



Long-time District 190 leader retires

After leading District Lodge 190 for the last 20 years, Jim Beno is hanging up his tool belt as Directing Business Rep (DBR). He plans to stay involved with his home Local (2182) and will maintain his position on the International's Law Committee through the convention being held later this year, but he's leaving the operations of District 190 to new folks to run.

Beno started his career as an equipment service worker at the City of Sacramento in 1974. "I worked in the police garage," Beno recalls. "We were represented by an unaffiliated group and were lumped in with garbage truck drivers and other groups that had nothing to do with our trade." Beno says the techs no longer wanted to be independent; they wanted to be in the AFL-CIO. "In 1976, after lobbying the City Council and getting unanimous support from them, we were able to carve out a bargaining unit that was part of the Machinists Union and we became members of Local 2182."

In 1977, Beno became recording secretary of the Local. Two years later, he was elected to be Secretary-Treasurer, which took him off the shop floor and became his first full-time union position.

In 1981, the International Union brought him onto the staff of the Vice President of the then South West Territory (now the Western Territory). For nearly a year, he was stationed in New Mexico, working on a variety of assignments. In 1982, he returned to California to work out of the Long Beach Regional Office, but not long after, the International instituted a huge staff cutback and he was laid off.

In July 1984, then DBR Frank Souza hired Jim to be a Business Rep for Local 428 in the Stockton office.

A few years later, the District decided to merge



Left: Senator Barbara Boxer spoke at the dinner for one of the Guide Dogs golf tournaments after being introduced by Jim Beno; Center: Jim speaks to the members of Local 1546; Right: Jim with California Labor Federation head Art Pulaski (L) and AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka.

the Stockton and Sacramento locals, and Jim became Area Director of the new and larger Local 2182. In 2000, he became the Administrative Assistant for Automotive. In 2001, upon the death of DBR Mike Day, Jim was elected to take over the District as DBR and has held that position until now.

Organizing was the priority

Jim says that the thing he enjoyed most about working for District 190 was organizing. "It's always been our #1 priority," he says. "The only way an organization continues to thrive is by bringing in new people. It's always heartening to bring together a group of people to work for a common cause to help themselves. It's great to see them go through and win an election and then to help them to bring their standard of living up by working under a union contract. Sadly, these days, the hard part is negotiating the first contract."

"Automotive is the core of District 190, but it's also the toughest to organize," Jim says. "The manufacturing sector is highly unorganized and needs to be organized. We need to work more on that end."

Overall, Jim is proud of his career with the union. "The labor movement is the only thing out there fighting for the middle class to help them make their lives better. The IAM is about 134 years old – we're an old institution but we're evolving. I believe the labor movement will be able to keep fighting for and with workers for another 100 years. The key is to keep organizing."

Pension was biggest challenge

Jim says that one of the most intractable problems that he faced as DBR was the fight to save the automotive pension plan. "The plan was strong until 2008 when the markets crashed," he explains. "We lost a lot of our employers at that time—both dealerships and manufacturing—which put the pension fund in jeopardy. We had to reduce future benefits and were looking at insolvency. It was scary."

Fortunately, a piece of the American Rescue Plan, President Biden's first bill in response to the pandemic, included the fix that the Machinists Union and most other unions around the country were advocating for. "When this passed in 2021, it provided a resolution that should make the IAM

plan viable again—at least through 2051. That enables me to retire knowing that the pension plan will be strong into the future."

Always changing

Jim recognizes that, as an organization, the union is always evolving. District 190 was created in 1973 as an amalgamation of many Local Lodges. "We now have 12 Local Lodges that make up the District, several with fewer than 500 active members. We need to find ways for the organization to operate more efficiently."

With dreams of merging all the locals into one large local, Jim believes it would be smart to combine the strike funds, giving the district the ability to concentrate its assets into organizing. "With a merger, instead of 12 entities, we can join together as one and achieve economies of scale," he said.

Jim noted that the District has had better attendance at its monthly meetings since they've been held on Zoom. "We have many delegates who live far from the Oakland office. The availability of zoom technology has enabled the District to increase involvement of rank-and-file delegates. Of course, in-person meetings are better...but maybe we could move to hybrid meetings."

From the staff perspective

Incoming DBR Don Crosatto, who has been on the district staff for over 30 years, says: "Jim was a wonderful boss. He's always even-tempered and never gets too excited in a crisis. He's always willing to listen to almost any idea and is always supportive of the staff. One sign of that is that he championed the District's annual lobster feed when he is deathly allergic to shellfish! I will miss his wise and calm counsel."

Jim's retirement plans include finishing some projects at the house, and when his wife Kathy retires from teaching in June, they'll visit all of their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. After two years of pandemic cancellations, he looks forward to helping out with the Guide Dogs Golf Tournament on August 19. As a member of 2182, he'll stay involved at the local level. "Definitely, I'm not going away and will be here to help out," he adds.



New District 190 Officers

At its November meeting, District 190 delegates elected new officers by acclamation. An election was held for the Trustee positions that was not finalized until January. Here is the new Executive Board—their term runs from 2022-2026.

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:
Tom Myers (Local 1546)
Dave Baumann (Local 1414)
Ken Stoner (Local 1546)



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:

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

The IAM District 190

Sparkplug

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Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor



UNION PEOPLE

New DBR comes with years of experience

Directing Business Rep (DBR) Don Crosatto may be new to this position, but he's been involved with District Lodge 190 for more than 35 years. He started his IAM career in 1985 as Research Director for the California Conference of Machinists.

