# The IAM District 190 DOING

VOL. IO NO. 2 February/March 2008

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge I90

CMTA-IAM Trustees find lower-cost benefits for retiree coverage

# New health benefits available to retirees

Rising healthcare costs are a major concern for all of us, but retirees have been hit the hardest. Healthcare inflation has left everyone paying more for doctor visits, hospital stays, and prescription drugs, but for retirees on a fixed income, every extra dollar hurts.

In addition, retirees eligible for a subsidy provided through employer contributions have seen that subsidy decrease—leaving our retirees responsible for a larger portion of the self-payment required for coverage.

Yet, while we are faced with very real challenges on the healthcare front, the CMTA-IAM Joint Retiree Health and Welfare Trust remains committed to providing retired members with access to affordable, quality healthcare coverage. To do this, the Trustees are pleased to announce that more healthcare plan options will be available effective March 1, 2008. The plans can protect against the high

costs of treating major illness or injury, and cover many day-to-day healthcare needs. This gives our retirees greater flexibility in

matching a medical plan to their personal health situations at a more affordable price.

The trustees have developed a new *Benefits Guide*, which will be in the mail shortly. It describes all of the health plan options, eligibility for these plans, and the steps to enroll in a plan.

#### What's new for 2008

The trustees are introducing the following changes to the plans, effective March 1, 2008:

For Non-Medicare Retirees— A new lower-cost HMO option, provided through UHC PacifiCare is

now available. [Note: PacifiCare

Be sure to call the
Trust Fund Office at
1-800-662-0738
if you have questions after
reading the Guide.

Kaiser option is also now available. These plans are available to California residents only.

recently

acquired

called

UnitedHealth-

care and is now

PacifiCare.] A new lower cost

by

UHC

#### ► For Medicare Retirees—

We are adding two lower cost HMO plans (provided through UHC PacifiCare) and two "Private Feefor-Service" plans (provided through Aetna). Also, we are adding two prescription drug only plans (provided through UHC PacifiCare).

# ► Prescription Drug <u>Only</u> plans for Medicare Retirees—

While the Trust Fund-sponsored medical plans provide comprehensive, Medicare-creditable prescription drug coverage, the Trust Fund is also please to offer retired members a choice of stand-alone Medicare

prescription drug plans. These plans are designed for individuals who are already covered or intend to seek coverage under a medical plan outside the Trust Fund (such as an individual plan or a plan through a spouse).

#### **Open Enrollment Period**

Because the Trust Fund is making changes to the plans offered, we are holding a longer-than usual open enrollment period for all eligible retirees (both Medicare and Non-Medicare). The open enrollment period runs from February through May 31, 2008.

If you wish to change your plan during this Special Open Enrollment period, contact the Trust Fund Office at 800-662-0738. Any change you request during this enrollment period is effective the month following receipt of complete enrollment forms (but not before March 1, 2008 coverage).

# **Working Californians feel brunt of Governor's budget cuts**

By ART PULASKI

Executive Secretary-Treasurer California Labor Federation

As the new year dawned, Governor Schwarzenegger announced his plan to close California's projected \$14.5 billion budget deficit. But instead of repealing tax breaks for the wealthy or finding new sources of revenue, the governor has opted to slash funding for nearly every public program in the state.

The 10 percent across-the-board budget cuts would shut down some government programs, and many state employees would lose their jobs. Working families that rely on these essential public programs, which include occupa-

tional safety, education, and health services, would be among the first to suffer from the governor's faulty budget plan.

#### **Occupational Safety**

If you've ever had to file a CalOSHA claim, you're familiar with the agency's long delays and sluggish response times. The governor's proposed cuts (which include more than \$2 million in funding cuts for the Department of Industrial Relations) would exacerbate the problem by drastically reducing staff and resources, limiting appeals hearings and delaying implementation of regula-



tions. The cuts would also reduce staff for the Division of Labor Statistics and Research. We would lose the knowledge and resources those staff share with the public on important issues like prevailing wage.

#### **Education**

Funding for education has always been a top priority for the state, but the governor's budget plan would reduce K-14 education funding by \$4 billion. Programs that our families rely on, like home-to-school transportation and career technical education, would be slashed by 10 percent. Additionally, higher education would become less

accessible, as the student fees at the UCs and CSUs would increase between 7-10 percent.

#### **Health and Human Services**

Despite the governor's efforts to expand healthcare to more lower-income families, his budget proposal would accomplish exactly the opposite. The Healthy Families program would be cut by \$42 million, and Medi-Cal funding would be reduced by more than \$1 billion. Medi-Cal recipients could lose their dental and vision care, and lower rates for Medi-Cal healthcare providers would also result in the loss of over \$1 billion in federal matching funds. Additionally, 16 percent fewer families would receive Cal-WORKs each month, and Cost of Living

Adjustments (COLAs) for SSI/SSP recipients for 2008 and 2009 would? be suspended.

Labor has a lot at stake in this year's budget fight. With a failing economy and increasing unemployment, more union members will be turning to government programs to help get them through the tough times. Slashing these essential programs is not the way to solve our budget crisis. California needs a realistic budget proposal that would generate revenue for much needed programs and give a leg up to our working families.

