The IAM District 190 DOMESTICATION The IAM District 190

VOL. I3 NO. 3 June/July 20II

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190

The advantages of being in a union

Across the nation, in state after state, newly-elected Republican governors and legislatures are seeking to enact laws that reduce union's collective bargaining power. Why has the fight against unions been their top priority? It's all about power—political power.

For those of us who had to fight to win union representation, and for those of us who came into already-unionized jobs, let us remember why it's important to be a union member.

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. 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 pro-

tects 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. (See page 2 for a review of recent arbitration wins.)

For automotive employees who work on a flat-rate basis, the dispute resolution process includes a timely resolution clause. All too often, non-union techs wait months, if not for-ever, 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

AUSTICE SERVIC TO THE COMMUNITY

Local 1484 members participate in the annual Labor Day parade by proclaiming "Justice on the Job; Service to the Community."

fessional union representative who is skilled in negotiations.

are done collectively and by a pro-

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.

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, 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 mental 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 then 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 lay-offs and recalls. If a non-union facility closes, any severance is at the discretion of the employer.

If you want to have the benefits of a union contract or know of others who do, contact the IAM at 510-632-3661 or complete the form on page 2.

Challenge to all District Lodge 190 members

I am challenging every member starting with our Local Lodge Officers, Executive Board Members and Shop Stewards to become a sponsoring member of the Machinists Non-Partisan Political League (MNPL). A \$25.00 donation will qualify you for a sponsoring membership for the year 2011.

These voluntary donations are critical for our organization to elect and support candidates for public office who, no matter what their party affiliation, will support the legislative goals of working men and women and defend our right to collectively bargain good union contracts.

The battle taking place in Wisconsin is an example of what happens to workers when politicians who don't support working men and women are elected. These politicians are taking away the basic rights of public workers to negotiate their wages, hours and working conditions. The right to collectively bargain is being all but wiped out. There are extreme right wing movements spurred by the Wisconsin events that are popping up in every state of the country and we have to fight these radical efforts with everything we have. By legislating out the right to collectively bargain, these extremists are trying to eliminate the right for workers to join together and form a union for their own protection.

If collective bargaining becomes illegal, then so do our unions and the basic right for workers to fight for justice on the job.

Join with us and help us fight off this ruthless attempt by joining the MNPL as a sponsoring member. Call your Local Lodge office or your Business Representative for sign-up forms. You will automatically be entered into a drawing for several prizes. The drawing will be held at the July 26 District Lodge 190 meeting. You need not be present to win.

James Beno Directing Business Representative

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FIGHTING FOR OUR MEMBERS

Pushing grievances to arbitration, District 190 wins back jobs, money, and better working conditions

Fighting for the rights of our members is one of the most important jobs a union can do. Most often this means that the Business Rep files a grievance and the problem is settled between the union and management directly. Sometimes a settlement is hard to come by and the union and management agree to take the case to "binding arbitration." This means they share the costs for an outside arbitrator to hear the case and make a decision, which they agree to abide by.

Here are some of the arbitration cases won in the last year for IAM members of Locals 1173, 1101, 1546 and 2182:

- Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA) terminated an employee for taking excessive rest breaks during work hours. Local 1173 was successful in mitigating this termination into a permanent lay-off with two additional months of medical coverage by the employer and the employer agreed not to fight the grievant's eligibility for unemployment benefits.
- Concord Nissan changed their procedure for dispatching available work to the technicians, resulting in lost income for all of the affected employees. Local 1173 was successful is getting the employer to cease their discriminatory dispatching system and making all affected employees whole for their lost time.
- Winter Chevrolet suspended a technician for two days because the grievant used shop language when talking to another employee. Local

1173 was successful in arguing that the suspension was too severe for the grievant's behavior and got the suspension reduced to only one day.

• Local 2182 filed for arbitration against UPS for failing to provide a temperature controlled work environment for the technicians in the shop. The union was successful in getting UPS to agree to keep the shop

temperature above 57.5 degrees.

Local 1101 filed for arbitration against Allison BMW when the employer failed to honor the seniority section of the contract. The employer took the position that when employees returned from a lay-off, the returning employees would have to serve a new probation period before they would be eligible to receive their health and pension benefits. The arbitrator found in favor of the union and ordered the employer to reinstate benefits to laid off employees upon their return without serving a second probation period.

• Local 1101 filed for arbitration against Frontier Ford for failure to pay the technicians the correct amount of money when performing

> work on vehicles that had an aftermarket extended warranty. The employer took the position that factory warranty and aftermarket extended warranties should be treated the same and technicians should be compensated the same amount of

time for each job. The union strongly disagreed with this concept and moved the grievance to arbitration. The arbitrator found in favor of the union and ordered the employer to

compensate the technicians at a higher wage rate when performing work on vehicles with an aftermarket extended warranty.

