



Hundreds of workers celebrated Labor Day 2022 at Mercedes Benz of San Diego, where the techs have been on strike since June.
Center photo: Chief Shop Steward at the dealership Pedro Gomez with IAM General Vice President Gary Allen.

Labor Day action for striking techs

On Monday, September 5, the labor community of San Diego came together, not for a picnic, but for a major strike action at Mercedes Benz of San Diego.

About 35 IAM Local 1484 members have been on an unfair labor practice (ULP) strike at the Penske-owned Mercedes Benz shop since June 16. They held a Labor Day rally, press conference and march down “Penske Auto Row” to highlight unfair labor practices and demand the dealership put forward an honest effort in negotiations allowing them to operate as union factory-trained technicians. The rally was supported by members of the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council and elected officials.

In what Area Director Kevin Kucera terms “spectacular,” about 300 people attended the Labor Day events, that also brought out San Diego Mayor

Todd Gloria, Chair of the County Board of Supervisors Nathan Fletcher, Labor Council leader Bridget Browning, and General Vice President for the Western Territory IAM Gary Allen.

“The guys at Mercedes Benz are amazing,” Kucera says. “They’re holding the line in good spirits. They’ve got the Rat, and they’ve got pop-ups, and picket signs. The public keeps dropping in, bringing pizzas.”

The IAM recognized UFCW Local 135 and the American Federation of Teachers for turning out big numbers at the event.

For months, management has decided to hire uncertified outside technicians at a higher rate of pay than the certified unionized techs get, leaving out the workers with a combined 400+ years of Mercedes-Benz experience.

“I am proud of my fellow technicians who put their careers on the line to fight for the respect and dignity we deserve,” said IAM Local 1484 member and Lead Technician Francisco Oseguera. “I am fighting to ensure the younger auto technicians that come after me will have a strong union contract to hold management accountable. Without the experienced auto technicians, there is no service department.”

“We are in this fight to protect our industry and to grow the union density in the San Diego area,” said IAM Local 1484 Chief Shop Steward and Master Technician Pedro Gomez. “We will

either be heroes or martyrs with this strike, but either way, we are winning.”

“I am so proud of our members’ courage and patience in this battle against a big company,” adds Kucera. “We will do everything we can to overturn these unfair labor practices and get our members back to performing their craft. We will fight to the bitter end to bring justice for our members and their families.”

“I couldn’t think of a better place to be during Labor Day than with our members at IAM Local 1484,” said GVP Gary Allen. “These technicians are true fighting Machinists, and I am proud to stand with them on this holiday that celebrates the dignity of work. We all must stand behind the technicians because the San Diego community wins when they win.”

UPDATE: Kucera says that the union attempted to meet with management in August, with the help of a federal mediator. “But as soon as the mediator shared his business card and one of the management reps saw that it had a union bug on it, signifying that it was printed at a union printer, management turned around and walked out. There have been no talks since.”

The Labor Community of San Diego continues to stand behind the techs. In late August, Kucera spoke at the San Diego Labor Council’s annual COPE banquet and was surprised to receive a \$10,000 check to support the striking workers.



Mercedes Benz techs were joined by hundreds of labor activists for the Labor Day press conference.



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goiam.org

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Local 1101: www.iamlocal1101.org
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Facebook pages:
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TikTok
Local 1484: Search for Mercedes Benz San Diego

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

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.

The IAM District 190

Sparkplug

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Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor

UNION PEOPLE

Celebrating DBR Jim Beno upon his retirement

On August 20, District 190 hosted a party to recognize and thank Directing Business Rep Jim Beno for his years of service to the IAM and to District 190.

Held at the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos, historic planes and helicopters hovered above the gathering of about 150 current and former staff, leadership and members, all there to wish Beno a great new chapter.

Former and current GVPs Lee Pearson and Gary Allen told stories about the early days with Jim, and he got a chance to rebut those tales. In all, it was a great night to celebrate a caring and successful leader.

(L) Now former DBR Jim Beno
(C) Former Western Territories General Vice President Lee Pearson with current DBR Don Crosatto
(R) Current Western Territories General Vice President Gary Allen with Jim Beno
Below: Misc. shots of members, staff, friends and family



Photos by
Chris Perry
Local 1414



NEWS FROM THE TRUST FUND

Automotive Industries Pension Plan: Special Financial Assistance Update

The Trustees of the Automotive Industries Pension Plan have been monitoring the Special Financial Assistance Program for Financially Troubled Multiemployer Plans since the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law on March 11, 2021. The Trustees met in September 2022 with the Plan’s actuary to review the requirements of the program in preparation for making the filing that will enable the government to shore up the union’s pension plan. The date the Plan will be allowed to file its application is expected to be sometime in the first quarter of 2023.



No Increase to Employer Contribution Rates for Welfare Benefits

The employer contribution rates for all Welfare Plan benefits (medical, prescription, dental, orthodontic, vision, life insurance and short-term disability) are reviewed annually by the Trustees and are updated in September of each year.

Due to the favorable cost experience of the plan over the past year, the Trustees have determined that there will be no increase in the employer contribution rates for the upcoming rate period. If you have a contract that requires cost sharing of welfare benefits, there will be no change to your cost sharing portion for the rate period of September 2022 – August 2023.