 For more information, visit www.calaborfed.org PAGE 2 February/March 2008



# UNION PEOPLE





District 190 was pleased to honor and celebrate its staffmembers that had retired over the last two years at a December 8 dinner at Francesco's in Oakland. (L to R): Vern Dutton, LL 1173; Manny Francis, LL 1414/1546; Craig Andrews, LL 1546; David Asplin, LL 1546; Jim Beno, DBR District Lodge 190 (Current); John Moran, LL 1414; Mike Cook, LL 1546; Glenn Gandolfo, LL 1101; Bob Miller, LL 1546.

## District celebrates its recently retired staff

Jim Beno hosted a special Retirement/Holiday dinner on December 8 in Oakland to pay tribute to an octet of recently retired IAM representatives. More than 150 members and their families attended the event, which honored past Area Directors Vern Dutton, Craig Andrews, and Glenn Gandolfo; Business Representatives David Asplin, Mike Cook, Manny Francis and John Moran; and Secretary-Treasurer (for both

District 190 Directing Business Rep (DBR) Local 1546 and District Lodge 190) Bob Miller.

> "This group of retirees represented more than 150 years of service to membership of District Lodge 190 and their leadership deserves to be acknowledged and commended," said Beno. "We've been fortunate to have such a strong and committed staff. I wish each and every one of them a long, healthy and happy retirement."

## The benefits of testing well

One of the most contentious issues of the Waste Management talks was the company's desire to establish a "super seniority" list and pay incentives to mechanics who completed 11 ASE certificates. "Ultimately, the techs absolutely refused the separate list,



Robbie Pollard at work

but they were open to the \$3/hour wage increase," explained Local 1546 Business Rep Pat Woodward. "Moreover, they were skeptical that anyone could meet the unusually high requirement of 11 ASEs."

In the three months since the contract was ratified, Robbie Pollard has met the requirement and will gladly take that wage bump, thank you.

"I already had seven ASEs, so I just needed four more," Pollard said. When asked what he had to do to get them, he answered "Sign up. Study. Take the test and get a passing score. Actually, it takes a lot of studying." The tests Robbie needed to pass were: Gasoline engine; alternative fuels; and specialist tests for diesel electronic technician and for truck and equipment electronics. "We have no gasoline heavy-duty trucks in our fleet, so that was a completely new topic for me. Frankly, I don't even know why it was on the list."

Robbie has worked at Waste Management for 15 years and currently works at the Livermore facility. He is a 17-year member of the IAM. He may be the first to qualify for the incentive, but he says he knows of at least four guys who are close.

## **Local 1584 celebrates its retiree veterans at annual awards luncheon**



Members who received their service pins at Local 1584's Retiree's Veteran Award Luncheon held on December 4, 2007 at Francesco's Restaurant in Oakland.

The following Local 1584 members members received awards for service ranging from 20 years to 50 years: 40 years . . Chris Carrington, Bernice Davi, Ivan Dodic, Sven Freiberg,

20 years . . Manuel Gutierrez

25 years . . David Bowen, Andrea Gorman

30 years . . Angel Mandujano

35 years . .Raymond Johnson, Scott Kell, Edward Santos, Raul Solorzano 50 years . .Edward LaPlante, Paul Neumann

45 years . .Geraldine Franks, Robina King, Frances Sanchez, Karl Kubock

Geraldine Goias, Ronald Hurtado, Ralph Jones,

William Kovalik, Elizabeth Lew, Richard Ortega, John Stone

Daniel P.L. Borrero is the President of Local 1584 Retiree's Club and Andrea Gorman is Sectretary-Treasurer.

## **Hollibush named new ADBR for District 190**

As of January 1, DBR Jim Beno named Mark Hollibush his new Assistant Directing Business Representative, replacing Herman Howell, who retired in December. "I get to do two jobs now," explained Hollibush. "In addition to my work at Local 1173, I'll be assisting Jim Beno in any capacity that he sees fit." Hollibush joined the District 190 staff as a Business Rep for Local 1173 in 2000 and was named Area Director in 2004. "As I spend more time on the job, I expect that the duties will expand. I look forward to growing into the position."

"Local 1173 has one of the most active memberships of any Local in the District, due to Mark's leadership," said Beno. "He posseses good organizational and administrative skills and I've already got him working on several projects."



Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor



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

The Sparkplug is the official publication of District Lodge 190 and its

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

Postmaster: Send address corrections to: The Sparkplug, 7717 Oakport Street, Oakland, CA 94621.



# ORGANIZING



#### Getting set for a national election

When the International started organizing the flight specialists of Lockheed Martin on a nation-

wide basis, Area Director for Organizing Jesse Juarez took responsibility for working with the crew in Oakland.

"All told, there are 900 people in this unit around the country, and 23 are here locally," said Juarez. "These are the folks who do air traffic for private jets. Probably their biggest issue is liability-and whether the employer will cover them in case there's an accident."

The IAM filed an election petition in January. The company has tried to include trainees in the unit, so as to dilute the vote. "We won't have an election date until they settle who can vote. But from the guys I'm talking with here, I'm sure that we have a good chance to win this," said Juarez.

## Can't win them all, especially if there are dirty tricks

After seeing how the union has benefited the body shop employees at Maita Toyota in Sacramento, several folks in the dealership's service department contacted the IAM in November,

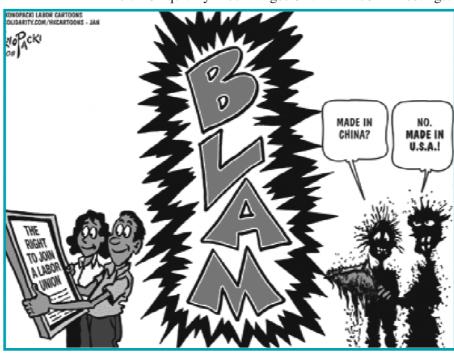
2007 to see if they could get their own contract.