In 1989, DBR Mike Day offered him the position of organizer, which he accepted. "I thought then and still believe that if we don't organize, we'll go out of business," Don says. "People need what we have to offer and we have a mission to grow the union."

On the second day of his new position, he was put in charge of the strike at Bridges Pontiac/GMC in Hayward and he spent his first year managing the picket line. For a break, he was sent up to Seattle for a month to help with the Boeing strike. Ultimately, in September, 1990, the union walked away from Bridges because the owner was intractable. He went belly-up in 1992 after operating non-union for a few years. Local 1546 reorganized the unit under a new owner in 1994 and got a contract. Sadly, the dealership finally went out of business in 2010.

Don's first organizing win was at Smith Chrysler-Jeep in Richmond. When he won his second drive, he says that he felt invincible. But then, he lost a few and the reality of how hard organizing can be set in.

For the next few years, Don continued to lead the organizing efforts as he learned the basics of negotiations. Soon, he got numerous servicing assignments for car, truck, and parts houses.

With the goal of increasing member communication and education, Don started *The Sparkplug* in 1991, initially just for Local 1546; it was soon expanded to include Locals 1101 and 1173. In 1998, it became the District's paper and Don has been active in overseeing its production ever since.

In 1995-1996, Don helped create the California Machinists 401K plan. "Even though the pension was doing great then and many thought we wouldn't need it, we were ultimately glad we had it. The plan grew from \$0 at its founding to \$125 million in assets today," he says with pride.

In 1997, Don was named Area Director for Organizing. Back then, he says, the District had 4-5 organizers. "In two years starting in 1998, we had organizing campaigns at 60 shops; we won voluntary recognition at 12 of them and won labor board elections at 23 more," he recalls. "We had a ton of activity – and we weren't doing anything strategic. We were just chasing hot shops."

Upon Joe Bobo's retirement in 2000, Don was named Area Director for Local 1546 and has held that position ever since. He became Senior Director in 2007 and then Assistant DBR in 2014. He has negotiated about 200 contracts along the way.

He currently holds several titles including Area Director for Locals 1546 and 1584 and now DBR. In addition, he was recently selected to serve as Chair of the Pension Fund, Co-Chair of the Health & Welfare Fund and of the Retiree Health and Welfare Plan, and Chair of the Individual Account Plan. He was also elected to serve as Treasurer of the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans, a nationwide organization that provides education around employee benefits for labor-management trustees.

Strengths of the District

Some of the positives at District 190 include that the apprenticeship program has really turned around. Years ago, the large majority of apprentices were at motor car dealers; now more are in



New DBR Don Crosatto

fleet shops, at garbage companies, and on the waterfront. "We're seeing apprentices in manufacturing where we hadn't had a machinist program in 40 years. As young people consider their options, the trades may hold more appeal than taking out thousands of dollars in college debt with no clear end game in mind. When we turn out high-quality skilled journey work-

ers, that makes signing a contract with us more desirable. Clearly, the wages and benefits are richer for the unions that emphasize training and supply quality people—and that includes us.

On another front, the reserves for our health and welfare fund are at an all-time high. "There have been no cost increases over the last three years, which has been great for our employers and for our members."

A little history

District 190 was created in 1973, but its roots go back to nine districts and several independent locals with about 65 reps. "Back then, each city was a district and the bigger locals were independent and had their own reps. With 40-50,000 members, the original District 190 was orders of magnitude bigger than it is today. Since the District's founding, we now represent only a fraction of the mom and pop independent shops and manufacturing houses that we used to. The overall trend is unmistakable."

"However, despite the negativity, we've still got a lot to offer," Don says. "Recently, we've been getting really good contract settlements. We have more organizing leads than we can follow-up on." Today's challenge, he says, is that "when we organize a shop, the employers go ballistic; they hire loads of attorneys. Many would rather let talented mechanics quit just to avoid signing a contract. This tells us that we're effective—they'll fight to the death and spend millions to keep us out, fearing that we'll prohibit them from running roughshod over the employees."

Don says that unions are held in higher esteem than they were 20 years ago. "Since the pandemic started, union favorability among young people is off the charts. We have something that people want. We just have to connect with them. That requires full-time staff which requires money."

Building for the future

"The long and short of it is that the staff of District 190 is experienced and talented—and getting older. And there aren't enough of us," Don says. "We're short-handed on reps and organizers and we have to ramp up now."

Adding staff takes money, but if you're worried that Don's answer is to raise your dues, don't! "Dues are already high enough as it is. We recently had a \$4/month increase for the district and the International, and we can't jack it up more than that," he says.

But, he notes, many of the Locals are sitting on big piles of cash. "Working with the International and the locals together, we need to develop a plan to free up some of those resources and devote them specifically to hiring more business reps and organizers. I believe that with enough staff, we could replicate the organizing success we had in the '90s."

Don plans to attend local lodge meetings to gain approval for an overall plan. "We'll need the okay from each local and also from the international, who will want to see that we're making a serious commitment to organizing. I expect to report in the next five years that we're on the rise."

NEWS FROM THE TRUST FUND

JOB BOARD

Your rights and protections against surprise medical bills

Effective January 1, 2022, the **No Surprises Act** went into effect that bans medical providers from “balance billing” when you get emergency care or get treated by an out-of-network provider at an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center.

Surprise billing is another term for an unexpected balance bill. This can happen when you can't control who is involved in your care—like when you have an emergency or when you



schedule a visit at an in-network facility but are unexpectedly treated by an out-of-network provider.