Vision Service Plan (VSP)

Collective bargaining agreements that include vision benefits under the welfare plan are provided exclusively by Vision Service Plan (VSP). The plan has contracted through VSP for many years because of their extensive network of providers. The vision plan will cover the following services for members:

- Exam every 24 months
- Lenses and Frames every 24 months
- \$25 Exam Copay (\$60 Copay for contact lens exam)
- \$130 Frame Allowance
- \$130 Elective Contact Lens Allowance

You can locate a VSP provider by going to www.vsp.com. VSP also provides an online option for ordering glasses and virtual try-on tools at www.eyeconic.com.

Employee Assistance Program Services Available Online

HMC HealthWorks is providing all Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services for eligible employees and their dependents.

The EAP is a resource to help those enrolled in medical coverage through the fund to address a broad range of personal difficulties that may be causing distress. The EAP offers up to three (3) professional, confidential counseling sessions per employee per incident with a network of professionals including licensed psychologists, social workers, and marriage and family therapists. In addition, legal/financial advice and eldercare/child-care advice is offered. These confidential counseling services are free, with no deductible, copay, or coinsurance.

HMC HealthWorks can be reached online at <https://hmc.personaladvantage.com> and using the Access Code: AUTOMOTIVE. They can also be reached by calling 888.690.1349.

Pension Plan searching for former participants

The Automotive Industries Pension Plan currently has approximately 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: Trust Fund Office Virtual Appointments Available

The Trust Fund Office at Health Services & Benefit Administrators in Dublin, CA continues to offer virtual appointments so members can ask one-on-one questions with a benefit analyst regarding their medical and pension benefits provided by their collective bargaining agreement. Appointments can be scheduled directly through the Trust Fund webpage at www.aitrustfunds.org. Click on the “Contact Us” icon on the home page and follow the instructions under the “Virtual Appointments” section to set up your appointment.

Local 1414

Local honors successful high school auto shop students

Local 1414 awarded three boxes filled with tools to three graduating seniors from the George Washington High School automotive program who showed potential for becoming successful auto technicians. The students collected their awards at the Local’s July 2022 general membership meeting.



The three students collect their tool box awards at Local 1414’s membership meeting. At left is Local 1414 member and auto shop volunteer instructor Miles Hampton; at center is Rich Del Rosso, longtime instructor and Local 1414 member.

The 2022 winners were: Horace Montgomery (1st place); José Villanueva (2nd place) who wrote in his winning essay, “My love for cars stems from when I was a baby. I came out of the womb holding hot wheel cars in both hands.” Taking third place was Michael Doushovnikoff. All three winners plan on pursuing a career in the automotive trade.

up internships and summer programs, providing real world hands-on experience for the students.

The high school auto shop program is always looking for donations of late model vehicles (2005 to present), tools and equipment. All donations are tax-deductible. Contact Rich Del Rosso at Del-rossos@SFUSD.edu to make a donation.

2022 General Election ENDORSEMENTS

District 190 has never been in the business of trying to dictate to our members who to vote for. We hope that you’ll take the interest of your work and your union into consideration.

If you’d like to see all of labor’s endorsements for state and federal office, go to: calaborfed.org/election

There are some labor leaders who are running for office that we’d like to recommend. There’s truly no better advocate than someone who has worked in the trenches of our unions and labor councils to represent working people in Sacramento.



Liz Ortega
Assembly—20th District
Liz has led the Alameda County Central Labor Council (South Alameda Cnty)



Tim Robertson
State Senate—4th District
Tim has led the North Valley Labor Federation (Modesto & the eastern part of the state from Nevada to Inyo counties)



Cindy Chavez
Mayor - San Jose
Cindy has led the South Bay Central Labor Council and helped launch Working Partnerships USA



Josh Harder
Congress - 9th District
Josh has been a champion for labor issues since getting elected in 2020.

Election Details & Deadlines -

All California active registered voters will receive a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 8 General Election. These ballots will have prepaid postage as long as they are returned on or before Election Day.

- Last day to register to vote: October 24, 2022 (you can register in person at a polling place through November 8)
- Election Day: Tuesday, November 8, 2022
In-person voting locations offer voter registration, replacement ballots, accessible voting machines, and language assistance for those in need.
- To register to vote (or re-register if you moved) go to: covr.sos.ca.gov



Local 93

Best contract ever

About 20 members work for **Five Rivers** at the Vandenberg Tracking Station “recently ratified the best agreement they have ever had,” explains Business Agent Richard Breckenridge. This group tracks military satellites and some launches into space.

“The contract was negotiated early, so the wage increases won’t start until December. They’ll get 11% in wage increases over the next three years, with the biggest bump in year one,” Breckenridge added.

Local 653

Good contracts at two shops

Area Director Mark Martin reports that the members at **Commercial Manufacturing** in Fresno ratified a new three-year contract with increases of 7%, 3.75% and 3.25% respectively each year.

Similarly, the union settled a four-year contract with **Ruan Transport** that provided significant wage increases and an annual \$1,000 tool reimbursement program.

“Next, we’re heading into negotiations with Fresno Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram and Sun-Maid Raisin,” Martin said.

Local 801

Growing pains with new employer

Louis Berger Services took over the Fallon Naval Air Station contract for jet refueling on April 1, 2022, reports Mark Martin. “While we were successful in reaching an agreement with the new company, there have been a host of growing pains in the way they’re applying the agreement,” he says.