"25 out of the 36 techs came to our first meeting," says Juarez. "We shared information about the organizing process and what they could expect the employer would do."

But, before they could have their second meeting, the employer found out that union talk was brewing. Juarez says that he immediately fired six technicians, four of whom had more than 14 years of service. "These were skilled guys and we have no doubt that this was an intimidation

technique. We had many fewer guys attend the second meeting—the chill factor was on. People were afraid they'd be fired, too."

The union quickly filed charges of unfair labor



practices with the Labor Board. "The company hired an anti-union lawyer who mentored them in all the intimidation tactics they could use. When they went before the labor board, they played up the hard economic conditions they were facing, even though they had increased the workforce by six techs a month before. We know they fired

66 Currently, many employers engage in initiatives to counter union campaigns they wouldn't dare do under [the Employee Free Choice Act]. Now, there's a minor fine; under EFCA, every unfair labor practice will be potentially a \$20,000 fine. Now, even if management is not overtly instigating it, the feeling is 'if one of my supervisors is talking to people, it's not so bad.' With EFCA, it will be very costly."

Stephen Cabot Chairman Cabot Institute for Labor Relations HR Magazine, January 2008

Cabot should know. His Washington institute helps employers to resist unions!

these guys and demoted a few others because they were union organizers. The service manager even interrogated another tech about who attended the meetings."

> Ultimately, the Labor Board did not believe that the firings were caused by union activity. The employer claimed it was a downturn in economic conditions and the NLRB sided with them.

> "It felt like a criminal just got away with a felony," says Juarez. "But it didn't surprise me. For the last seven years, the Labor Board has not been a friend of working people."

Juarez says that this once again shows the need for the Employee Free Choice Act. "There would have been justice and fairness at the workplace—that's all these guys wanted. Instead, guys were fired and the campaign was lost. Without the law on our side, the employers will pay whatever they need to and will fire

good people just to avoid having a union contract."

#### Still tangling with U-Haul

Since 2003, the IAM has been trying to help the employees at U-Haul in Nevada and Fremont get the union representation they want. In that time, the company has fired 49 union supporters.

> The union won a global settlement in 2007, but the company appealed it to the DC circuit while agreeing to a \$2 million settlement.

> Since then, however, they hired another attorney and want the case reheard. "We're starting from scratch. The litigation continues," Juarez explained.

> "In the meantime, I keep getting calls from U-Haul employees about organizing because the same bad stuff keeps happening. This case won't end until labor law is overhauled."



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Yeah! Business Rep Kevin their "Rubber Kucera!! Local 1484 – After dealing with the Benefit Trust for months. Kevin was able to deal with our issue within hours. Again, Yeah Kevin!!

> Sharon & Milton Reesor unteer with the Retired, Local 1484 V.A. Most vets

Kudos to the Sparkplug for printing an opposing point of view to my letter! Without hearing other views on a topic with an open mind, we can't learn. I would suggest to Brother Norgord that he drop the derogatory comments. When we resort to name calling, and/or raising our voice, it weakens and discredits our argument. Please let's stick to the facts.

Re: Bush bashing: President Bush has sustained low ratings for longer than ANY President in our nation's history. However, my point was that the Rove/Bush gang's actions angered so many Americans that it cost the Republicans both Houses of

Stamp" congress in the 2006 election.

I'm also retired & vol-I talk to are very upset with the earli-

er budget cuts to the VA by Bush. Walter Reed Hospital made the headlines but it wasn't the only hellhole with dedicated staff that didn't get enough funding to take care of our vets. I'm a vet & I've had 2 brothers who died in the U.S. after suffering for many years from what they sustained in the Viet Nam fiasco.

According to the Bureau of Labor statistics, unemployment has gone from 4.0 in Jan. 2000 to as high as 6.3 and back down to the current 4.7%, and this month's report will go even higher. I have total faith he'll set a record before he leaves office.

Did something in the Sparkplug make you mad or inspire you to action? Write us a letter and let us know. (Letters will be used, space permitting, and they may be edited for length or grammar, but not for content.) Send your letters to dchaplan @ mindspring.com Be sure to tell us which local you're from and where you work.

billion!!! The jobs created are mostly low-paying screeners hired by Homeland Security.

Bush

office with a

budget sur-

plus and now

has set the

record for the

highest budg-

et deficit in

our nation's

history. \$445

took

Instead of taxes, Bush has run up the credit card that China holds. Taxes for the working class were lowered by so little that it cost the US Treasury more money to cut and mail the checks than to pay out the amount of the check. Rich fund managers are paying 15% tax on the millions they're earning. Even in retirement, I'll pay more than 20%.

Warren Buffet called it ridiculous that he pays about the same income tax as his secretary—as I recall, she makes \$60K. The stock market went up due to: overseas funds (investing in foreign economies), predatory lending and deficit spending, all of which are now sinking the dollar and causing the market to correct. How many times can a Dead Cat Bounce? (Google it, it's a market term.) I'll take bets that the market won't recover in less than 12 months.

In closing, Sparkplug did a great job explaining where the candidates stood on labor issues. I'd like to add that John Edwards and John McCain, a man President Bush labeled a traitor in the 2000 primary, are low in the ratings because they are both opposed to the now legal corruption of politicians by special interests. Therefore, they don't have the war chests of the other candidates. McCain was too much of a gentleman to bring up Bush being AWOL during a time of war.

