

Workers stand together to organize

When the COVID-19 crisis hit and various levels of shelter-in place orders were issued across California, it was hard to know what to expect in terms of industries and jobs. The travel and hospitality industry—airlines, rental cars, restaurants and hotels—was immediately decimated. Grocery stores and on-line shops and deliveries saw business boom. Workers were considered either essential or expendable, and millions were suddenly out of work.

Back during the Great Depression of the 1930s, workers joined together in solidarity and created a strong and vibrant labor movement. While we don't yet know how this crisis will play out, to date, it has activated organizing campaigns across California. "The current situation may be rejuvenating the union movement," says Directing Business Rep Jim Beno.

Here are some of the many campaigns taking place right now.



Techs at Tracy Toyota take to the streets to demand safe working conditions and proper PPE.

Tracy Toyota

Fourteen mechanics at this dealership owned by famed 49ers Cornerback/Safety Ronnie Lott went on strike in mid-May. "That's the day we marched on the boss to tell him that 100% of his mechanics wanted a union and that we had filed a petition with the Labor Board for them to join the IAM," says Area Director for Organizing Jesse Juarez.

"The issues that compelled the organizing drive were that that the employer wasn't complying with COVID guidelines; he wasn't providing proper PPE, wasn't cleaning the cars thoroughly before and after the mechanics worked on them, and the new service manager was a bully, threatening to replace the mechanics. So they walked off the job on May 15."

Juarez says that the following Tuesday, the employer responded by hiring union buster John Boggs who asserted that the mechanics were striking for economic reasons, which gave the employer leeway to hire replacement workers.

"This employer is playing hardball," says Juarez. "They're trying to open up the bargaining unit to 29 other employees, which would require a hearing. But due to COVID, the Labor Board had been closed for months."

"The employer is trying to crush these workers during a pandemic," Juarez adds. "We offered to return to work but they locked out some of the

guys. We're fighting that as an illegal lock-out."

Shop Foreman Kevin Humeston has plenty of health and safety complaints. "The facility is not safe to work in during a pandemic. We don't have proper PPE. They're not following safety protocols. Each car should be sanitized before and after we work on it; they need to disinfect, cover seats and steering wheels. And, they're not fixing equipment so we're working in unsafe conditions."

Humeston says that management is so bad that in the nine years he's worked there, he's already on his tenth service manager. "I want to do good work, but they're making it impossible."

The shop's other foreman, Tyrone Jackson, has been there for six years. "The union drive has been brewing for a while," he says. "There's been wage theft, our 401Ks are screwed up and the cost of our benefits is through the roof. We've had enough."

Jackson added that the new service manager is not knowledgeable about Toyota's ways and policies. "He's been forcing us to do warranty work improperly."

"This is all about respect and dignity. People are sick and tired of employers not taking their grievances seriously," Juarez added.

At presstime, the workers were still picketing. The company is still trying to dilute the unit and delay the election. But, the Labor Board is back in business and will be holding a Zoom hearing to figure out the election process once and for all.



A simple request at Tracy Toyota

Ryder - Stockton

The workers at Ryder in Stockton decided they wanted a union and the IAM launched its organizing campaign on St. Patrick's Day.

Ninety percent of the 35 or so mechanics and fuelers joined Jesse Juarez to approach management on March 17. The group tried to organize in April, 2019 with the Teamsters but, before an elec-

tion could be held, they gave the company another chance and the Teamsters backed off.

"Somehow our intentions leaked out and management was expecting us," says Juarez. "These are the same HR people that we just completed bargaining with for a five-year contract in Benicia and Hayward. They admitted we have a great relationship but they refused to recognize the union in Stockton."

This group's main complaints are COVID safety and getting bullied by management.

The labor board was closed when the union filed its petition. "Getting



Mechanics and fuelers at Ryder in Stockton vote for union representation.

continued on Page 5



IN MEMORIAM

Bill Schechter

1943-2020



Bill Schechter

Bill Schechter, long-time IAM activist and officer died on April 23, 2020.

W.J. "Bill" Schechter was born in Detroit, Michigan. Bill joined the Air Force out of high school. His first union was UAW, but he quickly

joined the IAM in Detroit where he became a journeyman Heavy Duty Diesel Mechanic.

After migrating to California in the 1970s, he joined Local 1546 where he quickly became an active member, serving as Shop Steward at Golden Gate Freightliner, joining the Executive Board in the mid 80s, becoming Recording Secretary in 1995. He became Secretary-Treasurer in 2006 and served in that position until 2018. The Local named him Steward of the Year in 1992.

Bill was also a Trustee of the Alameda Central Labor Council for at least 15 years.

A generous donor to Guide Dogs of America, Bill was also frequently the largest single donor to the Machinists Non-Partisan Political League (MNPL), the IAM's political action fund. He also ran the Local's AA meeting for 25 years and was Secretary Treasurer of Machinists District Lodge 190 for ten years.

"Bill served several terms as Secretary Treasurer of District 190. He kept a watchful eye on the District finances and helped us through some pretty tough times," says District 190 Directing Business Rep Jim Beno. "He was dedicated to the labor movement and was always active in Local Lodge and District Lodge activities until his passing. He will be missed."

"Bill was proud that, for many years when he was a working mechanic, he gave more money to MNPL than the IAM International President. In all, he donated more than \$50,000 to the fund," says Area Director Don Crosatto. "He was incredibly generous with Guide Dogs, buying hundreds of raffle tickets and frequently winning golf clubs, that he didn't need. As he got older, his chief hobby was working for the union. Even as a part-time Secretary-Treasurer, Bill kept full-time hours. Although he could be cantankerous, he was a person who genuinely loved the union. We will miss his presence and booming voice."