You are protected from balance billing for:

Emergency services: If you have an emergency medical condition and get emergency services from an out-of-network provider or facility, the most the provider or facility may bill you is your plan's in-network cost-sharing amount (such as co-payments and coinsurance). You can't be balance billed for these emergency services. This includes services you may get after you're in stable condition, unless you give written consent and give up your protections not to be balanced billed for these post-stabilization services.

Certain services at an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center: When you get services from an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center, certain providers there may be out-of-network. In these cases, the most those providers may bill you is your plan's in-network cost-sharing amount. This applies to emergency medicine, anesthesia, pathology, radiology, laboratory, neonatology, assistant surgeon, hospitalist, or intensivist services. These providers can't balance bill you and may not ask you to give up your protections not to be balance billed.

You're never required to give up your protections from balance billing. You also aren't required to get care out-of-network. You can choose a provider or facility in your plan's network.

If you believe you've been wrongly billed, you may contact the Automotive Industries Welfare Plan at 800-635-3105, by email at AISupport@hsba.com, or by visiting www.aitrustfunds.org for assistance. Visit www.cms.gov/nosurprises for more information about your rights under federal law.

Update your life insurance beneficiary

You can name anyone to be the beneficiary of your life insurance benefit under the Welfare Plan. Over time, your choice of beneficiary may have changed. The Plan recommends that you review your beneficiaries on a regular basis to make sure you named the correct person to receive the benefit. You can review your beneficiary online through the Trust Fund's website at www.aitrustfunds.org. Enrollment forms are also available on the site if you need to update

your beneficiary.

Kaiser plan benefit improvement for retirees

Retired members that have Kaiser coverage through the CMTA-IAM Retiree Welfare Plan will have enhanced benefits provided at no additional cost. The new benefits provided under the plan are post-hospitalization meal delivery and transportation services.

Post-Hospitalization Meal Delivery Benefit: This benefit will provide all Kaiser retirees who have had an inpatient hospital stay with 3 meals per day for 28 days (4 weeks) at no cost. The meal plan information will be provided by Kaiser at the time of discharge and is provided through the service Mom's Meals.

Transportation Benefit: This benefit will provide all Kaiser retirees with 24 one-way rides to medical, laboratory or imaging appointments at Kaiser facilities. The rides will be coordinated by various transportation contractors engaged by Kaiser and can include taxi, rideshare or private transportation services. There is also a contract with ride services that can handle wheelchairs and hospital gurneys. If you are a Kaiser Retiree through the plan and need a ride, call 877-930-1477.

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 1970s or 1980s, is over age 65 and is not receiving a pension payment from the Trust Fund, they could be missing out getting monthly payments. Have them contact the Trust Fund at 800-635-3105 for a review of their work history to see if they are eligible.

Are you interested in becoming a Business Rep for District 190? Now you have your chance to learn how to effectively represent your fellow members and negotiate contracts. The District is looking to hire a Rep for the East and West Bay. Send your resume to DBR Don Crosatto at: dcrow441@aol.com

Many employers with IAM contracts are desperately seeking qualified techs. This includes UPS, at several East and North Bay locations.

If you're looking to change jobs, talk to your Business Rep to find out about opportunities that may be available.

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 on Page 8 for your local union's address.

Get your IAM news on the web!



Visit the District 190 website at: iamdistrict190.org

The International IAM website is at: goiam.org

Local Lodge websites:

Local 1101: www.iamlocal1101.org

Local 1414: facebook.com/IAMLOCAL1414/

Twitter

Union Organizer: @union1484

Facebook pages:

Local 1101: facebook.com/

Search for IAMAW-Local 1101

Local 1546: facebook.com/iam1546

UNION PEOPLE

Like father, like son



Reed Webre (L), celebrated 25 years as an IAM member and crane mechanic working for PBA Maintenance at the Port of Anchorage. His son Austin (R) was officially vested in the pension plan on the same day that he presented the award to his dad.

Support a union brother in need

Jon Herl, a Local 2182 member who has worked at Toyota Material Handling in West Sacramento for 21 years, is in desperate need of a kidney due to an autoimmune disease. He is currently at Stage 5 and dependent on dialysis.

His wife, Jammie, is asking for support. If you can donate a kidney, of course, that would be the optimal gift. However, if not, Jammie has partnered with the Hope Through Art Foundation to bring awareness to kidney disease and the need for organ donation.

The Foundation will use art and the creation of a mural to bring HOPE to kidney patients—90,000 of which are on the transplant list today. Please consider donating to this worthy cause to show Jon that he has a community that loves and supports him. All donations are tax-deductible.

To give the gift of Hope, go to hopethroughartfoundation.com/donate/ and put “Kidney” in the comments. Any funds raised over the needed cost of the project will go towards other creative projects that bring awareness to the need for organ donation and kidney disease.

Local 1484

Congratulations to Long Beach waterfront apprentices – now journeymen!

On Friday, February 10, 2022, five IAM apprentices received their official State of California Department of Industrial Relations Apprenticeship Council Certification of Completion. They also received the IAM Certification of Completion of Apprenticeship.

At the event, which was held at the SSA PCT Terminal in Long Beach, Area Director Kevin Kucera explained that SSA Terminals has an active apprenticeship program with Local 1484. "Typically, apprentices get about 8,000 hours of on-the-job training during the four-year term of their apprenticeship. They also take 144 hours of supplemental training classes at different community colleges each year. In this case, the apprentices at SSA received training with a special focus on the company's needs for workers on the waterfront."