> Robert Allen Retired, Local 1484

## **AROUND**

## Local 653

#### **Busy through June**

The year has started out fast and furious with negotiations getting started at J.M. Equipment (master agreement with Locals 653, 1528, and 2182), Peerless Pump, and Toyota Material Handling. Contracts opening in April are Rutter Armey, Saturn of Fresno and Sara Lee.

The Local has also launched a new organizing campaign with a pump manufacturer. Business Rep Tom Rotella says he hopes to come up for air about June.

#### Bad news and good news

The members at G&H Diesel have lost a fellow worker, friend and local union brother. Randy Dickens and his wife died in an auto accident on December 28, 2007. They will be missed.

On a lighter note, Rotella is happy to announce the birth of his second grandson, Vaughn Richard Wallis, born on January 5, 2008. Grandson and daughter are home and doing fine. Tom has informed Vaughn that he will be attending union meetings.

## **Local 1101**

#### **Contract update**

Negotiations with Peninsula Ford and Frontier Ford in San Jose are hot and heavy, and Business Rep Richard Breckenridge reports that the talks have recently taken a really nasty turn. Both dealerships are pushing for flat rate and the techs are pushing back because they don't want it. The company also proposed moving to a company medical plan and "they gave us some really bad language on training." Stay tuned.

Over at Hanson Cement, the negotiating team is scheduled to go back to the table on February 15. Breckenridge reports that the union has tentatively agreed to a one-year contract extension. "But we have some major issues with subcontracting that we have to settle, first. If we can wrap up some Letters of

Understanding that deal with those issues, then we'll give them the one-year extension."

## **Local 1173**

### Getting the hours straight

Over at Lehmers Pontiac-GMC-Buick in Concord, the company just can't seem to get the vacation records straight. "I've spent a lot of time trying to find out what the guys have accrued and been paid, and the company has fought me the whole way," says Area Director Mark Hollibush. "I can assure you that I'll go through each and every record so that everyone can be in agreement about who's owed what."

Hollibush offered an important caveat for all members: Keep track of your own vacation days taken so that you can always check it against the company's records. "Because," he adds, "as we know from this instance, the company's records are just not correct."

## **Local 1414**

#### **Word of Caution**

As business for car dealerships slows and profits are down, "management is scrutinizing everyone's performance" warns Business Rep Don Barbe. "Please get to work on time and be aware that everything we do is being examined." Barbe adds that the Local is being inundated with grievances. "Be careful!"

#### Important political race

We will be bugging you for your active involvement and help in the race to replace Rep. Tom Lantos, who announced his plan to retire at the end of this term due to cancer.

"Lantos has been one of working peoples' best friends in the Congress ever." says Barbe. "Jackie Speier has announced her intentions to run and we expect others may also do so. If we're ever going to address and solve such

## **Local 1414**

## **Ryder's safest shop in the West**

Ryder Truck recently named its San Francisco location as the safest in the West. The company celebrated its record of no injuries or accidents since April 9, 2000—more than 142,000 accident-free hours—by hosting a BBQ that included fresh boar, thanks to Mike, and side dishes courtesy of management. "Our members take pride in their safety efforts in the shop," said Local 1414 Business Rep Dave Taylor. "Shop Steward Rich Del Rosso says that the members have a daily safety/time clock meeting before each shift, as well as weekly one-hour safety meetings"

On behalf of the members, Taylor wanted to say goodbye and thanks to outgoing Ryder Truck Service Manager Mike Stillman, who is being promoted. "We wish him all the best and we welcome the new Service Manager Matt Simoni. Matt says safety will remain number one with Ryder He plans to continue all the programs to maintain a safe workplace."

important issues as healthcare and worker rights, we have to have strong representation in Congress. Politics is the only remedy," Barbe adds.

## **Local 1546**

# "Membership Education" meetings are open to all

For many years, Local 1546 held a "stewards" meeting prior to the Local's monthly business meeting with speakers addressing a range of topics. "Even though we didn't mean to restrict anyone, we've learned that some members would have liked to attend but felt excluded because they were not stewards," explained Area Director Don Crosatto.

All members are welcome to the newly titled Membership Education meetings, which take place on the First Tuesday of each month. "The information and speakers will be valuable to all members, not just shop stewards. Everyone is welcome to participate and partake of the food!" Crosatto adds.

The February meeting will include a crab feed. The speaker will be Carla Koren, from Smith Barney, who will talk about the 401K plan.

#### Sweet deal at Svenhards

The members at Svenhards Bakery is Oakland ratified a three-year contract of January 26. "We upped the health art welfare cap so there should be enough to cover any increases. We also got mode increases in the pension contribution art more money in the Mike Day retire medical fund," reported Crosatto.

# Problems emerge with merger

As *The Sparkplug* goes to press, the deal to merge Hayward Ford and the Ford Store of San Leandro, which was supposed to fall into place on Februar 1, fell apart that same day. But, it was resurrected on February 7. "From whe I've heard about other dealership mergers, this is a fairly typical situation," sait Local 1546 Business Rep Robbie Pinto "Mergers are more complicated that anyone could ever believe."

