# The IAM District 190 Sparker of the IAM District 190 The IAM District 190 The IAM District 190

VOL. I2 NO. 2 April/May 2010

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190

# The advantages of being in a union

Nearly 60 million workers would join a union if they could, based on polling research conducted by the Peter D. Hart Research Firm. Why don't they? That's a long, sad story that has to do with labor laws being stacked in favor of employers and against workers seeking union representation. In this special issue, we review why having union representation is good for workers and what it takes to get a union.

Many of our members get a job at a shop that's already organized, so they don't know what it's like for workers who do the heavy lifting to join together and fight for union representation. We hope this special issue will be useful to remind all of our current members, as well as those who seek union representation, of the advantages of being in a union.

he most important benefit that we get from union membership is impossible to put a price tag on—an active, collective voice which can bargain over working conditions, benefits, wages and due process on the job.

Here are some details about what you can expect to get as a member of the Machinists union (IAM).

## Written contract with employer

Each union contract is unique and customized for each employer group. All contracts have one thing in common: they spell out each party's rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

If you're not in a union, you have no contract. Your employment is considered "at will," which means at the will of the boss.

In all cases, a union contract protects you under "just cause." This means that the employer must have a solid reason for disciplining an employee. If the employee believes that disciplinary action was made in error, the contract includes a detailed dispute resolution process.

For automotive employees who work on a flat-rate basis, there is a dispute resolution process that includes a timely resolution clause. All too often, non-union techs wait months, if not forever, to resolve flat-rate disputes.

People who work without a union

must individually negotiate for their wages, hours, and working conditions. For most people, talking to the boss about getting a raise is the hardest thing they could conceive of doing. With the union backing you up, you don't have to worry about retaliation because all negotiations are done collectively and by a professional union representative who is skilled in negotiations.

#### Union staff back you up

Collectively, the District 190 staff has more than 300 years of service and experience to the membership. The staff handles grievances, arbitrations and contract negotiations. A business rep is just a phone call away.

The District staff also has the backing of legal staff on retainer who are well-versed in labor law and handling the more intricate legal cases involving labor relations.

All of these services are provided by the union, paid for by union dues. Without the union, there's no way to fight your employer unless you hire your own attorneys.

#### Wages and benefits

Overall, union wages are 30% higher than comparable wages in the non-union sector, but those higher wages are gained over years of negotiating annual increases. Depending on the needs of the group, the first contract may be a foot in the door, with a limited scope of improvements.



IAM member works as a mechanic at Stan Morri Ford in Tracy.

Most importantly, your wages, benefits and working conditions are guaranteed in your union contract. With the recession, non-union employers are cutting wages, vacation leave, days off, and health benefits, and the workers have no say whatsoever. When a union employer needs to make changes in order to keep their doors open, the employer has to negotiate with the union and any changes must be acceptable to the employees. Often, union members suggest creative ways to make concessions that meet the employer's bottom line and save jobs.

IAM members have guaranteed vacations and holidays. They also have sick leave and disability; if you get injured on the job, you'll have something to carry you through.

And, even in this down economy, we still have pension plans providing guaranteed monthly benefits for retirees, and 401K programs.

The IAM also has its own health and welfare programs with several levels of coverage that the union and employer negotiate; these may include full-family medical coverage, prescription drugs, dental, vision, orthodontics and life insurance. The program also includes an employee assistance program that covers men-

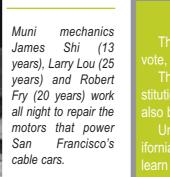
tal health, substance abuse and financial and family planning.

The IAM's state-approved apprenticeship program benefits employers and employees and those interested in working in the automotive industry. We currently have apprentice mechanics, machinists, maintenance mechanics, parts people, bodymen, and painters. These apprentices work full-time during the day, learning under a journeyman, and the go to school in the evenings to pick up the technical knowledge they need.

In today's economy, we've seen the closure of dozens of auto dealerships and other businesses, putting hundreds of members out of work. The only positive aspect of this is that our contracts have protective procedures for layoffs and recalls. If a nonunion facility closes, any severance is at the discretion of employer.

You've probably heard it before: union members get too much time off and too many benefits. We believe that everyone has the right to join a union to try to earn more and improve their standard of living.

If you want to have the benefits of a union contract, contact the IAM at 510-632-3661 or complete the form on page 6.





The California primary is slated for **Tuesday**, **June 8**, **2010**. If you want to vote, you must be registered. The last day to register is May 24.

This election is important—there are contested elections for statewide constitutional offices, as well as for many assembly and senate seats. There are also ballot initiatives on elections, taxes, public power, and auto insurance.

Unfortunately, as *The Sparkplug* goes to press, neither the IAM nor the California Labor Federation have held their endorsement meetings. If you want to learn who your union has endorsed in each race, go to the website for a complete rundown: www.iamdistrict190.org



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## ORGANIZING WINS

### A quick study of how unions help workers win a voice on the job

What is a union?

A union is a group of workers who form an organization to gain:

- Respect on the job,
- Better wages and benefits,
- More flexibility for work and family needs,
- A counterbalance to the unchecked power of employers, and
- A voice in improving the quality of their products and services.

#### How do people form a union?

When workers decide they want to come together to improve their jobs, they work with a union to help them seek formal representation. Once a majority of workers shows they want a union, sometimes employers honor the workers' choice. Often, the workers must ask the government to hold an election. If the workers win their union, they negotiate a contract with the employer that spells out each party's rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

Does the law protect workers joining unions?

It's supposed to—but no law is perfect. Under the law, employers are not allowed to discriminate against or fire workers for choosing to join a union. For example, it's illegal for employers to threaten to shut down their businesses or to fire employees or take away benefits if workers form a union. However, some employers violate these laws, and the union is forced to fight for the workers' rights.

