

Steps to save the AI Pension

When the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was signed into law in March, in addition to helping bail out individuals and companies impacted by the pandemic closures, it had the unique feature of funding the pension financing plan supported by union pension plans.

The "Special Financial Assistance Program for Financially Troubled Multiemployer Plans" is a key provision of ARPA that will provide funding to troubled pension plans so they can pay their benefit obligations to their participants through the plan year ending in 2051.

The Trustees of the Automotive Industries Pension Plan intend to apply for assistance under ARPA for the benefit of the participants. Because there have been many questions from members about the special financial assistance application process, the goal of this article is to provide a basic background of ARPA and the steps the Automotive Industries Pension Plan will need to take in order to receive financial assistance.

How ARPA works: Determining eligibility

ARPA special financial assistance will be administered by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) and funded by the Treasury Department's general revenue. Plans that qualify for the special financial assistance must apply to the PBGC for the funding. Once an application is submitted to the PBGC, that application must be processed within 120 days.

The first step of the application process is to determine if a plan will qualify for the special financial assistance. The government has estimated that approximately 200 multiemployer defined benefit pension plans meet the eligibility requirements to apply for special financial assistance. To be considered eligible a plan must meet one of four requirements:

- 1. A plan in critical and declining status in any plan year beginning in 2020, 2021, and 2022.
- 2. A plan with a suspension of benefits that has been approved under the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act of 2014 (MPRA) as of March 11, 2021.
- 3. A plan certified to be in critical status that has a modified funded percentage of less than 40 percent and a mature population in any plan year beginning 2020, 2021, 2022.
- 4. A plan that became insolvent after December 16, 2014, has remained insolvent, and has not terminated as of March 11, 2021.

The Automotive Industries Pension Plan is eligible to apply for the ARPA special financial assistance under requirement #1 because the plan is certified as being in critical and declining status in the plan years 2020, 2021, and 2022.

When we can apply

The second step is to determine when the Automotive Industries Pension Plan will be permitted to submit an application for special financial assistance.

Due to the estimated number of plans that will meet the eligibility requirements to apply for relief, the government has established "priority periods" during which an application will be accepted only for the plans that fall within that category. The periods are structured to prioritize the most im-



below for application eligibility dates.

The Automotive Industries (AI) pension plan was certified as being in critical and declining status for the plan year ending December 31, 2020, with a funding percentage of 51.0% and assets of \$1,153,928,489 against liabilities of \$2,364,467,746. The plan currently has a projected insolvency date of 2032. The plan actuary has advised the Trustees that they are eligible to apply for special financial assistance in early 2023 because the pension plan will be placed in either Priority Group 6 or Priority Group 7. The Board of Trustees is currently working with the actuary to prepare for submitting an application for special financial assistance once the priority window opens in 2023.

At press time, the PBGC has received 20 applications from plans that are in Priority Group 1. As these plans are processed and approved by the PBGC, and as they start receiving special financial assistance, the Trustees of the Automotive Industries Pension Plan will gain insight into how the program is operating and what to expect when we submit our application. Although the application will not be submitted until early 2023, the appropriation for the special financial assistance program was left open-ended so there will be funding available for the AI plan.

If you would like additional information on the special financial assistance program by the PBGC, please visit their website at

pacted plans and participants first. See the chart

www.PBGC.gov/arp-sfa

Priority Group	Description of Priority Group	Date Plan May Apply
1	Already insolvent or projected to be insolvent before 3/11/2022	7/9/2021
2	Implemented MPRA benefit suspensions before 3/11/21 or expected to be insolvent within one year of the date application was filed	1/1/2022
3	Critical and declining status plans with greater than 350,000 participants	4/1/2022
4	Projected to become insolvent before 3/11/2023	7/1/2022
5	Projected to become insolvent before 3/11/2026	2/11/2023
6	Present value of financial assistance in excess of \$1 billion	2/11/2023
7	All other eligible plans	3/11/2023



New District 190 Officers

Directing Business Rep (DBR) Jim Beno and Secretary-Treasurer Glenn Gandolfo will be retiring after serving in those positions for 20 and 8 years, respectively.

At its November meeting, District 190 delegates elected new officers by acclamation. An election was held for the Trustee positions at the December meeting. All officers will assume their new positions at the January 25 District meeting.

> **Directing Business Rep:** Don Crosatto (Local 1546)

President: Bruce Keller (Local 1414)

Vice President: Tim Cooper (Local 1101)

Secretary-Treasurer: Cindy Gagliardi (Local 1173)

> **Trustees**: To be determined

LETTER 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. All letters from members will be used, space permitting. They may be edited for length or grammar, but not for content. Letters may be submitted as follows:

dchaplan@mindspring.com e-mail: mail: IAM District 190 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621



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UNION PEOPLE

Woodward retires after fulfilling career(s)

Pat Woodward, a business rep for District 190 since 2000, retired in October.

Pat started his working life as an automotive technician, a career that he enjoyed from 1977-2000. After moving from Colorado, he got his first tech job in California at Diablo Mazda in Walnut Creek and soon became a shop steward at that Local 1173-represented dealership. But, in 1989, he and his co-workers found

themselves on a strike. Pat walked the picket line for about six months. He then took a positionas a foreman at Richmond Mazda and stayed there for seven years, becoming a Mazda master tech. He eventually finished his tech career at Concord Toyota.

But that wasn't the end of the story. In 2000, he started a new career as a business rep at District 190, where he worked until 2021, representing members primarily from Local 1546. Pat is quick to appreciate the satisfaction he got from negotiating good contracts for working men and women and from helping members solve their problems.

