communications • Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor



UNION SOLIDARITY

Support laundry workers organizing at Cintas Corp.

Who is Cintas?

Cintas is the largest provider of uniforms and laundry services in North America. Cintas sales last year topped \$2.3 billion; profits exceeded \$234 million.

But Cintas Corporation is the Wal-mart of the uniform & laundry industry. As the company grows, so does its record of union-busting.

17,000 Cintas workers in the U.S. and Canada are fighting back by organizing to join UNITE. Their campaign to win decent wages, better working conditions and respect is called *Uniform Justice*.

But Cintas has responded by violating workers' rights:

- Cintas has been fined numerous times for failing to pay minimum wage and overtime;
- More than 40 discrimination lawsuits have been filed against Cintas;
- In Feb. 2003, more than 75 complaints of labor law violations were filed against Cintas for threatening plant closings, spying

on and firing pro-union workers, holding captive audience meetings and one-on-one interrogations.

How you can help

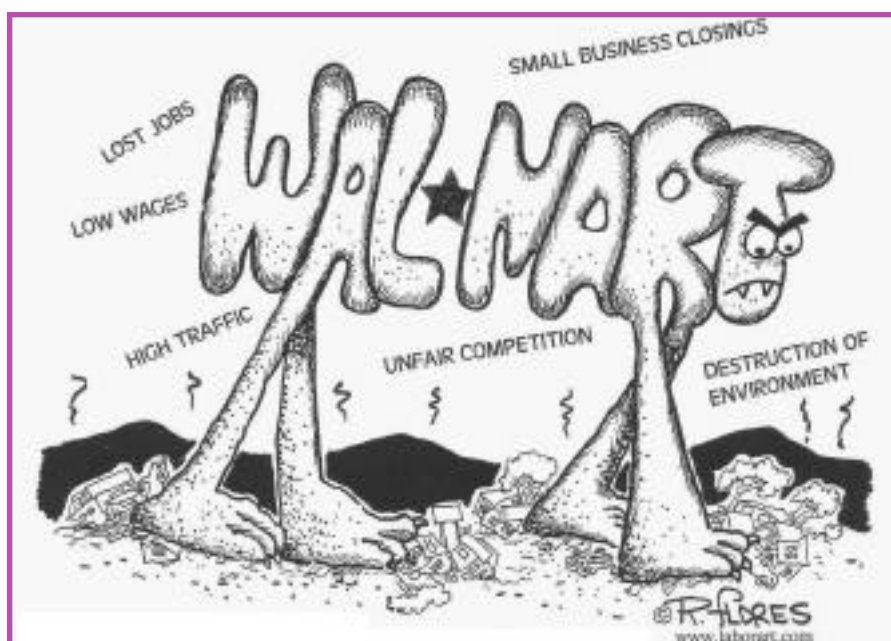
Many shops buy or rent uniforms or floor mats from Cintas. If yours does, encourage your employer to decide, using its managerial discretion, not to renew its contract with Cintas Corp. (Be sure to look at the UNITE website before talking with your employer (www.uniteunion.org) to make sure that your efforts cannot be construed as a 'secondary boycott.'

Cintas will change their ways and respect workers' rights when they get the message that abusing employees and breaking the law is not acceptable.

Until Cintas cleans up its act, no union member should want to wear a Cintas uniform.

For more information, go to the UNITE website: www.uniteunion.org, or call the union at 212-265-7000 x315.

Is the Cintas label in your uniform stabbing you in the back?



Unions join together to keep Wal-Mart out

As this issue of *The Sparkplug* goes to press, members of several California locals of the United Food and Commercial Workers and the Teamsters are gearing up for what amounts to a do-or-die struggle with Wal-Mart, the largest employer in the United States.

Wal-Mart is slowly moving up Hwy 101 and I-5 in an effort to open supercenters—huge big box discount stores with full grocery markets—throughout central and northern California. Wal-Mart pays \$7.50 per hour, with no benefits to speak of, and systematically violates the rights of its employees to organize a union. "Wal-Mart threatens to eat our lunch," says Richard Benson, President of UFCW Local 870, in Alameda County.

Fighting Wal-Mart at City Hall

Coordinated UFCW-Teamster campaigns are now underway in Fremont, Gilroy, and Oakland, where labor has successfully blocked Planning Commission and City Council approvals for new Wal-Marts. In Oakland, San Jose, San Francisco and other communities, City Councils are being asked to approve special ordinances which will ban large warehouse-type stores like Wal-Mart from selling more than a small amount of non-taxable items, that is, groceries.