In addition to his union brothers and sisters, Bill is survived by his wife, Lois.

The IAM District 190

Sparkplug

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Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor



UNION PEOPLE

IAM members give input to state policy

In May, Governor Gavin Newsom created an Economic Task Force that is charged with developing plans and guidelines for reopening the economy. A key sector of the economy, the manufacturing industry, is one that employs many of our District Lodge 190 members. The Governor's office contacted Directing Business Rep Jim Beno to help get direct input from some of our members who work in manufacturing, to get their experiences in dealing with the virus and share their ability to work and stay safe.

A zoom conference call was set up with the Governor, Task Force Chairman Tom Steyer and two of our District 190 Shop Stewards: Will Morris from Local 1584 and Jesse Wallace from Local

93 who both work for District 190 manufacturing employers.

Will and Jesse both gave the Governor a very candid and insightful report on dealing with the virus in their respective workplaces. One major takeaway that they both emphasized was that, once developed, the guidelines must be communicated plainly to the workforce and enforced consistently. Currently, our union is having great difficulty with employers not following their safety guidelines and protocols.

"On behalf of our members and the Machinists Union I want to thank Will and Jesse for representing the interests of all our members in this important endeavor," Beno said.

Congrats to Cemex Shop and Employee of the Year

Not only did the Cemex facility in Pleasanton co-win the 2019 Shop of the Year award from the company, mechanic and Local 1546 member Glenn Hart, who led the shop's clean-up efforts, won Cemex USA Employee of the Year.

Based in Monterrey, Mexico, Cemex is the biggest cement, readi-mix and aggregate company in the world; they have plants in more than 50 countries, and 30 states across the U.S.

In 2018, Cemex started a "best shop of the west," award as a competition between its Arizona, Nevada and California shops. "We gave Glenn a budget to make needed improvements to our shop," says Hart's boss John Urrutia. "The judging was based on safety, cleanliness and several other categories. In the end, we co-won for shop of the year with the shop in Orange (in Southern California). And, Glenn was named Employee of the Year for Cemex's U.S. shops."

As Glenn tells it, he started working at Cemex's Pleasanton shop in May, 2018, after a few months of training off-site. "When I walked into the shop, I thought it was a pig sty, an atrocious work environment. Certainly, it was nothing like what I was used to," he recalls, thinking that he wanted a worksite that was comparable to the dealerships he had worked in since 1992. "I wanted to make this shop one where I felt comfortable working so I could produce the best work I could."

He says that management was eager to support him in his effort to improve the facility.

"They opened the credit cards and let me do whatever I wanted," he says. "I called for inspections for Alameda County and internal inspections. I epoxied the floors and spraypainted all the walls white. When they saw how good things were looking, everyone started pitching in."

The next thing he knew, the presidents of Cemex-USA and of the Western Region visited the shop and they both loved it. "They wanted to enter me into a best shop contest. But I knew that the Los Angeles shop had just spent \$1 million to renovate and what I did could never compare," Glenn says. But ever up for the challenge, he says he just did what he could to make it great. "We took every part off the shelves. We painted the shelving units and

we organized and labeled everything."

Suddenly, one Friday afternoon, the company informed the shop that the contest inspection would take place the following Monday morning.

"At the same time, the Vice President told me that he wanted to look good, and that the sky's the limit for last minute fixes."

So Glenn and the crew of eight mechanics went to work to make the shop look perfect. "We worked

non-stop, all spending 35 hours on Saturday and Sunday to get the job done. When the inspectors showed up at 6 a.m. on Monday morning, I told them to take off their shoes before stepping into the shop. The next thing you know, we won the whole thing, which was incredible. It felt really good to have that much recognition," Glenn says with pride.

He says that one of the inspectors wanted to know how he set up the shop so well, asking if Glenn had a degree. "To me, it was just common sense. You put the most-used stuff up front and the less-used parts go to the back. They implemented this across the Bay Area, first in Oakland and then in Concord. But then, COVID hit."

Glenn says that he absolutely loves his job. "I can't believe it took this long to find what I love to do. I'm pleased to bring my dealership experience to this industry." In addition to the 20 trucks he's responsible for in Pleasanton, he also travels to San Jose, Union City, Oakland, Concord, Antioch and Berkeley. "I cover all the yards to help fix

something they can't fix.

In December, the new president of Cemex US awarded the eight mechanics at Pleasanton \$250 each for the best shop award. "They said that we exceeded their expectations for fixing up the shop. It's amazing what transpired from just a few months before."

Urrutia says that he's not one for recognition, but "it really was quite an honor to have won. Glenn really put his heart into it. He's a dynamite employee, always going above and beyond. He sets a high standard. We weren't in the running when we started this, but then it snowballed and we got recognition for that. It was a good deal."



Glenn Hart, Cemex' Employee of the Year (top) shares before and after photos of the Pleasanton shop.



FROM THE AI TRUST FUND

Your medical benefits during the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the global pandemic it created has impacted the participants in the Automotive Industries (AI) benefit plans in numerous ways. The Board of Trustees has taken steps to help participants under the AI Welfare Plan.

Blue Cross Direct Pay Plan

For Blue Cross Direct Pay Plan participants, effective for services received on or after March 18, 2020 and through the end of the emergency period in which the federal government has announced a National Emergency, the Fund will cover:

COVID-19 Testing – Covered at 100%

Diagnostic tests for COVID-19 from either an In-Network or Out-of-Network provider at 100% of the allowed charge, with no cost sharing to you or your dependents.

COVID-19 Treatment – Covered at 100% (In-Network Only)

Treatment of COVID-19 received from an In-Network provider at 100% of the allowed charge, with no cost sharing to you. This means that if a member receives treatment under a COVID-19 admission or diagnosis code from an In-Network provider during this time, the Plan will waive cost sharing.