- Local 1173 filed for arbitration against Antioch Auto Center for failing to recognize the union when the employer opened up their new Antioch Hyundai store non-union. The union demanded that the employer recognize the union and pay the employees the same wages and benefits as all of the other bargaining unit employees. At the recommendation of their attorney, the employer agreed to the union's demands and must now recognize Antioch Hyundai as a union shop.
- Local 1101 filed for arbitration against Sunnyvale VW for terminating an employee without just cause. The union was successful in settling this grievance when the employer agreed to award the terminated employee \$5,000 in severance pay.
- Local 1546 filed for arbitration against Safeway when they terminated an employee without just cause. The union took this grievance to arbitration and won. The arbitrator ordered Safeway to reinstate the employee and also awarded the grievant 30 days of back pay.



How your rights were won

Our rights don't just fall out of sky. Somebody fought for them and won them – for union and non-union workers, alike. Here's the story of how one important right was won.

Back in 1977, Jerry Bowers, a mechanic and member of Local 1546, had his tools stolen from his jobsite at Utility Trailer. He felt that the employer should be responsible for replacing the tools and the union agreed.

The union filed a grievance, which was denied. They took the case to District Court and lost there, but, in 1980, won on appeal. This case was the basis for Section 2802 of the California Labor Code.

Although the code isn't explicitly about mechanics' tools, it clearly establishes an employers' liability to pay an employee for tools that were stolen or destroyed, provided the employee took reasonable care.

While it doesn't happen frequently, a fire or break-in is certainly a concern for mechanics who may keep upwards of \$30-40,000 worth of tools at their worksite.

Remember the right to have your lost or stolen property reimbursed by the employer was won for you by your union. (And don't forget to give your employer an updated inventory of your toolbox.)

The key to a strong union is ORGANIZINGand 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.)

Local 1528 - Modesto Retiree Club *on the move*



Local 1528's Retiree Club meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at the union hall (unless on an outing). Past activities include an Alcatraz cruise, outings to parks and zoos, casino trips, picnics, pot lucks, fundraisers, annual Christmas dinners, etc. Members decide "where, when and how." New members are always welcome. Come check us out.

Club members at a recent Alcatraz cruise and lunch



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

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

ILCA

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



IT'S ALL POLITICAL

Machinists bring it to the halls of Congress

By GARRY HORROCKS District 190 Business Rep

From as far away as Alaska, Wisconsin, Maine and California, Machinists descended on Washington D.C. for the 2011 Legislative Conference.

More than 200 "Fighting Machinists" made the trek with one single goal in mind: to hold their elected officials' feet to the fire. "Don't forget it was our hard work that put these Senators and Congressmen and women in office," IAM Political Director Matt McKinnon told the fired-up crowd. "We phone banked, house called and talked to our members about electing them and if these officials don't want to vote with us, we will vote them out."

Even as the conference opened on Monday morning, it was clear that the Fighting Machinists meant business. From International President R. Thomas Buffenbarger all the way to new rank and file members, everyone rolled up their sleeves and charged the hill, Capitol Hill that is.

Thomas Brandon, Director of the California Conference of Machinists, laid the groundwork well in advance of the Californian team's arrival. Brandon secured appointments with the legislators when possible and when the legislators' schedulers failed to return phone calls and emails, Brandon led his team right in to the legislator's office and asked for a meeting.

By the end of the grueling three days of lobbying, the District 190 team had visited the offices of Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne



District 190 staff hits the streets and halls of Washington, D.C. From left: Richard Breckinridge; Art Gonzalez, Tom Brandon, Steve Older and IAM Grand Lodge Rep Ray Rivera.

Feinstein, and Congressmembers Pete Stark, Jackie Speier, Mike Honda, Barbara Lee, Zoe Lofgren, George Miller, Lynn Woolsey, Anna Eshoo, Jerry McNerney, John Garamendi, Mike Thompson and Sam Farr.

The Machinists lobbyists informed their legislators about our members' most pressing issues, such as defeating the three trade bills that are under consideration. They also discussed protecting Social Security, reforming banking, securing federal funding for programs that preserve IAM jobs and supporting agendas

like "Make it in America", that will create new jobs for Machinists by reinvigorating the nation's manufacturing sector.

Washington sat up and took notice that the Machinists were in town with a heavy-hitting line up of guest speakers who addressed the convention. These included AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker, Senior VP of Public Policy for the Boeing Company Timothy Keating, Senior VP of the Lockheed Martin Corporation Gregory Dahlberg, and MSNBC's Ed Shultz, who stopped by to entertain the delegates with his political wit and insight.