Wal-Mart has a powerful appeal to communities, promising hundreds

of jobs and million of dollars in sales tax revenue. But, the UFCW argues, the jobs are part-time poverty level jobs, and the revenue is simply cannibalized from union markets and small businesses. For every poverty-level job that Wal-Mart creates, says Benson, they destroy as many union and small-business related jobs.

Bay Area rundown

Here's a rundown of the Wal-Mart fights around the Bay Area:

Fremont: The Planning Commission voted on March 27 to deny a permit for a new Wal-Mart store. The company will probably appeal to the City Council.

Oakland: Wal-Mart is talking about moving into the old Super-Kmart site at the foot of High Street. An ordinance to keep Wal-Mart out of Oakland goes to the City Council at 7 p.m., April 8. Come and support our friends on the City Council who are supporting this bill.

Gilroy: Wal-Mart wants a \$5.4 million subsidy from the City, which a pro-Wal-Mart Planning Commission and Council have supported. Local UFCW and Teamsters, working with the South Bay Labor Council and community groups, believe that we can overturn this "gift" in a referendum vote, delay the project, and elect a labor-friendly City Council in November.

For more information about how to join the fight to stop the Wal-Mart plague, call 510-625-7733.

IAM ORGANIZING

One small victory, one big draw

Dodge detailers vote for union

The five detailers at the Dodge Group in the Serramonte Auto Plaza voted unanimously on March 5 to be represented by Local 1414.

"Our challenge will be to get them a good contract," says organizer Pedro Mendez. "The company is owned by the Sonic Corporation, and we've had a tough time getting a decent contract out of them at our other shops in Colma, San Jose and Concord. Sonic is bad news."

Mendez says that over the last three years, every time a Sonic shop votes to join the union, the corporation improves the benefits for its non-union workers. Negotiations for a first contract for these Dodge detailers will begin soon.

A draw at Sears

After a nail-biting count on February 14, the election by Sears appliance technicians and support associates ended in a tie: 200-200. The rules says that the union needs 50% plus one to win, so this draw turned into a loss. (One additional yes vote was received, but the voter's eligibility was challenged, so it was thrown out.)

"The company was spotted 100

votes, because we had to add the support associates to the unit, even though they weren't the ones who wanted a union," says Organizer Jesse Juarez.

According to Juarez, Sears thought the election would be a slam dunk, with the company winning by a 70% margin. "We definitely got 2/3 of the appliance techs voting for the union—they want representation and we want to give it to them," Juarez adds.

The day after the election results were announced, Sears told the Fresno-based support associates that most of their jobs were being moved to Chicago, Texas, Arizona and Sacramento. Juarez says that he had warned them there would be more consolidation. "Even their supervisor was in temporary status." The company said that the workers could move and would be absorbed, but couldn't guarantee their current wage rate.

"I got my *Sparkplug* where I was quoted saying 'I'll be fine with the result, win, lose or draw.' Then the next day, the results came in and it was a draw. I really couldn't believe it!" Juarez said. "However, I believe I'll get another chance to work with these folks at Sears soon."





Justice at JATCO

In 2001, the workers at JATCO, a Union City manufacturer of injection moldings, tried to organize to join the IAM. The company did everything it could to keep the union out—from firing union supporters to laying off 65% of the workers the day before the election.

“We believe that they not only did not play fair, but they violated the law,” says organizer Pedro Mendez. “So we took them to court.” After the National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint that the company violated the law, the union sought punitive damages for workers who were fired.

Fortunately, JATCO decided to settle even before going to trial. “We were prepared,” says Mendez. “We had 15 witnesses lined up for the 10-day trial. But after waiting two years, we decided it was better to settle.” Mendez notes that since the Supreme Court issued its anti-immigrant Hoffman Decision, the union was concerned that the company would appeal, and those workers who were undocumented wouldn’t be eligible for any money.

The company agreed to pay \$15,000 to the workers—those who were fired will get \$600, \$1,500 and \$2,500, and the rest will share the remainder of the money equally.

“We’re in touch with the workers at

JATCO and we know that the company is now following the law. They pay time and a half for overtime work, they give breaks, and they’re being nice because of the unfair labor practices charges.” Mendez says. “But because of our efforts, these \$8 workers will get a share of \$15,000. That’s good advertising for the union because it shows that we’re willing to fight to organize.”