In order to receive benefits at no cost sharing, you will have to receive treatment under a confirmed positive diagnosis of COVID-19, or have an inpatient admission for COVID-19, and your provider will need to use the correct codes for the diagnosis/treatment.

OptumRx - Prescription Drug Refills

OptumRx is waiving any refill-too-soon edits. This allows eligible OptumRx members to obtain early refills of their prescription medications if they have refills remaining on file at a participating retail or mail-order.

Blue Cross LiveHealth Online

Copayment Waiver for all Treatment.

Anthem Blue Cross LiveHealth Online

Anthem Blue Cross LiveHealth Online services will be provided with no cost-sharing for all treatment received. Please remember, LiveHealth Online is the Plan’s only provider for telehealth services where all cost sharing will be waived, except as otherwise provided for COVID-19 related tests and treatment, described above. Charges for any/all phone or online calls with another provider (In-Network or Out-of-Network), or any other services received where you are not personally examined by the provider will be covered at normal plan benefits (deductible, coinsurance).

Full information on the above benefit changes can be found on the Trust Fund website at www.aitrustfunds.org.

Kaiser

For participants who have elected coverage in the Kaiser medical plan, please visit <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/northern-california/health-wellness/coronavirus-information> for information on how Kaiser is assisting participants during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the latest information regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> or the State of California webpage dedicated to COVID-19 at <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the latest information regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> or the State of California webpage dedicated to COVID-19 at <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

Reminder: Looking for Former Pension Plan Participants

The Automotive Industries Pension Plan has approximately 2,000 participants over the age of 65 who are entitled to begin receiving their monthly benefit payment under the Plan but have not started the application process. If you believe that you or someone you know may be entitled to benefits under the Pension Plan, please contact the Trust Fund Office at 800-635-3105 and ask to speak with the Pension Department.

You may also view your pension benefit information on the Automotive Industries Pension Plan benefit website at www.aitrustfunds.org. The Plan has created a personal account page containing your pension information which can be accessed once a “User Account” is created. If eligible, there is a downloadable application for benefits available on the website.

About your 401K

If you looked at your 401K quarterly report for the quarter ending on March 31, you likely felt a shock at how quickly your retirement savings could disappear. “The stock market cratered in March, decreasing by 14% in the first quarter,” says Area Director Don Crosatto. “However, we’ve seen a tremendous uptick in the last two months. As of June 4, the Growth Fund of America was down 15% in first quarter, but is

now up 4% year-to-date. While other funds have not gone down or up quite so dramatically, as of June 4, most were down no more than 6%. Most of our members are invested in Target Date funds, which, at that time, were down at most by 2.4%, and many are even. Hopefully, when you look at your Second Quarter statement, you’ll feel some relief.”

No PPE charges at Delta

When Area Director Don Crosatto recently booked a dental appointment, he was surprised to get an email notifying him to expect a charge for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) used by the dental office. He contacted Delta Dental of California and this is what he learned.

“At this time, our policy that encompasses the bundling of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) into the procedure has not changed. Currently, a charge for sterilization/infection control is not billable under any Delta Dental plan and cannot be charged to the patient. We are monitoring the PPE situation and any changes will be communicated.”

According to Crosatto, the dental office may have a broad policy to charge for PPE for their patients, but they cannot charge it for those covered under a Delta Dental of California plan.

Guide Dogs of America still needs your support

Due to COVID-19, District 190 has had to cancel both the 2020 Lobster Feed and Guide Dogs golf tournament.

“One-third of the operating revenue for Guide Dogs of America comes from fundraising events like ours held around the nation,” says Directing Business Rep Jim Beno. “We may not be able to hold fundraising events this year, but the operational and ongoing needs for this important cause



continue and the organization needs our help.”

If members or sponsors are in a position to make a contribution to support the important work of Guide Dogs of America, please send a check to District Lodge 190 – made payable to GDA. (8201 Capwell Drive, Oakland, CA 94621

And put it on your calendar now: the next golf tournament is slated for August 27, 2021.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Retired and active members:

Please write in if something in *The Sparkplug* makes you happy or mad or inspires you to action. Be sure to give your full name, where you work, and Local number.

Letters may be submitted as follows:

e-mail: dchaplan@mindspring.com

mail: IAM District 190, 8201 Capwell Dr., Oakland, CA 94621

Thank you for your patience

By Don Crosatto, Area Director

On a personal note, I’d like thank the members for their patience during this crisis.

When the pandemic suddenly hit and the Bay Area counties were the first in the state ordered to shut down and shelter in place, our Alameda County-based Trust Fund was forced to send its workforce packing. They closed their offices and put everybody to work on computers at home, in many cases that entailed buying new computers and needing to be very conscious of privacy and security issues. The process was a scramble, but it ultimately went very smoothly, and we’ve gotten no calls of complaint!

The vast majority of members that we’ve interacted with over the last few months have been

patient, understanding the fact that it may take longer to get back to them, or we have to do business differently than normal. They’ve kept their good humor, which has made everyone’s life easier in a difficult time.

Because of wise planning at Trust Fund, we’ve had very few issues with people getting continuing coverage, and haven’t had any members lose coverage because they couldn’t get hold of the fund. Unfortunately, we did have a few employers who withheld payments, but we worked to straighten those situations out. Since the crisis started, all pension payments have gone out on time.

It may not be “business as usual,” but business is getting done.

Local 801

Trouble at UPS

There have been ongoing issues with UPS outsourcing bargaining unit work. “The Company is busier than ever but, at the same time, they’re limiting overtime and outsourcing work,” explains Area Director Mark Martin. “It’s like they’ve lost their damned minds!”