"I enjoyed helping members improve their way of living and helping them with their health and welfare or grievance issues," he says. He also enjoyed taking on the shops that were considered "hard to service," including Waste Management. "The company constantly dragged their feet on grievances, and we went through a lot of HR and Labor Relations people," he recalls. "But there was always tremendous satisfaction when we got good contracts out of them."



Pat Woodward

Thinking about the challenges of the work, Pat acknowledged that as different business reps retired over the past several years, few were replaced; instead, their shops were divvied up among current reps. "It was always interesting to meet whole new sets of workers and management and get to learn the quirks of each contract. And," he adds, "I had shops on both sides of the Bay plus San Jose and Tracy."

To do this job, Pat advises, "you need to be a little bit ornery. But," he adds, "I learned that you definitely get more with honey than with vinegar." Pat says that he had some very good teachers who showed him the ropes of how to be a successful business rep. "Folks like Craig Andrews and Mike Cook taught me that you have to be reasonable but you also have to be firm."

Upon his retirement, Pat will continue to be active with Local 1546, as he was recently elected to serve on the Executive Board. "I'll continue to pay retiree dues so that I can support the local," he says with pride.

Pat also sees a lot of travel adventures on the horizon. "I used to go to Mexico annually with my brother; now I'll go twice a year. Also, we'll take our annual jaunt to the Barrett-Jackson car auction in Scottsdale. And my daughter's wedding is slated for October." Beyond that, he has a 1970 Chevelle and a 1970 El Camino to work on. "Those will keep me busy for a while," he adds.

First woman shop steward elected in Local 1484

Lina Brown, a technician at Acura of Kearny Mesa San Diego was elected to serve as shop steward in November. She will be the first woman to serve as a shop steward for automotive technicians in Local 1484.

Lina has been an auto technician for eight years, and like many people who work in the automotive trade, she comes to it with family connections. "My father and two of my uncles were car salesmen, and one was also a tech," she recalls.

Lina majored in business in college, but couldn't quite see herself doing the work of business. "When I started to research what I really had a passion for, it became clear that I loved cars. I looked up colleges that had automotive programs and chose Miramar Community College because they have the Honda/Acura PACT program."

Her first job was at an independent shop inside Sears. After several years there, she moved to Kearny Mesa Acura to fully utilize her Honda/Acura certification. "I love the work," she says. "It's fast-paced and every day brings something new. We're not grease monkeys anymore," she adds. "It's no longer just mechanical; it's electrical, it's computerized." Not long after she arrived at the Acura dealership, the 10 techs started pulling together to organize into the IAM. She says the union campaign, which took place in 2019, was nerve-wracking in the beginning. "But, as we went through the process, we knew what we wanted to fight for-fairness and communications. We got stronger as the campaign went along." She says that after the election victory, it took about six months to negotiate their first contract.



Lina Brown – automotive tech and shop steward

a steward. "I love it because the biggest thing I fought for was communication between the company and the techs. I get to have a business relationship with the managers and get to know what's going on. Sometimes, I turn into a therapist for the guys and the management so that we can resolve an issue." She adds that, so far, everything has gone smoothly. "We had a lot of issues that just weren't getting resolved," she says. "But it was my goal to get things handled right away and, so far, we have. I guess that leadership runs through my blood." Lina says that she loves her career. "I'm passionate about bringing our industry up and understanding that we are worthy. That's what drives me." "The Kearny Mesa contract comes up next year for re-negotiations," says Area Director Kevin Kucera. "I look forward to working with Lina on the negotiating team. I'm happy that more women are coming into the automotive trades and especially that they're willing to jump into leadership positions. I hope we can find more like Lina."

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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.

Postmaster: Send address corrections to The Sparkplug, 8201 Capwell Street, Oakland, CA 94621.



Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor

"The day after our first steward left the dealership, I got elected. They said to get in there, we need you! So I did," Lina says with a smile.

She adds that she enjoys the work of being

NEWS FROM THE TRUST FUND

Blue Cross Self-Funded Medical Plan Participants

Annual Wellness Program - Health **Dynamics Testing Requirement Suspended** for Calendar Year 2022

The Board of Trustees has made the decision to again suspend the Wellness Program's Health Dynamics testing requirement for the Calendar Year 2022 (January 1 – December 31).

If you are on the lower deductible plan effective December 31, 2021, there is no action to be taken. You will remain on the lower deductible plan for the Calendar Year 2022.

If you are on the higher deductible plan effective December 31, 2021, or if you became a new participant anytime in the calendar year 2021, you will have the opportunity to move your coverage to the lower deductible plan in the Calendar Year 2022 by having a routine physical exam performed. Only the member needs to have the routine exam; there is no requirement for the dependent spouse to receive an exam.

An Exam Certification Form will be mailed from the Trust Fund office toward the end of December 2021 and will also be available on the Trust Fund Website: www.aitrustfunds.org

Please note that due to the national emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trust Fund Office will accept electronic signatures in lieu of physically signed forms. Forms received in the Trust Fund Office on or before March 31, 2022 will have deductibles reduced for claims incurred on or after January 1, 2022. Forms received on or after April 1, 2022 will have deductibles reduced for claims incurred starting the first of the month the form was received by the Trust Fund Office.

2021 Retiree tax documents

The Trust Fund Office will be mailing the Pension Plan 2021 1099-R Tax Forms no later than January 31, 2022 to all retirees receiving monthly pension payments. If you have moved in the last year, please make sure your address is updated with the Trust Fund Office before December 31, 2021.