The conference culminated with a reception, where District 190 delegates had the opportunity to escort Minority Leader of the House Nancy Pelosi to the podium. The delegates were also honored that night with a surprise visit by Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, who gave an encouraging speech telling the audience how she has not forgotten her humble beginnings and that both her parents were strong

union members. She reminded us that "you now have a friend in the U.S. Labor Department."

Just before leaving town, bus loads of delegates attended a rousing rally in front of the offices of the downtown Business Improvement District (BID) which supply Safety and Maintenance personnel (SAM) to the downtown DC business district. The SAMs decided to improve their lives and voted to join the IAM. Then the BID retained a union-busting law firm which has been stalling first contract negotiations with the IAM Federal District 1.

Local 1484 backs Janice Hahn for Congress



Endorsed by Local 1484 and also by the California Conference of Machinists, Hahn is shown here receiving a donation check from the MNPL for Local 1484 and Districts 947 and 725. (From left: Kevin Kucera, Chris Ward, Janice Hahn, Walter Nelson, Dickie Amai and Larry Olinger.)

When Congresswoman Jane Harman vacated her seat to become the head of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 16 candidates vied for a chance to take over the 36th Congressional seat and several were good friends to labor.

Local 1484 was quick to endorse Janice Hahn for the position. "Janice has always been there for us," says Business Rep Kevin Kucera. "She's represented our area in the City Council for years and whenever we needed help or backing, she stepped up."

The special election was held on May 17 and the runoff election is slated for July 12. Hahn took first place in the special election and will face Republican Craig Huey in the runoff.

Pay your dues on-line

Here's how:

First, you must be able to access your bank account on-line.

- Go into the bank's bill-payer section.
- 2 Make the "payee" for the check 'IAM&AW.'
- For address, put in the address of your local union (see page 8 for addresses.)
- For account number, use your card number (or book number). If you don't know what your card number is, call your local lodge.
- You can choose whether or not to pay automatically. You can easily set it up so that the check is sent out on the first of every month.

Depending on your bank, this transaction will be free or there may be a small fee.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We didn't get any letters this issue, but don't hesitate to write if something in *The Sparkplug* makes you happy or mad or inspires you to action. 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

Get your IAM news on the web!



Local 1546 members have a new website for their local news that was created by Communicator Joaquin Santos. Go to:

www.IAM1546.com

For everyone else, visit the District 190 website at:

www.iamdistrict190.org

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AROUND

for growing the movement and part-

nering to organize new members in

Struggling at VSE

it wants and hopes the union won't

notice that the contract has been

breached. That didn't happen at Fort

Hunter Liggett, where Local 93 has a

change in working conditions by forc-

ing everybody to drug test when they

don't have drug testing in the contract,"

says Business Rep Richard Breckin-

labor board and will be taking the case to arbitration. "This comes two short months before we open the con-

tract for negotiations," Breckinridge

The union filed charges with the

ridge. They also fired six employees.

"The company made a unilateral

service contract with VSE.

Sometimes a company does what

the region.

Local 1173 walks bridge in solidarity with Wisconsin workers



On April 4, as part of the nationwide "We Are One" events held to support the workers in Wisconsin and other states who are fighting back against GOP efforts to end their collective bargaining rights, 1000 people walked across the Carquinez Bridge and Local 1173 was there.

Local 1173 Communicator-Educator and Central Labor Council Delegate, Brian Fealy helped organize the group.

From left: Mark Hollibush, Ray Lehre, Rhonda Gonsalves, Cindy Gagliardi, Bob Gonsalves, Brian Fealy, Steve Strom, Stephen Passafume, Rick Rodgers, and Steve Older. (Margaret Lehre and Tom Fitzsimmons from Local 1173 also participated but are not in this picture.)

Local 93 - San Jose

Contract updates

Local 93 members approved a new two-year agreement with Commercial Truck Company in Salinas. "They'll be getting modest wage increases and maintaining the status quo on health and welfare and pension benefits," says Business Rep Sam Saiu.

And over at BAE Systems in Santa Clara, the members now have a new three year agreement that includes wage increases.

Saiu reports that contracts are still open at Industrial Machine Shop in Salinas and Granite Rock in Aromas. Negotiations for a first Agreement continue with Kimball Motor Com-

David Sanchez and Derrol Shupe, who both work at the Granite Rock Company, are now journeymen machinists. They received their Journeyman Machine Maintenance Certificates from the General Secretary Treasurer's Office for completing their apprenticeships through the Bay Area and Central Coast Machinists Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee.