## What kinds of workers are forming unions today?

A wider range of people than ever before—doctors and nurses, poultry workers and graduate student employees, home health care aides and wireless communications workers, auto parts workers and engineers, to name a few.

## How do unions help working families today?

Through unions, workers win better wages, benefits and a voice on the job—and good union jobs mean stronger communities. Union work-

ers earn 30 percent more than nonunion workers and are more likely to receive health care and pension benefits than those without a union. In 2007, median weekly earnings for full-time union wage and salary workers were \$863, compared with \$663 for their nonunion counterparts. Unions lead the fight today for better lives for working people, such as expanded family and medical leave, improved safety and health protections and fair-trade agreements that lift the standard of living for workers all over the world.

## What have unions accomplished for all workers?

Unions have made life better for all working Americans by helping to pass laws ending child labor, establishing the eight-hour day, protecting workers' safety and health, and helping create Social Security, unemployment insurance and the minimum wage. Unions are continuing the fight today to improve the lives of all working families in America.

## What challenges do workers face today when they want to form unions?

Today, thousands of workers want to join unions. The wisest employers understand that when workers form unions, their companies also benefit. But most employers fight workers' efforts to come together by intimidating, harassing and threatening them. In response, workers are reaching out to their communities for help in exercising their freedom to improve their lives.

-Source: AFL-CIO

#### IAM members @ work at Ames Research Center



(L) 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



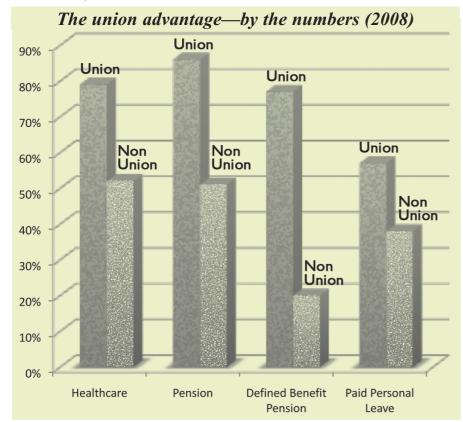
(Above) Steward Jose Rosario shows where he flies helicopters and other planes remotely.

# Union workers have better health care and pensions and more days off

Union workers are more likely than their nonunion counterparts to be covered by health care and receive pension benefits, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. In March 2008, 79 percent of union workers were covered by health insurance through their jobs, compared with only 52 percent of nonunion workers. Union workers also are more likely to have retirement and paid personal leave.

As the chart below illustrates, 86 percent of union workers participate in pension plans versus 51 percent of nonunion workers. Seventy-seven percent of union workers participate in defined-benefit pension plans, compared with 20 percent of nonunion workers. (Defined-benefit plans are federally insured and provide a guaranteed monthly pension amount. They are better for workers than defined-contribution plans, in which the balance in a worker's account fluctuates depending on how well the underlying investments perform, and the monthly payment amount is uncertain.)

There's no reason why YOU shouldn't have the benefits of union representation, too.



*Note:* Defined-benefit pensions pay a guaranteed monthly benefit. *Source:* U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employee Benefits in Private Industry, March 2008. August 2008.

-Source: AFL-CIO

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We're glad to print "Letters" when we get them, but none were received this edition. 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:

e-mail: dchaplan@mindspring.com • fax: 510-288-1346

mail: IAM District 190, 7717 Oakport Drive, Oakland, CA 94621

**Oops**: The volume and issue number of the last issue was inadvertently not updated. The February/March issue of The Sparkplug should have been Volume 12 Issue #1. We apologize for any inconvenience caused by this error.



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## ORGANIZING WINS

#### What to expect in an organizing drive

When workers form a union, they gain a voice in decisions that affect their jobs, their future and their families. Unfortunately, employers don't always like the idea of sharing the decision making with employees. So an employer's first reaction may be to make a lot of misleading statements to try to convince you not to join together.

Knowing what to expect from your employer will help you stay focused on your real goalwinning a voice on the job and a say in your

Many times, employers make the following statements to discourage employees from joining

Employer: "The union will make you go on strike."

*Fact:* Strikes are rare. They are an absolute last resort. And a strike can only happen if 2/3 of the membership votes to go on strike. Going on strike is a decision taken by the members, not by the union.

Employer: "If you form a union, you risk losing the benefits and pay raises you already have." Fact: It is illegal for a company to freeze or cut previously scheduled raises to discourage you from forming a union. Once you're organized, you'll negotiate a contract with new wage rates.

**Employer**: "The union just wants your dues money."

*Fact*: Every serious organization—churches, clubs, sporting leagues, and similar organizations—has to have some kind of funding, and unions are no different. Dues pay for the costs of organizational expenses including contract negotiations, grievances and arbitrations, training for members, legal fees, and other things so no one has to go it alone.

Employer: "With a union, you won't be allowed to talk to your supervisor—you'll have to go through the union."

*Fact*: We have found that having a union strengthens communication between employees and supervisors. Direct relationships with immediate supervisors continue and you can negotiate to retain any good policy and procedures already in place. The advantage of joining together in a union is that you're able to make your voices heard at the upper levels of management, where key decisions are made.

**Employer**: "The improvements we're willing to make right now show that you don't need a union."

*Fact*: It's great that your employer is responding to your concerns. It shows that when you join together, your voices are heard. By forming a union, you can make sure this progress is not just short term—you'll build an ongoing dialogue with your employer on all your issues.

You'll also have peace of mind with a union since the improvements you agree on will be guaranteed in your union contract.

Keep in mind that it's normal for some tension to arise when workers start to build a union. But the tension is temporary. After you vote to form a union, the employer gets used to the idea of your having a voice on the job.

No matter what the employer says, stay focused on your shared goals—to make your workplace the best possible place to work.