“We resolved a vacation accrual issue that would have caused some members to lose their 2022 vacation allotment. I’m confident we’ll resolve all remaining issues in favor of the membership,” he added.

Local 1101

Year one bumps

In August, the 28 techs and service writers at **Sunnyvale Ford** ratified their new three year contract and will see enormous wage increases in year one starting that month.

The mechanics will all get 4% increases in years two and three. But depending on their experience, “they’ll see first year wage increases that range from 8.83% for journey-men mechanics to 11% for master level one mechanics, 14.3% for master level two, and 17.5% for Triple Masters,” says Breckenridge.

The Service Writers will have a new pay structure altogether. Instead of being salaried, they will now get \$18 for every hour worked, plus all commissions on top of that hourly amount. “I expect that they will do very well with this formula,” Breckenridge added.

Local 1173

Coming up to area standard

The two bus mechanics at **First Student** in Concord ratified a three-year contract in July and they’re pretty happy about it.

“They’ll get a 25% wage increase over three years, with a 15% hike coming in year one,” says Business Rep Brian Fealy who adds that they’ll also get their first tool allowance of \$150, \$25 more for boots, and \$50 for non-prescription safety glasses.

“These increases are really due to the members’ initiative,” Fealy says. “These are two fairly new members who came in and turned the operation around.”

Two cycles ago, the same negotiator started off with 12.5¢ increases. “But it’s clear that these guys were behind on area standards,” Fealy adds. “The company finally recognized that they can’t attract and retain talent if they keep the techs so far below the area standard, because they’ll just go somewhere else.”

Industry is coming back

In August, the six machinists and two Teamsters at **Parker Robb**

Body Shop in Walnut Creek ratified their new three-year contract.

“This shop got hit hard with COVID and their business really declined. With so few people going anywhere, there were fewer accidents,” says Fealy. “We had rolled over the contract for the last two years, anticipating that the company wouldn’t have much to give and we didn’t want to lock into something substandard.”

The body shop business is not where it used to be, “but it’s coming back,” says Fealy. “With raises of 6% in year one and 5% the following two years, I think we did better than we would have gotten earlier.”

Local 1414

Good deals

The 55 techs and service writers at **Serramonte Ford** in Colma ratified a new three-year contract in August. “This contract provides a big boost in wages over the three years, with the largest increase in year one,” says Area Director Pedro Mendez.

At **Cal Body Steel Forming**, a manufacturing company in Benicia, the 19 members ratified a new three-year contract that includes good wages, maintenance of benefits on their health and welfare, a safety bonus, and increases in the pension contribution.

The 10 techs at **TransDev Paratransit** in South San Francisco ratified their new contract in June. “They’re happy,” says Mendez. “They got big wage increases, and maintained their medical and 401K.”

The techs at **Avis/Budget** at the Oakland and San Francisco Airport locations ratified a new agreement and, according to Mendez, it’s a fairly reasonable deal.

“The car rental companies are having a hard time recruiting,” explains Mendez. “This contract raises the starting wage by \$4/hour immediately. We’ve informed the company that there are people currently working who are making close to that wage and that anybody who’s close needs to have a commensurate upward adjustment.”

Arbitration win at SSA

SSA had a longstanding policy of treating sick days or vacation days as hours worked for computing overtime although the contract only stipulated that holidays worked should count. In 2021, the company decided that since sick leave and vacation time were not stipulated in the contract, they would stop paying on those hours.

“We brought the issue to an arbitrator and got a decision in eight days,” says DBR Don Crosatto. “When you’re trying to prove a past practice, you’ve got to have lots of examples and we were ready.”

Crosatto says that the arbitrator ruled that the six grievants must get back pay for the days when they

should have received time-and-a-half or double-time. In the future, the company has to treat sick and vacation days as hours worked unless and until they negotiate something different in the next contract.

Crosatto wanted to thank the current and former stewards and mechanics who testified in the case, including Walter Willis, Bryan Pon (who testified from his vacation via facetime and had kept excellent records), Junior Oregel, Kevin Vier, and Tim Weaver.

Locals 1414 & 1484

More on SSA

SSA Terminals West Coast Negotiations will take place in 2023 and the planning has begun. “We expect good contracts, due to the increase in inflation,” says Area Director Kevin Kucera. “We’ll survey our members so that they have a voice at the table. The more who participate, the better it will be for developing proposals that the members truly want and prioritize.”

Local 1484

Celebrating partnership with HomeBoy Industries

Los Angeles-based **Homeboy Industries** is the largest gang rehabilitation and re-entry program in the world. In addition to providing services to individuals, the non-profit organization runs several businesses that employ former gang members.

In August, Area Director Kevin Kucera joined Western Territory General Vice President Gary Allen to announce that IAM District Lodges 190, 947 and 725 will partner with Homeboy Industry’s electronics recycling program. “The initial vision is to work with our employers and membership to collect electronic recycling items so they can be brought to HBI. Down the line, we hope to create an apprenticeship program,” Allen said. “The Machinists Union is once again making a difference in our shops and in our communities.”

One contract done

Kucera says that the 11 members at **Kearney Mesa Acura** ratified their second agreement. “These negotiations were not easy given the trouble over at Mercedes Benz.”