As everyone who's gone through apprenticeship knows, it's not easy to work and go to school at the same time. But the effort pays off with a good career. Congratulations to David and Derrol!

has been a lesson in patience and delay.

the legal system is grinding slowly."

Kudos for organizing

The Monterey Bay Central Labor

Council has recognized Local Lodge 93's organizing efforts at its annual Labor Awards Dinner held April 29, 2011. The union received an award

Until recently, the union has had a good relationship with the company, but Breckinridge believes that they're testing the waters to see how much the union will take. He says he just received a letter announcing that the ORGANIZING CHALLENGES

> "They've decided to do whatever they felt like without talking to us and we won't stand for any of it."

> company will force the members to

use their vacation for unpaid leave,

which is contrary to past practice.

Local 653 - Fresno

Contracts updates

Just as negotiations at Herwaldt Subaru started, the union was able to get the termination of a member reduced to a suspension, and the member was returned to work.

Over the next couple of months, Business Rep Tom Rotella will open talks with Ruan, Fresno Truck Center, G&H Diesel and Elliott Manufacturing.

Grievance Win

After the union grieved a wrongful termination at United Parcel Service, the Board of Adjustment agreed with the union's assertions and returned the member to work.

pany in San Luis Obispo. **Congrats grads!**

drew the election so we can go back in when the guys are ready again." Juarez says that, in the course of the labor board's hearing process, the union uncovered several wage/hour violations, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to the guys. "I blame the labor board's delays for enabling the employer to exert pressure and have time to buy the guys' favor. But, we've seen it before. Things improve for a while, but don't last, and then the workers come back to us to for a new election."

Mercedes Benz delays cost workers dearly

Dealing with the Mercedes Benz dealerships in Anaheim and in San Diego

In San Diego, the techs voted for union representation in August, 2010. The

company appealed, and even though the Labor Board filed a complaint against

the company, a decision isn't expected until July 18. "The company has con-

tinued to make changes after election day without bargaining," says Area

Director Jesse Juarez. "The members voted for the union almost a year ago, but

techs at Mercedes Benz of Anaheim. Due to a variety of company-sponsored

delays, the election wasn't scheduled until May 19th—more than 100 days

after the initial filing. "The company brought in the typical anti-labor consult-

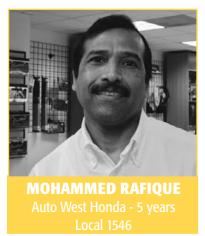
ants, held one-on-one meetings, and tried to intimidate the guys. While we

started the campaign with almost unanimous support, ultimately, we'd have

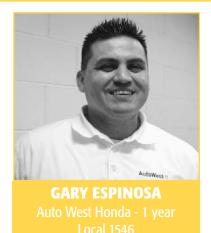
been lucky to squeak by with a narrow victory," Juarez explains. "We with-

In Anaheim, the union filed for an election in February on behalf of the 36

SHOP TALK: GM and Chrysler paid back their government loans, but is the



"The industry's not really back. If it were, we'd see continuous customers coming in, buying and selling parts. We need to get the housing industry going first, otherwise the auto industry won't go anywhere."



"It's going to come up. I think it'll eventually come back, once the housing market starts to improve and people start getting more jobs."



"After the slump, I think it's starting to rebound. The tsunami in Japan effected the industry, especially the Acura line. Honda parts are mostly sourced locally so it didn't hurt us too badly. Our industry will probably get better as the economy gets better."



JUAN RAMIREZ GONZALEZ

"The crisis in this industry started back at 9/11. Everything has been slow-car sales, detailing and service. It's not back yet."



"They're not selling are definitely slov for about three ye about the future, coming back."

HE LOCALS

Local 1101 - San Jose

Dealer contracts done & due

The 35 members at Stevens Creek Toyota ratified a new four-year contract. They'll get 60¢ wage increases each year of the contract.

Business Rep Richard Breckinridge reports that the contracts at Pearcy Toyota and Alison BMW are just opening.

Local 1484-Wilmington

Fair trade not free trade

Local 1484 members have been actively lobbying to stop the Korean Free Trade Agreement, reports Business Rep Kevin Kucera. "This is the next biggest trade agreement to NAFTA, and would severely impact our members, as this is a manufacturing local. It would be hard to compete with the 40,000 workers in the Korean free trade zone who work for less than \$1/day.

Contract updates

The union is in contract talks with Port of America; the contract expires on June 30. Several other contracts are opening up soon.

Local 1546 - Oakland

Fighting Groth

First, the U.S. District Court granted an injunction against Groth Brothers Chevrolet in Livermore because the company unilaterally reduced its pension contributions by 90%. Then, on May 18, the dealership filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and stopped paying the employee health insurance.