Some employers, used to having their own way, may resort to illegal tactics to keep you and your co-workers from forming a union. There's a list of 30+ tactics, from threatening punishment or firing for union activity to granting wage increases in order to keep the union out—we don't want to list all of them to give employers any ideas. But all of the items on the list have been tried during IAM organizing campaigns.

As an employee, you have rights afforded to you by the National Labor Relations Act. If your employer uses tactics like these, you may take your case to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and report this illegal activity. In some cases, you and your co-workers may be entitled to back pay and/or reinstatement. Gaining a voice in your workplace may not be easy, but few things in life worth having ever are.

#### Organizing a union—sometimes harder than it should be

In March and April, the District 190 staff took on several organizing campaigns. They all started strongwith a strong majority of the employees commited to joining the union. Here's the story of one drive that needed an extra battle to get the election certified, one that was fairly smooth sailing, and one still to come.

#### **Democracy delayed at Fairfield Toyota**

On March 11, the technicians at Fairfield Toyota voted 10-4 to join the IAM. "The employees really stuck together during the campaign because they knew that they wanted a union," says Area Director Jesse Juarez.

"Usually, after an election, the NLRB certifies the count and we schedule bargaining for a first contract as soon as we can. But that didn't happen this time." Juarez says that the employer filed what the union contends are frivolous objections to the election, and the process came to a standstill. "We asked the company to withdraw their objections so we could sit down and bargain; instead they told us to protest, so protest we did."

On March 20 and for the next



Pickets at Fairfield Toyota included a 16-foot inflatable rat and a human-sized Easter rat, letting the company and community know that it was time to recognize the will of the employees.

three Saturdays, the technicians and dozens of union supporters picketed at the dealership. Juarez reports that the sales staff and porters were very aggressive, trying to incite fights; they put a hole in the union's 16-foot their best techs when there's so rat, threw nails in front of union members' cars, and played chicken in the driveway. "It's been awful. I don't know what peaceful protesting means anymore."

Juarez believes that an ownership change is in the works, so both the

company and the labor board were stalling. "With the recall going on, most of the certified techs are union supporters. Will the dealership really risk breaking the union and losing much work?" Juarez asks.

"The company spent thousands of dollars to fight the will of their employees to have representation. To counter our protests, they brought in clowns, jugglers, and even a mariachi band."

Ultimately, however, the union pickets seem to have worked. "We've finally had dialogue with the company, and both sides have agreed to respect the decision of the Labor Board."

The union has suspended its Saturday pickets, and is hopeful that they will start negotiations with the company shortly.

#### **Hope at Hopkins**

On April 7, the techs at Hopkins Honda/Acura Fairfield held a union election. The issues were the same here as they are for most mechanics: high co-pays for health care, favoritism and wage reductions. The vote was 13-0. The employer didn't file any objections and the election will be certified shortly. "We look forward to bargaining a contract for these techs," Juarez says.

#### **Coming soon to Concord**

The union filed a petition to hold an election on May 6 at Concord Honda, a Sonic dealership. "We have a lot of support, but it's still in the early stages," Juarez explained. "Stay tuned because they hired a notorious union-busting law firm."



## **Get your IAM news on the web!**

District 190 has updated its website and added lots of new features. Go to:

www.iamdistrict190.org

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## AROUND

#### Local 93

#### Contract updates

Local 93 has wrapped up negotiations with World Technical Services for members working at the Vandenberg Air Force Base Satellite Tracking Station. "The new three-year accord provides for wage improvements and, for the first time, contributions to the IAM National Pension Fund," says Business Rep Sam Saiu.

Negotiations are currently underway for members at Jennings Technology in San Jose and TM Industries in Santa Clara. The Local is also in talks with CEMEX for a Plant Closing Agreement at the Company's Davenport Cement Plant.

#### **Hawgs for Dogs**

Hawgs for Dogs and Guide Dogs of America will again have a presence at this year's Arlen Ness Bike Show, held at the San Mateo County Events Center in April. West Coast Hawgs for Dogs will be holding a Father's Day Pancake Breakfast fundraiser in June at the Florence, in Fremont's historic Niles District. Members should contact Sam Saiu at the Local 93 office 408-723-4900 to get more details or to volunteer.

#### **Local 1101**

#### Member wins seniority case

At the last minute, just as the case was going to arbitration, Local 1101 and Frontier Ford settled a year-long grievance and the member got a \$30,000 settlement. The union contended that the member had been laid off out of seniority; the company finally admitted that it was true. The member ultimately moved out of state, but is eligible for rehire.

#### **Union wins member's job back**

A member at Capitol Ford in San Jose recently got his job back and \$5,400 in back pay as a result of the union taking his fight all the way to the Board of Adjustment.

The member was fired after two instances where cars fell off a rack and it was discovered that they didn't have

#### **MNPL**

#### THE POLITICAL PROC

#### Machinists support candidates who stand up for labor and wo

On March 30, Machinists made two visits to offer political support, one to newly-elected Congressman John Garamendi, and the other to candidate Dr. Ami Bera. Garamendi's 10th District spans parts of Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano and Yolo Counties. Bera's District 3 covers the greater Sacramento area.

The Machinists Non-Partison Political League (MNPL) donated to Garamendi's congressional campaign—which he won in a special election in October, 2009. The MNPL also supported Bera, who's making his first run against Republican Dan Lundgren.

The IAM and its local unions do not contribute to political candidates. All political contributions come from voluntary contributions made by machinist members to the MNPL fund. No dues money is used for these funds.

Marti (Above—LtoR): Area Director Tom Brandon, member Brian

Fealy, Area Director Mark Hollibush, Congressman John Garamendi, and Business Reps Rick Rodgers and Pedro

the safety lock on. However, upon investigating the facts, the union learned that the company discovered that the rack was broken after the first car fell off and they neglected to fix it.