Local 1173

Keeping healthcare alive

According to Business Rep Brian Fealy, generally, dealerships in Contra Costa County worked to stay open during the shutdown. “It seems like they’re back to full employment.” Even when there were layoffs, Fealy says that most of the dealerships guaranteed healthcare coverage during the shutdown. “I guess it would look bad to cut healthcare during a pandemic.”

Just vote ‘no’ to decert

By a vote of 14-6, the members at Vallejo Toyota agreed that they wanted to keep their union representation and voted down a decertification election. “Last year, the members here went on strike and were on the street for 82 days. We had agreed to everything in the contract, but rejected the company’s desire to gut the union security clause,” Fealy says. The dealership implemented the contract, nevertheless.

A new hire who hadn’t been part of the strike filed for a decert election, which was held by mail ballot in May. Due to COVID, the labor board sequestered the ballots for two weeks to ensure they were virus-free.

“When the vote was finally counted on June 15, we proved that we have a majority of the members who want to be represented by the machinists union,” Fealy said. “We will demand the company come back to the bargaining table ASAP.”

Local 1484

Dealing with employers during COVID

Because of uncertainty and fear, every day poses a new challenge between employers and employees, says Area Director Kevin Kucera. “Dealing with employers during COVID is more challenging than ever before. We recently held a Board of Adjustment at Mercedes on Zoom. That could work okay, but some employers don’t have video cameras so they insist that we go to their premises for talks.”

He adds that everybody seems to be getting impatient with PPE—members want to stay safe, but it’s annoying to wear. Most employers are providing appropriate PPE, but not all.

“Our stewards are engaged with their employers to ensure member safety,” Kucera adds. “We’re very fortunate that we have a union and that we can insist on this and bargain over it.”

“Administratively, this has been a challenge. The office is closed but we’re fully operational,” he says. “Fortunately, the vast majority of our contracts have dues-check-off, so few members have to come in to pay their dues. And, we’re getting great interest in organizing new shows because employers are taking advantage.”

Member donates car for high school auto program

Retired Local 1414 member Mike Francini made a very special donation to help preserve the future of the industry he came out of—auto mechanics and technicians. He donated a 20XX Camaro in mint condition to the George Washington High School Auto Shop in San Francisco.

“The vehicles we have in the auto shop now have been disassembled and reassembled so many times,” says Instructor and Local 1414 member Rich Del Rosso. “It’s kind of like a frog in science class they could only be dissected so many times before you need a new frog.”

Local 1414 sponsors the auto shop at GW as a way to insure that young people learn about auto mechanics as a career choice. They are always looking for donations of late model vehicles—2005 to present. All



Thanks to retired member Mike Francini, GW auto shop students will have a cool classic car to work on.

donations are tax-deductible. If you’d like to make a donation, contact Mark Jayne at Local 1414.

Quick new contracts

Business Rep Brian Fealy reports the following new contracts:

The 10 techs and parts folks at Concord Mitsubishi-Kia have a new one-year deal, essentially a contract extension.

The one member at Drill-Tec Drilling and Shoring has a new one-year contract.

The 10 members at Soscol Auto Body ratified a two-year deal that includes an increase of \$0.50/hour each year.

Local 1484

A few layoffs

PortsAmerica MTC in Long Beach laid off 23 members.

Both the Acura and Mercedes Benz dealerships in San Diego laid off a third of their employees. Area Director Kevin Kucera notes that they’re both slowly coming back and re-hiring.

Local 1528

A COVID-related extension

Since the shelter-in-place orders got established, the demand for canned goods has increased by about 30 percent. Silgan, a long-time IAM employer, doesn’t create the prod-

uct, but creates the actual cans.

The union contract at Silgan Riverbank was due to expire this spring, but due to COVID, traditional bargaining wasn’t feasible. “We were successful in negotiating a one-year extension to the contract that provided wage increases far surpassing anything we’ve gotten in over a decade,” said Area Director Mark Martin. The 140 members ratified the contract extension overwhelmingly.

“A side benefit of being forced into getting an extension instead of a full new contract is that, now, the expiration date matches with our other Silgan plant in Modesto,” Martin adds. “The members at both plants are happy about that development.”

Local 1546

Facing a tough economy

“Most of our manufacturing shops did instantaneous layoffs as soon as the shelter-in-place orders came down,” says Area Director Don Crosatto. “Fortunately, many called folks back within a few weeks.”

However, a few may not be coming back. “The rental car companies saw their business evaporate. Hertz, in particular, was leveraged

to the hilt after going through an expensive bidding war to buy Dollar and Thrifty. They immediately laid off 10 mechanics and 200 Teamsters across the Bay Area. They have since filed for bankruptcy,” Crosatto adds. “It’s not clear how easy it will be to liquidate because they have a glut of cars in stock.”

While nobody knows which businesses will reopen fully and which will be hobbled by the COVID economy, Crosatto says that Berkeley Farms is the only permanent casualty. “And their closure was not due to COVID. It was another case of a highly-leveraged company getting sold for parts. That’s a sad story.”

Looting doesn’t help matters

When protesters took to the streets after the George Floyd murder and other cases of police brutality got national attention, criminal elements took advantage of the situation and looted several auto dealerships, including a few IAM-represented shops.

One group laid waste to the Mercedes-Benz dealership in Oakland, spray painting and setting on fire several luxury cars. Oakland Honda was also hit, with several cars stolen.

The non-union San Leandro Chrysler Dodge dealership lost about \$5 million in vehicles, including nearly all of the dealership’s \$90,000 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcats.

Members safe so far from COVID

The Business Reps from across District 190 report that no members have come down with COVID-19 at this point.