"This has historically been a good employer, but the economy has unhinged them," says Area Director Don Crosatto. The current owner, Robin Groth, is the daughter of previous set of owners. Business has been tough, as with all Chevy dealerships. "In fact, it's been so bad that employee paychecks have frequently bounced."

The issue goes back to 2006, when Groth asked to be able to reduce her pension contribution. The Business Rep at that time, Craig Andrews, suggested that they hold off making the change pending an upcoming arbitration with the Pension Trustees. Unfortunately, in early 2007, the arbitrator ruled that he did not have jurisdiction to rule. Without a decision, the union agreed to reopen the contract to reduce the contribution at the employer's request. The employer's attorney knew about this, because he was at the

In 2008, the new Pension Protection Act stipulated that employers couldn't reduce their contribution at all. At this point, Groth decided to reduce it by 92%, going from \$586 down to \$50. While she promised the employees that she'd instead put money into a 401K plan, the union has no evidence that ever happened.

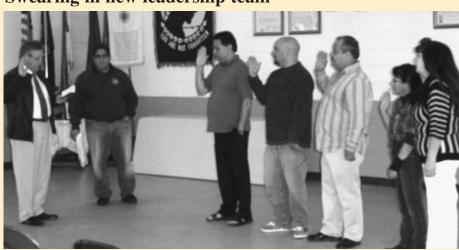
table. They never made the request.

The Trust Fund sent her to collection. She filed a countersuit for misrepresentation. When mediation went nowhere, the case went back to court.

The union and trust fund asked the court for a "Summary Judgment," meaning that there's no way the employer could make its case. In April, 2011, the judge ruled in the union's favor. "He told the employer that she's flat out wrong," says Area Director Don Crosatto. "That doesn't happen a lot. It essentially says they brought a frivolous case."

Local 2005 - Livingston

Swearing in new leadership team



Directing Business Rep Jim Beno swore in Local 2005's new officers at their monthly meeting held on May 15. From left: DBR Jim Beno, Business Rep Pedro Mendez, President Joga Chahal, Vice President Mike Farias, Trustees Miguel Melgoza, Abundia Romo, Sentinel Juanita Santiago. According to Business Rep Tom Rotella, the new officers will have a full plate as negotiations with Foster Farms are set to open next fall. Meantime, Mendez and Rotella have been busy working on many issues, from correcting overtime and work assignments to fighting terminations.

It has just come to light, through the bankruptcy filing, that the IRS has a lien against the dealership for more than \$1 million. "We hope that the employers' share of the employee's social security contribution has been paid, but we're not sure," says Crosatto.

The union also got a list of Groth's creditors. "At about \$300,000 in back pension contributions, interest and penalties, the pension fund is the dealership's biggest creditor besides the IRS," adds Crosatto, who speculates that Groth spent close to \$100,000 in legal fees, of which \$37,000 are still outstanding.

The dealership is still open for business. Groth has requested deep concessions, including 10-20% pay cuts, and no longer covering family health insurance—a cost of about \$800/ month for those with families, and forcing the mechanics to work on flat rate. The union understands that the dealership is not in good shape and will entertain concessions, but "there are a lot of issues raised by her proposals that will require negotiations," Crosatto says.



Local 1528-Modesto

Local holds first ice cream social

Local 1528 members, and their kids and grandkids enjoyed games, movies and all the ice cream and toppings they could eat at the local's first ice cream social on May 15, 2011. A voter registration table netted five new voters.

"Even though it was raining outside, we made full use of the lodge and turned a gloomy day into a fun-filled ice cream social event," said Diane Stewart. "Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a success."

Watch The Sparkplug for an announcement about the second Ice Cream social.

auto industry back yet? What do you see?



ng a lot. Things

ver. It's been bad ears. I don't know but I don't see it



"We're seeing it trend slowly back up. It is still slow, however. We have our daily challenges. Clients don't have a job; they can't pay, so they put off the service. Others are working and all is fine. It seems like sales are okay."



JOSE MEDINA

"It's nowhere near coming back. We have the traffic, but it's basically oil changes and warranty work. We're doing much less preventive maintenance. Most people put things off."



RODNEY JUAREZ

"I think it's on the upside a little bit. We see a little improvement. The last few years have been a struggle. People are doing smaller repairs to keep their cars on the road, using what little money they have available."



DAVID SHETRONE

"It's still off and on. Some weeks will be good and others are off. We've had an increase since it hit bottom in 08/09, but it's definitely still down from before then."

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IN THE NEWS

Labor Board okays union display of giant rats

Federal regulators say union activists have the legal right to display giant inflatable rats outside companies during labor disputes.

In May, the National Labor Relations Board ruled that putting up a 16-foot-tall rat balloon is allowed even if the business is not directly involved in the conflict between the union and another employer.