Mendez says that the majority of the workers at JATCO are women. “They’re brave; they’re not afraid. We’ll definitely try to organize them again.”

White or black hat for new dealership owner?

Business at Stevens Creek Dodge has been declining over the last 18 months; the slow Silicon Valley economy has definitely impact sales and service. This shop that once had 43 union employees was down to 22.

As of March 12, Chris Hall has come to the rescue. Whether he’s wearing a white hat or a black hat is yet to be seen.

Hall owns Chris’s Dodge World in Golden, Colorado—the largest Dodge dealership in that state. But Hall’s roots are in the South Bay—he was born and raised in Santa Clara and worked for some of the dealerships as a detailer.

“We’ve done the effects bargaining

After 39 day strike, Silgan-Stockton me

After walking the picket line from February 11 through March 21, the 129 Local 1528 members who work at Silgan’s Stockton can plant finally have a contract they can live with.

“Nobody crossed the picket line,” says Business Rep Gilbert Gonzalez. “This is the strongest group I’ve ever worked with. They really stick to their guns.”

Chief stop steward Jesse Martell explained why the members could not accept the company’s final offer. “The big issue was the health and welfare co-pays. We told them that we’d continue to pay the \$61 we’re paying now, but if we accepted their offer, we’d be paying close to \$300 a month by the end of the contract.”

Martell says that the wages weren’t much of an issue, “but they were only offering \$10/month on the pension and only starting in the third year. That just wasn’t enough.”



Silgan-Stockton members kept the picket line for 39 days

The members voted b
“An HR person told us: If
pany’s final offer, we sho
there’s no more money,”
people are willing to sta
takes.”

On March 21, the mem

with the old employer to protect the guys as best as we can,” says Local 1101 Business Rep Glenn Gandolfo, “and he agreed to take care of all his obligations, including any retroactivity.”

Gandolfo sent a letter to Hall, asking him to recognize that this is a union shop and that the union wants to meet with him to extend the contract.

To date, he’s re-hired all of the service advisors and mechanics, except for three. By keeping a majority of union employees, Hall is effectively agreeing to recognize the union.

While Hall agreed to keep the current wage structure, and hold off on implementing a flat rate structure for 45 days, this will clearly be on the table. “At this point, he isn’t offering retirement and is only putting \$100 toward the medical, and he’s talking about lower wage rate than area wage rate,” Gandolfo said. “Our guys are all Chrysler certified and trained. It’s to Hall’s advantage to keep them and keep them happy. I just don’t know how they’ll be able to live on Colorado wages in the Silicon Valley. And ultimately, I don’t think that they will.”

Good increases at Bianco and Marin

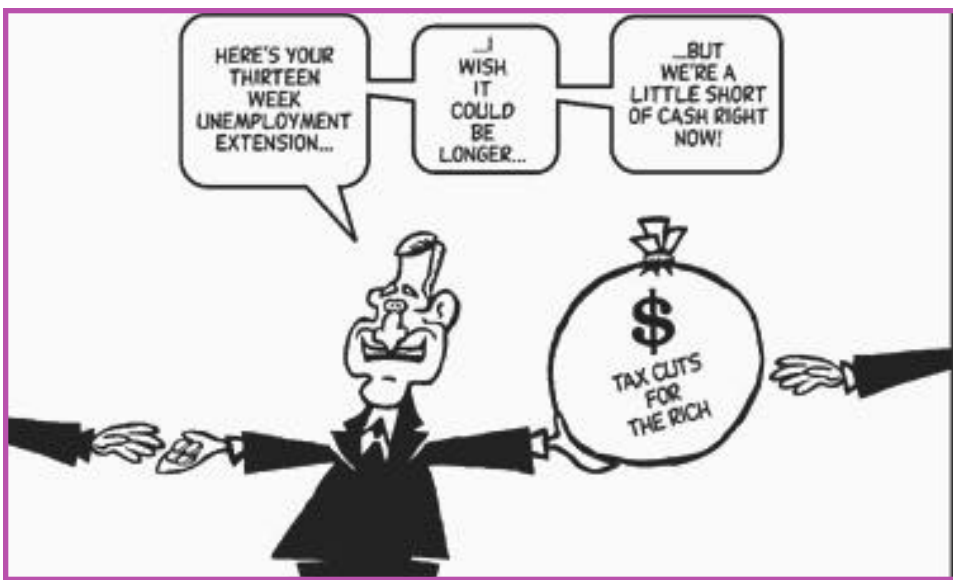
The Local 1414 members at Bianco Saab/Subaru and Marin Buick/Pontiac ratified a three year agreement in February that will increase their wages by \$2.35 per hour over the term of the agreement. “Not too bad for these economic times,” says Area Director Charles Netherby.