In January, the approximately 8 Local 1546 members at the two shops had developed and ratified on a mergoragreement by an overhelming margin of 65-3 that the dealers had signed off or

The merger agreement include integrating the seniority lists of the tw shops. "Unfortunately, we know that number of members will be laid off

# SHOP TALK: Facing a \$14 Billion deficit, the Governor proposes closing par



Steve Kilgore Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"If you've got to make cuts, do it across the board and equalize it among state expenditures. I'm sure there are more creative ways of raising funds besides Indian gaming."



Dan Kiel Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"We need better fiscal resonsibility and accountability for state spending. When the governor came in, he promised to audit everything to find the waste. We still need a clear picture of where we're at before we can assess where to go."



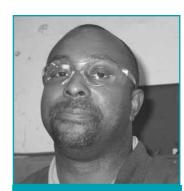
Vince Pisciotto Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"Schwarzenegger messed up when he cut the Vehicle License Fee. That should be reinstated."



Raul Castillo Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"They need to find another way to raise money. If they cut education, parks and healthcare and let inmates go before their time is up, who will pay is the working class."



Marcus Fogle Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"All the environmentalists in California can probably find money for the parks, but when it comes to education, the more he cuts, the worse it'll be. Things don't happen overnight. Soon, either we'll have a new governor or be in for more changes."



"Parks and s state's most es. You can't ple's ability to relieve stress is key. I'd pay and parks—a where my mo

# IE LOCALS





(Standing L-R) Machinist members Joe Castleberry, Greg Stepanenko, Shop Steward Rich Del Rosso, Service Manager Matt Simoni, Mike De Lasarte, Darryl McGruder and Don Dudley. (Kneeling L-R) Teamsters Local 665 members Eric Jefferson, Richard De Lasarte and Colin McIver.

rosatto added. "But the union is preared to grieve any unfair layoffs romptly and we got a federal mediator agree to sit on the panel to insure that rievances are handled quickly and idiciously."

Also in the agreement, wages for the layward Ford employees would be educed—but they'd come back up by ear three. The Ford Store employees rould have an immediate \$2.80/hour rage increase.

Crosatto explained other changes in overage: "While we have to go into a ompany health plan, the monthly co-pay and structure are not bad. We maintained to AI dental, ortho, life insurance, disbility and retiree medical plans. We had or give up two holidays, but one comes ack in 2010 and the other in 2011."

"Ford has seen a 50% drop in market hare in this area and Ford dealers are hally struggling. In fact, Broadway ord just announced that it will be closing at the end of March and we can expect more closures in the future," trosatto explained. "Both of these have suffered a severe loss of ales. We hope the deal goes through so ney can create one stronger dealership hat will survive for the long haul, and eep our members working."

#### **Tough contract at ConGlobal**

"We had to scratch, claw and bite to get even a little bit of money out of ConGlobal," said Business Rep Pat Woodward, "but at least we didn't have to strike like they did in Southern California.

In December, the 31 members who work at ConGlobal in Alameda ratified their new five year contract that was retro to June 2, 2007. Included in the deal was an increase in the health and welfare insurance cap by \$37 in the first year and \$25 in years two through five. "This should cover about half of the increased costs," said Woodward.

Other changes included a small wage increase, some improvements in the vacation policy, and moving the company into the AI accident and sickness disability plan, which is better and cheaper than the company plan.

## **Local 1596**

## **Busy contract year**

Area Director Tom Brandon reports that 2008 will be a busy year for negotiations in the North Bay. The contracts at the three Eureka shops will all be expiring, as will eleven in Sonoma and Marin County. "And I still have two from 2007 that have yet to be completed."

## **Local 2005**

#### **Continuing to grow**

"Local 2005 is pleased to welcome Ruben Zesati to our staff to work on a full-time basis covering the night shift at Foster Farms," said Business Rep Ralph Meraz. "By having a greater presence on all shifts, we can better serve those members, which, in turn, is helping to grow our membership."

"Of course," Meraz added, "we are also grateful to all the District 190 reps who have come to Livingston to assist and train us, especially Al Lopez, Mark Martin, Tom Rotella, Gilbert Gonzalez, Rick Rodgers, Jesse Juarez, Steve Older, and Pedro Mendez."

The Local's goal is to have membership cards from 1,300 members, which is roughly 70% of the workforce, before negotiations start in the summer.

"Our relationship with Foster Farms continues to improve and the morale and momentum among our members is strong," Meraz said. "We expect the negotiating climate will be tough, but it should be more positive than the last round. The key to successful negotiations this year will be the number of union members we've signed-up—the more the better."

The union is forming committees to formulate proposals and set the direction regarding negotiations. The first meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 10.

## **Local 2182**

#### **NLRB** sanctions Hubacher

The Labor Board has issued a complaint against Hubacher Cadillac for unlawfully withdrawing recognition of the union. "When the company changed and added car lines, they added employees to the original contingent of about 17 of our members. But instead of working with the union, they just cancelled the contract. As a result, many of our former members suffered a \$3 reduction in pay and the family health and welfare plan jumped to

\$700/month," says Area Director Mark Martin.

"We are seeking an injunction to have the company restore recognition of the contract prior to the trial, which is set for March 4," Martin added.

#### Welcome TMH employees

The three parts employees at Toyota Material Handling in Sacramento unanimously voted to have Local 2182 represent them. "We already represent the techs at TMH, and the company didn't even try to take us on during the campaign," Martin said. "We believe we will be successful in reaching a first agreement in the near future."

#### **Contract update**

The six members who work at Brooks Body Shop in Manteca ratified a three-year contract that includes maintenance of benefits for their health and welfare and a \$1/hour wage increase in year one, and re-openers for wages and benefits in the following years.