Unions often use the giant rat as a form of street theater. The goal is to shame companies that hire outside contractors who refuse to use union workers or pay union-scale wages.

The case was closely watched by business groups who claim the

giant rat is too coercive and confrontational. But the labor board says the rats are a form of symbolic speech that don't interfere with business activity.

Report: Out-of-Pocket Medicare Costs Double Under Republican Plan

by James Parks, AFL-CIO NOW

Republicans have claimed that their Medicare "fix" would not impact current retirees, but a new state-by-state analysis by the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee (JEC) disproves that contention

The report shows that current Medicare beneficiaries will be harmed by the Republican budget, immediately losing preventive services such as mammograms and facing higher prescription drug costs. The Republican plan also would reopen the donut hole, the gap in Medicare Part D that had forced beneficiaries to pay 100 percent of their drug costs after they exceeded an initial coverage limit and until they qualified for catastrophic coverage.

The JEC also found that annual out-of-pocket Medicare health care



costs will more than double in every state for seniors turning 65 in 2022 under the Republican budget plan. Seniors living in Florida would be the hardest hit with a \$7,383 jump in medical costs, the JEC estimates

"If Republicans have their way, traditional Medicare will no longer exist in 2022," says Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.), chairman of the JEC. "Instead, our elderly will get a voucher to purchase private insurance, but the voucher won't keep pace with health care costs. The result would be a staggering increase in out-of-pocket costs beginning in 2022."

Wisconsin anti-union law overturned—for now

A Wisconsin judge struck down a law taking away nearly all collective bargaining rights from public sector workers in that state. Dane County Circuit Judge Maryann Sumi ruled that Republican legislators violated Wisconsin's open meetings law by giving less than 24 hours notice of the meeting at which the law was being voted on. She says that renders the law void. The Wisconsin Supreme Court is set to hear arguments on the case June 6.

"What we've seen in Wisconsin from the beginning is an arrogant disregard for the voices of working people," said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, in a written statement. "This decision underscores the point that when people's rights are blithely violated, our politics is broken. Gov. Walker and Senate Republicans may forge ahead to undermine middle-class families, voting rights and more, but they will not be able to do it without full and close scrutiny."

Not only has the Wisconsin legislature's dirty deeds been deemed illegal, but on June 3, the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board announced that they approved the signatures required for recall elections against six GOP senators who supported the ploy.

At the same time, the Board also announced that they are not prepared to approve the signatures gathered by Republicans for the recall of their three Democratic targets. The board stated that the signatures "have raised numerous factual and legal issues which need to be investigated and analyzed."

With six Republicans facing a recall election, Democrats only need

three wins to take back the state senate. No Democrats are currently facing a recall. That's a pretty sizable advantage for the Democrats.

'Paycheck protection' returns

They're at it again. A group, started by unnamed financial backers, is raising cash to put a proposal on the ballot that will block unions from using union dues for political contributions.

Californians Against Special Interests, the committee formed to support the proposal, has raised \$345,000 in contributions and funds left over from their 2010 campaign.

A similar "paycheck protection" measure, backed by then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, was defeated in 2005.

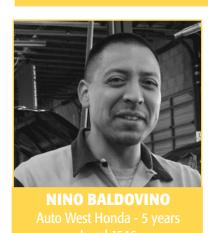
The current measure would require that union committees and other employers obtain authorization in writing from employees who wish to contribute to the organization's political campaign spending. It also bans unions and corporations from giving to candidates and candidate-controlled committees.

This bill would primarily affect public employee unions, as private unions already must get special permission from members to give funds to political campaigns.

The organization's website does not include any information about who's backing it, but given the disparity between union and corporate contributions and the major impact the proposition would have on public employee union political clout, its unlikely that the donors are union sympathizers.

Union members should be aware that this initiative is not in their interests, and should strongly consider declining to sign a petition to get it on the ballot. If enough signatures are collected, it will be on a ballot in 2012.

SHOP TALK: What's the state of the auto industry?



"It's a slow comeback, but it's coming back. It fluctuates; it's not steady. But it's definitely better than it was a couple of years ago."



MARCO GONZALEZ
Auto West Honda - 6 years
Local 1546

"Honda is doing okay with sales. More than before, but still down a bit."



"The industry is coming back. Hybrids are taking off. People are still afraid of electric cars—running out of juice before you can plug them in. Those technologies might slow work for us, or make us head in a different direction."



Auto West Honda - 3 years
Local 1546

"I think the industry is about the same. It depends on the day. It's dead in the winter, but we do oil changes year-round, and we can sometimes get some up-sales from that."



