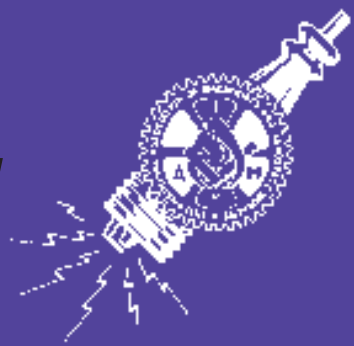


The IAM District 190 Sparkplug



VOL. II NO. 2



February/March 2009

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge I90

Obama's inauguration opens new era of U.S. history



"I do not view the labor movement as part of the problem; to me it's part of the solution."

—President Barack Obama

When Barack Obama took the oath of office on January 20, he did so in front of two million people on the National Mall, and at least 38 million people at home and at inauguration parties across the country. Even as the nation suffers from its worst recession since the 1930s and is mired in two wars, Obama used the occasion to usher in a new enthusiasm for democracy and to raise the prospect of hope for the future.

During the transition, Obama named Congressman Hilda Solis to be Secretary of Labor. Solis, a representative from Southern

California, is the daughter of immigrant parents with union jobs. She has been an unfailing advocate of workers' rights during her eight years in Congress and before that, in



Top left: Screen shot of the inauguration. President Obama gets ready to take oath of office as nearly two million people look on at the National Mall. Above Left: Secretary of Labor Nominee Hilda Solis. Above Right: New National Labor Relations Board Chair Wilma Liebman.

California politics.

Her record in Congress dovetails with the mission of Obama's Labor Department, to protect and further the rights and opportunities of working people. It also dovetails with many of the promises Obama made during the campaign, both in its specifics and in its focus on the needs of America's working families. Unfortunately, at press time, her confirmation is in limbo, held up by an "anonymous hold" put on by a Republican Senator.

Obama also named Wilma Liebman to chair the National Labor Relations Board. Liebman has served on the board for 11 years and had led



the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for two years. She also served as Legal Counsel for several unions in the 1970s and 1980s.

"Having people who understand unions and care about working people running the nation's critical labor agencies will be a refreshing change," said Directing Business Rep Jim Beno. "There will be a new voice for labor in the Labor Department."

"Having a president who comes into office committed to the Employee Free Choice Act means that the act has a good chance of getting passed," he added. "We just have to make sure that Congress understands that the Act will result in more workers being able to join unions. That's good for building a strong middle class and it's good for rebuilding the economy."

Economist and former Labor Secretary Robert Reich agrees. "The American middle class isn't looking for a bailout or a handout. Making it easier for all Americans to form unions would give the middle class the bargaining power it needs for better wages and benefits. And a strong and prosperous middle class is necessary if our economy is to succeed."

State needs budget; governor proposes cutting workers' rights instead

Governor Schwarzenegger's at it again. In spite of a shrinking economy and growing state deficit growing, he has proposed, for the third time in a year, rolling back workers' rights to fix the state's ailing budget. His current proposal contains significantly more worker takeaways than his earlier plans.

"With working families facing sharply rising unemployment, mass layoffs and stagnating wages, California should take a page out of President-elect Obama's playbook and stimulate the economy by creating, not eliminating jobs," stated California Labor Federation's Art Pulaski in a recent press release. "We also must take immediate steps to shore up our unemployment system and stem the tide of rising home foreclosures."

Unfortunately, none of those ideas were presented by Governor Schwarzenegger in his State of the State message on January 15. Declaring that California was in a state

of emergency, "incapacitated until we solve the budget crisis," the governor explained that the \$42 billion deficit required him to stop construction jobs and cut hard-won workers' rights. He's already mandated that state offices close two days every month.

His most original suggestion was that if the legislature can't agree on a budget on time, then they don't get paid until they do. "That might be a popular idea," Directing Business Rep Jim Beno responded, "but it doesn't solve today's budget crisis

and it doesn't do anything for working families."

Proposals cut overtime, lunch breaks, benefits

Schwarzenegger's budget plans, unveiled in November, include a proposal to take away overtime protection from workers, which would result in pay cuts for millions of families at a time when they can least afford it.

In addition, he's again seeking to take away the right to a guaranteed

lunch break, which is essential to worker health and safety. State law already provides 'flexibility' for meal breaks, but without jeopardizing worker protections, as the Schwarzenegger plan would do.

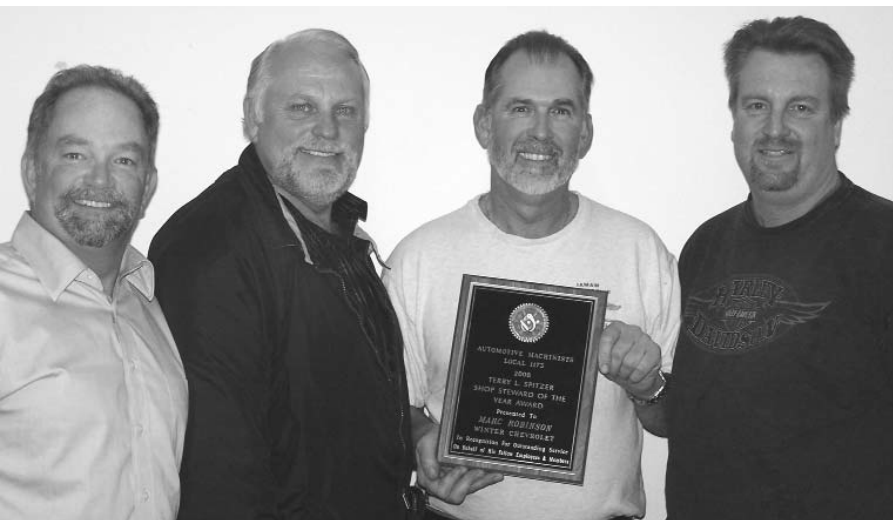
At 9.3%, California faces its worst rate of unemployment in more than a decade. In response, the Governor has proposed to cut benefits for unemployed workers. "These are benefits that families desperately need to pay their bills and keep their homes. This plan isn't just unfair to families—it's also economically unsound," Pulaski added. Studies have shown that every dollar of unemployment insurance benefits returns \$1.64 to local communities, which means that slashing benefits will hurt the state economy, not stimulate it.