“We just focused on wages for the one-year deal,” he says. “They’ll get a minimum of 4% this year, and could get up to 8-9% depending on their proficiency bonus.”

Local 1528

Changes in the canning industry

Local 1528 represents 240 mem-



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

bers at **Silgan Containers** in Modesto and Riverbank. “The company approached us seeking help because the sole remaining supplier of steel plate in California is closing in 2023 and no other U.S. providers of this type of steel have the capacity to provide Silgan the volume needed,” said Area Director Mark Martin.

“Our International President, Robert Martinez, got directly involved with politicians in Washington, D.C. to work for a solution that will ensure Silgan gets the steel it needs while recognizing the need to protect the U.S. Steel industry.

“Thank you brother Martinez for your help, along with that of General Vice President Gary Allen, who pushed to make this happen,” added Martin.

Local 1546

Big total

DBR Don Crosatto reports that the six members who work at **St. Francis Electric** in San Leandro ratified a three-year contract that includes raises of 5.5% in year one, and 5% in the next two years. Most important, their wages will top \$50/hour by the end of the contract.

Increases at Hertz

The rental car industry took a nosedive when the pandemic hit, but as air travel is on the upswing, companies like Hertz are seeing a significant rise in their business fortunes.

After three weeks of negotiations, the 37 **Hertz** techs at the airports in Oakland and San Jose ratified a new three-year contract in August and September and are happy with the result. Those in San Francisco rejected the offer and, at press time, are still back at the table.

The contracts are slightly different at each location, but overall, journeymen will get close to 10% increases and the utility techs will get 11.8% increases over three years. That comes with a cap on the maximum hours on overtime, an increase in the tool insurance, and \$0.25/hour for each ASE certification, with new certifications added to the list.

“Each location uncovered some pending grievances,” says Brian Fealy. “We settled the contract but opened a can of worms on the grievances. And in San Francisco, we discovered a vacation payout issue that the company has since agreed to make right.”

Local 2182

Fuller pockets

The members at **Clutch & Brake Xchange** in Stockton ratified a one-year agreement that puts 9% additional in wages and a \$500 signing bonus into everyone’s pocket, reports Business Rep Paul Abarca. “Our members are retaining 100% company-paid union health and welfare benefits, their union pension and 401K match.”

National Greyhound talks

The IAM just finished national negotiations in Dallas-Fort Worth for the members at **Greyhound Lines** and Paul Abarca was there. “The negotiations team feels that we squeezed as much as we could out of the company. Our members across the U.S.—including three in Local 2182—approved the package on September 2.”

Ambulance contract passed

The ambulance company **American Medical Response (AMR)** employs members from four locals across Northern California (2182, 1528, 1546, and 1414). “Typically we see a lot of company foot-dragging

but this contract went quickly,” says Business Rep Paul Abarca. The members ratified it in September.

“The Bay Area and Sacramento members typically get higher wages than those in Modesto-Stockton, but we worked hard to bring those folks up a bit closer. It was a good deal.”

Leading the industry

Members at **Teichert** ratified a three-year contract that provides for large increases and a final wage amount that will be the lead in the industry.

“I want to thank our Shop Steward Mark Misasi and fellow negotiations committeeman Kevin Scoggins for their efforts to get this across the finish line,” said Abarca.

Getting better at Ryder

It took a strike and 14 months of talks to get a first contract at **Ryder Truck** in Stockton, recalls Area Director Mark Martin.

“We continue to work towards fairness in the workplace and successfully resolved a grievance tied to seniority and shift bidding,” Martin adds. “I have optimism that things will continue to improve at Ryder.”

Local 1414

Breaking 4% at City/County of San Francisco

About 400 members who work for numerous agencies in the city and county of San Francisco ratified their new two-year contract in May.

Former Business Rep Art Gonzalez came back to help negotiate the deal with an 18-person committee, which included members who work under the City Contract, (auto mechanics, heavy-duty machinists; as well as those that work on the MTA contract (bus mechanics, automotive machinists and maintenance mechanics). These members create parts for the cable cars, maintain the track, and turntables, repair and paint the historic and new trolleys, and more. Members also work at Hetch Hetchy, in the power station and dam; they fix vehicles and keep the water flowing. Members also work at Parks and Recreation and at the airport. At MUNI, members work on parking meters, as well as painting and repairing all of the buses.

“It’s a complicated contract,” Gonzalez says, glad to have it behind him. “There are two contracts but both cover many of the same classifications. A key goal for the city was to avoid arbitration and get the contract completed. The IAM negotiators were able to use that city goal as leverage, enabling them to break the 4% wage increase barrier and get up to 5%

increases. But in order to deal with many of the committee’s proposals that did not get heard, the group established a Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC), to meet every 90 days and work out those issues.” Gonzalez adds that, with a two year contract, the next negotiations will be starting in just over a year, “so our members need to get ready to start again.”

Some of the increases include: 10% wage increases over the two years; certain job categories got additional monies added to their base wages, others got an increase in heavy duty pay; and at MUNI, one job category got a 9% increase on top of the 10% increase. An additional benefit was that techs could use photos to inventory their tools for purposes of tool insurance.