Work at Panella Trucking in Stockton has remained busy so the members were able to ratify a three-year agreement that they're quite happy with. The deal includes maintenance of health and welfare benefits all three years; a 5% wage increase in year one and 3% in years two and three; with 2% increases for the general laborer classification. There were also vacation, pension and other language improvements.

#### Kenworth ownership change

The owner of Redding Kenworth thought that this and another of their California shops were set to be sold to Eugene-based Papé Trucks, but at the eleventh hour, Kenworth, Inc. disallowed the sale.

The new plan is to put together a deal by the end of March to sell the Redding shop to the Bay Area Kenworth group. "Indicators are that the new company will sustain all the employees," said Martin, "and then we'll have to bargain for a new contract because the current one has expired."

# letting out prisoners, and cutting health and education. What do you think?



n**teith** alnut Creek เร

are the ant servicaway peoout and education for schools as I know going."



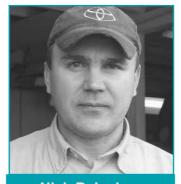
Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"Instead of cutting the state across the board, just cut excessive waste. The politicians just got a raise—maybe they should give their raise back until they find creative ways to make cutbacks. No new taxes!"



Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"The budget cuts are not good. I have two kids in college—it's just not right."



Nick Belenkov Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"If we overreact now, we'll make the problems worse. If you close parks, you don't make money from them and it costs more to reopen them later. Don't let prisoners out early—you're taking a chance."



Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"I don't think those cuts are a good idea. He fumbles around for answers and comes up with a hare-brained idea. He's just wasting a lot of taxpayer's money. I don't think giving more slot machines to Indian casinos will fix the problem."



Chris Vo Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"Letting out prisoners is a bad idea; they'll just cause more problems. I'd pay my fair share if the economy is going well. If they raise the Vehicle License Fee, that's bad for us because people won't buy cars."

PAGE 6 February/March 2008



# IN THE NEWS



# **Increase in Union Members Highest in Decades**

The number of U.S. workers belonging to unions rose to 15.7 million in 2007. That 311,000 gain was the largest single-year increase in union membership since 1983 when the government first started keeping track, according to a recent report by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Construction and health services showed the strongest growth, the report showed, and more women than men joined unions last year.

"In 2007, among full-time wage and salary workers, union members had median usual weekly earnings of \$863 while those who were not represented by unions had median weekly earnings of \$663," said the report.

More and more workers want to join unions, according to data from independent research firm Peter Hart Associates. In fact, some 60 million U.S. workers—more than half of all workers-say they would join a union if they could. But for many, employer intimidation and retaliation keep them from having a voice on the job. This could change dramatically if the next Congress passes, and the new president signs, the Employee Free Choice Act, which will increase penalties for employer misconduct and make it easier for workers to organize.

# **Economic stimulus may not solve economic woes**

With the news media reporting that the administration and Congress have reached agreement on an economic stimulus package, it's important to know if that deal will really help stem off what seems to be a foregone conclusion: recession.

Following is a statement by the Economic Policy Institute, a Washington think-tank.

"The real test of any anti-recession plan is whether it helps working

# Are you better off today than you were four years ago?

That was the famous question Ronald Reagan asked the nation, as he swept Jimmy Carter out of office. It's a fair question, and it's important to take a look back and see if eight years of the Bush administration has made our lives better or worse. The numbers speak volumes. Following are just a few categories to compare.

(Info gathered by thinkprogress.org. Check that website for sources on all the numbers.)

	January 20, 2001	Today
Real GDP Growth	4.09% over prior 8 years	2.65 over prior 7 years
National Debt	\$5.7 Trillion	\$9.2 Trillion
Budget Deficit/Surplus	\$431 Billion surplus over	\$734 Billion deficit over the
	the previous three budget	previous three budget
	years	years
New Private Sector Jobs	1.76 Million jobs per year	369,000 jobs per year over
Created	over previous 8 years	previous 7 years
Americans in poverty	31.6 million	36.5 million
Americans uninsured &	38 million uninsured	47 million uninsured
change in uninsured lev-	4.5 million less in 2 years	8.5 million more in 6 years
Annual total premium	\$6,230 for family premium	\$12,106 for familiy premium
Price of gas	\$1.39/gallon	\$3.07/gallon
Cost of college	\$3,164 per year	\$5,192 per year
Personal savings rate	+2.3%	-0.5%
Consumer credit debt	\$7.65 trillion	\$12.8 trillion
US trade deficit	\$380 billion	\$759 billion
Strength of U.S.dollar	\$1.07 Euros per dollar	\$0.68 Euros per dollar

Americans to keep earning their paychecks and paying their bills.

This deal gets it half right by providing broad-based payments to individual workers and for children, with the administration backing off its ineffective, inequitable approach. It is scandalous, however, to throw about \$50 billion at businesses for investments that have already been made. It is common sense and established economics that businesses



invest and hire when they have customers—not when they get tax subsidies for equipment to make things they can't sell.

Missing from the package is any effort to help the long-term unemployed or to help state governments avoid cutting public services and increasing taxes—actions that will only deepen the downturn. Moreover, we could create millions of jobs by rebuilding and repairing public schools, bridges, and highways.

At a time when unemployment is expected to increase to at least 6% by the end of the year, we don't have a day or a dollar to waste. Increasing Unemployment Insurance benefits is one of the most efficient ways to stimulate the economy, since jobless workers are most likely to spend their benefits immediately and pump more money back into the economy, generating more economic activity."