"Clearly, the company thought it would be easier to blame the worker rather than fix a known hazard," says Area Director Jim Schwantz. "We're glad this case got decided correctly."

#### Strike possible at Coast **County Truck**

The members at Coast County Truck in San Jose are not happy with the company's proposal to cut 15% in wages and benefits over the next three years. "Our guys rejected that proposal and took a strike vote. They have the sanctions and are ready to strike if they find they have to reject the company's next proposal," says Business Rep Richard Breckinridge. "The members don't want to strike, but they also don't want to be gouged. They're prepared."

#### **Local 1173**

#### Hard fight for new contract

The 35 members who work at Antioch Auto Center recently ratified a three-year agreement in March. The Antioch Auto Center includes four franchises: Toyota, Nissan, Dodge, Mazda.

The employer had hired a union-busting attorney who immediately went to work gutting the existing contract. The employer's opening proposal contained more than \$10 per hour in takeaways for each employee. Additionally, the attorney introduced language into the contract that would have set the members back 30 years in hard-won rights and guarantees provided under their contract.

After several negotiating sessions, it became very clear to the bargaining unit that the only way to get the employer to pull back his egregious proposals was to threaten to walk out when the contract expired. The Employer eventually realized that the bargaining unit was not bluffing about their refusal to go backwards in their working conditions and removed all takeaways from the proposal.

The final agreement contained new language that eliminated the employer's regressive flat rate pay program for the technicians, corrected the flawed health and welfare co-pay formula and provided for a wage increase in the third year of the contract.

Understanding that, particularly in today's economic climate, the final contract proposal was a definite improvement over their current contract, the members overwhelmingly voted to accept the new agreement.

The union's two shop stewards, Kyl Edwards and Wayne Cunningham, wei part of the bargaining committee. "The did an outstanding job, even though th employer threatened them with termina tion during negotiations," says Are Director Mark Hollibush.

#### Fighting against takeaways

The 16 members who work at Dirit Brothers Concord Nissan are currentl in negotiations for a contract whic expired back in August 2009. Th employer has proposed a three-yea wage freeze, stopping employer contr butions, currently \$300/month, an eliminating the Automotive Industric Disability Plan.

The members are very frustrate with the employer's regressive ecc nomic proposal and are showing a wil ingness to fight to protect their currer working terms and conditions. "Moi negotiations are set for April," say Hollibush. "Hopefully, the employe will understand that we are not going t tolerate having our retirement take away and will modify their proposals

#### Working together to avoid layoffs

The six members working at Sosco Auto Body are currently in negotiation for their contract that expired in Januar

'With a union, we have repre-

sentation and

the security of knowing that we

have support behind us.

Management

can no longer

decisions without

make all the

us having a

## SHOP TALK: How has being in a union changed your life? What's the most



**Local 1101** 

employees. We finally have a flat rate guarantee-if we're here for 40 hours, we're guaranteed 34 hours pay. Before, with no guarantee,

"Now we're

not 'at will'

we could end up with 20 or less hours pay, depending on how slow it was.

We also have a means for resolving grievances, and we have somebody advocating for us to be sure our issues get addressed. We got our first raise in six years and are hoping for a decent raise with the new contract. We definitely have hopes for improvement."



**GIRMA TADESSE** \_exus of Stevens Creek - 3 years **Local 1101** 

"Now I can speak to management and service advisors. The union enabled me to get certified and I got a big raise with the contract. Now I'm more equal than before."



**Local 1101** 

voice. They have guidelines and proper procedures to follow now.

I was on the bargaining team. There's a lot more involved in the negotiating process than most people ever see. It's interesting to see both points of view and to see how hard it is to reach compromise. We didn't initially get the wage bump we hoped for, but with the economy coming up, we're looking for major improvements this time."



Lexus of Stevens Creek - 8 **Local 1101** 

things and find solutions that workers, and to management company to its knees-that de all need to survive.

Our first contract focused o people's wages. We got our for mechanisms in place. We'll w for all of us."

## HE LOCALS



#### ng people

R): District 725 Business Rep Mike Cook, otella, IAM Western Territories AA Bobby rea Director Tom Brandon, Dr. Ami Bera, IAM e President Gary Allen, Area Director Mark Business Reps Pedro Mendez and Tom Rotella.



10. The employer is struggling to eep all of the body techs working, but nless business picks up, he may evenally have to lay off some employees.

The members understand that these re hard times and want to do their part keep the shop open. The technicians greed to a one-year contract with a age freeze and will be looking at an ternative medical plan that will save ie employer a substantial amount of ioney until the contract expires.

"The employer has already agreed to store the employees' lost benefits in ie future if the company returns to the rofitability it enjoyed the last couple f years," explains Hollibush. "The lembers will make sure that he lives p to his word."

#### **Local 1414**

#### Good news at Steward

Steward Chevrolet Cadillac in olma has become an authorized Saturn arts and repair facility, although no ew Saturn cars will be sold. "Business as picked up a lot with the new car line nd could not have come at a better me," says service manager John kers. "This has enabled us to add seval more technicians." Business Rep avid Taylor adds that it was tough hen Colma Saturn closed a year ago,

## **Join the MNPL** and get entered into the 2010 raffle

If you'd like to donate to the MNPL and help the Machinists build our political power and effectiveness, now's the time. Not only will you make an important contribution, but you'll also get a ticket for the 2010 raffle.

Each member who contributes \$25 as a sponsoring member will receive a ticket for our drawing. Each member or shop steward that returns an envelope with another member's \$25 donation as a sponsoring member will receive an additional ticket for recruiting a new sponsoring member. (Please write your name on the back of the MNPL envelope to get credit for your recruitment.) The new sponsoring member will also receive a ticket.