Gonzalez would like to thank District 190 Directing Business Rep Don Crosatto, IAM General Vice President Gary Allen and Grand Lodge Rep Jimbo Watson for their help and advice throughout the process. He also wanted to give a shout out to Rob Bergeson, (MTA- cable car) Malei Maloa (MTA-bus), Scott Thomson (Central Shops), Jason Bernardo (PUC), Richie Bernal (MTA – body shop), and Dan Brown (Hetch Hetchy). “This group worked on putting the proposals together and worked hard in negotiations.”



Vernon Ting — MTA



Members work on fire trucks...



Ambulances...



Muni cars...(Shown here is former business rep Art Gonzalez)



At the cable car shop...



Body work & paint on historic trolleys.



Members at the MTA...



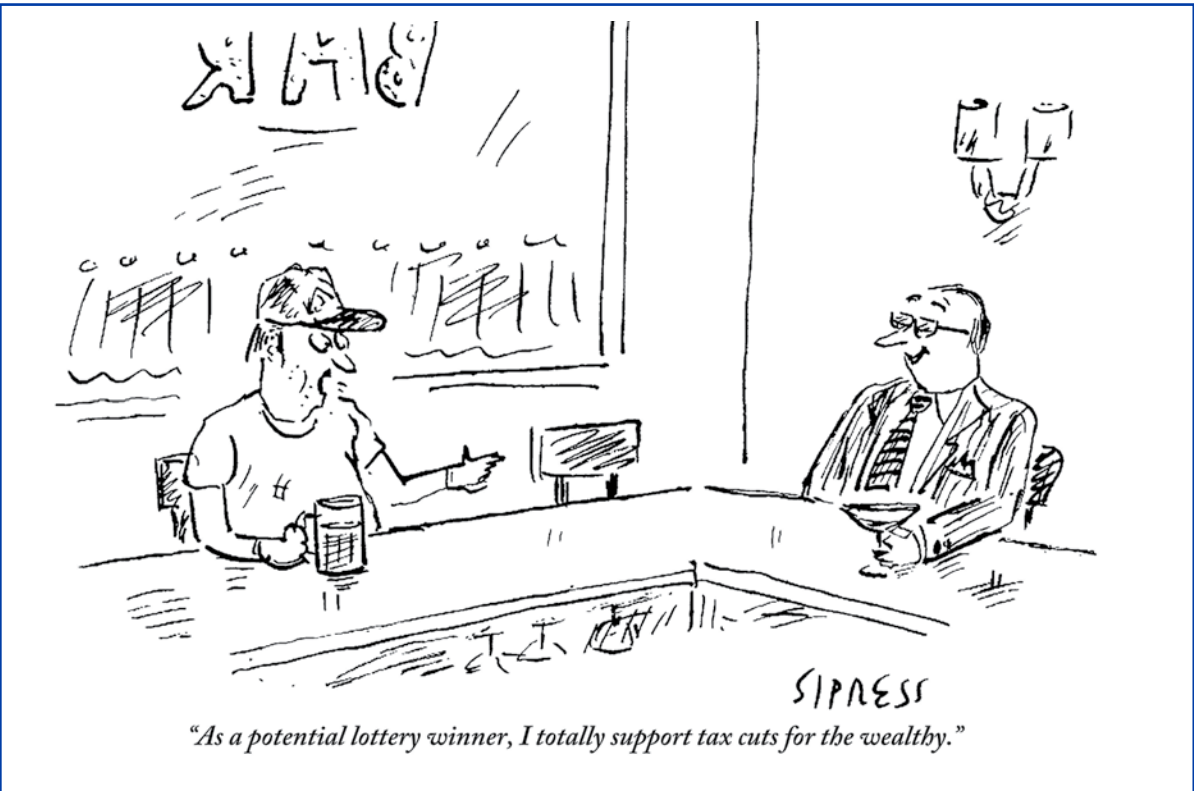
Don Adonis in the Fire Shop.



Restored and painted bus done at the Woods Body Shop.



IN THE NEWS



Public approval of unions hits highest point since 1965 ... again

Public support for unions is at its highest level since 1965, according to Gallup’s annual pre-Labor Day survey. And if that headline sounds familiar, it’s because last year Gallup also found the highest public support for unions since 1965.

In 2021, 68% of people surveyed said they approved of labor unions. In 2022, 71% said they approved. That’s a “statistically similar” number, as Gallup puts it, but before the pandemic, the number was 64%. That’s part of an ongoing trend in the right direction: “Support for labor unions was highest in the 1950s, when three in four Americans said they approved,” Gallup notes. “Support only dipped below the 50% mark once, in 2009, but has improved in the 13 years since and now sits at a level last seen nearly 60 years ago.”

Recent years have seen a huge uptick in labor organizing and action, including a remarkable string of union wins at Starbucks along with one enormous win at Amazon. Workers at Trader Joes, Chipotle, REI, and even Home Depot are also beginning to organize, one shop at a time.

The COVID-19 pandemic also spurred many workers to reconsider their relationships with their work and their employers. Workers dubbed “essential” early in the pandemic soon saw themselves treated as disposable, facing the competing pressures of work, health and safety, and the demands of their employers.

Over the past decade-plus, unions have also led fights for policies like an increased minimum wage and paid leave—extremely successful initiatives at the state level, even if those policies remain stalled at the federal level—that benefit all workers, not just union members. Even if you don’t pay attention to the data showing that unions reduce economic inequality, the old right-wing attacks on unions as purely self-interested very obviously don’t hold water.