There are approximately 200 individuals



Here, three of the new journeymen received their completion certificates. (From left.) Area Director Kevin Kucera; Evan Rubio, Heavy Duty Truck Mechanic; KC Irwin, Waterfront Crane Mechanic; Nicholas Bacich, Heavy Duty Truck Mechanic; Rudy Morales, Local 1484 President/SSA Shop Steward; John Bell, Maintenance Manager, SSA Terminals.

within District Lodge 190 enrolled as Automotive Apprentices across California; these members work full-time while attending automotive-related classes at a community college. Automot-

ive Apprentices can work in the field of Auto & Truck Mechanics, Auto Body, Auto Paint, Truck and Trailer Repair, Service Advisor, Heavy Equipment Mechanic, and Parts Counter-Person. Apprenticeship is a tried-and-true training method that prepares individuals for occupations in the skilled trades and crafts. In addition to classroom training, apprentices work with experienced journeymen on the job and receive an hourly wage and other benefits while learning their chosen trade or craft. Apprenticeship programs are operated under the authority of Joint Apprenticeship Committees (JAC) that's composed of an equal number of employer and union representatives and are overseen by the California Apprenticeship Council.

A common thread of many of these stories is that, in today's economy, to attract and/or retain talent, employers need to provide fair compensation. "We preach this all the time during negotiations but too many employers refuse to acknowledge this fact until they are understaffed to the point that it negatively impacts operations," says Business Rep Brian Fealy.

Local 93

Coast Counties deal

The 15 members at Coast Counties Truck and Equipment in Salinas recently ratified a new three-year contract that provides 3% wage increases each year, and clarifies that they can contribute to the California Machinists' 401K Plan.

"They also got a new benefit in the form of a quarterly bonus," says Business Rep Pedro Gonzalez. "Techs who achieve an average of 90% efficiency will get an extra day of vacation pay (at straight time) each quarter."

Local 1173

Wage increases in Napa

The five members at Soscol Auto Body in Napa ratified a new one-year contract in March.

"It's a bit of a dark reality that COVID had a major impact on the auto body/collision repair industry, resulting in members getting laid off. When the public wasn't driving as many miles, there were far fewer vehicles that needed repairs from collisions," explains Business Rep Brian Fealy. "Also, the collisions tended to be at higher speeds, resulting in more vehicles being totaled. The good news is that work has returned to near pre-pandemic levels and everyone is back to work now."

However, Soscol Auto Body has

seen not one but two long-time Journeymen Body Men poached by other shops. "We had a lot of discussion about inflation, the rising cost of living, and how this shop could attract and retain talent," says Fealy. "We didn't get everything we wanted but, in March, the bargaining unit ratified a one-year agreement that will see their wages increase by \$2.00 this year (\$1.00 on April 1 and another dollar on October 1)."

Local 1414

Open at Ryder

The Ryder San Francisco contract is open for negotiations; talks should begin in early April.

"This is another shop that has recently seen a mass exodus of experienced long-term talent," says Fealy. "The employer will need to agree to some serious wage improvements in the agreement to retain current techs and attract new ones."

Local 1528

Solid increase at Sardee

The 10 members at Sardee Industries in Stockton recently ratified an 8% wage increase over two years," says Business Rep Paul Abarca. "We were able to get increases in the retirement, tool reimbursement, and safety reimbursement amounts while maintaining their current health and welfare benefit amounts."

Quicker raise

The 277 members at Applied Aerospace in Stockton are currently in year one of a two-year contract extension, explains Business Rep Paul Abarca. "With the current high inflation rates, the company and union agreed to give our members a 5% wage increase during the first quarter of the year, instead of making them wait until December 5," says Abarca.

Local 1546

Lucrative deal at Waste Management

Waste Management negotiations produced record gains for Local 1546 members as the company stepped up and met all of the committee's principal objectives.

"With inflation and the ongoing shortage of technicians, the union figured we were in a good place going into negotiations," says DBR Don Crosatto, "Back in 2018, we were able to increase vacations and sick leave and we added \$500/month in 401(k) contributions. This time around, after only three meetings, two of which were delayed due to COVID, the Local 1546 bargaining team delivered an even richer package than the last time."

The wage rates for journeymen increased immediately by \$2 per hour, with a CPI increase (based on February numbers) to follow on July 1, 2022, and additional CPI increases in 2023 and 2024. Given the high rate of inflation, the July increase will be \$2.48/hour. "In addition, for the first time ever, mechanics who hold a Commercial Drivers license

(CDL) will receive an additional \$2 per hour," Crosatto explained.

These increases, along with the 11% premium for those mechanics who are ASE masters, will have some of the Waste Management techs at \$57 per hour by July 2, 2022. "This is remarkable considering they only cracked the \$40 threshold less than ten years ago," Crosatto adds.

Additionally, the union pushed to increase the Health and Welfare caps, likely protecting the members from paying any more than they currently do. The company also agreed to add \$50/month into the 401(k) and \$40/month into the Mike Day Retiree Medical plan.

"Our bargaining committee did an outstanding job in delivering for the members," said Crosatto. The committee was comprised of veterans Steve Dearborn (98th Ave), Art Gaspar (Container Shop), Dave Money (Altamont), Nick De Michino (Davis St.), Greg Sanchez (MRF), and new members Will Kerry (Davis St. HE), Joe Simons (MRF), and Justin Mungeray (98th Ave.)