The employer will pay the full cost of the health plan for employees and their dependents, the full cost of laundering work uniforms with a clean change each workday, and will increase the pension contribution by \$45.34, or 21% over the term of the agreement.

In addition, premiums will be paid for ASE or I CAR Certifications and maintaining a valid California Smog License. Finally, the employees may earn a wellness bonus of up to 3 days pay for perfect attendance.

Keep the contract short

After a two week strike, the Local 1173 members at Lithia Dodge went back to work when the company prom-



SHOP TALK: How is the health care crisis impacting you or your family?



Matt Achtymichuk
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“I don’t have a family, so it hasn’t effected me yet. I do know that co-pays will be an issue at our next negotiations.”



Ed Nakamura
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“PacifiCare would no longer pay for our doctors, and this was when my wife was in mid-treatment on cancer. Their closest hospital is 30 miles from us, so we switched to Direct Pay. It costs more, but we can keep our doctors.”



Rich Owens
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“The price of medical care is ridiculous. I know that when I retire in a year, health care will take a big chunk of my income.”



Mike Clark
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“When PacifiCare closed down, we had to get a new doctor in San Ramon—and we had to pay out-of-pocket during the change-over.”



Max Wirkkala
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“So far, the union does a good job with us. My dad’s retired and the union takes real good care of him. I’m really against higher co-pays.”



Joe
Concord
Local

“Right now it’s too bad, but deductibles will be a big issue on the contract.”

THE LOCALS

Members get a contract they can live with



pt the picket going 24/7 for

y a 9-1 margin to strike. we turned down the com-ould let our people know Martell said. “Well, our ay out here as long as it bers voted on a new 3-year

contract that was significantly better than the company’s original final offer. In exchange for accepting a “new hire rate” of 80% for new employees during their first two years of employment, they got a 2.5% wage increase each year of the agreement, a half percent higher than than final offer. They’ll also get \$10 pension contributions in each year of the contract, and about \$90 more in health and welfare contributions than the company originally offered.

People are returning to work as of March 24, and eventually everybody will go back to work

Gonzalez had begun negotiating an agreement at Silgan’s Modesto plant two weeks after the strike started. “I expect there will be some impact from the Stockton strike...but it’s hard to know what that will be at this point,” Gonzalez said. “At least they know that our members will do what it takes to get a decent contract.”

ised to negotiate in good faith. It took another three months of talks, but they finally came up with a deal that the members could live with—for one year.

“We finally got our pension back on the table,” says Area Director Vern Dutton. Wages increased by \$1 per hour and each member will get \$300 for medical benefits. They can choose from a cafeteria plan from the company or opt out if their spouses are covered and put those dollars can be put into a 401K.

“For the family guy, it’s horrible. The single guy probably makes out okay,” Dutton adds. “And the moved to flat rate. Before this year is up, we have Lithia Ford contract coming up. We’re preparing for a real battle.”

‘Below par’ contracts

Dutton reports that Local 1173 members at Sonic’s Concord Toyota and Concord Nissan ratified new two-year contracts. “We’re not happy at all with these contracts. The members will have to use the company’s health and welfare plans with co-payments and they’ll be on flat rate. But the guys decided that it’s better than a strike at this time.”

The dealerships at the Antioch Auto Center (Nissan, Toyota, Chrysler/Jeep and Dodge) agreed to good wage increases, front-loaded into the contract, But they also moved to flat rate and capped the health and welfare benefits at their current level—“any increase comes out of employees check,” Dutton says.

“The companies are taking a very hard line,” he adds. “These have been very difficult negotiations.”

Dutton says the the Local was prepared for strikes at the three Sonic and Lithia shops, but it didn’t happen. “So, we take a deep breath and get prepared for the new car dealers contract—which expires on June 30.” Ten dealers are members of the Contra Costa association. “What we agree to here will set the pattern for all our independent owner-operators.”

Hayward Honda is #1

For the second time, Hayward Honda has been declared number one in the company for customer satisfaction in the state, and was named number one in the nation. “This should provide some

good leverage for negotiations when their contract comes up in September,” says Area Director Don Crosatto. Congratulations to the 10 mechanics, and members of Local 1546.