—Laura Clawson, Daily Kos Labor

Labor Board rules for union insignia

After consideration of public comment, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found that it was unlawful for Tesla to maintain a policy requiring employees to wear a plain black t-shirt or one imprinted with the employer’s logo, thus prohibiting employees from substituting a shirt bearing union insignia.

The Board reaffirmed that when an employ-

er interferes in any way with employees’ right under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act to display union insignia, that interference is presumptively unlawful, and the employer has the burden to establish special circumstances that make the rule necessary to maintain production or discipline. The majority then found that Tesla failed to establish special circumstances in this case.

“Wearing union insignia, whether a button or a t-shirt, is a critical form of protected communication. For many decades, employees have used insignia to advocate for their workplace interests – from supporting organizing campaigns to protesting unfair conditions in the workplace

– and the law has always protected them,” said Chairwoman Lauren McFerran. “With today’s decision [August 29, 2022], the Board reaffirms that any attempt to restrict the wearing of union clothing or insignia is presumptively unlawful and – consistent with Supreme Court precedent – an employer has a heightened burden to justify attempts to limit this important right.”

More workers organizing

Starbucks: There are now [at least] 221 Starbucks stores where workers have voted to unionize—but the company has only engaged in first bargaining sessions at three of them.

Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board is handling hundreds of unfair labor practice charges against the company, and the reason for that is not hard to see: The company’s vicious union-busting campaign continues, including the firing of one union supporter after another. The fact that stores continue voting to unionize shows the workers’ determination and the screaming need for workers to have the power to make management listen.

Companies have been firing workers for their union participation for years, but thanks to phones with video capability and social media, it’s now visible to the greater public.

—Laura Clawson, Daily Kos Labor

Trader Joes: There is now a second unionized Trader Joe’s as workers at a TJ’s in Minneapolis voted overwhelmingly, 55 to 5, in favor of unionizing. Like the Trader Joe’s workers in Hadley, Massachusetts, the Minneapolis workers voted to join Trader Joe’s United, an independent union.

—Steven Greenhouse



UNION-MADE

Five good reasons to buy union-made products

By Sahid Fawaz, Union 411, July 2022

- Want to help build a better America? Go union-made! Here are five reasons why it’s better to buy union.
- You Support Companies Where Workers Are Paid Fairly And Have A Voice On The Job**
- Many of us dislike the notion of spending our consumer dollars on companies that are run like dictatorships and pay workers poverty wages. But at unionized companies, workers have a voice on the job and within their union. This creates a more democratic environment for the worker where he or she has real bargaining power and decision-making in the workplace.
- When we buy union, we provide these companies with revenue, which helps them grow and be more successful, leading to more union jobs.
- You Support A Stronger Economy By Putting More Money Into The Pockets Of Workers (Instead Of Greedy Executives)**
- Union workers make more on average than their non-union counterparts. When you buy union, you are helping the domestic economy because workers spend more on goods than the executives do. When a worker receives a paycheck, it gets spent. When a rich executive gets paid (millions), it often finds its way out of the local economy into some offshore account or tax haven.
- You Support Domestic Jobs**
- Buying union-made often means buying American-made or American-built. By spending our money on domestic production, we invest in our own economy and create more tax revenue for important things like infrastructure and education.
- You Deny Money To Non-Union Companies**
- The union-busting companies of the world can’t survive without customers. If we spend on union companies instead, we “punish” non-union companies by not giving them the thing they need most: our consumer dollars.
- You Support Companies With Safer Work Environments**
- It’s a well-documented fact that union jobs are safer jobs. Workers negotiate over safety issues, bringing a higher level of safety than is often found in non-union workplaces.
- Start buying union-made today by browsing the Labor 411 Directory of over 12,000 union-made products and services. It’s the largest directory of its kind. Go to **Labor411.org**



IN THE NEWS

Top federal labor official declares war on captive audience meetings

National Labor Relations Board General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo has asked the labor board to find that it is an unfair labor practice for employers to require workers to attend pro-company meetings during union organizing efforts.

In a message to NLRB field offices across the country, Abruzzo argued that these types of mandatory meetings — during which employers present arguments against forming a union — “inherently involve an unlawful threat that employees will be disciplined or suffer other reprisals if they exercise their protected right not to listen to such speech.”

She wants the NLRB to overturn decades of precedent by outlawing mandatory attendance for such meetings — which critics call “captive audience” gatherings — and ensuring that workers’ participation is “truly voluntary.”

In addition to larger gatherings, the memo also seeks to outlaw instances where employees are “cornered by management” while performing their jobs to talk to them about unionization.

Why it matters: These meetings are a common feature across many organizing campaigns, particularly for employers who would prefer not to have a unionized workforce.

Labor unions have long denounced the practice as coercive, rife with misleading or false information, and unfair since organizers are not guaranteed the right to hold similar meetings with workers that offer a competing viewpoint.

“Captive audience meetings must be declared illegal,” said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, in a statement. “They are the major weapon employers use to spread disinformation, intimidate workers and interfere with their choice as to whether they want union representation.”