"We need a real economic stimulus plan—one that creates jobs, rather than weakens the protections for those already in them," Beno added.





UNION PEOPLE



Local 1173 honors Marc Robinson, holding plaque, as its Shop Steward of the Year. (L to R): Area Director Mark Hollibush, Business Rep Rick Rodgers, Marc Robinson, and Local Lodge 1173 President Dennis Doyle.

Marc Robinson an easy choice to be Local 1173's Shop Steward of the Year

Local 1173 chose Marc Robinson to receive its 2008 Shop Steward of the Year award for his exemplary leadership at Winter Chevrolet-Honda, where he has worked since 1979 and served as steward since 2003. Marc will be retiring later this year.

"The decision to name Marc Robinson as our shop steward of the year was easy," explained Area Director Mark Hollibush. "What was difficult was finding the way to sufficiently thank him for his unwavering dedication to the union."

Hollibush said that whenever the Local put out a call for members to man picket lines, phone bank, walk precincts, there was always at least one volunteer from Robinson's

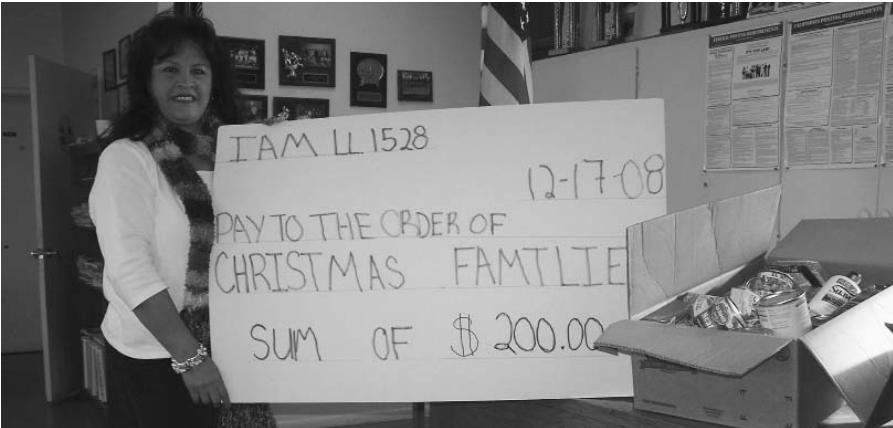
shop. "And at our membership meetings, his coworkers filled the union hall each month. To have that type of respect and dedication from his shop truly demonstrates his leadership ability and his dedication to this union."

Robinson started at Winter Chevrolet in 1975 as a Teamster, and became an apprentice mechanic and IAM member four years later. In 1981, he became a journeyman, and took the mantle of shop steward in May, 2003.

The award was presented to Robinson at the Local's December membership meeting by President Dennis Doyle.

Congratulations Marc, and good luck in your retirement!

Members at Silgan contribute to families in need over holidays



Local 1528 member Adeline Brimm, who works at Silgan Containers-Riverbank, decided to spread some holiday goodwill. She collected \$810 from her fellow Silgan employees and the local lodge kicked in \$200 and two fully-loaded food baskets, which was divided between two families chosen by the Riverbank schools. "In these hard times, we want to show people that we care," said Brimm. "It's a gift to us to see the kids smile. That's what this season is all about."

Member's daughter performs with SF Girls Chorus at Inauguration celebration

Ever the proud dad, Guilherme "Gil" Freitas announced at Local 1546's January membership meeting that his daughter Kelsey would not only be attending the inauguration of President Obama in Washington, D.C., but she'd be performing on stage—as a member of the San Francisco Girls Chorus.

Gil is employed by Miles Motor Transport and works as a crane mechanic at Marine Terminals at the port of Oakland.

Kelsey, who just turned 18, recognized that she was taking part in an important occasion. As she told

the *Westside Connect* newspaper in Newman, "It is a point in history. We are so honored to be selected. It is going to be amazing."

The chorus, along with the San Francisco Boys Chorus, performed six musical selections just before the call to order and welcoming remarks by Senator Dianne Feinstein. Chorus members wore matching red knit hats, scarves and gloves to ward against the 19 degree morning weather.

"This is a very exciting time for a young woman to be a part of history," says Kelsey's mom Karen Lynne.



The San Francisco Girls Chorus performs at the Capital for the Inauguration.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

As a concerned employer of a significant number of your members, I write in an effort to correct a huge public misconception that has been perpetuated in all forms of media, including the most recent edition of the *Sparkplug*. Specifically, an article on page 6 of the December/January edition claims that, "The credit crisis has made it difficult even for customers with good credit to get decent rates on car loans...." Nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, it is just as easy now as it was last year for good credit customers to obtain financing. In the case of well-capitalized finance companies like American Honda, it is probably even easier today as these banks strive to grow earnings in a shrinking market and to help their parent manufacturers

sell more cars. Even marginal credit customers can still qualify for a loan, though admittedly they might be required to put down more money than in the past.