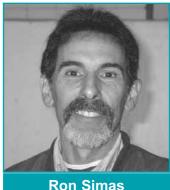
#### **Bad appointments**

▶ Bush re-nominates anti-worker lawyer to chair Labor Board: In January, President Bush nominated Robert Battista to another term as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). As the point man in Bush's war on workers, Battista has consistently voted against workers and their unions and in favor of management.

Last year, the board redefined the term "supervisor" to deny as many as eight million workers the freedom to join unions. Just last month, Battista told a joint Senate-House hearing he doesn't believe the primary purpose of the National Labor Relations Act is to promote collective bargaining.

Fox in Sacramento Henhouse: Governor Schwarzenegger proved just how post-partisan he is *not* when he appointed Republican Phyllis Cheng of the notorious antiunion law firm Littler, Mendelson, to the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. The post pays \$136, 155 per year.

# SHOP TALK: What do you think of the Governor's proposed budget cuts?



Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"You don't know the truth of what's going on back there, so you have to go on the Governor's word that he's doing the right thing. You can't form an opinion unless you see the books."



Mike Merry Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"I don't think it's a fact of raising money. They need to stop wasting money. There are too many social programs."



Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"Growing medical costs and cost of living is tough for the economy. It's a never ending battle—everyone has to keep raising prices just to keep up. And it's crazy to see how many people are losing their homes."



**Jay Youngcamp** Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"I think we should cut back on some entitlement programs. We're spending it as fast as we're taking it in."



Jack Blackford Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"The car tax thing is unavoidable. Other taxes are unavoidable. We have a problem with the borders that has to be fixed. You can't close state parks and let out prisoners. They have to find money."



# EMPLOYER PROFILE



## Better relations make for more successful workforce

When the Local 1414 members were on strike at Serramonte Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep and Serramonte Mitsubishi for 96 days in 2003, the relationship between labor and management was about as low as it could go. Nobody would have guessed that the sister dealerships would rank number one in customer service satisfaction because the employees were so unhappy.

But times have changed. And so has the management and its attitude toward its employees—and vice versa. Now, both shops are rated well above the zone and

region averages for customer service satisfaction as well as for training.

"We got a 99% CSI at the Dodge group and 100% CSI at Mitsubishi. Things have definitely improved over the last three years," says Serramonte Dodge shop steward and 20-year technician Keith Bottoms. "I'm not going to say it's perfect, but our attitudes have definitely changed."

Bottoms says that right after the strike, "management was screaming and we were screaming back. Now, management is not yelling any more and it's a nicer place to work."

"It's a team effort," agrees Service Director Doug Davis. "Our customers appreciate what we're doing. From lot attendant to top mechanic, everyone's working just as hard."

Davis says that in the three years he's been at Serramonte, he has watched the CSI go up and stay steady. "We're always above zone and region. Our customers clearly appreciate what we're doing."

Business Rep Pedro Mendez takes an evenhanded approach. "Everything's possible when the company and union work together."



#### No strike for this contract

Negotiations for a new four-year contract were tough, but an agreement was reached without a strike. Serving on the negotiating committee along with Bottoms was 12-year tech Jeff Voltattorni. With 17 techs at the Dodge store and 4 at Mitsubishi, the two shops have been owned by Sonic Automotive for about seven years.

"In 2003, the company wanted to take away our union medical plan and replace it with a bad



(Top) Serramonte Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep techs; (Bottom) Serramonte Mitsubishi Techs—after receiving notice of their high CSI rating

company plan," explains Bottoms. "We negotiated for a while, then one day, the company came in and announced that we had a new medical plan. We said no, and walked out."

The members spent more than three months on the picket line. When the union and management finally got back to the bargaining table, they agreed to maintain the union's medical plan, but for the first time, instituted a co-pay. "Now, everyone's got a co-pay, so we were just early to bite the bullet," Bottoms explains.

"This time around," Bottoms says, "the company came into the talks wanting to take away this and that—the normal thing. Some folks were ready to strike again, but ultimately, that's not good for any of us."

The new contract includes wage increases of more than 6% per year, and a \$30/month decrease on the medical co-pay. "We ended up going positive and got a decent deal," Bottoms adds.

#### Some things don't change

It's still management and the union, however, and that means on-going issues get raised. "I have to file a lot fewer grievances and, basically, we just appreciate that we're all here. We all argue and fight—and we're still a family."

Davis says that he appreciates seeing policies put in place and the commitment of the individuals. "It's a team effort—that's the only way it'll work. We've got highest commitment to training of any store in the zone and region. That's because we believe in our people. Providing training opportunities helps us and it helps them."

Bottoms sums it up by looking more broadly. "Across the country, it's always negative on unions, as if they're always fighting. But here, customer satisfaction has gone way up—it's a bet-



Send the mailing label on this newspaper to your Local Union office.

See Calendar on Page 8 for your local union's address.



ASSOCIATED THIRD

PARTY ADMINISTRATORS

**ATPA** is the administrator for the Automotive Industries Health & Welfare and Pension Trust Funds.

Contact us at 510-836-2484

# SHOP TALK: What do you think of the Governor's proposed budget cuts?



**Ryan Gouldthread** Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"If he closes the parks, I'll have a hard time finding a place to ride my motorcycle. And, I live by Folsom—they can't just let out the prisoners. Finding more money is an ordeal, but that's what they need to do."