After January 31, 2022, the 1099-R Tax Forms will also be available on the Trust Fund website at

> www.aitrustfunds.org and can be downloaded or printed directly from the website. If you don't already have access to the website, creating an online account is simple and takes just a

few minutes to complete. Visit www.aitrustfunds.org for details on how to create an account so that you can review your benefit information.

Trust Fund Office still closed to walk-in appointments

The Trust Fund Office at HS&BA in Dublin, CA is still closed to walk-in appointments and will remain closed to walk-in until mid-2022. You may schedule a Zoom appointment or a telephone call through the Trust Fund webpage at www.aitrustfunds.org. Click on the "Contact Us" icon and follow the prompts to set up your appointment.

Reminder: Pension plan searching for former participants

The Automotive Industries Pension Plan currently has about 2,000 participants who are entitled to receive a pension payment under the Plan but have not made application for their money.

If you know someone who used to work in the industry during the 1970's or 1980's, is over age 65, and is not receiving a pension payment from the Trust Fund, they could be missing out on a monthly payment from the Plan. Have them contact the Trust Fund Office at 800-635-3105 for a review of their work history to see if they are eligible.

Reminder to all Techs

Be sure to update your tool inventories for the new year. If you've gotten new tools, you want to make sure that the employer knows about it so they can be insured.



UNION PEOPLE

Penske names Local 1414 member "Elite Tech" – twice!

In 2018, Jared Taylor, then a 17-year tech at the hardest questions in all of the categories of tests Peter Pan BMW in Burlingame won Penske's nathat they give s tudents and mash them into one," he says. "Even the instructors have a

Why are my dues going up?

I don't want to pay union dues... so I'll forfeit all of my contractual insurance, benefits, job protections, vacation time, due process, and wage increases.... Said no one, ever.

ROTTENECARDS @ @unions4workers //unions4workers

In 2022, union dues for all members will officially increase by \$4.46 per month. Note: some locals will be able to subsidize this increase.

"Union dues rates are a function of a couple of different things," says Area Director Don Crosatto. "Since the formula is based on the rate of pay, any wage increases you received during the prior year will lead to an increase in the dues rate."

The second factor is that District 190, which pays for your representation, and the International union have a system tying rates to the September Consumer Price Index. "Over the last ten years, the increases have averaged between one and three percent. This year, because of inflation, the CPI number was 5.8%," Crosatto explains.

Because it was such a large increase, for example, Local 1546 voted to pay 60% of it out of reserves, rather than passing on a bigger increase.

"Most of our contract settlements are coming in above \$1 per hour. The dues increase for most members is going to be two or three cents per hour" he adds. "Not a bad trade!"

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Visit the District 190 website at: iamdistrict190.org



tional "Elite Tech" Award. If that wasn't a big enough deal, he just won the award again in 2021 and is the first person to be a two-time winner in the short history of this honor.

Each Penske BMW dealership has an opportunity to nominate one or two techs to compete at the local level. The top nine winners across the country then compete against each other. "And the winner was me!" Jared says with pride.

Jared explained that the

award is given to the top scorer in a computer test administered by the Universal Technical Institute (UTI), an automotive repair training provider.

"They test you on everything. Basically, they take ing as long as they let me."

hard time with that test." Jared began his career by completing the BMW STEP program. In 2001, he came to work for Peter Pan BMW, joined Local 1414, and has been at the same shop ever since.

When he won the first time, Jared was flown out to North Carolina, but he hasn't gotten that trip this time due to the pandemic. "But I did get a bonus, gift cards and some other good stuff."

When asked what his co-workers think of his victory, he said that

they think he should be helping them out now... "and I try to," he says.

Will he enter the contest again? "I'll keep enter-

The International IAM website is at: goiam.org

Local Lodge websites:

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

Twitter

Union Organizer: @union1484

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





Local 653

Finally a contract with Bimbo Bakeries USA

Business Rep Jeremy Celaya reports that the six mechanics at Bimbo Bakeries USA in Fresno finally got a new four-year contract in November.

The mechanics received a 5.95% increase the first year, and 1.7% raises will come in years two and three. They'll also get a one-time COVID appreciation bonus of \$300 to acknowledge and thank the members for being fully vaccinated and working through the pandemic.

In addition, the mechanics will see a \$50 increase to the tool allowance, bringing them up to \$200 a year. And, they improved the sick leave language and increased the cap on the medical.

Local 801

Changing contractors

The members who have worked for LB&B Associates at the Naval Air Station in Fallon, Nevada finally settled their contract only to find out that the company lost the competitive bid with the Navy to keep this contract.

The new company, Lewis Berger, will be taking over on April 1, 2022. "The IAM has contracts with this employer in both Southern California and South Carolina," says Area Director Mark Martin. "We're confident that we'll reach a fair settlement with the new employer."

Local 1101

New deal at car rental agencies

Business Rep Rich Breckenridge reports that the six members at Avis/ Budget Rental Car in San Jose ratified a new three-year agreement in November. "There had been so much turmoil in this industry after the pandemic all but closed it down. This was an excellent deal under the circumstances," reports Breckenridge. "We got an additional personal day. We got base wage increases of 85¢ in year one, and 75¢ in each of years two and three, as well as Guild raises of between 25-55¢ on top of the base, depending on their schooling in their craft.

the two shops ratified a 3-year agreement in December that includes a \$2 raise in year one, and \$1.75 each in years two and three. A new benefit was that the techs get paid an additional 75¢/hour for all hours spent producing customer videos. Breckenridge says that it's been standard practice to take photos of what's wrong with the car to show to customers. However, the high-end dealers are now moving to video, which takes more time and becomes an issue for flat-rate technicians. If you're a tech and haven't yet been called on to video the cars you're working on, know that this practice is probably coming to where you work soon.