Increases at Falck

The seven members who work at Falck Ambulance Company based in Hayward got a three-year contract

We're Here
Employee Assistance Program

IAM Substance Abuse and Alcohol Addiction Helpline
888-250-4IAM (4426)

IAM - EAP National Helpline: 301-335-0735

Trained IAM-EAP representatives are ready to provide information and support assistance with: Addictions/Disorders, Divorce, Elder Care, Financial Issues, Gambling, Grief and Loss, Health Care Concerns, Marital/Family Problems, Stress, Violence (Workplace/Domestic)

THE LOCALS

that increases wages by 5% each year. Although they ratified the contract in January, it took until the end of March for them to get a final signed and completed contract.

Cromer techs stick with union and see historic gains

After having to strike to get a fair contract twice in a row, the mechanics at Cromer Material Handling weren't sure what would happen when Marshall Cromer sold the company to Cleveland, Ohio-based GNCO. After testing the waters with a union-buster and committing several unfair labor practices, GNCO reversed course and began good-faith bargaining.

While the new company recognized that Cromer's wages were too low to keep and attract talent, they initially wanted to offset large wage increases with major cuts to the benefits package. After several rounds of talks, the negotiating committee was able to recommend an excellent contract that the members at Cromer easily ratified.

Journeyman mechanics received first-year increases of \$4.15 per hour, with an additional \$2.55 to come in the next two years. Four employees who had been held back in "trainee" positions for years were upgraded to journeyman status. The members also gained two additional holidays.

"Perhaps most important, they were able to preserve their fully-funded Automotive Industries Welfare Plan C, which had been a major sticking point," says Area Director Don Crosatto.

While the new Cromer contract will not participate in the AI Pension, they did agree to put \$342 per month into the California Machinists 401(k) plan, along with some "seed money" to get everyone started. The company also created a Master Mechanic classification, which gave additional dollars to several of the existing mechanics.

"With this new agreement in place, everyone involved hopes that the new company will grow and prosper," Crosatto adds.

Bigger unit at RTS

For many years, the IAM has represented two mechanics at the Union Pacific Railway intermodal yard in Lathrop to repair the hostlers (the tractors that move constrainters around the yard). They worked through RTS.

Recently, the railroad realized they had a non-union contractor take care of their cranes. "Those guys worked cheap but the equipment was down all the time," says Crosatto.

"Union Pacific decided to hire RTS to do the work. We negotiated a new three-year contract that includes a wage rate for crane mechanics that is almost \$9 higher than the hostler mechanic rate and we were able to move our members into the crane department to enjoy the higher rates.

Local 1584

Successful contract at Atlas Pacific

In January, Local 1584 successfully negotiated a new three-year contract with Atlas Pacific Engineering in Modesto. The 13 journeyman service reps here manufacture, rebuild, install and maintain about 450 machines that pit peaches and other fruit across California. In addition to the five corporate customers, including Dole, across the state, the company has customers in Australia, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Spain, Italy, Greece, and South Africa.

The agreement includes increases of 6.5% in year one; 4.5% in year two, and 3.25% in year three. "We also got significant protection for future benefit in-

creases, escalations in pension contributions, an improved vacation schedule, and we added Veteran's Day to the holiday schedule," says Assistant DBR Mark Martin. "A key selling point was that one of our committee members was emailed a job offer the week before our bargaining sessions started. We shared this with the company on our final day of bargaining and that helped to get the package across the finish line."

Martin wanted to acknowledge Shop Steward extraordinaire Tom Swanger, (who's also Secretary-Treasurer of Local 1584) and committee member Shaun Morgan for their help on the contract.



Photos of Atlas Pacific members by Shop Steward Tom Swanger: (From left) Tony Lemus, Jason Mounts, Kyle Brown, and Luis Rodriguez; Damien Rivera rebuilds a transfer assembly; Dave Lewellen; Mike Swanson, the most senior member, with 30 years in the union.

We should gain four new members out there.

Local 1584

Early contract opener means big wage increases

The 11 members at GP (Georgia Pacific) Gypsum, who maintain and repair wallboard manufacturing equipment, ratified their new contract early.

Business Rep Brian Fealy reports that the contract was set to expire at the end of June 2022, but GP approached the union last December asking to open the contract early. "They had several highly experienced employees leave and they couldn't attract new hires," Fealy explained.

"As per the Grand Lodge Constitution's Membership Bill of Rights, the membership votes whether to open the contract early," he said. "This puts the union in a unique bargaining position—the offer has to be very strong or the members will not agree to the early opening."

Fealy says that GP management heard the members loud and clear. "They put substantial wage increases on the table and the members ratified the 28-month offer in early February."

Cargill finally ponies up

The maintenance mechanics who work at the Cargill salt plant in Newark have been negotiating a new agreement since the fall of 2020. At presstime, DBR Don Crosatto reports that after months of low-ball proposals, the company finally stepped up and offered a dramatically improved pay package that the committee will be recommending.

"After seeing a steady exodus of mechanics, the Company proposed immediate increases of \$4/hour for journeymen and \$2.75 for non-journeymen," Crosatto says. The total package over the life of the agreement is \$77,000, front-loaded with \$24,000 in retro pay.

Unilateral increases

Area Director Steve Older reports that the members at Henkel Aerospace in Bay Point had been happy with the contract that got ratified and signed last October. However, over the past few months, the company has realized that they can't find new hires because the pay is insufficient.

"Henkel management came to the union and announced that they would be increasing wage rates by as much as 16% for some of the groups as a way to attract and retain workers," Older says. "While we were happy for them to raise wage rates, we wanted it across the board. In the end, we advocated for and won increases for additional workgroups."

Local 1596

Talks in Novato

Area Director Steve Older reports that the talks at Novato Toyota are coming along well. "We're trying to get 7% increases because of the economy. We'll see how that goes!"