Raffle prizes will include Machinists Union watches, shirts and other prizes.

The membership drive will be from April 1, 2010 through June 22, 2010 drawing will be held at District 190 Delegates meeting in June. You need not be present to win.

"but this is great news to see Saturn here again, across the street from the old Saturn shop. Customers can again get their cars repaired by a good union shop with qualified Saturn technicians."

#### A contract at SF Toyota

After five long months of negotiations, Local 1414 members who work at San Francisco Toyota finally have a ratified contract. "The technicians stood strong all the way and understood that a strike was very close," says Business Rep David Taylor. "It helped that owner John Horton understood the needs of both sides."

Shop Steward Tony Shiu says that he's glad they were able to avoid a strike and, in the end, got a good three-year contract. Service Manager Igor Giderman adds that the technicians have worked a lot of overtime to complete the recalls quickly. Taylor thanks the entire crew of techs and Area Director Tom Brandon for their help on the negotiations.

#### **Local 1528**

#### Three big contracts open

Members at Silgan Containers/ Riverbank, International Paper Company and Geiger Manufacturing are all seeing their contracts expire at the end of April.

"I'd like to say that we'll complete

negotiations on all three by the end of the month, but we may have to get contract extensions," says Business Rep Gilbert Gonzalez. "Even though we've known the deadlines were coming for the last three years, the companies always wait until the last minute, and this time, I have a week-long staff conference out of town as well."

Gonzalez says that, across the board, the issues are the cost of health-care and the level of wage increases. "The companies are all quick to tell us about how bad the economy is and that there is not that much money out there, so we will see what happens."

#### **Local 1546**

#### Moving ahead with new employer

Last year, after considerable debate and discussion, the city of Livermore decided not to renew their residential garbage service contract with Waste Management's subsidiary, Livermore/Dublin Disposal. They put the contract out to bid, and the winning bidder was a new entity, Livermore Sanitation, owned by Louie Pellegrini. He'll be taking over on July 1.

"We've dealt with Louie successfully at ACI, which handles Alameda and San Leandro's garbage service," says Area

which was

Director Don Crosatto. "He had worked out a deal with the Teamsters, so we sat down with him, and in less than an hour, we hammered out an agreement."

Crosatto says that the economics and contract expiration date are identical to the previous contract with W/M. Most importantly, he agreed to offer the jobs to current W/M employees first. "We're very pleased to work with this new employer who we hope will be a player for a long time," Crosatto added.

Livermore Sanitation has purchased a location for shop facilities, and will hold a meeting there on April 22 so that current W/M employees can tour it and ask questions. At that point, the union will conduct a bid of existing W/M employees. In the event there are more positions than bidders, the company will offer positions to non-W/M employees. The current wage rate is \$34.25/hour.

#### Doing the right thing

As part of the negotiations for a new contract with Honda of Oakland, in addition to decent wage increases, the union employer agreed to an HRA plan (Health Reimbursement Arrangement) through a small broker. The plan came with \$1500 deductible, but the employer was to pay the first half.

The week before Christmas, when the broker was informed by Kaiser that he couldn't sign people up, because this employer had a "large business" account for his non-union employees, and the HRA plan was a "small business" plan. The employer went through numerous machinations with Kaiser to get a plan comparable to what was agreed to in the contract. Ultimately, the members had to spend one month under a less generous plan, but now they have the coverage they had agreed to.

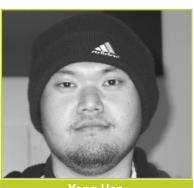
"We appreciate that the company stepped up to the plate," says Crosatto. "General Manager Conley Burns agreed to pay more money than originally budgeted so that the members could get the plan they thought they had coming to them. The union will continue to push Kaiser to get them to honor the original proposal."

## nportant benefit of union membership?

"The biggest benefit of a union is that now I have some clout. I can discuss issues with management as an equal. There was always the possibility you could ruffle some feathers that would come back to bite you. The culture was to keep our heads down.

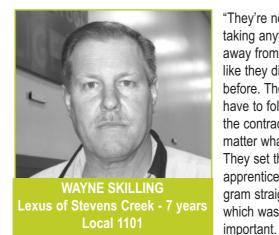
Now, we can discuss itually beneficial to us, as on't want to bring the do anybody any good. We

jing up the lowest-paid the door and put the make this contract better



Yong Han Lexus of Stevens Creek - 3 years **Local 1101** 

"I was an apprentice, but not getting much training. When the union came in, they got me back into school. I got a raise initially, but won't get another one until I finish the apprenticeship program. Hopefully, that'll change with the new contract."



They weren't advancing anyone or giving them the proper protection. We froze the medical so we're paying less than the non-union folks here. Because of the recession, our first contract wasn't that lucrative. Then there was a recall, and the company made a lot of money. This time around, we're looking for a major



Lexus of Stevens Creek - 3 years **Local 1101** 

"The union is somewhere to go when we have issues. More stability with the union here. We had to make some concessions to get going—hopefully we'll make up for some of the losses in the

next contract. We have a 34-hour flat rate guarantee, which I'd like to see increased. Sometimes, the shop is slow and it's hard to make your hours. I like the union. I was in a union before and I'm all for it. Before they could change your pay plan, move you up or down at their own will. That wasn't a good thing, and I'm glad it's in the past."

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## IN THE NEWS



## Facts about health care reform

Before you're innundated with ads claiming health care reform will destroy the economy, the nation and world as we know it, here are a few of health care reform's many benefits for working families.