Two now, more to come

Local 1484 is in the process of getting a contract with Auto Warehousing in Wilmington. “Right now they have two folks working there,” says Business Rep Kevin Kucera. “But they may be getting a big contract out of Hawaii. If that comes through, we should see some hiring and this company will grow.”

These two new members will get a good wage increase, close to maintenance of benefits on the health and welfare, overtime on Saturdays for the first time, and other improvements.

New members at Bayshore

Local 1546 welcomes seven new members who work at Bayshore International in what was previously their non-union leasing division. “The Company agreed to recognize the union and agreed to roll the seven employees into the union under the current agreement. We’re pleased to represent them, along with all of the techs that we already represented,” says Business Rep Dave Asplin.

Much less than thrilled

The 85 Local 1596 members who work at MGM Brake in Cloverdale voted their contract down by 50-25, but they didn’t have enough support to go on strike. So the contract they don’t like will go into effect April 1, 2003.

“We were ‘back doored’ into this agreement,” says Business Rep Tom Brandon. “In the last contract, we got

maintenance of benefits. This time there are co-pays on the health insurance. They did get a 2% wage increase each year of 3-year agreement.”

Brandon says that the company showed the committee their books for the last three years and they’ve been in debt all that time. “Their bankers told them to shut the plant down but management wants to keep it open,” Brandon said. “They could have moved to North Carolina where they have a non-union facility but they really didn’t want to. So our members have jobs, but a lousy deal. It’s a trade-off.”

Satin jacket awards

Local 1414 is proud to announce that they awarded satin jackets to Amada Garcia and Omar L. Navarro for completing the Apprenticeship program and turning out as Journeymen.

The Local also gave jackets to Ray Bannister, David M. Baumann, Marie Box, Rich Del Rosso, Jim MacKinnon, Joe Porta, Ralph Sizemore and Frank Souza in honor of their service to the Local Lodge.

Congratulations one and all!

Cal Conference coming up

The California Conference of Machinists, the legislative advocacy arm of the union, will meet April 9-11 in Sacramento.

Big changes in the conference are afoot. “Between the coming departure of our long-time Secretary-Treasurer Matt McKinnon and the decline in membership numbers across the state—particularly in aerospace, airlines and manufacturing—we’ll have to chart out new directions for the Conference,” said DBR Jim Beno.

WORKERS
MEMORIAL
DAY

MOURN
for the Dead
FIGHT
for the Living

April 28, 2003



Szeeto Mitsubishi
Local 1173

hasn’t been increasing the all probably be in our next



Ted Curran
Concord Mitsubishi
Local 1173

“Fortunately, our union contract is still good, but the future scares me. Other contracts had to take concessions—I hate to see the technicians take the brunt of the slow economy.”



Dennis Adams
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“When PacifiCare pulled out of Napa County, I had to switch to direct pay. That definitely costs me more money.”



Charles Landon
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“Co-pays are going up. Many folks are having a hard time paying it now...I’m worried about what will happen later.”



Bret Beard
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“I’m single so the union plan covers me well. But health care and raises will be the big issues on our next contract.”



Mark Ellyson
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

“I notice that with Kaiser, you get less coverage for more money. I’ve had 3 family doctors in 3 years. It’s disheartening—just as you get comfortable with someone, they leave”

BENEFITS NEWS

IAM won't do business with anti-union company

Prescription provider changeover delayed

The last issue of *The Sparkplug* announced that both the Machinists and the AI Health and Welfare Trust Funds were switching prescription drug plans from RxAmerica to Prescription Solutions. Well, don't expect a new prescription card for a while. The changeover is being delayed—perhaps indefinitely—until Prescription Solutions settles the labor dispute with its employees.

"Prescription Solutions is in a huge labor battle right now," explains Directing Business Representative Jim Beno. "The people who work in their Carlsbad headquarters voted to join PACE, the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union. But the company's response has been to bring in a union-busting law firm and employ all the typical anti-union tactics. That's just not acceptable for a company that wants union business."

According to Beno, the company delayed bargaining for so long, they were able to force a de-cert election. Because the company has been so aggressive in marketing to union health and welfare trusts, the AFL-CIO is forming an investigatory committee, headed by Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka, to review their labor practices and see what actions their union customers can take.

Prescription Solution's parent company is PacifiCare. "We're prepared to put pressure on PacifiCare to get this dispute settled," Beno adds.

When the Machinist Trust Fund met on March 21, the trustees agreed to delay conversion until the company resolves its labor problems. When the AI Trust Fund meets on April 1 this issue will be on their agenda as well.