Local 2182

Sacramento: Pro & Con

Pro: The 48 members who maintain and repair vehicles for the City of Sacramento ratified a new two-year contract, retro to June 2021.

"Negotiations took seven months

but we were able to secure a 3.5% wage increase with retro pay and a 2% equity adjustment for the Equipment Service Worker Classification," says Business Rep Paul Abarca. "The contract includes 35 hours of paid leave that can be cashed out now or at retirement and a \$1,000 signing bonus." The group will be back at the table in June 2023.

Con: Assistant DBR Mark Martin says that, as this paper goes to press, the 30 members who are part of the Building Trades group will be voting on a similar package, but this is not one that the union recommends.

"Our folks are entitled to more, given the scarcity of machinists and generator techs," Martin says. "Clearly, the city wanted to take care of the city manager rather than recognize the reality that skilled employees are hard to find and equally hard to retain."

Wage opener at Brooks

In January, the eight members at Brooks Body Shop in Manteca agreed to a 3.25% wage increase while maintaining their current health, welfare and pension benefits, reports Paul Abarca, who says that the entire agreement opens up next January.

New owner; good contract

When Martin Marietta bought out Lehigh Cement in Stockton last September, it was anybody's guess how the talks would proceed.

"Fortunately, we secured a four-year agreement in March that provides our 13 members with a 17.75% increase over the term of the contract while maintaining their current health and welfare and retirement benefits," says Paul Abarca.



IN THE NEWS



Belgium says Yes to 4-day work-week and the right to ignore boss after work

The country famous for its chocolate, beer, and waffles is now a more attractive place to work.

“Workers in Belgium will soon be able to choose a four-day week under a series of labor market reforms announced in February,” reports EuroNews. Workers will also have the right to turn off work devices and ignore work-related messages after hours without fear of reprisal.

“We have experienced two difficult years. With this agreement, we set a beacon for an economy that is more innovative, sustainable, and digital. The aim is to be able to make people and businesses stronger,” Belgian prime minister Alexander de Croo told a press conference announcing the reform package.

Workers in the gig economy will also receive stronger legal protections under the new rules, while full-time employees will be able to work flexible schedules on demand.

One reader noted that it’s a 38-hour 4-day week; workers have to request that schedule, and it gets re-evaluated every six months.

Sahid Fawaz, Labor411.org

Trying to slow union elections, Starbucks misses legal deadline by 8 minutes

The baristas at three corporate-owned Starbucks stores, to date, have voted for union representation, and workers at more than 100 more stores in 19 states have filed for Labor Board elections. To slow the pace of new elections, Starbucks has enlisted a massive legal team. But the coffee chain suffered a tough legal setback in February, thanks to some late emails.

Through its lawyers from the firm Littler Mendelson, Starbucks asked the National Labor Relations Board not to move ahead with some of the votes, arguing that elections for individual stores aren’t appropriate. The company wants all the stores within the region grouped into one big vote. Sadly, that argument has slowed down the legal process and bought Starbucks more time to run its campaign against the union.

But the strategy ran aground in New York when Microsoft Outlook apparently crashed on Starbucks’ lawyers.

In order to make its case for the bigger union election, Starbucks had to submit what’s known as a Statement of Position to the labor board and the union by noon on Feb. 11. The company’s lawyers apparently didn’t get all the paperwork to the union’s lawyers until 12:08 p.m.

The lawyer from Littler Mendelson explained the mishap in a filing to the labor board, saying the files attached to the emails were apparently too large and crashed. Ian Hayes, a Buffalo-based labor lawyer working for Starbucks Workers United, argued that the company shouldn’t be allowed to make its case because of the blown deadline.

The labor board sided with the union, saying that “the employer’s failure to timely serve its Statement of Position precludes it from litigating any of the issues raised in its untimely submission.” Starbucks is expected to appeal the ruling because delaying elections allows them more time to persuade workers to vote against the union.

The legal tussle is the latest indication of how the gloves have come off between Starbucks and Workers United. The union says the company’s legal case against single-store elections is a redundant waste of time. Starbucks has made essentially the same argument against each new election effort, but so far, labor board officials have knocked it down at each turn.

None of Starbucks’ roughly 9,000 corporate-owned stores had union representation until late last year when the union won two out of its first three elections in New York. A third election, in Arizona, was also recently won.

By Dave Jamieson, Huff Post

Momentum is growing for an \$18 minimum wage in California

With inflation at high levels, a movement for an \$18 minimum wage is growing in California.

“Just months after a federal \$15 minimum wage failed to take shape, Californians may get the chance to vote on even higher minimum hourly pay,” reports CNBC.

A measure to raise the state’s minimum wage to \$18 began to collect signatures in February. If the campaign, called the Living Wage Act of 2022, gets 700,000 signatures, it will be on California’s November ballot.

“The purchasing power of the minimum wage declines over time,” said Joe Sanberg, an entrepreneur, and sponsor of the legislation. “That means that we have to keep fighting for an increased minimum wage to make sure that working people can afford life’s basic needs.”

If signed into law, the measure would gradually raise the minimum wage in California to \$18 from \$15 by 2025. That means that it would increase to \$16 in 2023 and \$17 in 2024. This would apply only to businesses with more than 25 employees – those with fewer than 25 employees would reach \$17 an hour in 2025.



GO UNION

Did you know that you own millions of acres of national parks, historic structures, cultural artifacts, ancient forests, snow-capped mountains, and clear blue lakes? Our public lands and waters belong to all Americans and are waiting for you to explore them.