“There was a big outbreak at the Safeway Distribution Center in Tracy. About 50 Teamsters were diagnosed with COVID and one died,” says Crosatto. “But our guys work in a different building from where those cases were, so they didn’t get it.”

A few members were quarantined because they came in contact with someone who had COVID, but so far, none have contracted the virus themselves.



Local 1484 purchased masks for active and retired members. (CW from top left) Shop Stewards Pedro Gomez, Mercedes Benz of San Diego; Frank Chavez, ITS/ConGlobal; Jose Curiel, ITS/ConGlobal; and Area Directors Kevin Kucera & Jesse Juarez at El Cajon Honda.

THE LOCALS

On-going talks

The Local has started negotiations with Aramark. “Management is on travel hold, so we’ll have virtual negotiations with the labor relations manager who’s in Las Vegas,” says Crosatto.

And talks have gotten underway with MV Transportation for two groups of workers, one in Union City and a newly-organized group (WestCAT) in Pinole.

Local 1584

Up and down at Veriflo

Veriflo, a manufacturer of memory chips in Richmond, remained open and even did some hiring during the weeks of shelter-in-place. “In fact, they gave the members a 15% COVID pandemic appreciation premium—and were our only shop that offered hazard pay,” says Area Director Steve Older.

But just a few weeks later, they’re asking for concessions. Apparently, Veriflo’s parent company is primarily in aerospace,

and is experiencing a slow-down in work.

“The members voted not to open up the contract to have that discussion, especially if there were no guarantees,” said Older.

Phillips 66

Business Rep Brian Fealy held negotiations with Philips 66. “I have an offer for the members to vote on as the paper goes to press,” he says.

Contract time at Henckel

Negotiations will open soon with Henckel, a manufacturer of industrial adhesives in Bay Point. The members had to go on strike for 14 weeks to get their first contract, but the company and union have had much better relations over the course of the agreement.

“They had guaranteed three months worth of health care coverage for employees preferred to stay at home during the shelter-in-place orders,” says Older. “We’re starting to meet with the members to get their proposals, and hope to have a smoother process this time.”

Local 1596

Signed, sealed and delivered

The 60 members at MGM Brake in Cloverdale who make parts for truck and train brakes ratified their new contract in March.

“We got the company to agree to a \$1/hour raise each year over three years which is a bigger raise than ever before, and we fixed some language issues that needed clarifying, like the overtime clause, says Area Director Steve Older. “The members held tough. We were doing our bargaining over the phone with management in North Carolina. The members kept rejecting the contract and management kept making changes.”

Older said that traditional contracts at MGM called for 2-3% wage increases. By getting a hard dollar amount, the higher-wage members effectively took less than they might have gotten to help bring up those in the lower wage positions. “They acted like a union and were looking out for each other by doing the wage increase that way,” he said.

More talks

Older reports that he’s been negotiating with Henry Curtis Ford over Zoom. “We’re very close to a deal. I’m just not sure yet how we’ll vote the members.

Talks are also in progress with Fred’s Auto Body in Eureka. “This should get settled soon,” Older adds.

Local 2182

Evaluation is mandatory

Mark Martin reports that the union has had numerous issues at Harrold Ford with the apprentices not being evaluated properly.

“If the company fails to address the issue properly, we’ll have no choice but to cancel them as a participating employer, which would be a shame—for the apprentices themselves, and for our efforts to build a skilled workforce,” Martin says. “All this is as we approach the contract’s expiration and our upcoming contract negotiations.” More on this to come.



ORGANIZING WINS

Ryder-Stockton

continued from Page 1

an election took a while, because everybody was working remotely.

“When we finally got in front of the labor board at the end of March, we requested a mail ballot while Ryder insisted on holding an in-person election,” Juarez explains. “The company started to hold group meetings trying to divide and conquer. Fortunately, due to the pandemic, the labor board agreed to a mail ballot.

The mail ballots went out on May 4. The count took place on May 29. And the result: “The union won overwhelmingly! I guaranteed it,” says Juarez.

“Even though Ryder agrees that we have a great working relationship at their other unionized facilities, they launched a terrible anti-union campaign at the Stockton shop,” says Juarez. “We’ll be dealing with five terminations and we have 13 board charges pending.”

The union will get shop access to do inspections on June 29 and bargaining dates have been set for July 13-14.

Lexus of San Diego

A union election was held here in February, but the 25-2 vote wasn’t convincing to Lexus management. Just as COVID hit, the Company hired union buster John Boggs to make numerous frivolous objections and appeals.

“Of course, all the charges they filed were denied and dropped,” says Juarez. “But we offered to do a re-run election so they couldn’t keep delaying the process.”

A mail ballot was sent out at the end of May, and the count took place in mid-June. Even though the company had laid off several folks,



Techs at El Cajon Honda, after walking on the boss to say “Union, Yes!”

everyone, including those off work, were eligible to vote.

And the result: this time it was 100% for the union. The company has one week to appeal the election, but at presstime, they hadn’t yet done so. “That’s the good news,” says Juarez. “The better news is that they’ve since recalled several furloughed workers.”

Concord Toyota

The union held an “Armour Globe” election on March for the service advisors at Concord Toyota. (This is the process when other workers at the same facility are already in the same union—in this case the parts and service techs.)

The union won the election 4-3. There had been one challenged ballot, which when opened later, was a Yes vote, meaning that the final tally was 5-3 for the union. The Labor Board certified the election.

The company filed an appeal to include another service advisor in the unit, but even if he voted no, the union would still have a majority. “This is all about playing games to delay the inevitable,” says Juarez. “They’re delaying justice, even after a clear election win for the union.”

Stay tuned.