Again, until there's a solution to the labor dispute, both Trust Funds will maintain their current prescription plans.

Tough choice between health and solidarity

Maintaining union solidarity is not always easy, especially when your health is at stake. Local 1596 member John Grainger found this out the hard way.

Grainger was working at Larkfield Body & Paint in Santa Rosa three years ago when he had an on-the-job accident and damaged a disk in his neck.

"I avoided surgery for as long as I could, but finally the migraine headaches were getting unbearable," Grainger said. When he finally decided to get the surgery, he learned that the nurses were on strike at the hospital where his doctor was affiliated.

In fact, the nurses strike at Doctor's Medical Center in San Pablo started in November, 2002 and continues to this day, primarily over the issue of pensions and retiree medical benefits.

Most of the striking nurses are working at other hospitals.

"I would have put off the surgery even longer because I didn't want to cross a picket line. But my doctor was getting nasty and I was afraid I couldn't get another one from workers' comp. And then the pain got so bad that I finally had to do it."

Grainger went to the hospital in a taxi and didn't see any pickets. "No matter what, this was a bad deal. I needed the surgery but I didn't want it that way. I was stuck between a rock and a hard spot," Grainger says sadly.

"John is really a true unionist," says Local 1596 Business Rep Tom Brandon. "He did his best to put union solidarity before his own health. Unfortunately, limited health care choices mean that he had no other option."



Information Meeting & Year-End Update California Machinists 401k Plan

The Trustees of the California Machinists 401k Plan invite all interested members to attend one (or more) of the four information meetings that will be held over the coming months. Representatives from Smith Barney will provide the following:

- ❖ Performance updates on all investment options;
- ❖ Discuss the addition of three new funds to the investment menu and where they fit in the overall Plan asset allocation;
- ❖ Provide performance updates on the five asset allocation funds that were added during 2002;
- ❖ Revisit the significant tax and savings benefits provided by 401k Plans
- ❖ Distribute market and economic commentaries prepared by Smith Barney analysts for 2003
- ❖ Highlight important changes in the tax law which affect 401k Plans and all types of IRA accounts;
- ❖ Be available for an extended question and answer period.

Meeting Dates & Locations

Meetings were held in Oakland in February and in Concord in March. Upcoming meetings include:

Saturday, April 12, 2003

9:30-11:00 a.m.
IAM & AW Local Lodge 1414
150 South Blvd., San Mateo

Saturday, May 10, 2003

9:30-11:00 a.m.
101 Bascom Avenue, San Jose

SHOP TALK: How are you personally impacted by the health care crisis?



Steve Oliver
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

"So far, not yet. But co-pays are on the chalk board and a cap is being discussed. That will definitely be a problem with members who have young families."



Jerry Hall
Concord Mitsubishi
Local 1173

"I've been lucky because we have a great contract, and my wife's plan gives me double coverage. But I don't like the way it's going. Co-pays are the wave of the future and we don't like it."



Erik Ebding
Concord Mitsubishi
Local 1173

"I hear co-pays will be on the table at our next negotiations. I'm not happy about that. The boss has made millions for years. We shouldn't have to pay now when times slow down."



Gary Brown
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

"No impact yet. But they'll probably try to make it an issue in our next contract."



Todd Burnham
Concord Mitsubishi
Local 1173

"It hasn't impacted me yet, but when our contract comes up, they want to change it and make us pay more out-of-pocket."

Coping with the uncertainty of war

No matter where they stood in the debate over disarming Saddam Hussein, many Americans still felt apprehensive about the onset of war with Iraq. Now that military action has begun, most people are probably experiencing a complicated mix of emotions ranging from fear, loss of control, anxiety, hope and more. Those with loved ones in the military may be especially vulnerable to stress and bouts of anxiety. How do you cope with the onset of war during these uncertain times?

1. Recognize what you can and cannot control.

While you do not have control over what happens in the world, you do have choices on how to conduct your day-to-day life. Try to keep your daily routine as normal as possible. This is especially important in families with children or those with loved ones in the active military. Eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep and sticking with your usual school, work and exercise schedules can all help alleviate stress and anxiety, and give you a sense of control over your life.

2. Manage your exposure to war coverage.

The news media will be following the events unfolding in the Middle East 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Even if you opt not to watch the news, many regular primetime shows may be running news updates during the program. The coverage can seem overwhelming at times. It's wise to know your tolerance – and that of your children – for handling so much detail on the war. For instance, if you become anxious or depressed watching the news, limit your exposure to a summary in the morning paper or via the Internet in the evening. If you observe your children becoming fearful after watching mainstream news cover-

age, you may want to consider limiting their exposure to kid-friendly news sites only.