GUEST COLUMNIST

Wisconsin Comes to California

Righeimer and his

cronies are part of a

national strategy to dis-

mantle collective

bargaining, city by city,

if necessary.

By California Labor Federation **Executive Secretary-Treasurer** Art Pulaski

Think Wisconsin-style attacks on workers' rights could never happen in California? Think again.

Much like Gov. Scott Walker in Wisconsin, City Councilman Jim Righeimer is using the budget as an excuse to go after public sector workers' jobs, pensions and unions in the Orange County town of Costa Mesa. His plan is to fire half of the City's workers and outsource their jobs to private companies—leaving hundreds of working families high and dry, and putting even more taxpayer money directly into the pockets of wealthy corporations.

In May, the Costa Mesa CEO, (yes, their city bureaucracy strongly resembles a corporation), presented a smorgasbord of no-bid spending to private companies that wouldn't save the city a dime-in fact, it

would increase the city's budget deficit by \$150,000. To add insult to injury, the City actually boosted the amount of one no-bid contract from \$25,000 to \$145,000. It seems these 'spending cuts" apply to workers'

salaries and benefits, but not to the city leadership. At the same time they're trying to fire half of the city's workers to supposedly save money, they hired a \$3,000-aweek spokesperson, and they're spending

more than \$7 million to pay for cosmetic upgrades to City Hall. And they're not stopping at Costa Mesa.

Righeimer and his cronies are part of a national strategy to dismantle collective bargaining, city by city, if necessary. Orange County Republican Party chairman Scott Baugh boasts that his anti-worker campaign puts him on the cutting edge of Republican politics and says Costa Mesa is "ground zero" for other cities. It's certainly no secret that the OC GOP is committed to spreading the Costa Mesa model to other cities—their website refers to labor

> leaders as "Obama's union bosses" and claims retirement security that people work for their whole lives is a "taxpayer rip-off."

> And while the conservative right has been leading the anti-

worker charge, some Democrats have even gotten in on the union busting. San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed is pushing a "fiscal emergency" measure that would gut workers' collective bargaining and sharply reduce retirement security. Reed's measure isn't at all necessary. In fact, San Jose unions have come to the table to negotiate concessions with the mayor to help ease the city's fiscal crisis. Instead of working with city workers, Reed adopted a sleazy political tactic to strip workers of their ability to come together to advocate for decent wages, working conditions and benefits.

These attacks aren't about jobs or pensions. They're about politicians trying to eliminate our basic right to have a union. If the anti-worker forces succeed in stripping collective bargaining away in Costa Mesa and San Jose, you can be sure it won't be long until they come to your town.

That's why it's important that we all stand together to fight back. In the labor movement, we are one. It doesn't matter if we're in the public sector or private sector or whether we're teachers or truck drivers. Our power comes from unity. Our strength from solidarity. Together, we must beat back these attacks, no matter where they arise.



BENEFITS NEWS

Annual pension letter causes unneeded angst

Recently, the annual funding notice about the AI Pension Trust sent to all contributors caused more confusion than clarity.

The main issue that people called our pension administrators or their business reps about was the proposed changes for "inactive vesteds," (an inactive member who hasn't had a pension payment made for more than 18 months).

To clarify: inactive vesteds may still retire at age 65.

However, the trustees eliminated the early retirement option. While they also eliminated the 100% surviving spouse option, they maintained the 50% and 75% surviving spouse options. From here on in, surviving spouses must wait until the spouse would have reached age 65 to collect the surviving spouse option.

By way of update in

English (not in legalese): The financial markets are currently doing well, even if the rest of the economy isn't, and the pension trust has been a beneficiary of that good fortune. 2009 and 2010 have been good investment years, but the pension is still recovering from the 2008 hole.

Nevertheless, the trust paid out \$120 million in pension payments in 2010.

> New summary plan descriptions are about to come out on the health and welfare plan. These are the rules that govern the plan and explain your rights and benefits in more detail. While it's not exciting reading, it should answer any questions you have. Once they're available, contact ATPA or your local union office to get a copy.

more A few union-made items

Banquet Chicken Pot Pie Betty Crocker Pasta Alfredo Campbell's Soup **Chef Boyardee** Mini-ABCs **Dannon** Activa—Prune, mango, peach **Del Monte** Spaghetti Sauce **Dinty Moore** Beef Stew **Gebhardt** Refried Beans Kraft Pasta Salad Prego Fresh Mushroom Pasta Sauce & Meat Pasta Sauce **Rosarito** Refried Beans **Skippy** Super Chunk Peanut Butter Wholesome Helper Beef Stroganoff **Yoplait** Fiber One Yogurt

Note: These items are produced by Machinists, Teamsters, Food & Commercial Workers, Bakers Union members, or the UIW. It's likely that other products by these companies are also union made, but not 100% certain. Check with unionlabel.org

Contact us at 510-836-2484

SHOP TALK: Is the auto industry coming back yet?