Coast Counties Truck: Breckenridge says he reached out to Coast Counties to get them to add the 401(K) to the contract. "While we were dealing with that paperwork, the company asked if we could extend the contract out another three years. Ultimately, the 20 or so techs, parts people, and service writers agreed to the extension and every employee will be getting a 3% increase each year."

In general: Breckenridge reports that he's still dealing with COVID, in particular, the vaccine mandate. "We've had to make sure the employers are doing the proper paperwork and that everything is getting cleaned and done according to OSHA," he explained. "It's amazing how many people go to work sick and that becomes a real problem for employers," he adds. "If someone gets COVID, the employer needs to do contact tracing. If one person gets sick, four others have to go home."

And Salinas, too

Business Rep Pedro Gonzalez reports that the members at two Salinas shops ratified good three year contracts in December.

The eight techs at **Commercial Truck** will get a \$2/hour raise in year one, and \$1/hour in years two and three. And the 15 heavy equipment mechanics at **Coast Counties** will see 3% increases each year of their contract, with no take-aways. And, once members achieve 90% proficiency, they'll get an extra vacation day, that they can take or cash out. Brian Fealy, who explained that the advisorss voted for IAM representation in an "Armour-Globe" election, which allows an additional unit where there already are unionized employees to vote to join the union. "The service advisors now have the opportunity to participate in Automotive Industries Plan "A" healthcare in addition to other benefits not previously afforded to them."

Walk-out at Concord Toyota leads to new contract

In a show of solidarity with the smaller units at Concord Toyota the detailers, parts department and service writers—the techs at that dealership walked out for an hour on September 21. "The technicians were happy with the contract we had negotiated for them a few months ago," says Area Director Steven Older, "but they refused to vote it in until we got good contracts for the rest of the union employees."

Concord Toyota, and its neighbor, Concord Honda, are both Sonic-owned shops, though they have different local management and are run quite differently. The members at both shops had taken two strike votes and are prepared to walk out if they can't settle.

After the techs' solidarity walkout, talks continued for all the units, and in mid-December, the bargaining team and management finally came up with an agreement that the members could vote on.

"Unfortunately, our plan was to vote the contract on January 3, but we have a big Omicron outbreak at the shop," says Area Director Steve Older. "We'll work on a plan to reschedule the vote remotely so everyone can participate."

Older added that the omicron variant is wreaking havoc at many of the shops he represents. "Managers

are out, so we're not even getting notified of which members are out on quarantine. And because testing is so scarce, members are having to stay out longer if they've been exposed because they can't confirm a negative test result."

AROUND 7

Local 1484

West coast port mechanics meeting in Las Vegas

Area Director Kevin Kucera reports that a special meeting was held in Las Vegas on November 20 to explore the possibility of developing a plan for the upcoming 2023 coastwide negotiations with SSA Terminals. Local 1484, representing mechanics in Long Beach, Local 1546 representing mechanics in Oakland, and Local 289 representing mechanics in Seattle, all have collective bargaining agreements that come up for renewal at the same time.

Western Territory General Vice President Gary Allen set up the meeting for staff and rank-and-file leaders from the three locals to discuss how to coordinate their approach to SSA's 2023 negotiations.

"I am thankful that all of us were able to come together to hold this meeting since all of our agreements are set to expire on July 1, 2023," said Local 1484 President Rudy Morales. "I hope we can look at the possibility of negotiating a master agreement as well"

"There is a unique window of opportunity not only because our contracts are set to expire at the same time but the employer has signaled a clear interest in negotiating a master agreement," said Don Crosatto, Assistant Directing Business Representative of District 190.

Kucera added, "We have a really good working relationship with the

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🖉 ORGANIZING UPDATES

Stuck in the bog(g)

Area Director for Organizing Jesse Juarez reports that while he's been working with the business reps to get first contracts after successful organizing drives, his efforts have been stymied. It seems that every time the workers band together to demand union representation, the employers call on the anti-labor attorney, John Boggs, to fight the process and appeal labor department decisions that call for bargaining.

Contracts across San Jose

Normandin Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge: The 35 techs, service writers, and paint/body techs at Normandin ratified their new three-year contract in mid-November. They'll be seeing raises of \$2 in year one, and \$1 each in years two and three, reports Breckenridge.

Stevens Creek BMW & Honda: The 83 techs and 24 service writers at

Local 1173

New group and contract at Winter Chevrolet-Honda

In early October, the 50 members at Winter Chevrolet-Honda in Pittsburg ratified a new three-year agreement. The unit includes mechanics, parts department personnel, and now service advisors.

"We won significant wage increases for existing classifications plus we were able to add the 11 service advisors to the existing bargaining unit," says Business Rep To date, the union has been confronted by Bogg's stall tactics at Audi of Concord, Tracy Toyota, and Lexus of San Diego.

The tactics are obviously illegal, but they result in diminishing support for the union. For example, Juarez says, Lexus San Diego is clearly showing favoritism and has fired some union supporters. "The boss has been taking workers out to lunch and who knows what he's saying," Juarez says. "After the firings, these folks chilled."

Members from the recently-organized Mercedes Benz and Acura shops in the San Diego area are picketing Lexus at lunchtime. "What's so frustrating is that the Penske Auto Group, which owns this shop, has enjoyed record profits. But they keep frustrating the process, making proposals that the workers won't accept," Juarez explains. "Although we've already won two elections there, they've launched a de-cert petition. Fortunately, our members are pushing back and want to fight on. It's corporate America running amok on the workers."