Two important facts: first, if you have employer-sponsored health care coverage won at the bargaining table, you'll keep it. Second, the tax on health care benefits in high-cost plans has been reduced by 85 percent and delayed until 2018. In addition, the new law:

- ▶ Ends insurance companies' most abusive practices, including denying coverage to people with pre-existing conditions, beginning in 2014 for adults, and this September for children. The insurance industry tried to weasel out of covering sick kids, but that sleazy maneuver came to a quick end.
- Eliminates annual and lifetime limits on benefits, ends discriminatory premiums for women and requires government review of excessive rate increases.
- Lowers health care costs for working families by creating new health insurance exchanges to increase competition and provides tax credits and cost-sharing assistance for middle- and lower-income families to purchase insurance.
- Helps seniors purchase prescription drugs, closes the Medicare prescription drug "donut hole" and ensures seniors get free preventive care under Medicare.

While the new health care law is far from perfect, it is a major step forward in the ongoing fight to reform our nation's health care system. Labor unions will continue to fight to improve the system until every single Californian and American is able to get quality, affordable health care.

-by Mike Hall, AFL-CIO blog



#### Obama appoints two prounion NLRB nominees

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) gained two laborfriendly members in late March as President Obama exercised his power to make appointments while the Senate is in recess. Most of the nominees were approved by Senate committees months ago, but were being held up by Republican opposition.

Labor lawyers Craig Becker and Mark Pearce will join the current two-member board, which has been operating understaffed since 2008. Becker has worked as an associate general counsel for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and staff counsel for the AFL-CIO. Pearce is a partner with Creighton, Pearce, Johnsen & Giroux, a New York law firm that represents unions and workers in discrimination cases.

According to Steven Greenhouse from the *New York Times*, business organizations worry that the board will revamp the rules for unionization elections by engaging in broad rule-making while relying less on case-by-case decision-making.

Labor unions argue that the recess appointments Becker and Pearce will merely restore some balance after the board favored business under President George W. Bush.

"The Bush board took things in a really anti-worker direction," said Jonathan Hiatt, chief of staff of the AFL-CIO. "Workers have taken a beating under board rulings in recent years, and we hope the new board will provide a little more fairness to workers who want to exercise the right to organize and bargain collectively."

One thing labor and business agree on is that the board's deadlock will soon end. Since January 2008, the board has had just one Democratic member, its chairwoman, Wilma B. Liebman, and one Republican, Peter C. Schaumber. Now there will be three Democrats and one Republican.

About 220 cases are pending at the board. Half are on important, controversial issues that Liebman and Schaumber have not tackled, believing they should not be handled by just two members.

In fact, Local 1546 has an important case on appeal that has been on hold for a year. In this case, a waterfront employer, PMMC, closed its doors and immediately reopened as PCMC, forcing all IAM members there to change unions and become Longshore members. In the course of this changeover, they lost signifi-

cant benefits and seniority.

The IAM filed suit on behalf of its members about three years ago, ultimately lost, and appealed the case in 2009. But because the NLRB didn't have a quorum, the case has been in limbo. "Now that there's a functioning labor board, we hope they'll pick up our case and do something good with it," says Area Director Don Crosatto.

The president has made a total of 15 recess appointments. He said in his announcement that the Senate has "the responsibility to approve or disapprove my nominees. But if, in the interest of scoring political points, Republicans in the Senate refuse to exercise that responsibility, I must act in the interest of the American people and exercise my authority to fill these positions on an interim basis."

President Obama also noted that President Bush made 15 recess appointments by this time in his presidency, and at this time in 2002, Bush had only 5 nominees pending on the floor. President Obama currently has 77.

#### Schwarzenegger protects tax cheats, refuses tax relief for struggling families

In mid-March, Governor Schwarzenegger announced that he would not sign a bill passed by the Legislature to give tax relief to struggling homeowners and renewable energy companies. Perhaps this was because the bill would also increase the penalty on multi-million dollar corporations and the wealthiest Californians who blatantly cheat on their taxes.

The bill, SBx8 32, introduced by Senator Lois Wolk, does several things to bring California state tax law into line with federal law, and extends badly needed tax relief to homeowners and green technology businesses. But the Governor would rather protect multi-millionaire tax cheats, many of whom are his wealthy corporate friends and benefactors.

## The key to a strong union is ORGANIZING—and you can help keep District 190 strong!

Do you know people who work in your industry but don't have a union? Often non-union workers have the same wages as union employees—but that's all they have. Talk to people in non-union shops about the benefits of having a contract, a grievance procedure, a pension and good union benefits. If they're interested, ask if one of our organizers can call them. (Remind them that the call will be completely confidential.) Here's a contact form for you to complete and send to District 190.

#### About you:

Name:\_

Where you work:

Your phone number:\_

#### Please call the following to tell them more about IAM representation:

Name:\_\_\_

Company:

Home or Cell Phone Number:\_\_

Best time to be reached:

Please return this form to: District 190, 7717 Oakport Street, Oakland, CA 94621. (Use this form, or just include the info on your own paper.)

## Moving?

Or to report a member recently deceased...

Send the mailing label on this newspaper to your local union office.

See Calendar below for your local union's address.



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

Contact us at 510-836-2484

#### A brief history of the IAM

1888: 19 machinists meet in locomotive pit at Atlanta, GA, vote to form a trade union. Machinists earn 20 to 25 cents an hour for 10-hour day.

**1889**: 34 locals represented at the first Machinists convention, held in Georgia State Senate Chamber, elect Tom Talbot as Grand Master Machinist.

1890: First Canadian local chartered at Stratford, Ont. Union is named International Association of Machinists. Headquarters set up in Richmond, VA. Membership at 4,000.

1891: IAM Local 145 asks \$3 for a 10hour day.

1892: First railroad agreement signed with Atcheson, Topeka & Santa Fe. **1895**: IAM joins American Federation of Labor (AFL), moves headquarters to

1898: IAM Local 52, Pittsburgh, conducts first successful strike for 9-hour

1899: Time-and-a-half for overtime has become prevalent. Headquarters moved to Washington, D.C.