Unfortunately, doom and gloom sells far better than good news. Please help your dealers buck that trend by letting your members know the truth. Truth begets knowledge. Knowledge begets power. Power begets confidence. Confidence is exactly what we are severely lacking right now and is, in fact, the only ingredient that will ultimately lead us out of this mess. Every one of our jobs depends upon that happening.

Looking forward to our mutual success, I am
SEAN P. BEARDSLEY ~
President/General Manager
AutoWest Honda, Fremont

If something in *The Sparkplug* makes you happy or mad or inspires you to action, write us a letter. All letters will be used, space permitting. They may be edited for length or grammar, but not for content.

Letters may be submitted as follows:
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The IAM District 190

Sparkplug

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Recently overheard...

The following joke was told to an employer by his own lawyer during union negotiations...
Two farmers are trying to pull a cow to their side of the fence. Farmer Jones is pulling the cow's tail while Farmer Smith is pulling her head. What's the lawyer doing? He's milking the cow for all she's worth!
.....
If you've ever been in union negotiations or witnessed the stall tactics employed by anti-union lawyers, you know that this story is all too true.



AROUND THE LOCALS

Multiple Locals

It's not smart to raid the IAM

You may have heard of MENSA, the organization for the super-intelligent. Well, the IAM has just come up against NEMSA. Their spelling's not so hot and they made a dumb move when they tried to raid our union to represent the workers at American Medical Response (AMR).

The IAM represents AMR's mechanics in Sacramento, Concord, San Leandro and Burlingame, in one contract with members in Locals 2182, 1546 and 1414. When the contract came open, the National Emergency Medical Staff Association (NEMSA), which represents the Emergency Medical Technicians, got a few of our members to sign petitions to change unions.

"That's what's called a raid," says Directing Business Rep Jim Beno. "We learned what was going on after a group of mechanics from a non-union AMR shop contacted us about joining the IAM, and then suddenly got cold feet. We quickly learned that we'd be having elections to start representing the mechanics in Modesto, Stockton San Jose, but we'd also have an election to keep our members in the other shops."

The labor board mailed ballots that had three choices—representation by the IAM, representation by NEMSA, and no union—on January 5 and

counted them on January 22. In the end, the IAM won both sets of elections—gaining unanimous support from those at the unorganized shops, and gaining a super-majority among those the IAM previously represented.

"Now, not only are we negotiating the renewal agreement, we're also negotiating a first agreement for the shops that have been non-union all these years," Beno explains. "Our goal is to have everyone covered under one agreement because their issues are basically all the same. We'll see what happens."

Beno says that when he first learned of the raid, he contacted NEMSA and suggested that they back off and that the two unions sit down and talk. But they refused. "They made their bed. We've heard that some of the medical techs aren't happy with their representation and may be interested in switching unions to have us represent them when their contract opens up. We'll see."

Looking for a miracle

Locals 1101, 1546 and 1173 are currently in negotiations with Miracle Auto Painting; Local 1101 Business Rep Richard Breckenridge is chairing the talks. The company has about 10 members in shops in Richmond, San Jose and Walnut Creek.

"These are tough negotiations," Breckenridge says, "but we need to preserve every contract we have right now."

Auto mechanics and solvents—how healthy is that combo?

The University of California School of Public Health has gotten funding to study the health effects of solvents on auto mechanics.

"This is a follow-up to a study we conducted several years ago. Back then, we found that some of the solvents used by mechanics did cause some negative health effects," explains researcher Kathy Hammond. "By having the union, the university, and the state health department work together, we were able to put enough pressure on the manufacturers to make them reformulate the most dangerous of the solvents. That's a real success story."

Hammond says that the university has just received a grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) to do a five-year study to again look at auto mechanics and their use of different solvents, and how these may impact the nervous system, vision and the reproductive system.

For scientific validity, the researchers will need to identify the mechanics who participate in the study. "We have to choose our participants carefully, based on random choices within certain subsets. For

instance, we need mechanics who are different ages, have been doing this work for different lengths of time, and who work with different solvents. There are several criteria."

Hammond adds that she will need help from mechanics to learn about the composition of the specific products they're using. "And we hope that they will make themselves available if we do ask them to participate."

The study itself will take about two hours and will be conducted at a central location. Participants will get a small reimbursement for their time.

Since getting funded, the researchers have been gathering information about the different solvents in use. Getting a study like this off the ground takes a lot of background work. "Everything we do goes through the Human Subjects committee on campus to make sure that it's done ethically," Hammond adds. "We hope to start interviewing next fall."

If you have information about solvents to share, give it to your shop steward or your business rep. And watch the *Sparkplug* in the months to come for updates about the study.

Local 1414



Celebrity support for Grace Honda strikers

Local 1414 members who work at the Grace Honda dealership in San Bruno have been on strike since September 12, 2008. It's been a tough fight, but they couldn't have been more pleased when former San Francisco Giants Manager Dusty Baker joined their picket line, which he saw when he came to eat at a nearby restaurant. As he left, he made a donation to the strike fund.

Local 1414 was also honored when the 33rd Western Workers Labor Heritage Festival, held January 16-18 at the IBEW hall in San Mateo, chose the Grace Honda picketers to be the recipients of the event's fundraising concert. On behalf of the incredible Grace Honda striking men and their families, thank you!