Ernie Davis Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"There should be other ways besides letting prisoners out and cutting schools. If we don't take care of our kids, what does the future look like? I'd have to look at the budget to make an opinion of where to cut."



**D.J.** Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"He can make cuts, but in other places. I don't think closing state parks is good. Maybe the politicians can cut their own wages, rather than just make everyone else take the heat."



Joe Rush Walnut Creek Toyota Local 1173

"Letting prisoners out will cost more in the long run. If they raise taxes, that'll raise an uproar and that's not how you get re-elected. They need to raise taxes for those with money and not the working people."



George Rodriguez Lawrence Volvo - Walnut Creek Local 1173

"I don't agree with the cuts.
They need to start by trimming the fat from the top. The working class needs to be taken care of. Don't cut essential programs. The government should listen to the people, and not just at election time."



# LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS



## **Officers of Local 1414**

President Vice President Recording Secretary Secretary-Treasurer Conductor/Sentinel Trustees

**Executive Board** 

Richard E. Harden Raymond Ceballos Leon G. Bernal **Bob Hisle** George Litvinoff Scott Thompson Craig Ashford David Baumann Isaiah Bryant III Rich Del Rosso Jim DeMetris James McCrum

Bruce Keller

Richard G. Bernal

At the November and December union meetings, Locals 1414 & 1596 held officer elections. Congratulations to all those who stepped up to to represent their fellow union members for the next three years.

## **Attention Local 1596**

**Special-Called Meeting** 

Tuesday, February 19, 2008 8:00 p.m. 4210 Petaluma Blvd., N. Petaluma, CA 94952

Agenda: to discuss and vote on transferring monies from our strike fund to our general account.

## **Officers of Local 1596**

President Vice President Financial Secretary **Recording Secretary** Trustees

Randy Watson Frank Crabtree Joyce Trumbly Albert Farrens Brian Roe Gordon Cameron Steve Buchanan



Lawrence Pratap

# **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. February 26 • March 25 • April 22

#### **General Delegates' Meeting**

Fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. February 26 • March 25 • April 22

## Local 653

544 West Olive, Fresno, CA 93728 559-264-2815

#### **Executive Board Meeting**

Third Wednesday of the Month at 5:00 p.m. February 20 • March 19 • April 16

**Membership Meeting** 

Third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. February 20 • March 19 • April 16

#### **Local 1528** 713 16th Street

Modesto, CA 95354 209-529-9210

#### **Executive Board Meeting**

First Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. February 6 • March 5 • April 2

#### **General Membership Meeting**

First Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. February 6 • March 5 • April 2 **Women's Committee Meeting** 

Please contact local 1528 for times and dates of monthly Women's committee meetings

#### Retiree's Club

Third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. February 20 • March 19 • April 16

Narcotics Anonymous: Every Tuesday, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

## Local 801

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

#### **Membership Meeting**

Third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m. February 21 • March 20 • April 17 Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.

## **Executive Board Meeting**

Local IIOI 3777 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 320 Santa Clara, CA 95051 408-551-2280

Second Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

February 14 • March 13 • April 10 **General Membership Meeting** 

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. February 14 • March 13 • April 10

Check at union office for meeting room.

Note change in office hours:

Mon-Thurs: 7:30a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Friday: 7:30a.m.-4:00 p.m.

## Local II73

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

#### **Executive Board Meeting**

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. February 14 • March 13 • April 10

Membership/Shop Stewards' Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. February 21 • March 20 • April 17

# **Local 1546**

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

## **General Membership Meeting**

First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. February 5 • March 4 • April 1

**Member Education Meeting** 

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

February 5 • March 4 • April 1

**Executive Board Meeting** 

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

January 31 • February 28 • March 27 **Retiree Club Pot Luck Luncheon** 

First Wednesday of each month at 12 noon

February 6 • March 5 • April 2

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.

February 21 • March 20 • April 17

## **Executive Board Meeting**

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

February 21 • March 20 • April 17

**Retirees' Club** 

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

February 5 • March 4 • April 1

150 South Blvd. 650-341-2689

## Local 44 Shop Stewards' Meeting

First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. San Mateo, CA 94402 February 7 • March 6 • April 3

## **Executive Board Meeting**

Second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. February 14 • March 13 • April 10

## **General Membership Meeting**

Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. February 21 • March 20 • April 17

## **Retirees' Club**

First Wednesday of June, Sept., Dec., March at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome! March 5, June 4, September 3, December 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. February 19 • March 18 • April 15

#### **Executive Board Meeting**

Third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. February 19 • March 18 • April 15

## **Local 2005**

416 Main Street Livingston, CA 95334 209-394-7822

Meetings of the general membership are held at the Livingston Portuguese Hall, usually on the Second or Third Sunday of the month.

- English & Punjabi—at 1:00 p.m.
- Spanish & Portuguese—at 2:30 p.m.

Check with the Local office to find out the meeting schedule.

## Local 1484

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

## **Executive Board Meeting**

Third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. February 21 • March 20 • April 17

### **General Membership Meeting**

First Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. February 5 • March 4 • April 1

**Retirees' Club** 

Third Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. February 20 • March 19 • April 16

#### **Local 2182**

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

## **Executive Board Meeting**

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

#### February 12 • March 11 • April 8 **General Membership Meeting**

Second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. February 12 • March 11 • April 8

## **Retirees' Club - VISTA CLUB**

Third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m. February 20 • March 19 • April 16