THE LOCALS

Local 1484 turns out for Guide Dogs of America annual event

IAM Local Lodge 1484 was proud to attend the 40th Annual Guide Dogs of America William

W. Winpisinger Charity Banquet in Las Vegas on Saturday November 20.

This years theme was "Rodeo," so local officers and staff put on their best western gear, grabbed their cowboy hats, got on their horses and headed to Las Vegas.

GDA has transformed lives through partnerships with service dogs. They breed, raise, and train guide dogs for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and they provide service dogs for veterans and children with autism.

> "A hoop and holler good time was had by all those who got a chance to attend the event," said Secretary-Treasurer Dan McEntire. "The work that

GDA does for our community is vitally important. GDA has provided the gift of love, confidence and hope to countless individuals. I am happy that we are involved with such a great organization."



Attending the event (from left) were Area Director Kevin Kucera,Vice President Javier Contreras, Secretary Treasurer Dan McEntire, President Rudolph R. Morales, Trustee Mike DiGaetano, Recording Secretary Ed Bartkus, and Office Manager Lynette Singleton.

Continued from page 4

coastwide rank-and-file leadership. They clearly recognize the long-term benefits and so does the employer. We have an opportunity to create a winwin for everyone concerned, however, this will require a lot of hard work and cooperation by everyone to bring this together."

The objective is to create the general framework for a master agreement with supplemental economics. The three locals are currently putting together a side-by-side non-economic and economic comparison of all the current separate bargaining agreements. "This will allow us to develop a comprehensive approach to developing a plan," Kucera added.

The committee also discussed the importance of including membership participation and involvement. "The committee's plan is to develop a survey that members can complete and return to their respective local committees," Kucera said. "We expect this survey will provide us with critical feedback from our members that is important to the collective bargaining process."

Oceanwide is done

The 14 members at Oceanwide in Long Beach ratified their new threeyear contract in October. "We had to push the employer into a corner to get a decent contract that folks would ratify," says Kucera. "In the end, they got respectable wage increases, increased health and welfare caps, and three additional sick days that they didn't have before." ing deliveries of holiday gifts, medicines, and construction materials.

"The waterfront supply chain is definitely broken," says Kucera. "But the workers are not the problem. . We're e a large part of what's fixing that. Our members are working very long hours and collecting plenty of overtime to make sure that everything can be loaded and unloaded safely and swiftly."

Local 1546

Talks are moving ahead

When Cromer Material Handling in Oakland got sold, Area Director Don Crosatto was originally hopeful about swiftly getting a contract with the new owners. But that hope was quickly dashed.

"Out of the gate, the Labor Board has issued an unfair labor practice complaint against them. So now they're serious about negotiations," Crosatto says. "We may be fairly close to a deal. While the company wants to increase wages, they also want to lower the health and welfare cap. We shall see."

New owner and contract at Central Concrete

Crosatto reports that Central Concrete, through their parent corporation, was recently purchased by Vulcan Materials. In a good opening move, the company granted New Year's Eve off as a new paid holiday for 2021. "That's definitely a good morale booster," Crosatto says. "Everybody worked hard during the pandemic; this is a way to reward and encourage folks." neymen will see wage increases of \$.85/hour in year one, and \$.75/ hour in years two and three plus a \$.60/hour "equity adjustment." Almost all of the techs belong to the Guild, an in-house ASE-type program. They'll get an additional \$.50 per year. Adding it up, someone at the master level will get \$4.45 total over the next two years plus a \$500 signing bonus and three additional sick days.

And, Crosatto says, "for the first time in 18 years, they'll get a substantial increase in the pension contribution of \$32/month in year one, and \$28 in years two and three."

Good 5-year deal at Cemex

The 10 techs at Cemex in Antioch, Concord, Oakland, Pleasanton, San Jose, and San Francisco recently ratified a strong five-year deal that includes wage and health and welfare increases ranging from \$2.05 to \$2.30 per year. "The new wage rate will be \$46.23/hour on the day shift," Crosatto says.

The company was adamant about buying their way out of the pension, but Crosatto thinks that the agreement pretty well makes up for the loss. "They're paying all the money that they were paying into the pension and more," he says. "They'll put \$1,045/month into the Machinists 401K, with \$20/month increases thereafter. And, to get everybody started, depending on the length of service, the company will give \$5,000-\$28,000 to start accounts. two-month strike to get a good contract," Older adds.

Local 1596

A steel deal

The 22 members at Van Bebber Steel in Petaluma recently ratified a new three-year contract. They'll be seeing wage increases of 7% in year one, and 3.5% in each of years two and three.

Local 2182

More difficult talks with Sacramento

Area Director Mark Martin reports that the contract with the City of Sacramento expired at the end of June. To date, the City offered an 18-month contract with no wage increase. "They offered a one-time cash bonus of 3% (of course, taxes would be removed) and no increases to deal with health and welfare increases. Naturally, we said "No."

Martin adds that he's gotten information that the City Council and the City Manager are rethinking their position. "Maybe it was talk of striking that got their attention. We'll keep you posted," he adds.

First contract at Ryder

After more than a year of negotiations following a successful organizing drive, Local 2182 succeeded in reaching a first contract with Ryder Truck in Stockton. The Local is pleased and proud to welcome the 30 new members to the fold.

Local 1414 is still working to finalize the contract for the one member who works at Oceanwide in Oakland

Marine Dockside is close

The 13 members at Marine Dockside in Wilmington ratified their new four-year contract in December. "It was rough and tumble negotiations; we're just glad we got a deal," said Kucera.

Supply chain issues

If you watch or read the news, you've seen pictures of dozens of container ships waiting in line at the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, stallAnother way is that the mechanics will be approaching \$50/hour by the end of their contract.