El Cajon Honda

Back in February, Juarez was meeting with a group techs at El Cajon Honda, part of a superstore with several dealerships, and they were ready to launch an organizing campaign. But when COVID struck, the group put the drive on hold. However, not long into the pandemic, the techs came to feel that employer wasn’t meeting COVID guidelines; they were running out of hand sanitizer, weren’t given gloves

and the cars were not getting properly sanitized before the techs were slated to work on them. One person at the dealership tested positive for COVID, but the rest of the workers were kept in the dark about it until much later.

“Everyone put on their union buttons and IAM masks and we went to talk to the boss on a Friday morning in April,” Juarez says. “We walked out by 10 a.m.” Juarez explained that his goal is to make the employer resolve issues right away and if they don’t, to walk out. “We’re just not wasting any more time. Workers health and safety can’t wait.”

Warren Nelson, a union-buster from Fisher & Phillips was hired to crush the workers’ rights. His latest tactic is to include 33 Toyota techs who work in the next dealership.

“We’re working to create a leadership group at El Cajon to build cohesion among the crew,” adds Area Director Kevin Kucera. “The techs communicate seamlessly using WhatsApp on their phones and they can let us know if employees have questions or concerns. There’s no substitute for the in-person meeting, but in this COVID environment, this is a great tool—especially with the younger guys.”

At presstime, Juarez says that they’re waiting for a decision from the Labor Board about who is in the unit. He expects to hold the election soon.



IN THE NEWS

US Tax Court drives nail in coffin of bogus tool rental plans

On May 14, the United States Tax Court issued a decision in the case of *Davison v. IRS*, which should be the last word on tool rental schemes.

For a number of years, various promoters have come to automotive and truck shops, offering a plan whereby mechanics and their employers agree to split the mechanic's wages with one portion of the wage being reclassified as the shop renting the mechanics' tools. The idea is that while the fee for rental is an income-taxable event, it is not wages, and so not subject to Social Security, Medicare and Unemployment tax (FICA and FUTA). As a result, the employer saves about 8% of payroll and the employee gets an 8% "raise" due to lower taxes. What is usually left unsaid is that by reducing the wages, the mechanic will receive a lower social security benefit upon retirement. The promoters of these plans charged the employer a piece of the savings for running the program and issuing the second check.

About 20 years ago, several of these firms started lobbying the IAM to help promote these programs. Cash Management Systems (CMS) was one of the bigger players in this shady business. Inevitably the first question someone would ask is, "Is this legal?" The CPA who helped set up CMS, Allen Davison, advised that the IRS knew about and blessed these tool rental programs even though the large national accounting firm he worked for and several others weighed in saying that the IRS would surely disallow the tool rental scheme. Rather than heed these warnings, Davison and CMS signed up shops all over the country.

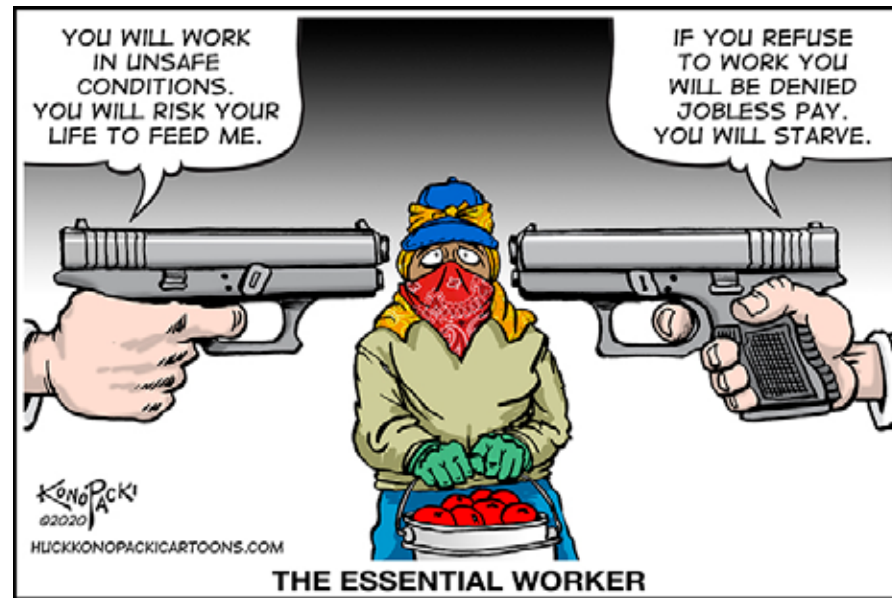
In 2008, the IRS began cracking down, auditing 24 employers who owed \$4.6 million in back taxes. Three years later, Davison and his colleagues were banned from offering tax advice and Davison lost his CPA license. After years of appeals, he finally was forced to pay penalties that were originally assessed in 2013.

Court strikes down major parts of NLRB union election rules

A federal judge has struck down major portions of a new set of regulations that modify how union elections are conducted, ruling that the National Labor Relations Board should have given the public a chance to weigh in on those components of the rulemaking.

The court's decision, issued on May 30, effectively blocked the full regulation from taking effect on June 1, as planned.

The NLRB, which administers elections when a group of workers seek to unionize, issued the final rule in



December without first releasing a proposed version for public comment.

The rules make a series of modifications to the board's protocol for union elections, in effect extending procedural deadlines and allowing for more time between when a union files a petition to the agency to hold an election and the date when workers actually vote on whether to unionize. The new rules also give employers more opportunities to challenge the process at different stages.

The time period between the petition and actual election is considered crucial by businesses and unions because it often represents the peak of the union's support among workers, and is typically when employers are carrying out or ramping up counter-union campaigns.

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia agreed with the plaintiff—the AFL-CIO—that parts of the rulemaking went further than merely changing the board's processes for carrying out union elections, and thus affect the substantive rights of parties involved in such proceedings.