1903: Specialists admitted to membership. Drive begins for 8-hour day.

1905: Apprentices admitted to membership. There are 769 locals.

1908: Metal Trades Department established within AFL with IAM President James O'Connell as president.

1911: Women admitted to membership with equal rights.

1914: Congress passes Clayton Act limiting use of injunctions in labor disputes and making picketing legal.

**1915**: IAM wins 8-hour day in many shops and factories.

1916: Auto mechanics admitted to membership.

**1918**: IAM membership reaches 331,000.

1920: Machinists earn 72 to 90 cents an hour for 44-hour week.

1922: 79,000 railroad machinists pin shopmen's strike against second postwar wage cut. Membership declines to 148,000.

**1926**: Congress passes Railway Labor Act requiring carriers to bargain and forbidding discrimination against union members.

1928: 250 delegates at 18th IAM convention urge 5-day week to alleviate unemployment.

1929: Depression layoffs cut IAM membership to 70,000.

1932: Congress passes Norris LaGuardia Act banning use of court injunctions in labor disputes. Wisconsin adopts first unemployment insurance act. Nearly 30% of union members are jobless.

1933: IAM backs National Recovery drive and 40-hour week. Membership sinks to 56,000.

1935: Congress adopts National Labor Relations Act establishing right to organize and requiring employers to bargain in good faith. IAM opens drive to organize aircraft Industry.

1936: First industrial union agreement signed with Boeing, Seattle. Membership climbs to 130,000.

1937: Social Security and Railroad Retirement Acts now in operation. IAM negotiates paid vacations in 26% of its



Efren Callenta (L) has maintained boilers and Facilities Control Management System at Moffett Field NAS in Mountain View for 11 years. Andy Angeles has worked on the energy management system for 18 years. Here, they're working together to inspect all the safety parameters of the boiler and do the annual cleaning.

employers.

agreements.

1939: IAM signs first union agreement in air transport industry with Eastern. 1940: Machinists rates average 80 cents an hour. IAM membership climbs to 188,000.

1941: IAM pledges support to win the war, including no-strike pledge.

**1944**: 76,000 IAM members serve in armed forces. Total membership now 776,000.

1945: Widespread layoffs follow end of World War II.

1946: 88% of IAM agreements now provide for paid vacations.

1947: Congress enacts anti-union Taft-Hartley Act. Machinists average \$1.56 an hour.

1948: IAM membership opened to all regardless of race or color.

1949: Railroad machinists win 40-hour week. Membership down to 501,000. 1952: Employees on 85% of airlines now protected by IAM agreements.

92% of IAM contracts provide for paid holidays. **1953**: IAM has contracts fixing wages and working conditions with 13,500

1955: 70% of IAM contracts now have health and welfare provisions. Machinists average \$2.33 an hour. 1956: 2.000th active local chartered. 1958: IAM convention establishes a

strike fund approved by the membership in a referendum vote. IAM membership now tops 903,000.

1959: Congress enacts anti-union Landrum-Griffin Act.

1960: IAM establishes Labor Management Pension Fund.

1962: JFK issues Executive Order giving Federal employees a limited right to collective bargaining. Machinists now average \$3.10 an hour.

1964: Membership at 800,000.

1966: IAM members strike five major airlines and finally break through unfair 3.2% limit on wage increases. First dental care plan negotiated with Aerojet

**1968**: IAM membership tops 1,000,000. Machinists average S3.44 an hour. 1969: IAM member, Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin, the first space mechanic, walks on the moon.

1970: Congress votes first Federal Occupational Safety and Health law. 1971: IAM wins biggest back pay award in history, more than \$54,500,000 for 1,000 members locked out illegally by

1972: IAM membership drops to 902,000 as a result of recession and layoffs in defense industries.

National Airlines.

**1973**: Machinists average \$4.71 an hour. Membership rises to 927,000.

1979: IAM-sponsored Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition launches first Stop Big Oil day to protest obscene profits by oil conglomerates while American workers' paychecks continue to shrink.

1982: Reaganomics grips nation. Individual and corporate bankruptcies reach epidemic proportions. IAM membership begins drop to 820,211.

1983: IAM introduces "Rebuilding America" act to Congress as alternative to Reaganomics and to rebuild nation's industrial base.

1988: IAM celebrates 100th anniversary in Atlanta, GA, on May 5.

**1992**: IAM moves to new state-of-theart headquarters building in Upper Marlboro, MD, to keep pace with technological changes and serve members' needs well into 21st Century.

1994: International Woodworkers of America ratify merger agreement. More than 20,000 members join IAM family. **1995**: Sixty-nine day strike brings major

victory in new contract at Boeing. 1996: 'Fighting Machinists" spearhead

political battle for worker rights. 1999: IAM Shares mutual fund created; allows members to put money to work in a fund that invests in IAM-represented companies. The National Federation

of Federal Employees affiliates with the **2000**: The IAM meets in San Francisco for the 35th Grand Lodge Convention.

2002: The IAM establishes the Automotive Department and sets in place dozens of organizing blitzes. 2010: The IAM currently represents 720,000 members in the U.S. and Canada. President Thomas Buffenbarger administers more than 15 departments at IAM Headquarters that provide crucial services to support the union's mission to better the lives of IAM members and working families throughout North America.

Source: www.goiam.org

### Don't be afraid

### "Being in a union made a huge difference"

"What would I tell someone who's thinking about joining a union?" asks Juan Prado, the shop steward at Air Gas Dry Ice in Torrance. "I'd say, don't be afraid. Just do it. Or else you'll keep getting bullied by management."