Stop by the dealership at 345 El Camino Real in San Bruno and meet the strikers. They are fighting now, in this bad economy, because if they give in, other employers will look to this employer's terrible contract proposal as the new standard.

Local 653

Lots of talks to come

Local Lodge 653 is currently in negotiations with Fresno Unified School District and Peerless Pump, and has another seven contracts opening up throughout 2009.

Local 1173

Keeping the doors open

The 11 employees at Barber Dodge in Vallejo ratified a new 42-month contract. "It's not great, but neither is the economy," says Business Rep Rick Rodgers. "The members will take a wage freeze for six months and then get 80¢/hour each year thereafter, and they kept the AI health and welfare fund. They agreed to freeze the pension contribution where it is, and went to a flat-rate compensation plan."

Rodgers adds that this was an effort to help a company that was struggling financially to keep their doors open. "We're just trying to keep what we have or limit the number of takeaways."

Short contract

Thirty members who maintain, service and repair buses at the Central Contra Costa County Transportation Association (CCCTA) agreed to a one-year contract. They'll be getting a 3% raise and no increase in their monthly health and welfare co-payments. Rodgers explained that the union typically gets a three-year contract with public entities, but because tax revenues are down, so is the county's transportation budget. "So, for what it is, it's a really good deal."

Local 1484

It's all about flexibility

"All we're hearing is that we'll have to suspend the bells and whistles if we want to avoid layoffs," says Local 1484 Business Rep Kevin Kucera. "Everybody's talking 'flexibility'."

"While everyone has high expectations of Obama, they also understand the harsh reality that the economy won't get fixed tomorrow. Hopefully, things will start to turn around. And hopefully, we'll have enough shops still open that were able to weather this storm," he adds.

Local 1546

Tough times in rentals

The members who work at Avis-Budget at the Oakland Airport have a new contract. "They got a 60¢/hour wage increase each year, but had to switch to the company's health plan," says Local 1546 Business Rep Garry Horrocks. "They got decent wage improvements considering the company is almost bankrupt."

Local 1596

Big contracts coming due

Area Director Tom Brandon reports that 2009 is slated to be a busy year because the contracts at all of the Local's big shops are coming due. The members at MGM Brakes in Cloverdale got a one-year contract extension, is in negotiations with Donal Machine, and both KVAL and Stero are opening soon.



The IAM's crew at the Ames Research Center stand before a model in the 40 by 80 wind tunnel. Pictured: Jarvis Gross, Jose Rosario, Oscar Jolson, Tom Wade, Adam Walsh, Todd Fuller, and Kent Griffin



Steward Jose Rosario shows off the room where he remotely flies the helicopters and other planes.

COMPANY PROFILE

NASA'S A INCLUDES LARG

When scientists noticed that, during liftoff, some foam debris had hit a wing panel of the space shuttle Columbia in 2003, they immediately got nervous, not wanting to have another shuttle explosion on NASA's record.

As the shuttle was making its way to the space station, they acted quickly and set up tests to assess whether the damaged shuttle could withstand re-entry into the earth's atmosphere. Scientists from the Kennedy Space Center brought some of the ripped material to the Ames Research Center for testing in one of the center's wind tunnels. "We tested it and concluded that the shuttle could re-enter earth's atmosphere with no problem," said Tim Steiger from the Wind Tunnel Operations Branch. And they did.

Who were the heroes of that story? A dedicated crew of engineers, scientists, and union members, including a dedicated group of IAM Local 1414 members, who work at NASA's Ames Research Center at Moffett Field, the home of the largest wind tunnel in the world.

The Ames wind tunnels are managed by the Jacobs Engineering Group; this company has managed the facility for ten years and is currently bidding to run it for the next five. Members of the IAM, Elec-

trical Workers and Operating Engineers provide support to and run the wind tunnels, auxiliary facilities and vacuum systems. They test thermal systems for anything that does re-entry and conduct a wide range of aeronautical tests.

"Our guys do sophisticated infrastructure model tests," explained shop steward Jose Rosario, whose job is to fly the models from the remote room. "The customer provides the full-scale model and we take the data. Some tests require high pressure air, hydraulics—anything a flying airplane would need."

Rosario was a helicopter mechanic in the Army so coming to work at the wind tunnel was an easy transition. "You see another view of how aerodynamics works than what the pilot sees."

NFAC Site Manager Nick Jize underscored the challenge of Jose's job. "It's much harder than flying in the real world. Normally, when an aircraft stops, so does the wind. But here, the wind keeps going."

Rosario takes his job seriously, as he does his role as shop steward. "In my three years here, we haven't had to file any grievances. The atmosphere is relaxed. It's

Today, no craft, or s reentry vel committed design an have been in win



Left: The crane st the 80 wind tun aircraft n hoisted c and the v be brou tunnel wi front of opens o at right.)

SHOP TALK: Is the Employee Free Choice Act important? Should it be ena



Tyson Viarengo
Henry Curtis Ford
Local 1596

"Being union helps. If we didn't have a union, we'd be taking a pay cut right now. We're not too fond of getting our dues raised, but job security is really important."



Mike Dusek
Clover Stornetta Farms
Local 1596

"If people want to be in a union, they should be able to. It shouldn't be frowned upon."



Doug Lund
Stero
Local 1596

"In this economy, it's important to have people working. I think it's good for workers who want unions to be able to have them. If this law helps, good."