Locals 1414 & 1546

Avis/Budget deal

The 13 members who work at Avis/Budget in Oakland and San Francisco recently ratified excellent new contracts.

Crosatto reports that the jour-

Local 1584

A good contract at Henkel

Area Director Steve Older reports that the members at Henkel, the adhesives manufacturer in Pittsburg, ratified their new three-year contract on September 29. "It passed with only two No votes," he says. The members will get a raise of 3.2% in year one, and 3% in years two and three and many other improvements on their ability to advance within the company.

"These talks went much smoother than the last time, which required a

"Shortly after this contract was settled, the Company terminated a member without sufficient cause," reports Mark Martin. "We were successful in demonstrating the flaws in the company position and got the member reinstated. Ordinarily, it takes a period of time to prove the benefits of union membership, but it seems that Ryder didn't want to waste any time. These employees stuck together and the result is that we now have a contract we can all be proud of."



IN THE NEWS



Amazon reaches labor deal, giving workers more power to organize

In a surprise settlement with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in December, Amazon agreed to let its warehouse employees more easily organize in the workplace.

Under the settlement, Amazon said it would email past and current warehouse workers likely more than one million people — with notifications of their rights and give them greater flexibility to organize in its buildings. Amazon also agreed to change a policy that limited employee access to its facilities and notified employees that it had done so, as well as inform them of other labor rights. The agreement also makes it easier and faster for the NLRB, which investigates claims of unfair labor practices, to sue Amazon if it believes the company violated the terms and lets the NLRB bypass an administrative hearing process, a lengthy and cumbersome undertaking if the agency found that the company had not abided by the settlement.

This year, Amazon has grappled with organizing efforts at warehouses in Alabama and New York. Workers at the Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Alabama are going to get a second shot at unionizing, after the NLRB called for a revote upon finding that the e-commerce giant improperly interfered in the first election.

Compounding the problem, Amazon is struggling to find enough employees to satiate its growth. The company was built on a model of high-turnover employment, which has now crashed into a phenomenon known as the Great Resignation, with workers in many industries quitting their jobs in search of a better deal for themselves. workers across the United States that it will not interfere with their right to act collectively to improve their workplace by forming a union or taking other collective action," said NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo in a statement.

By Karen Weise, New York Times

Workers end strike at Kellogg's, with help from on-line support

An 11-week strike ended in December after 1,400 Kellogg's cereal workers accepted a contract deal. The workers, concentrated in Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee, had rejected a previous offer, then faced threats from Kellogg that it would hire permanent replacements.

There was just one problem: organized discontent. A poster on the popular Reddit community **r/antiwork**, which has 1.3 million members, got members to send fake applications to the online hiring portal. Then a young TikTok user created a code to automatically fill out fake applications for the jobs perpetually. Kellogg likely found it impossible to distinguish the real applications for the scab positions from the bogus ones.

All the workers will get wage increases and cost-of-living adjustments, but a two-tier system that had spurred strong opposition will remain largely intact. Under the new deal, workers who have been at Kellogg's for more than four years will get veteran worker status, and each year of the deal, another 3% of a plant's headcount will be moved up to the veteran tier.

Laura Clawson, Daily Kos Labor Robert Kuttner, The American Prospect

First unionized Starbucks in U.S.

Starbucks workers in Buffalo made history in December by becoming the first in the U.S. to unionize at a corporate-operated store. They will be represented by Workers United New York, a branch of the Service Employees International Union.

Union representation elections were held at three Buffalo-area Starbucks stores, with three different results. Workers at the Elmwood Avenue store voted yes, 19 to eight. Workers at another store voted no by a 12 to eight margin, but the union is contesting that outcome, saying that some votes may not have been counted. At a third location, the vote count stood at 15 in favor of unionizing and nine against, leaving a union win overwhelmingly likely but dependent on the resolution of seven challenged ballots.

Starbucks poured resources into defeating the union effort, from sending corporate managers to "help" at the stores (translation: intimidate workers away from union support) to sending former CEO Howard Schultz to town to give a veiled anti-union speech during which area Starbucks stores were closed so workers could attend.

The reason companies spend that much money and effort to defeat relatively small organizing efforts—a total of around 111 workers were eligible to vote in these three elections—is because they fear that one win for workers will spur organizing efforts in other places. And indeed, even before the one and likely two wins in Buffalo, workers at another three Buffalo Starbucks stores and one in Mesa, Arizona, had petitioned for union representation elections.

This is small in absolute numbers, but large in significance—even though there's a brutal contract fight ahead.

By Laura Clauson, Daily KOS Labor

900 workers fired en masse on Zoom

On December 1, about 900 employees of the online mortgage company Better.com joined a Zoom call with chief executive Vishal Garg. The call lasted less than three minutes but upended hundreds of lives as Garg informed the workers that they were losing their jobs, effective immediately. "If you're on this call, you are part of the unlucky group being laid off," he said.

Garg's mass termination strategy drew intense backlash from critics and even some of the company's own executives, three of whom resigned in the aftermath.

In an apology released the next week, Garg acknowledged that he had "embarrassed" the company with his termination strategy. "I failed to show the appropriate amount of respect and appreciation for the individuals who were affected and for their contributions to Better ... I realize that the way I communicated this news made a difficult situation worse."

"This settlement agreement provides a crucial commitment from Amazon to millions of its

BUY UNION

As winter kicks in, it's a great time to grab a favorite blanket, a hot drink or a comforting bowl of soup to embrace the season. These warmers are made by ethical companies that treat their workers fairly and give them a voice on the job.

Stay toasty and let's all help build a stronger America.