The judge said in a short order that she would strike down the "challenged portions of the regulation," adding that she would issue a full memorandum opinion shortly. The AFL-CIO argued that the rule in its entirety should be struck down.

The NLRB can and likely will appeal the ruling.

Gig companies shirking responsibility to provide unemployment insurance

Massive gig companies haven't paid a single dime to California's unemployment insurance (UI) fund, making it more difficult for workers to access UI benefits and depleting the fund of vital resources all workers need in this economic crisis.

Gig companies are even denying the claims of workers who have filed for UI, delaying workers from getting checks they desperately need to pay rent, put food on the table and provide other basic necessities for their families.

California's UI fund is severely stressed. Millions of new claims have come in since mid-March. While responsible employers have been funding UI to sustain it in times of crisis, Uber, Lyft, Instacart, DoorDash and other gig companies refuse to comply with the law to pay their fair share for UI, putting all workers at grave risk.

"We need a sustainable UI fund now more than ever," said California Labor Federation Secretary-Treasurer Art Pulaski in a statement in May. "We demand that gig companies comply with the law by immediately contributing to the state's UI fund so their own workers – and all workers – can get the benefits they so desperately need to weather this crisis."

Sadly, instead of ensuring that their employee drivers could access state benefits, Uber, Lyft, Postmates and DoorDash, have stockpiled \$110 million in a PAC account to fund a November 2020 ballot initiative aimed at denying drivers basic protections.

The measure would enable these companies to continue rig the rules in their favor, allowing them to shirk their responsibility to pay their fair share for unemployment insurance, Social Security, Medicare and other social safety net services.

Across the state, drivers are demanding that the companies immediately drop this harmful measure and use those millions to provide direct relief to workers.

In what workers claim is a public relations stunt, Uber and Lyft offered sick leave only for those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or were individually ordered to quarantine. Without employer-provided health care, and with the continued backlog of testing, this is little reassurance. What's more, they can't take paid time to care for a sick or quarantined family member.

Further, the gig companies refuse to provide drivers and shoppers still on the job with any equipment or supplies needed to keep them safe: no hand sanitizer, no disinfectant wipes, no masks. By refusing to take

worker safety seriously, these companies put drivers and the public they are serving at grave risk.

The Labor Federation has joined drivers and shoppers to call on the gig companies to:

- Immediately follow the law of the land - AB 5 - and classify gig workers as employees so workers can get the basic protections they desperately need.
- Provide 14 days of paid leave to all drivers, shoppers and other gig workers so they can have the flexibility they need to care for themselves and their families while not putting the public at risk.
- Immediately pay their fair share by contributing to the State's unemployment insurance fund, Social Security and Medicare so that these critical safety net programs are there to support all workers.
- Provide personal protective equipment and supplies to keep drivers safe.
- Provide a clear protocol in case of COVID-19 exposure, including free COVID-19 screenings to all drivers/deliverers.
- Immediately drop the deceptive and harmful ballot measure that denies workers basic protections like a minimum wage, overtime pay and safety equipment.

Fed report says coronavirus shock has hit low-wage workers hardest

In its semiannual report to Congress, the Federal Reserve said severe disruptions in the U.S. labor market related to the coronavirus pandemic were hitting workers with lower earnings, including minorities, especially hard.

Employment had fallen nearly 35% from February to mid-May for workers who were previously earning wages in the bottom fourth of wage earners, the report stressed. Higher-wage earners, by contrast, had seen employment fall by 5% to 15%.

Because lower-wage earners are disproportionately African-American and Hispanic, unemployment has risen more sharply for those groups. "The path ahead is extraordinarily uncertain," the report said. "The pace of recovery will ultimately depend on the evolution of the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States and abroad and the measures undertaken to contain it."

After the Agency's June policy meeting, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said that the central bank was preparing additional ways to support the economy after slashing interest rates to zero and purchasing trillions of dollars of government debt to improve financial market functioning.

 **IAM CONVENTION**

Machinists Union Postpones 40th Grand Lodge Convention until 2021

In order to protect the safety and health of members and guests in light of the coronavirus pandemic, the IAM Executive Council has made the difficult decision to



postpone the upcoming 40th IAM Grand Convention, which had been scheduled for September 6-11, 2020 in San Diego.

The convention will instead be held Sept. 12-17, 2021 at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel.

“This decision was not made lightly and our Executive Council shares in the disappointment we all have about not being able to join together as one union at our convention this year,” said IAM International President Robert Martinez Jr. “I want to especially thank General Vice President Gary R. Allen, the Western Territory and the 2020 Host Committee for all the work they have done to prepare for this convention.

“I am also extremely grateful for our mem-

bership’s patience as we continue to navigate this extraordinary time and the challenges it poses to our union,” said Martinez. “For now, your health is our paramount concern, but I very

much look forward to the convention in 2021 and continuing the democratic traditions of our union. Stay safe, stay strong, stay united—together, in solidarity, we shall overcome.”

Only Locals 1546 and 1414 had completed their delegate elections before COVID-19 closed down business. Those elected delegates may keep their positions provided they remain in good standing with the union. If those locals had reduced the number of delegates they were sending due to the pandemic, they may hold a new election in 2021 for additional delegates. Locals who had postponed their election for this year will hold delegate elections in the Spring of 2021.

IAM Disaster Relief Fund

The IAM Disaster Relief Fund provides assistance in situations where our members and their families endure hardships due to natural disasters. The IAM reacts quickly to these needs before other sources of assistance are able. This is not possible without the support of those who have committed to keep the Fund vibrant and healthy.