3. Take steps to ensure your sense of safety.

If you, like many Americans, feel safer having emergency supplies and plans in place, by all means obtain them. Many websites, including those sponsored by the federal government, include lists of supplies to have on hand in case of an emergency. Your employer most likely has a disaster plan in place, and can share that with you upon request. You may also want to have an emergency plan for your family as well.

4. Stay in touch with your spirituality.

Many people find great comfort in their religion and in spiritual activities during times of conflict. Even those without a formal religion may find that having a belief system or sense of world order can help them cope with events beyond their control. Now is a prime time to reconnect with your spirituality.

5. Talk with your kids.

If your child seems upset or alarmed by what he or she has heard or read, explore what your child knows and why he or she is upset. A great way to alleviate your child's anxiety is to discuss his or her fears

openly, so you can help your child know the difference between news and reality.

Create an open dialogue. Kids will not always tell you when they are scared or worried about current events so parents should look for clues as to how their child is reacting. Keeping their trepidation to themselves is more damaging to kids than open discussion. If you suspect your child has been affected by media reports, ask what he or she knows about the situation. Depending on your child's age, you can allay his or her fears outright, explain the difference between news and reality or, with older children, explore the facts and provide a context on media events.

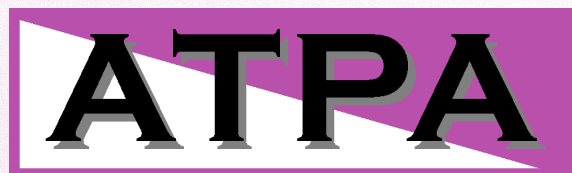
Share your views. With older children, discussions about news reports provide an excellent opportunity for parents to share their values.

6. Special note to military families.

Families with a loved one in the Middle East have probably been dealing with the added stress of separation for months now. It is especially important during this time to watch for – and deal with – the physical or emotional impact of this stress on yourself and your children. Experts agree that an important way to cope is to reach out for others, particularly other military families who can relate to your fears, hopes and anxieties. Maintaining active support networks can be an important means of helping you get through these uncertain times.

You are not alone

Your Employee Assistance Program/Member Assistance Program can provide a referral to a caring professional counselor who can help you cope. For more information, call 1-800-491-3334.



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.

SHOP TALK: How are you personally impacted by the health care crisis?



Harold Brooks
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

"If they want to co-pay us, we'll go on strike. It's got to stop somewhere. We pay for school and for tools, and now they want us to pay for health care. No way!"



Rick McElwain
Concord Mitsubishi
Local 1173

"I haven't been impacted yet, but there's rumor of co-pays when our contract comes up this summer. I'm against take-aways...period."



Ray Wong
Concord Mitsubishi
Local 1173

"It's a chain reaction—one dealer gets away with increasing co-pays and the rest try to follow suit. They should raise the labor rate so they can continue maintenance of benefits."



Troy Dunkirk
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

"My wife had back surgery and PacifiCare didn't want to cover the procedure. Then they pulled out of our local hospital, so she has to drive 25 miles for pain management. Everything has been a fight."



Karl Rhinebeck
Fitzpatrick Chevrolet-Concord
Local 1173

"The threat of co-pays will be a big issue in our next contract. Right now we have maintenance of benefits. All the non-contract employees here pay \$100/month for their benefits. We would, too, if we didn't have the union."

APPLY NOW – Union scholarship money for high school seniors

Thirty-eight \$2,000 scholarships will be awarded to California high school seniors.

Deadline: Postmark by April 8, 2003 (Deadline coincides with the State of California’s very first Labor History Week!)

Eligibility: Any graduating senior from a California high school who plans to enroll in an accredited college or technical school in 2003

Application: Submit the form below and an essay of 500-1,000 words.

Essay Topic: *How have unions been important to working people in California over the past 100 years?*

- Write a 500 to 1,000-word essay.
- Use **three examples** from current events or history to support your argument
- Type or neatly print your essay.
- Complete the form to the right (or a photocopy) and mail it with your essay and transcript to:

California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO
Attn: Scholarship Program
600 Grand Avenue, Suite 410, Oakland, CA 94610-3561

For additional information contact 510-663-4024 or ahobson@calaborfed.org

Suggested Resource Materials

Center for Labor Research and Education: <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/>
California labor Federation, AFL-CIO: www.calaborfed.org
California Federation of Teachers, AFT and Resource Guide for Teachers: <http://cft.org/comm-n/labsch/>

Please submit this form along with your typed or handwritten essay postmarked by April 8, 2003.