Coats & Outerwear Brooks Brothers/Garland Manufacturing (Workers United, UNITE HERE!) Carhartt (IBT) DeMoulin (Workers United) Pendleton Woolen Mills (Workers United) Schott N.Y.C. (Workers United)

Blankets Pendleton Woolen Mills (Workers United) Hot Chocolate Ghirardelli Hot Cocoa (UAW) Kayo (UAW) Swiss Miss (UFCW)

Coffee Folgers (UAW), Maxwell House (UFCW, UAW, IBT) Millstone (UAW) MUSA Coffee Company (UAW) Soup Campbell's (IBT) College Inn (IBT) Healthy Choice (UFCW, IBT)



For more great tips about union products and services, go to Labor411. org. This great resource tracks and promotes a wide range of union-made consumer products.



Unions not only promote economic equality but also community power

A new report by the Economic Policy Institute documents the correlation between higher levels of unionization and a range of economic, personal, and democratic well-being measures.

In the same way unions give workers a voice at work, with a direct impact on wages and working conditions, unions also give workers a voice in shaping their communities. Where workers have this power, states have more equitable economic structures, social structures, and democracies.

The 17 U.S. states with the highest union densities have state minimum wages that are on average 19% higher than the national average and 40% higher than those in low-union-density states. They also have median annual incomes \$6,000 higher than the national average and have higher-than-average unemployment insurance recipiency rates, meaning a higher share of those who are unemployed actually receive unemployment insurance.

"Unions promote economic equality and build worker power, helping workers to win increases in pay, better benefits, and safer working conditions. But the benefits of unions extend far beyond the workplace. The

data suggest that unions also give workers a voice in shaping their communities and political representation," says Asha Banerjee, economic analyst at EPI and co-author of the report.

The report finds that states with the highest union densities have an uninsured (without health insurance) population 4.5 percentage points lower, on average, than that of low-union-density states. These states also all elected to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act and are more likely to have passed paid sick and family and medical leave laws than states with lower union densities.

According to the report, the 17 highest-union-density states have passed significantly fewer restrictive voting laws than in the middle 17 states and the 17 lowest-union-density states (these totals include the District of Columbia). Over 70% of low-union-density states passed at least one voter suppression law between 2011 and 2019.

"Through long-standing advocacy and work to protect the right to vote, unions have linked voting rights to workers' rights," says Margaret Poydock, policy analyst and government affairs specialist at EPI and co-author of the report. "Unions play a key role in mobilizing workers to vote, helping to determine which political leaders are elected and what occupational backgrounds they come from."

The authors explain that the relationship between high union density and higher household incomes, access to health care and paid leave, and fewer voting restrictions highlights the importance of protecting the right of workers to organize, including passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act.

IN THE NEWS

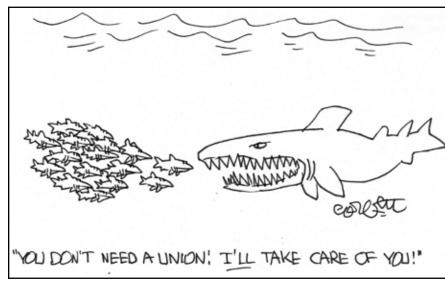
AB 701: Adopts protections for warehouse workers against unreasonable quotas

AB 1003: Increases criminal penalties for wage theft

SB 331: Further prohibits settlement agreements and NDAs from preventing the disclosure of workplace harassment and discrimination involving all protected characteristics

AB 1561: Provides clarifications regarding worker classification with respect to employees and independent contractors

SB 727: Adds general contractor liability for penalties, liquidated damages, and interest



AB 1023: Authorizes the Labor Commissioner to impose monthly penalties for failure to upload electronic certified payroll records on public works projects

Addressing Inequities

AB 1177: Convenes state commission to study creating a free public banking option

SB 390: Requires the Employment Development Department (EDD) to make a recession plan

AB 628: Modifies the Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative program to address racial and ethnic inequities in the labor force

AB 941: Establishes resource centers to educate and assist farmworkers

SB 321: Convenes an advisory committee to develop health and safety standards for domestic workers

AB 313: Increases employment opportunities for people with disabilities in state government

SB 639: Ends sub-minimum wages for workers with disabilities

Health, Safety and Benefits

SB 242: Requires health plans and insurers to reimburse providers for PPE and other expenses to prevent the spread of respiratory diseases

SB 326: Adopts provisions of Affordable Care Act

clusion of bargaining unit members employed at the Alameda Health System Hospital Authority (AHS) in ACERA

SB 598: Establishes PERB as the enforcing agency for Sacramento Regional Transit District

AB 275: Adjusts minimum and maximum probationary periods for community college district classified employees

AB 438: Expands rights to notice and hearing for classified school district employees

AB 1550: Protects union rights of University of California employees

AB 615: Provides right to appeal discipline for medical and dental interns and residents

Private Sector Employees

SB 338: Expands public posting of motor carriers with unpaid penalties for labor violations

AB 1506: Re-establishes the Borello test to determine whether newspaper carriers are independent contractors or employees

SB 646: Provides PAGA exemption for janitorial employees represented by a labor organization and requires janitorial companies to provide requested information

AB 450: Creates Paramedic Disciplinary Review Board for paramedics

to appeal licensure decisions

Education and Training

AB 1273: Expands Earn and Learn training programs for health and other licensed professions

SB 628: Enacts the California Creative Workforce Act of 2021

AB 643: Requires schools to provide advance notice to apprenticeship programs of career fairs and college fairs

AB 680: Enacts the Calif. Jobs Plan Act of 2021 By Weinberg, Roger & Rosenfeld

\$15 minimum wage for federal contract workers goes into effect in 2022

About 390,000 people who work for federal government contractors will be getting a raise starting on January 30, 2022. In April, President Biden signed an executive order directing the minimum wage for federal contract workers be raised to \$15 an hour, and in December, the Labor Department announced the final rule putting Biden's order into effect.