Mark Howe
Henry Curtis Ford
Local 1596

"Unions are good because they help keep us in fair wages. In these times, they help keep us employed and not arbitrarily laid off. It's good to have a union, especially if you had a crappy employer."



Sean Aldrich
Stero
Local 1596

"It should be easy to organize and get into a union. With today's economy, people are too willing to do anything to keep their job. The right to a union—that's what America's all about."

AMES RESEARCH CENTER LARGEST WIND TUNNEL IN WORLD

like a small family, which is good. Everybody's important and contributes to the test one way or another."

Jize explained that tests in the wind tunnel are already fully-scheduled for the coming year. "We're either taking a model

craft, spacecraft or space launch or space reentry vehicle is built or committed to flight until after its design

down, putting one up, operating the tests, or doing preventative maintenance. It's always something different and the work is constant."

That's because today no aircraft, spacecraft or space launch or reentry vehicle is built or committed to flight until after its design

and components have been thoroughly tested in wind tunnels. According to the NASA website, "every modern aircraft and space rocket has made its maiden flight in a wind tunnel."

More about the facility

The Ames Research Center has two sets of wind tunnels, each powered by a set of fans. The large wind tunnel has two sections; one is 80 feet high by 120 feet wide, and the other is 40 by 80. Air is driven through either of these test sections by a single set of six fans, each with a

diameter equal to the height of a four-story building. At more than 1,400 feet long and 180 feet high, the 80 by 120 foot subsonic tunnel can test planes with wing spans of up to 100 feet.

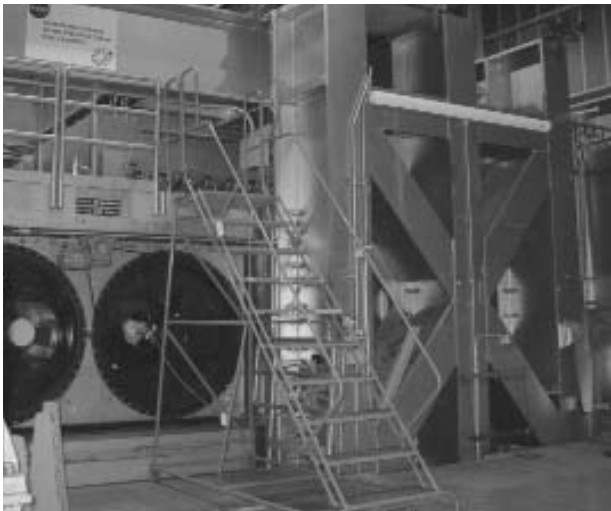
Ames also has a Unitary Plan Facility, which opened in 1956 with three test sections, although one has since been shuttered. At the time, this facility cost \$27 million to construct; Wind Tunnel Operations Branch Manager David Morrison couldn't even guess how much it would cost today. The two remaining working tunnels include an 11 by 11 foot transonic (both sub and supersonic) tunnel, which is where the Columbia shuttle material was tested, and a 9 by 7 foot supersonic wind tunnel.

The computer age has enabled researchers to take a new look at improving wind tunnel data normally available at transonic speeds. When the *Sparkplug* visited the wind tunnels, NASA had a group of scientists and information techs sitting at three banks of computers to test the calibration on one of the tunnels. Cameras, observer stations, and computer data clearly illustrate the impact of different issues being tested.

Across the nation and across District Lodge 190, machinists do all kinds of interesting work. Flying planes remotely in wind tunnels may be one of the most unusual.



Top: The stand for testing a parachute that will be used in the upcoming Mars landing. (LtoR): DBR Jim Beno, Site Manager Nick Jize, Local 1414 Business Rep Pedro Mendez.



Middle: A view of the fans that power the two smaller wind tunnels in the Unitary Plan facility.



Bottom: A model is placed in the 11x11 transonic wind tunnel, awaiting its test.

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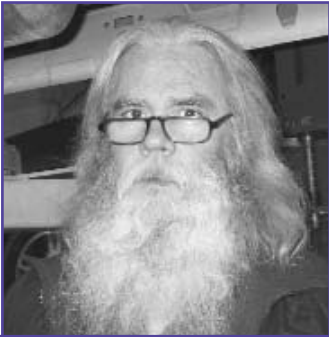


ed in these tough economic times?



Tony Weston
Clover Stornetta Farms
Local 1596

"I once worked for a company that would fire people if they said the word 'union.' This law would be good if it allows people to talk and discuss it."



Bill Redmon
Henry Curtis Ford
Local 1596

"It should be easier to join a union. In this economy, employers don't take care of their employees like they did 20 years ago."



John Potter
Stero
Local 1596

"It definitely should be easier. Management intimidation is a big factor on why more people aren't unionized. This should be a good time for unionizing—give the workers a chance to speak!"



Erik Skinner
Petaluma Poultry
Local 1596

"I think people should be able to have a choice."



Ken Jensen
Henry Curtis Ford
Local 1596

"In this economy, it would be very beneficial to have help getting unions organized and started. The more people who can get into unions, the better it is for all of us."

IN THE NEWS

After workers win back pay settlement, plant may reopen

The workers at Republic Windows and Doors in Chicago, members of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), won their first victory when they got a \$1.75 million back pay and benefits settlement in December after the plant was slated for closure. Now it appears that the plant may get a second life with a new owner.

Serious Materials, a Sunnyvale-based company, is currently in negotiations to buy the factory and rehire the workers. Serious Materials, which specializes in sustainable glass and other green building materials, is discussing the idea with creditors of the now-bankrupt Republic Windows and Doors.