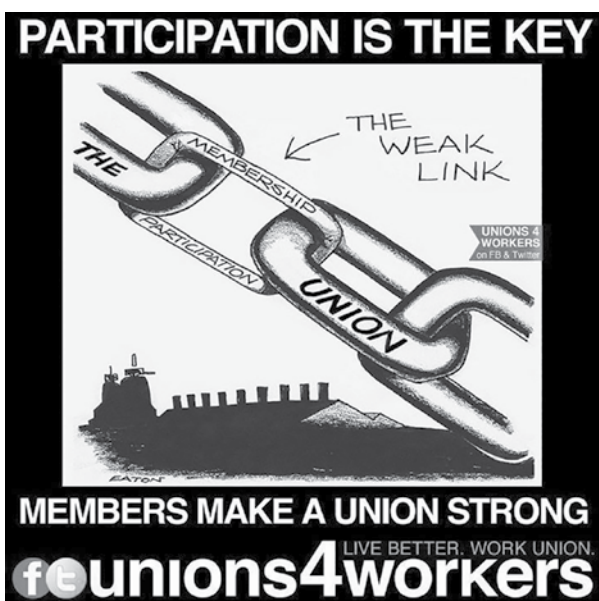
Blowback to come: Any move to curb use of mandatory workplace meetings is sure to face monumental opposition from the business lobby and right-to-work groups, particularly given the concerns about regulating corporate speech rights.

“The fact that a threat arises in the context of employer speech does not immunize its unlawful coercive effect,” Abruzzo said in a memo. “Imposing that long-overdue protection of employees’ right to refrain will not impair employers’ statutory or constitutional freedom of expression,” it states elsewhere in the three-page document.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.) the top Republican on the House Education and Labor Committee, slammed the document as a “hyper-partisan

love letter to unions.” As Foxx said in a statement, “Should the NLRB choose to overturn decades of precedent and silence job creators, the consequences will be disastrous.”

—Nick Niedzwiedek, *Politico*



Why Baseball Minor Leaguers Voted to Unionize

Minor league baseball has long been notorious for its low wages and grueling working conditions.

But that could soon change, as players are on the brink of one of the most sweeping unionization drives that professional sports has seen in years. In August, the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) announced that more than half of minor league players voted to unionize and that it is seeking voluntary recognition from Major League Baseball (MLB) to represent minor leaguers. If the league refuses, a National Labor Relations Board election that would provide a referendum on the state of the changing sports labor landscape is the likely next step.

Dr. Travers, a professor of sociology and anthropology at Simon Fraser University, said that sport has long been treated as a kind of “quasi profession” with different cultural norms than many other industries — but that appears to be changing. “There’s this idea of, ‘We’re just so lucky, we’re so grateful to even have a chance at this dream,’ but if you actually look at what’s happening, you have a labor pool that is vastly under-remunerated, which doesn’t have the same protections that workers in other sectors do,” they said.

Athletes across sports appear to be wising up. The U.S. women’s national soccer team won an

equal pay agreement in their most recent collective bargaining agreement. National Basketball Association players organized around the racial justice uprisings of 2020, while college athletes are now being compensated for the use of their name and likeness.

The rise in organizing in sports has coincided with a massive surge in labor activity across the country, which has seen labor unions hit their highest approval rating since 1965.

Baseball, whose extensive and precarious minor league system is perhaps unrivaled in American professional sports, has been particularly ripe for collective action.

“Baseball’s minor leagues have long been a place of hyper exploitation, where ‘disposable populations’ essentially grind out a living under extraordinarily difficult conditions and where baseball brass, the people who run the sport, keep players in line in a certain respect through poverty wages,” said Jules Boykoff, professor of politics at Pacific University.

That is no exaggeration. While the average value of an MLB franchise is more than \$2 billion, most minor league players make, on average, less than \$14,000 per year — and are only paid during the regular season and not for work during spring training or the offseason. This is by design: in 2018, the MLB successfully lobbied Congress to pass legislation exempting baseball players from the federal minimum wage and collecting overtime pay.

Groups of minor league players and activists have been organizing for years, but Boykoff said it’s no coincidence that the momentum behind organizing minor league baseball has crescendoed as the broader labor movement has grown in strength.

Boykoff said that federal legislation revoking Major League Baseball’s unique antitrust exemption could go a long way in shoring up labor protections for players as well as potentially protecting communities who value baseball as more than a means of enriching ultra-wealthy owners. Meanwhile, Major League Baseball is angling to eliminate minor league teams and jobs to save money in the coming years.

“I think a lot of athletes in the past were very much, ‘I’m lucky to do this, it’s for the love of the game, thank you Mr. Owner for giving me my opportunity. I’d gladly do this for free,’” union lawyer Ryan Gauthier said. “But I think a lot of players realize now that they’re workers.”

—Abe Asher, *In These Times*



LOCAL UNION MEETING NOTICES

LOCAL 1101 & 93

Members of both Locals 1101 and 93 will be voting about whether to merge in October. Even if they vote yes, both Locals need to hold officer elections.

Officer positions will be nominated at the November regular meeting:

Local 93: November 8, 5:00 p.m.

Local 1101: November 10, 6:30 p.m.

Elections will take place in December.

Local 93: December 13, 5:00 p.m.

Local 1101: December 8, 6:30 p.m.

All meetings will be held at the union hall: 2102 Almaden Rd., #105, San Jose.

LOCAL 1173

NOTICE OF MERGER MEETING

Local Lodge 1173 will be holding a meeting on November 1, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. for the purpose of voting whether to merge with Local 1596. All members are encouraged to attend.