The federal minimum wage has been \$7.25 an hour for more than a decade, though many states and cities have raised their minimum wages. The \$15 minimum for contract workers will be indexed to inflation, so it won't stagnate. The new rule also includes disabled workers and eliminates the tipped worker sub-minimum wage by 2024. In a video announcing the move, Labor Secretary Marty Walsh said, "The fact is, contract workers are essential workers, and are critical to the federal government. They clean and maintain federal buildings, keeping us safe. They provide health care for veterans and child care for our kids. They provide food services for military families. And they build and repair roads and bridges, and so much more. This executive order improves the economic security of their families and communities, and makes progress towards reversing decades of income inequality. And it ensures that the federal government leads by example, creating good jobs for workers all across our country."

New California laws will impact

unions and workers

California lawmakers sent the Governor hundreds of bills in 2021. Labor law firm Weinberg, Roger & Rosenfeld highlights those bills that bear a direct connection to workers and their health and safety, the labor movement, and worker justice. (For more detail, go to: www.unioncounsel.net)

Need to Know

SB 62: Ends piece rate payment and establishes new protections for garment workers

SB 510: Ends surprise billing for COVID-19 testing and immunization

AB 73: Incorporates wildfire smoke events and agricultural workers in the state s PPE requirements AB 1033: New California Family Rights Act provides leave to care for a parent-in-law

SB 606: Establishes an OSHA presumption of enterprise-wide violations and reforms citations for egregious violations

SB 278: Makes adjustments with respect to CalPERS compensation reporting errors

Public Sector Employees

AB 237: New Public Employee Health Protection Act protects health care coverage while public employees participate in strikes

SB 270: Imposes penalties on public employers who fail to provide bargaining unit information AB 1048: Requires labor negotiations for inBy Laura Clauson, Daily KOS Labor

IAM LOCAL UNION MEETINGS

A note about meetings and COVID

Since the COVID shutdowns started, local unions have been holding general membership meetings over Zoom or other video conferencing programs. Some chose to tailgate—meeting six feet apart outdoors—to meet the guidelines for social distancing. Some locals are now meeting indoors again while others are holding "hybrid" meetings — both in-person and on Zoom.

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 in advance to ensure that you're registered to join them on-line.



MOVING? Or need to report a member recently deceased...

Send the mailing label on this newspaper to your local union office. Please note: If you send your notice to 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!

See calendar below for your local union's address.

UNION MEETINGS				
District Lodge 190 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621 510-632-3661	 Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month January 25 • February 22 • March 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 January 20 • February 17 • March 17 General Membership Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month January 4 • February 1 • March 1 Retirees' Club: 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: January 19 • February 16 • March 16	
Local 93Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month January 11 • February 8 • March 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 January 5 • February 2 • March 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 January 15 • February 19 • March 19 Narcotics Anonymous: 5:30-6:30 p.m. every Tuesday	
Local 653 5726 E. Shields Avenue Fresno, CA 93727 559-264-2815 <i>Local Lodge meetings will b</i> <i>staff can ensure there's eno</i>	Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month January 19 • February 16 • March 16 Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m. Membership Meeting: 5:30 p.m. he held in-person again. Please RSVP to the office so the ugh food for you.	Local 1546 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-638-6705	Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month January 4 • February 1 • March 1 General Membership Meeting & E Board Meetings: 6:30 p.m. Member Education Meeting: 5:30 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous: 9 a.m. every Saturday	
Local 801 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621	January 20 • February 17 • March 17 Membership Meeting: 4:00 p.m.		Meetings will be held on zoom for the foreseeable future. Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in.	
800-655-2182	<i>Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.</i>	Local 1584 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605	<i>Meetings are the third Thursday of the month</i> January 20 • February 17 • March 17 Membership Meeting : <i>7:00 p.m</i> .	
Local IIOIMeetings are the second Thursday of the month2102 Almaden Rd., #105January 1 • February 10 • March 10San Jose, CA 95125Executive Board Meeting: 5:30 p.m.408-440-8716General 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.		510-632-3661 Meetings will be held on zoon Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net		
		Local I596	Meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday	

Local 1173 1900 Bates Ave., # H Concord, CA 94520 925-687-6421 *LL1173@sbcglobal.net*

Local I4I4

150 South Boulevard San Mateo, CA 94402 650-341-2689 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month January 1 • February 10 • March 10 Membership/Shop Stewards' Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

on the second Thursday of the month January 1 • February 10 • March 10

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

January 20 • February 17 • March 17 **Executive Board Meeting:** 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month

January 1 • February 10 • March 10 General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month via Zoom. Please contact the office for the meeting link.

January 20 • February 17 • March 17

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

March 2 • June 1 • September 7 • December 7

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

January 18 • February 15 • March 15 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

The Lodge will continue to hold monthly meetings on Zoom. On a quarterly basis, the meetings will be held "hybrid" (both in-person and on Zoom). The in-person location is at the Local 38 Plumbers and Pipefitters Hall (3473 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95407). To stay on zoom, contact the local at 925-687-6421 for the meeting number and passcode.

Local 2182

967 Venture Court Sacramento, CA 95825 916-929-1040 For dues questions, call Debbie Bird: 559-269-6386 *machinists2182@gmail.com* Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month January 11 • February 8 • March 8 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: January 19 • February 16 • March 16