About 200 members of UE Local 1110 occupied the plant for six days in December after being summarily fired when the company closed. The sit-in ended only after Republic's chief creditor, Bank of America, agreed to kick in the money for their unpaid severance and accrued vacation pay.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Serious Materials CEO Kevin Surace contacted the union when he saw the story. Now with the union fully backing the proposed deal, Surace said, it's up to the judge handling Republic's bankruptcy—and Bank of America as the chief creditor—to allow it. “They could stall it, they could let the deal go through tomorrow,” Surace said. “Hopefully we'll wrap it up soon.”

Undoing Bush's damage—one bill at a time

The president signed three Executive Orders that union officials say will undo Bush administration policies that favored employers over workers. The orders Obama signed will:

- Require federal contractors to



offer jobs to current workers when contracts change.

- Reverse a Bush order requiring federal contractors to post a notice that workers can limit financial support of unions serving as their exclusive bargaining representatives.
- Prevent federal contractors from being reimbursed for expenses meant to influence workers deciding whether to form a union and engage in collective bargaining.

“We need to level the playing field for workers and the unions that represent their interests,” Obama said before signing the Executive Orders during a White House ceremony.

“I do not view the labor movement as part of the problem. To me, it's part of the solution,” he said, to a round of applause. “You cannot have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement.”

Fair Pay Act is first bill Obama signs

With Lilly Ledbetter looking on, President Barack Obama signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

“In signing this bill today, I intend to send a clear message: That mak-

ing our economy work means making sure it works for everyone,” Obama said during the White House signing ceremony. “That there are no second class citizens in our workplaces, and that it's not just unfair and illegal—but bad for business—to pay someone less because of their gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion or disability.”

After working nearly 20 years at a Goodyear tire plant, Ledbetter discovered she had been paid significantly less than men doing the same job. A federal jury ruled in her favor but Goodyear appealed, and in 2007 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Ledbetter—and other workers—had no right to sue for a remedy in cases of pay discrimination more than 180 days after the first paycheck, even if she didn't discover the pay discrimination until years later.

Former President Bush had threatened to veto the bill after it was passed by the House in 2007, but it was the first legislation Obama signed since taking office.

“We are heartened that this legislation was made a top priority of the new Congress and administration because it demonstrates a return to the common sense values of hard working Americans,” said AFL-CIO

President John Sweeney, who attended the signing ceremony. “The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act is one large step towards ensuring truly equal pay for equal work.”

—Mike Hall, *AFL-CIO Now* blog

Woodfin workers win \$200,000 backwage decision

After a long, tough battle, current and former workers of the Woodfin Suites Hotel in Emeryville won a historic victory in January. The Emeryville City Council found that the hotel owes the approximately 200 workers some \$200,000 in back wages for shifts they worked in 2006 under the city's Measure C Living Wage Ordinance.

The workers' victory in this latest chapter of the three-year “David vs. Goliath” dispute came at the conclusion of a marathon five-day hearing process begun in November 2008. Since 2005, the hotel has been the site of numerous rallies, marches, and acts of civil disobedience.

Incredibly, throughout the hearing, Woodfin lawyers and managers challenged the definition of “cleaning.” They argued that their hard-working housekeepers weren't owed their full wages under the law because they had the assistance of supervisors and housemen; they actually claimed that cleaning is not just done by the housekeepers with their hands, but by other employees with “their eyes and their heads.”

Wary that the hotel may seek to stall the payout by filing further legal appeals, workers will continue their fight until they have the money in hand.

“Our struggle for justice has lasted more than one thousand days, and it's already been an inspiration to my children,” said Woodfin worker Luz D. “I look forward to sharing this hard-earned money with my family when it finally arrives.”

—from *East Bay Labor Journal* and *Ebase*

SHOP TALK: Is the Employee Free Choice Act important?



Willie Hudspeth
Petaluma Poultry
Local 1596

“I'm supportive of the cause. But at the same time, the company has to be able to conduct business. (I'm a capitalist at heart!)”



Dan Ancheta
Stero
Local 1596

“Every worker should have a choice, and it should be a majority. This is America. You get a free choice. When workers want to go that way, they should be able to.”



Nathan Seiger
Henry Curtis Ford
Local 1596

“Unions are important and they should be stronger, but I think they currently focus too much on the political and should focus more on employee rights and working conditions.”



Randy Watson
Stero
Local 1596

“We need all the help we can get. This economy is definitely a good time for people to be able to join unions. If there were no unions, employers wouldn't be paying us anything. Feinstein shouldn't backtrack; she should be supporting us.”



Max Belik
Stero
Local 1596

“Unions aren't as strong as they used to be. Because of the economy, companies are downsizing. It's good to have a union. It gives us some backbone. Those who want a union should be able to have one.”



UNION ORGANIZING



Nearly 60 million workers would sign up for a union tomorrow if given the chance

Employee Free Choice Act gives workers and unions a fighting chance

Passage of the Employee Free Choice Act is labor’s top priority. Even though the Chamber of Commerce promises a tough, expensive fight, the Act has bipartisan support and a good chance of becoming law.

The Employee Free Choice Act will remove unfair barriers to union representation and collective bargaining. It will help workers achieve the American Dream by giving them the freedom to choose a union and bargain collectively. Polls show that 60 million workers would sign up for a

union tomorrow if given the chance.