ATPA is the administrator for the

Automotive Industries

Health & Welfare and Pension Trust Funds.



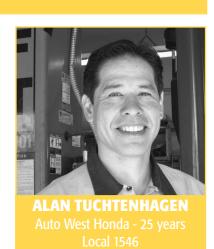
"I don't know where the industry is going. We're starting to face stiff competition from Hyundai. They're coming on strong with their 100K/7 year warranties. Soon everybody will have to step up to their game."



"This year is slower than last year. I don't know if the industry is coming back or not. It seems to be getting slower."



"The consumers are doing well; they're getting great deals. But we, the techs, are hurting. As a flat rate shop, our time is precious."



"Today's nice; last week was a struggle. The industry's not back. It's more off and on."

PAGE 8 June/July 2011

Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State & Flyaway Productions

Presents

Sympathetic

An aerial dance performance exploring the historic 1934 San Francisco General Strike.

July 9, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

by Jo Kreiter/Flyaway Productions with music composed by Pamela Z Celebrating the Labor Archives and Research Center's 25th Anniversary

Dance will be performed on the side of the Historic Rincon Annex Post Office building Corner of Steuart and Mission Streets in San Francisco

Free and open to the public.

A free walking tour will take place between the performances

MOVING? Or need to report a member re-



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 con-

tribution, but you'll also get a ticket for the 2011 raffle.

Each member who contributes \$25 or more as a sponsoring member will receive a ticket for our drawing. Raffle prizes will include Machinists Union watches, shirts and other goodies. The membership drive starts now and runs through July 26, 2011. The drawing will be held at District 190 Delegates' meeting in July. You need not be present to win.

UNION MEETINGS

District Lodge 190

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

Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month June 28 • July 26 • August 23

Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. **General Delegates' Meeting:** 7:00 p.m.

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

June 16 • July 21 • August 18

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

June 7 • July 5 • August 2

Retirees' Club: 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: June 15 • July 20 • August 17

Local 93

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

Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month

June 14 • July 12 • August 9 **Grievance Committee**: 3:30 p.m. **Executive Board Meeting:** 4:30 p.m. **Membership Meeting:** 5:00 p.m.

Note: Office hours are 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

June 1 • July 6 • August 3 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 20 • May 18 • June 15

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

June 15 • July 20 • August 17 Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m. **Membership Meeting:** 5:30 p.m.

Local 1546

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

Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month

June 7 • July 5 • August 2 **General Membership Meeting:** 7:00 p.m.

Member Education Meeting: 5:30 p.m. **Executive Board Meeting:** 6:30 p.m. on the Thurs-

day preceding membership meeting June 30 • July 28 • September 1

Retiree Club Pot Luck Luncheon: 12 noon on the

first Wednesday of each month June 1 • July 6 • August 3

Alcoholics Anonymous: 9 a.m. every Saturday

Local 80i 7717 Oakport Street,

2102 Almaden Rd., #105

The office remains open during lunch.

San Jose, CA 95125

408-723-4900

Oakland, CA 94621 800-655-2182

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

June 16 • July 21 • August 18 Membership Meeting: 4:00 p.m.

June 9 • July 14 • August 11

Executive Board Meeting: 5:30 p.m.

General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.

Meetings are the second Thursday of the month

Local 1584

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

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

June 16 • July 21 • August 18 **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: June 7 • July 5 • August 2

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

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

Note: Office hours are now 8 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Membership/Shop Stewards' Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on

June 16 • July 21 • August 18

ocal 1596

4210 Petaluma Blvd. No. Petaluma, CA 94952 707-795-0086

Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month June 21 • July 19 • August 16

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

150 South Boulevard 650-341-2689

Thursday of the month June 9 • July 14 • August 11

the third Thursday of the month

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

Meetings are held the third Sunday of each

month at the Veterans Memorial Hall: 1605 7th Street, Livingston, CA 95334. No meeting in June • July 17 • August 21

Executive Board Meetings: 9 a.m. at Union Hall **General Membership Meetings:**

Spanish: 1:00 p.m. English: 2:00 p.m.

Local 1414

San Mateo, CA 94402

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

June 16 • July 21 • August 18

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

June 9 • July 14 • August 11

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

June 16 • July 21 • August 18

Retirees' Club: 11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of March, June, Sept., Dec. All are welcome! June 1 • Sept. 7 • Dec. 7

.ocal 2182

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

Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month

June 14 • July 12 • August 9

Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Retirees' VISTA CLUB: 11:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month:

June 15 • July 20 • August 17