You also employ thousands of union members who staff federal parks and monuments. AFSCME represents thousands of municipal workers at city and state parks and zoos. Interior Department workers who staff federal parks and monuments are also union members (NFFE, an affiliate of the IAM). And AFGE represents employees who build exhibits, conduct research and maintain the world-renowned Smithsonian Institute Museum in Washington, D.C.

Support good jobs by visiting our national parks and other federal lands.

US National Parks

- ALASKA**
Glacier Bay
Katmai
Kenai Fjords
Lake Clark
Wrangell-St. Elias
Denali
Kobuk Valley
Gates of the Arctic
- AMER SAMOA**
American Samoa
- ARIZONA**
Saguaro
Petriified Forest
Grand Canyon
- ARKANSAS**
Hot Springs
- CALIFORNIA**
Death Valley
Joshua Tree

- Channel Islands
Sequoia
Pinnacles
Kings Canyon
Yosemite
Lassen Volcanic
Redwood
- COLORADO**
Mesa Verde
Great Sand Dunes
Black Canyon of the Gunnison
Rocky Mountain
- FLORIDA**
Dry Tortugas
Everglades
Biscayne
- HAWAII**
Hawai’l Volcanoes
Haleakala

- INDIANA**
Indiana Dunes
- KENTUCKY**
Mammoth Cave
- MAINE**
Acadia
- MICHIGAN**
Isle Royal
- MINNESOTA**
Voyageurs
- MISSOURI**
Gateway Arch
- MONTANA**
Glacier
- NEVADA**
Great Basin
- NEW MEXICO**
Carlsbad Cavern
White Sands

- NORTH CAROLINA**
Great Smoky Mountains
- NORTH DAKOTA**
Theodore Roosevelt
- OHIO**
Cuyahoga Valley
- OREGON**
Crater Lake
- SOUTH CAROLINA**
Congaree
- SOUTH DAKOTA**
Wind Cave
Badlands
- TEXAS**
Big Bend
Guadalupe Mountains
- US VIRGIN ISLANDS**
Virgin Islands

- UTAH**
Zion
Bryce Canyon
Canyonlands
Capitol Reef
Arches
- VIRGINIA**
Shenandoah
- WASHINGTON**
Mount Rainier
Olympic
North Cascades
- WEST VIRGINIA**
New River Gorge
- WYOMING**
Yellowstone
Grand Teton
- Many thanks –
Label Letter/AFL-CIO



IN THE NEWS

‘The reality in America is that most people who are working full time live on a knife’s edge of financial ruin,’ said Sanberg, adding that a higher minimum wage would help support people of color and essential workers.

If the measure succeeds, it will give some 5.5 million people in California a raise of more than \$6,000 per year. California’s minimum wage was officially increased to \$15 per hour at the beginning of 2022, though some parts of the state have set their own minimum wages higher.

The hike would also apply to tipped workers and continue to be adjusted to keep pace with the cost of living past 2025.”

Sahid Fawaz, Labor411.org

Governor signs COVID sick pay back into law

On February 9, 2022, Governor Newsom signed into law the renewal of COVID sick leave pay. A similar law had been in effect in 2020 and expired in September 2021 when the virus levels had improved.

This law (SB114), which will go into effect in 10 days, is retroactive to January 1, 2022, and requires employers to provide up to 40 hours of COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave to a covered employee, if the employee is unable to work or telework because the employee is:

1. Subject to quarantine or isolation related to COVID-19 as defined by the State Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or a local health officer who has jurisdiction over the workplace;
2. Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19;
3. Attending an appointment for themselves or a family member to receive a COVID-19 vaccine or a vaccine booster;
4. Experiencing symptoms related to a COVID-19 vaccine or a vaccine booster that prevents the employee from being able to work;
5. Experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
6. Caring for a family member who has symptoms from a COVID-19 vaccine or a vaccine booster;
7. Caring for a family member who is subject to quarantine or isolation; or,
8. Caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed due to COVID-19.

For the cases described in (4) and (6), an employer may limit the total COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave for symptoms to three days or 24 hours unless the employee provides verification from a health care provider that the covered employee or their family member is continuing to experience symptoms related to a COVID-19 vaccine or a vaccine booster.

The law further requires employers to provide up to an additional 40 hours more of COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave to a covered employee, if the employee, or a family member for whom the covered employee is providing care, tests positive for COVID-19. A covered employee is not required to exhaust the initial flexible 40 hours of COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave before accessing the 40 hours additionally provided because of a positive COVID-19 test.

The supplemental paid sick leave will remain in effect through September 30, 2022.

Play Ball! Baseball lockout settled

It took 99 days of a contentious lockout, but baseball is back.

An agreement reached in March by Major League Baseball’s club owners and its players’ union after months of heated negotiations will allow for a full season, with opening day scheduled for April 7.

The five-year collective bargaining agreement will increase pay for young players and better incentivize teams to compete, among other provisions. Over the final two days of the talks, the deal was nearly derailed by a disagreement over creating a draft system for players overseas, but a compromise was struck that will be finalized later.



With the agreement, baseball will get to approach something closer to a normal season for the first time since 2019. The last two seasons had been disrupted by the pandemic.

Baseball’s last work stoppage had come when the players went on strike in 1994, with that dispute dragging into the 1995 season. Since then, the league and its players had enjoyed labor peace.

Tony Clark, a former player and the head of the union, said in a statement: “Our union endured the second-longest work stoppage in its history to achieve significant progress in key areas that will improve not just current players’ rights and benefits, but those of generations to come. Players remained engaged and unified from beginning to end, and in the process re-energized our fraternity.”