Current federal labor law—the National Labor Relations Act—has become a barrier to workers’ rights. Companies intimidate, harass, coerce and even fire people who try to organize unions. Workers are fired in a quarter of private-sector union organizing campaigns and most workers who try to form unions are subjected to repeated, coercive one-on-one anti-union meetings with their supervisors. Even after workers successfully form unions, 44 percent of

the time they can’t get a first contract.

The Employee Free Choice Act remedies these problems in three specific ways:

1 Removes current barriers that prevent workers from forming unions to bargain collectively.

Requires that when a majority of employees has signed authorizations designating the union as its bargaining representative, the union will be certified by the National Labor Relations Board. If workers want an election, it’s their choice—not management’s.

2 Guarantees workers a contract when they form a new union.

Provides that an employer or newly formed union can request

mediation by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) if they are unable to bargain a first contract within 90 days. If no agreement has been reached after 30 days, the dispute is referred to binding arbitration. This change eliminates current incentives for employers to delay and stall negotiations.

3 Strengthens penalties against companies that break the law during organizing campaigns and first contract negotiations.

New, tougher remedies will provide more protection for workers’ rights, including civil penalties, treble back pay and court injunctions against employers.

**Local 1596
Proposed bylaws change**

ARTICLE I: DUES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

Section 1. The monthly dues of this Lodge shall be: ~~a uniform rate equal to two (2) times the weighted average hourly earnings of members covered by the collective bargaining agreements under the Local Lodge jurisdiction in accordance with the IAM Constitution, plus \$1.10.~~

~~In the year 1993 the dues will increase as per the formula of the International plus \$.25 to cover future increases in operating expenses. This amount is to be rounded out to even dollar amounts.~~

~~Effective July 1, 1993, the monthly dues of this Lodge shall increase by \$2.00 per member. This additional dues will be transmitted to District Lodge 115 as additional per capita tax.~~

~~Effective January 1, 1997 the monthly dues shall increase by \$1.50 per member for the purpose of ARTICLE J, Section 4., Defense Fund.~~

~~Effective January 1, 2001, the monies that were designated for the group life insurance policy (\$2.00) shall be used to offset the dues increase set by the Grand Lodge, District Lodge 190 and AFL CIO State Federation per capita increases for the year 2001.~~

<i>Rate of Pay per hour</i>	<i>Monthly Dues</i>	<i>Rate of Pay per hour</i>	<i>Monthly Dues</i>
\$7.50- \$10.00	\$35.00	\$20.01- \$22.00	\$78.00
\$10.01- \$11.00	\$45.00	\$22.01- \$24.00	\$82.00
\$11.01- \$12.00	\$50.00	\$24.01- \$26.00	\$85.00
\$12.01- \$13.00	\$55.00	\$26.01- \$28.00	\$88.00
\$13.01- \$14.00	\$60.00	\$28.01- \$30.00	\$92.00
\$14.01- \$16.00	\$65.00	\$30.01- \$32.00	\$97.00
\$16.01- \$18.00	\$70.00	\$32.01- \$34.00	\$104.00
\$18.01- \$20.00	\$73.00	\$34.01 and above	\$111.00

Solano County Office of Education dues will be \$65.00

If at anytime there is an increase in our per capita tax to the International Association of Machinists or Machinists Automotive Trades District Lodge 190, the increase shall be incorporated into our dues structure and become effective the same month the increased per capita is to be paid to the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers or Machinists Automotive Trades District Lodge 190.

Section 2. Members whose dues are one (1) month in arrears will be required to pay dues through the current month.

Section 3. Members will be required to pay dues through the current month.

Section 4. For withdrawal cards, see the IAM Constitution.

Note: Local 1596 members will vote on this proposal at the February membership meeting. The location has been moved to Plumbers Hall, 3473 Santa Rosa Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA.

**Send a letter to support
The Employee Free Choice Act**

Senator Dianne Feinstein was an early endorser of the Employee Free Choice Act, but now she’s wavering. She says she’s concerned that this is not the right time for business. We need to let her know that this is **precisely** the right time, because our neighbors, friends and kids want and need union protection to keep them in the middle class and to build a strong economy.

The most effective way to reach Senator Feinstein is to write her a letter. Here’s a sample. Be sure to make it personal.

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
One Post Street, Suite 2450
San Francisco, CA 94104

Dear Senator Feinstein,

Your early support and co-sponsorship of S. 1041, the Employee Free Choice Act, was instrumental in the bill’s achieving a majority in the Senate and passage in the House in 2008. I thank you for that critical support and call on your leadership to pass it in the 111th Congress.

The global economic crisis has hit working families especially hard. We are losing jobs, health care, homes and retirement savings. Now, more than ever, we need to pass the Employee Free Choice Act to restore workers’ ability to bargain. Any economic stimulus plan will be strengthened by including the Employee Free Choice Act, and its passage will help ensure we can rebuild our nation’s middle class.

[Add your personal story here!]

It’s time our economy worked for everyone again. I hope to count on your leadership again to help pass the Employee Free Choice Act.

Signature

Union Local, Address, City, Zip / E-mail Address

SHOP TALK: Is the Employee Free Choice Act important?



Leroy Johns
Stero
Local 1596

“This country was built and will turn around through strengthening small business. But I don’t see the advantage of unionizing small businesses. We should focus on medium and large companies.”



Bob Palm
Stero
Local 1596

“I’ve never been in a union before, and I don’t get much involved.”