Student Name _____ Social Security # _____
Home Address _____
City and Zip _____
Phone Number (_____) _____
Extracurricular activities (clubs, teams, etc.) _____

Community Service _____

Career goals _____

High School Name _____ High School Counselor _____
High School Address _____
City and Zip _____
Phone Number (_____) _____ County of High School _____

I understand that my essay, name, and photograph may be used by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, a central labor council, or a local union for publication in union newsletters and mass media. I hereby give my permission for the California Labor Federation, affiliated labor councils and local unions to edit, reprint, and publish my essay to educate the public about key issues for working people and about the Federation's scholarship program.

Student's Signature _____

UNION MEETINGS



District Lodge 190

7717 Oakport Street
Oakland, CA 94621
510-632-3661

Executive Board Meeting
Fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
April 22 • May 27 • June 24
General Delegates Meeting
Fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.
April 22 • May 27 • June 24

Local 801

7717 Oakport Street,
Oakland, CA 94621
800-655-2182

Membership Meeting
Third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m.
April 17 • May 15 • June 19
Meetings are held at the Carpenters’Hall, in Reno.

Local 1101

1150 So. Bascom # 23
San Jose, CA95128
408-291-2550
*All meetings are held at
Lion’s Blind Center:
101 North Bascom Ave.
San Jose*

Executive Board Meeting
First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
April 3 • May 1 • June 5
Stewards Meeting
First Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m.
April 3 • May 1 • June 5
General Membership Meeting
Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
April 10 • May 8 • June 12

Local 1173

1900 Bates Ave., # H
Concord, CA 94520
925-687-6421

Executive Board Meeting
Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
April 10 • May 8 • June 12
Membership/Shop Stewards Mtg.
Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
April 17 • May 15 • June 19
Retirees Club Meeting
Call Local for current meeting times

Local 1414

150 South Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94402
650-341-2689

Shop Stewards Meeting
First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
April 3 • May 1 • June 5
Executive Board Meeting
Second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
April 10 • May 8 • June 12
General Membership Meeting
Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
April 17 • May 15 • June 19
Retirees Club
*First Wednesday of June, Sept., Dec., March
at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome!*
June 4 • Sept. 3 • Dec. 3 • March 3, 2004

Local 1484

1261 Avalon Blvd.
Wilmington, CA 90744
310-835-6688

Executive Board Meeting
Third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
April 17 • May 15 • June 19
General Membership Meeting
First Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
April 1 • May 6 • June 3
Retiree Club
Third Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.
April 16 • May 21 • June 18

Local 1528

713 16th Street
Modesto, CA 95354
209-529-9210

Executive Board Meeting
First Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.
April 2 • May 7 • June 4
General Membership Meeting
First Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
April 2 • May 7 • June 4

Local 1546

10260 MacArthur Blvd.,
Oakland, CA 94605
510-638-6705

General Membership Meeting
First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
April 1 • May 6 • June 3
Shop Stewards Meeting
First Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.
April 1 • May 6 • June 3
Executive Board Meeting
Thursday preceding membership meeting at 6:30 p.m.
March 27 • May 1 • May 29
Senior’s Luncheon
First Wednesday of each month at 12 noon
April 2 • May 7 • June 4
Alcoholics Anonymous: Every Saturday, 9 a.m.

Local 1584

8130 Baldwin Street
Oakland, CA 94621
510-635-2064

Membership Meeting
Third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
April 17 • May 15 • June 19
Executive Board Meeting
Preceding Monday at 7:00 p.m.
April 14 • May 12 • June 16
Retirees Club
First Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.
April 1 • May 6 • June 3

Local 1596

4210 Petaluma Blvd. No.
Petaluma, CA 94952
707-795-0085

Membership Meeting
Third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
April 15 • May 20 • June 17
Executive Board Meeting
Third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
April 15 • May 20 • June 17

Local 2182

967 Venture Court,
Sacramento, CA 95825
800-458-9200

Executive Board Meeting
Second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
April 8 • May 13 • June 10
General Membership Meeting
Second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
April 8 • May 13 • June 10
Retirees Club - VISTA CLUB
Third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.
April 16 • May 21 • June 18