“Being back on the field is exciting for owners, players, fans as well,” Gerrit Cole, a Yankees star pitcher and a member of a union subcommittee that worked on the deal, said in a phone interview. “I think that’ll be the first step to maybe trying to mend some of the fences with some of the fans that have probably been upset with this process, and rightfully so.”

Contract changes include: The minimum salary will jump to \$700,000 in 2022 (and increase \$20,000 each year), and the luxury tax thresholds, which effectively penalize owners for overspending, will rise each year starting from \$210 million in 2021 up to \$244 million in 2026. A \$50-million bonus pool will be created for top young players not yet eligible for salary arbitration; the postseason will be expanded to 12 teams and there will be new ways to prevent clubs from manipulating young players’ service time.

James Wagner, NY Times

Landmark bill would outlaw bosses cutting off healthcare to striking workers

House Democrats introduced a landmark bill that would make it illegal for employers to cut off healthcare benefits to striking workers. The **Striking Workers Healthcare Protection Act** would subject employers to a fine of up to \$50,000, which could be doubled by the National Labor Relations Board for employers who have been in violation of the policy within the past five years.

Rep. Cindy Axne (D-Iowa) says she was inspired to introduce the legislation after John Deere threatened to take away healthcare policies from workers who were on strike in her district last fall.

Several of the bill’s co-sponsors represent districts where cutting healthcare has been used by companies as a strike-breaking tactic, including Rep. Steven Cohen (D-Tenn.), whose constituents were among the 1,400 striking workers at Kellogg’s cereal plants in four states.

If passed, the legislation could better position workers to negotiate with their employers for better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

“The threat itself is used to break strikes and force workers to accept contracts that don’t meet their needs. That’s why I wrote the bill,” Rep. Axne told *In These Times*.

In October 2021, 10,000 members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) went on strike at John Deere for the first time in 35 years, demanding better salaries and

overtime pay while opposing proposed increased healthcare premiums and a two-tiered wage system. The company responded by threatening to eliminate healthcare benefits for workers and their families over the duration of the strike, before ultimately reversing course.

“Unfortunately, employers use this threat to discourage workers from going on strike or to push workers to end a strike before an adequate contract agreement has been reached,” says Laurel Lucia, the Health Care Program Director at the University of California Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education. “With this threat looming, workers aren’t fully able to exercise their rights to a fight for a strong collective bargaining agreement.”

Had John Deere cut workers off from their healthcare, the UAW promised to pick up the cost of COBRA payments, but members would have lost coverage for dental and vision. However, the UAW, with its nearly one million active and retired members, has a \$790 million strike fund. Other striking workers aren’t always afforded this benefit.

Indigo Olivier, In These Times

Attn: Local 1584 Members

Notice of potential BYLAWS change

In accordance with Article XIII, Section 3 of the IAM constitution, notice is hereby given:

Local 1584 will hold a first reading of potential by-laws changes at the General Membership meeting on April 15, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. This meeting will be held at the Local’s office: 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605.

The second reading and vote will take place at the May 19 meeting (same time and location.)

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 tail-gate—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.

1,743%

The amount Wall Street Bonuses have increased since 1985.

\$61.75/hour

The amount the minimum wage would be if it had increased by the same percentage.

(While the California minimum wage is currently \$14/hour, the federal rate still lingers at \$7.25/hour)

Sources: Institute for Policy Studies, NY State Comptroller, Bureau of Labor Statistics



UNION MEETINGS

District Lodge 190

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

Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month

April 26 • May 24 • June 28

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

April 21 • May 19 • June 16

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

April 5 • May 3 • June 7

Retirees’ Club: 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: April 20 • May 18 • June 15

Local 93

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

Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month

April 12 • May 10 • June 14

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

April 6 • May 4 • June 1

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

April 16 • May 14 • June 18

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

Local 653

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

Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month

April 20 • May 18 • June 15

Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m.

Membership Meeting: 5:30 p.m.

Local Lodge Meetings will be held both in person and on zoom. If you plan to attend in person, please RSVP so staff can ensure there’s enough food. If you want to attend on zoom, you must send a personal email to iamaw653@comcast.net. Be sure to provide your first and last name and the shop you work at in the email. Once you do, you will receive an invite to the zoom meeting.

Local 1546

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

Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month

April 5 • May 3 • June 7

General Membership Meeting & E Board Meetings: 5:30 p.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous: 9 a.m. every Saturday

Meetings are now hybrid - in person and on zoom. Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in on zoom.

Local 801

8201 Capwell Drive
Oakland, CA 94621
800-655-2182

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

April 21 • May 19 • June 16

Membership Meeting: 4:00 p.m.

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

Local 1584

10260 MacArthur Blvd.,
Oakland, CA 94605
510-632-3661

Meetings are the third Thursday of the month

April 21 • May 19 • June 16

Membership Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Retirees’ Club: 12:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month: April 5 • May 3 • June 7

Meetings will be held on zoom for the foreseeable future. Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in.

Local 1101

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

Meetings are the second Thursday of the month

April 14 • May 12 • June 9

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 1596

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

Meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday of the month

April 19 • May 17 • June 21

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 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

April 14 • May 12 • June 9

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

April 14 • May 12 • June 9

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

April 21 • May 19 • June 16

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

April 14 • May 12 • June 9

General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month via Zoom. Please contact the office for the meeting link.

April 21 • May 19 • June 16

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

June 1 • September 7 • December 7

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

April 12 • May 10 • June 14

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:

April 20 • May 18 • June 15