To contribute, go to <https://www.goiam.org/departments/headquarters/community-services/disaster-relief/iam-disaster-relief-fund/>

FAST FACTS

\$76 billion
 The increase in the combined wealth of America’s top five billionaires since mid-March.
SOURCE: INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES, BILLIONAIRE BONANZA UPDATE, MAY 21, 2020

Over that time, 36.6 million workers, a quarter of the U.S. workforce, have applied for jobless benefits.
SOURCE: ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE, MAY 21, 2020

INEQUALITY



We get it. It’s no fun to be stuck indoors. One way to help to pass the time is to ditch the screens, silence the cells, warm up those dice rolling hands and make it a family game night. The games on the list below are enduring classics, the kind of entertainment that entertained your parents (and possibly even your grandparents) for days and nights on end. They also come with the added bonus of being manufactured by ethical companies that treat their workers fairly and give them a voice on the job. A special shout out to the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) and United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) whose members make these classics.

By buying union, you are supporting good jobs and helping to strengthen the middle class. Stay safe at home and let’s all play our way to a stronger America.

- Barrel of Monkeys
- Candy Land
- Chutes and Ladders
- Clue
- Connect 4
- Cranium
- Family Game Night
- Game of Life
- Guess Who?
- Hasbro Games
- Memory
- Monopoly
- Operation
- Pictionary
- Risk
- Scrabble
- Sorry
- Trivial Pursuit
- Yahtzee

For more information about union-made consumer items and gifts, go to Labor411.org

IAM LOCAL UNION MEETINGS

A note about the meeting schedule:

The International IAM has given the okay to hold Local membership meetings over ZOOM or another video conferencing tool. Some locals will be doing it that way; others may choose to tailgate—meeting six feet apart outdoors to meet the guidelines for social distancing.

If you wish to attend a union meeting, the first step is to contact your Local and find out how they're holding it. Unless otherwise notified, they will continue with the current schedule (see below).

If your Local is holding on-line meetings, you'll need to contact them to learn the plan and probably make sure they have your email address. See the list below to find the email address of the local and let them know that you want to join your on-line union meeting.

Update your Address

This is key for learning about union elections and events.

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

Please note: Even if you notified the Pension Fund or the Health and Welfare Trust, that won't change your address as the union has it.

Be sure to contact your local union!
(Addresses are listed below.)



Get your IAM news on the web!

The International IAM website is at:
www.goiam.org

District Lodge 190 website:
www.iamdistrict190.org

Local Lodge websites:
Local 1101: www.iamlocal1101.org
Local 1414: www.iam1414.org
Local 1584: www.iamlocal1584.com

Facebook pages:
Local 1101: facebook.com/Local 1101
Local 1173: facebook.com/pages/Machinists-Union-Local-1173
Local 1546: facebook.com/iam1546
Local 1584: facebook.com/IAMLocal1584

Twitter:
Union Organizer: @union1484

UNION MEETINGS

District Lodge 190

8201 Capwell Drive
Oakland, CA 94621
510-632-3661

Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month

July 28 • August 25 • September 22

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

July 16 • August 20 • September 17

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

July 7 • August 4 • September 1

Retirees' Club: 12:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: July 15 • August 19 • September 16

Local 93

2102 Almaden Rd., #105
San Jose, CA 95125
408-440-8716

Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month

July 14 • August 11 • September 8

Grievance Committee: 3:30 p.m.

Executive Board Meeting: 4:30 p.m.

Membership Meeting: 5:00 p.m.

Meetings will be held on the Bluejeans App for the foreseeable future.
Email rbreckenridge1101@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in.

Local 1528

713 16th Street
Modesto, CA 95354
209-529-9210
machinists2182@gmail.com

Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month

July 1 • August 5 • September 2

Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Shop Steward Meeting: 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month

June 21 • July 19 • August 16

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

Local 653

5726 E. Shields Ave.
Fresno, CA 93727
559-264-2815

Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month except in November

July 15 • August 19 • September 16

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

July 7 • August 4 • October 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

July 30 • August 27 •

Retiree Club Pot Luck Luncheon: 12 noon on the first Wednesday of each month

July 1 • August 5 • September 2

Alcoholics Anonymous: 9 a.m. every Saturday

Local 801

8201 Capwell Drive
Oakland, CA 94621
800-655-2182
machinists2182@gmail.com

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

July 16 • August 20 • September 17

Membership Meeting: 4:00 p.m.

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

Local 1101

2102 Almaden Rd., #105
San Jose, CA 95125
408-440-8716

Meetings are the second Thursday of the month

July 9 • August 13 • September 10

Executive Board Meeting: 5:30 p.m.

General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

Meetings will be held on the Bluejeans App for the foreseeable future.
Email aab1101@att.net to learn how to join in.

Local 1584

8201 Capwell Drive
Oakland, CA 94621
510-632-3661

Informational Meetings are the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

July 16 • August 20 • September 17

Retirees' Club: 12:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month: July 7 • August 4 • September 1

Note: Address for meetings and sending dues checks: 8201 Capwell, Oakland, 94621

Local 1173

1900 Bates Ave., #H
Concord, CA 94520
925-687-6421
LL1173@sbcglobal.net

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

July 9 • August 13 • September 10

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

July 9 • August 13 • September 10

Local 1596

1900 Bates Ave., #H
Concord, CA 94520
925-687-6421
LL1173@sbcglobal.net

Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month

July 21 • August 18 • September 15

Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

Note: Monthly meetings are held at the Plumbers Hall: 3473 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa CA 95407

Local 1414

150 South Boulevard
San Mateo, CA 94402
650-341-2689

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

July 16 • August 20 • September 17

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

July 9 • August 13 • September 10

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

July 16 • August 20 • September 17

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

Sept. 2 • Dec. 2

Local 2182

967 Venture Court
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-929-1040
machinists2182@gmail.com

Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month

July 14 • August 11 • September 8

Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

General Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m.