Back in 2007, Prado had worked at Air Gas for eight years and was constantly abused and fearful that he'd get fired. One day, he and his co-workers decided that enough was enough—they needed a union. "One of our group had previously worked with Al Lopez before Lopez became a Business Rep at IAM Local 1484. I met with Al, and then he met with our group to explain how a union works and what happens during an organizing drive. We decided to sign a petition and seek union representation."

Prado says "the company did all they could to keep the union out: they brought in union busters to scare us, and then, after all but one of us voted for the union, they delayed negotiations for almost a year."

"The workers wanted a voice in their workplace more than anything," explains Business Rep Kevin Kucera. "The company actually lowered their wages in the first contract, but they decided that they were willing to take that to have a union and fight to make improvements later."

"It was really worth it," Prado says. "Having a union made it a lot easier for us. No longer are we scared that managers will write us up for every little thing-actually, I think the managers are scared of us. Now we can take proper breaks. They can't threaten us anymore. The union works really well on our behalf."

Initially there were six members in the union; now they're 13 strong. The group is still working under their first contract and looks forward to negotiating a new contract later this year.



The employees of Air Gas Dry Ice in Torrance believe that having a union behind them gives them a voice on the job. (Local 1484 Business Rep Kevin Kucera is on the left and Juan Prado is next to him).

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## IMPORTANT INFO for the UNEMPLOYED

#### Health coverage for uninsured children

The Kaiser Permanente Child Health Plan offers health coverage for uninsured children that are under the age of 19. Parents who are losing their employer-sponsored coverage may find the Child Health Plan is an option to explore. 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. This program is open both to former Kaiser members and nonmembers.

To be eligible, you must:

- Have a total household income below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines;
- Not be eligible for other government coverage,

such as Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, or CCS (California Children's Services); and

• Not be eligible for health care coverage that is paid for, in any part, by an employer.

Individual enrollment kits with applications may be obtained at your local, or requested as follows:

On our website: https://prospectivemembers.kaiserpermanente.org/kpweb/healthplans/ind ividualplans.

By phone: Member Services at 1-800-464-4000 (toll free) or 1-800-777-1370 (toll-free TTY for the hearing/speech impaired)

#### **Prescription medicines may** be available

Pfizer Pharmaceutical is making free prescription medicines available to unemployed workers who were previously taking a Pfizer medicine but have lost their health coverage.

Individuals may be eligible if they have become unemployed since January 1, 2009, were prescribed and had been taking a Pfizer medicine for three months prior to becoming unemployed, currently have no prescription coverage, and can attest to financial hardship.

More information on available medications and on how to apply can be found at:

#### http://www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com/

Several other pharmaceutical companies have similar hardship programs. Unemployed workers who have lost prescription coverage should look on the websites of all of the appropriate pharmaceutical companies to enquire about the availability of prescription medicines for unemployed workers.



## UNION MEETINGS

#### District Lodge 190

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

Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month April 20\* • May 25 • June 22

General Delegates' Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

**Executive Board Meeting:** 6:30 p.m.

\* Note: Date changed due to an IAM national staff meeting

#### **Local 1484**

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

**Executive Board Meeting:** 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month

April 15 • May 20 • June 17

General Membership Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month

April 6 • May 4 • June 1

Retirees' Club: 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: April 21 • May 19 • June 16

#### Local 93

2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-723-4900

Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month April 13 • May 11 • June 8

**Grievance Committee**: 3:30 p.m. **Executive Board Meeting:** 4:30 p.m. **Membership Meeting:** 5:00 p.m.

*Note:* Office hours are now 8 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office remains open during lunch.

#### **Local 1528**

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

Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month

April 7 • May 5 • June 2 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:

April 21 • May 19 • June 16

Narcotics Anonymous: 5:30-6:30 p.m. every Tuesday

#### Local 653

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

Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month April 21 • May 19 • June 16

Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m. **Membership Meeting:** 5:30 p.m.

April 15 • May 20 • June 17

#### Local 1546

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

Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month

April 6 • May 4 • June 1 **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 April 1 • April 29 • May 27

Retiree Club Pot Luck Luncheon: 12 noon on the

first Wednesday of each month

April 7 • May 5 • June 2

**Alcoholics Anonymous**: 9 a.m. every Saturday

#### Oakland, CA 94621 800-655-2182

Local 801

7717 Oakport Street,

Local IIOI 2102 Almaden Rd., #105 **Membership Meeting:** 4:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

San Jose, CA 95125 408-723-4900

Meetings are the second Thursday of the month April 8 • May 13 • June 10

Executive Board Meeting: 5:30 p.m. **General Membership Meeting:** 6:30 p.m.

*Note:* Office hours are now 8 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office remains open during lunch.

#### **Local 1584**

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

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

April 15 • May 20 • June 17

**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:

April 6 • May 4 • June 1

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

Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month

April 8 • May 13 • June 10

Membership/Shop Stewards' Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month

April 15 • May 20 • June 17

#### .ocal 1596 4210 Petaluma Blvd. No.

Petaluma, CA 94952 707-795-0086

Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month April 20 • May 18 • June 15

Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. **Membership Meeting:** 7:00 p.m.

#### Local 1414

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

**Shop Stewards' Meeting:** 5:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month

April 15 • May 20 • June 17

Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month

April 8 • May 13 • June 10

General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month

April 15 • May 20 • June 17

Retirees' Club: 11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of March, June, Sept., Dec. All are welcome! June 2 • September 1 • December 1

**Local 2005** 416 Main Street Livingston, CA 95334 209-394-7822

Meetings are held the third Sunday of the month

at the Veterans Memorial Hall: 1605 7th Street,

Livingston, CA 95334. April 18 • May 16 • June 20

- Spanish @ 1:00 p.m.
- English & Punjabi @ 2:00 p.m.

#### .ocal **2182**

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

#### Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month

April 13 • May 11 • June 8 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

April 21 • May 19 • June 16