Keith Marchando
Henry Curtis Ford
Local 1596

“Many people need the protection of a union, so it’s good for the overall to have more unions. Viva la union! Ultimately it’ll help so that employers can’t discriminate against union supporters.”



Yvelt Anglade
Stero
Local 1596

“I think it’s a good idea. If people want protection from a union, they should be able to have it.”



Sean Patrick Stero
Stero
Local 1596

“As workers, we have the right to form a union. The company can’t take advantage. With Obama in office, this bill might finally get signed.”

Kaiser offers new child health plan for the recently unemployed

If you, or someone you know, has recently lost their job, you'll know that getting family health coverage through COBRA is very expensive. The Kaiser Permanente **Child Health Plan** is an affordable health plan that may be right for your children. You can give your children the health care they need for just \$8 or \$15 per child, per month, for up to three children, depending on your family size and income.

Your child is eligible for the Child Health Plan if he or she:

- Is under 19 years of age and is not currently insured.
- Is **not** eligible for government health care coverage, such as Medi-Cal, California Children's Services (CCS) or Healthy Families, or health care coverage that is paid for, in any part, by an employer.
- Is in a family within Kaiser's income guidelines. (Check eligibility guidelines in enrollment packet for more details.)

If you would like to apply for the Kaiser Permanente Child Health Plan and you reside in one of our Northern California Kaiser Permanente Service Areas, call Member Services at 1-800-464-4000. Or, you can get an enrollment packet on-line or through your union local.



ASSOCIATED
THIRD
PARTY
ADMINISTRATORS

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

Contact us at 510-836-2484

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Moving?

Or to report a member recently deceased...

Send the mailing label on this newspaper to your local union office. **See Calendar on page 8** for your local union's address.

→

UNION MEETINGS			
<div><div>District Lodge 190</div><div>7717 Oakport Street Oakland, CA 94621 510-632-3661</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month February 24 • March 24 • April 28 Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. General Delegates' Meeting: 7:30 p.m.</div>	<div><div>Local 1484</div><div>1261 Avalon Blvd. Wilmington, CA 90744 310-835-6688</div></div>	<div>Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month February 19 • March 19 • April 16 General Membership Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month February 3 • March 3 • April 2 Retirees' Club: 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: February 18 • March 18 • April 15</div>
<div><div>Local 93</div><div>2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-723-4900</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month February 10 • March 10 • April 14 Grievance Committee: 4:00 p.m. Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m. Membership Meeting: 5:30 p.m.</div>	<div><div>Local 1528</div><div>713 16th Street Modesto, CA 95354 209-529-9210</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month February 4 • March 4 • April 1 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. General Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Women's Committee Meeting: Please contact local 1528 for times and dates of monthly meetings Retiree's Club: 10:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: February 18 • March 18 • April 15 Narcotics Anonymous: 5:30-6:30 p.m. every Tuesday</div>
<div><div>Local 653</div><div>544 West Olive, Fresno, CA 93728 559-264-2815</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month February 18 • March 18 • April 15 Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m. Membership Meeting: 5:30 p.m.</div>	<div><div>Local 1546</div><div>10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-638-6705</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month February 3 • March 3 • April 7 General Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Member Education Meeting: 5:30 p.m. Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the Thursday preceding membership meeting January 29 • February 26 • April 2 Retiree Club Pot Luck Luncheon: 12 noon on the first Wednesday of each month February 4 • March 4 • April 1 Alcoholics Anonymous: 9 a.m. every Saturday</div>
<div><div>Local 801</div><div>7717 Oakport Street, Oakland, CA 94621 800-655-2182</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the third Thursday of the month February 19 • March 19 • April 16 Membership Meeting: 4:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.</div>	<div><div>Local 1584</div><div>8130 Baldwin Street Oakland, CA 94621 510-635-2064</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the third Thursday of the month February 19 • March 19 • April 16 Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. Retirees' Club: 12:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month: February 3 • March 3 • April 2</div>
<div><div>Local 1101</div><div>2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-723-4900</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the second Thursday of the month February 12 • March 12 • April 9 Executive Board Meeting: 5:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m.</div>	<div><div>Local 1596</div><div>4210 Petaluma Blvd. No. Petaluma, CA 94952 707-795-0085</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month February 17 • March 17 • April 21 Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m.</div>
<div><div>Local 1173</div><div>1900 Bates Ave., # H Concord, CA 94520 925-687-6421</div></div>	<div>Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month February 12 • March 12 • April 9 Membership/Shop Stewards' Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month February 19 • March 19 • April 16</div>	<div><div>Local 2005</div><div>416 Main Street Livingston, CA 95334 209-394-7822</div></div>	<div>Meetings of the general membership are held at the Livingston Portuguese Hall, usually on the Second or Third Sunday of the month.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English & Punjabi—at 1:00 p.m.• Spanish & Portuguese—at 2:30 p.m.</div>
<div><div>Local 1414</div><div>150 South Blvd. San Mateo, CA 94402 650-341-2689</div></div>	<div>Shop Stewards' Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month February 5 • March 5 • April 2 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month February 19 • March 19 • April 16 General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month February 19 • March 19 • April 16 Retirees' Club: 11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of March, June, Sept., Dec. All are welcome! March 4 • June 3 • September 2 • December 2</div>	<div><div>Local 2182</div><div>967 Venture Court, Sacramento, CA 95825 800-458-9200</div></div>	<div>Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month February 10 • March 10 • April 14 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. General Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Retirees' Club - VISTA CLUB: 11:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month February 18 • March 18 • April 15</div>