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Local Lodge 1173 will hold elections this year. We will nominate candidates for Officer positions at the November Regular Meeting (November 10 at 6:30 p.m.) and will hold the election at the December Regular Meeting (December 8 at 6:30 p.m.). All meetings will be held at 1900 Bates Ave., #H, Concord.

LOCAL 1528

NOTICE OF PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES

Please be advised that the Local 1528 general membership meeting will be held on November 2, 2022 at 7 p.m. The reading of proposed bylaw changes will take place. The second reading and vote will take place on December 7, 2022 at the general membership meeting.

The meetings will be held at IAM Local Lodge 1528 located at 713 16th Street, Modesto, CA

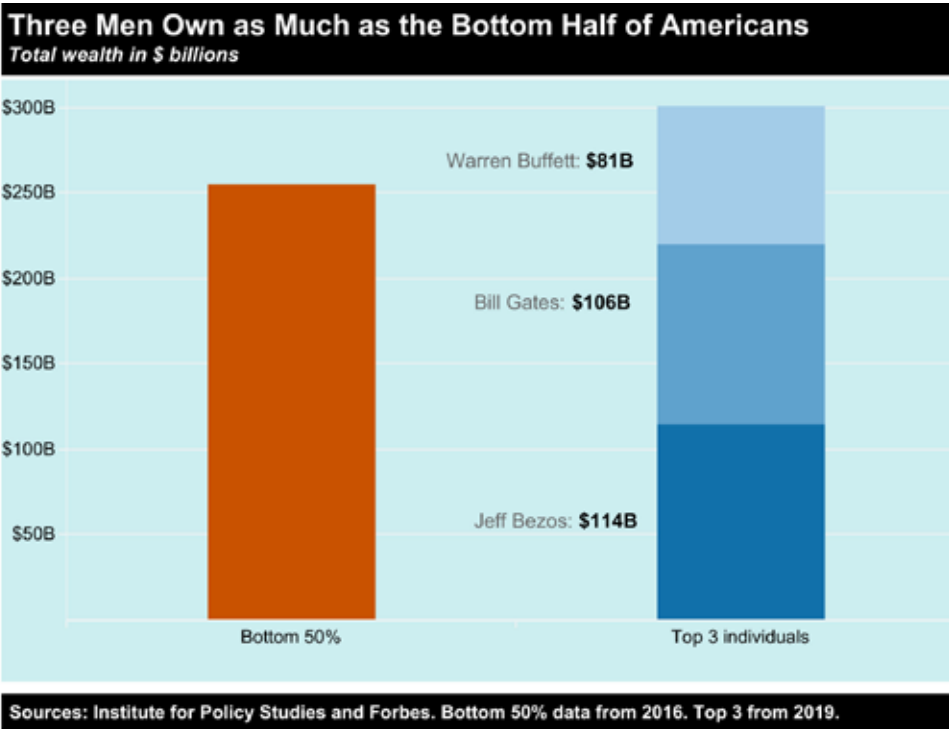
IAM LOCAL UNION MEETINGS

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.



UNION MEETINGS			
 District Lodge 190 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621 510-632-3661	Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month October 25 • November 22 • December 27 Executive Board Meeting: 6:30 p.m. General Delegates’ Meeting: 7:00 p.m.		Local I484 1261 Avalon Blvd. Wilmington, CA 90744 310-835-6688 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month October 20 • November 17 • December 15 General Membership Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month October 4 • November 1 • December 6 Retirees’ Club: 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: October 19 • November 16 • December 21
	Local 93 2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-440-8716 <i>Meetings will be held on the Bluejeans App for the foreseeable future. Email rbreckenridge1101@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in.</i>		Local I528 713 16th Street Modesto, CA 95354 209-529-9210 machinists2182@gmail.com Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month October 5 • November 2 • December 7 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 October 15 • November 19 • December 17 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 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.</i>	Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month October 19 • November 16 • December 21 Executive Board Meeting: 5:00 p.m. Membership Meeting: 5:30 p.m.		Local I546 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-638-6705 Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month October 4 • November 1 • December 6 General Membership Meeting & E Board Meetings: 5:30 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous: 9 a.m. every Saturday <i>Meetings are now hybrid - in person and on zoom. Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in on zoom.</i>
	Local 80I 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621 800-655-2182 Meetings are the third Thursday of the month October 20 • November 17 • December 15 Membership Meeting: 4:00 p.m. <i>Meetings are held at the Carpenters’ Hall, in Reno.</i>		Local I584 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-632-3661 Meetings are the third Thursday of the month October 20 • November 17 • December 15 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: October 4 • November 1 • December 6 <i>Meetings will be hybrid (in person and on zoom) for the foreseeable future. Email Tom.Swanger@atlaspace.com to learn how to join in on zoom.</i>
Local I10I 2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-440-8716 <i>Meetings will be held on the Bluejeans App for the foreseeable future. Email: aab1101@att.net to learn how to join in.</i>	Meetings are the second Thursday of the month October 13 • November 10 • December 8 Executive Board Meeting: 5:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m.		Local I596 1900 Bates Ave., #H Concord, CA 94520 925-687-6421 LL1173@sbcglobal.net Meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday of the month October 18 • November 15 • December 20 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m. <i>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.</i>
	Local I173 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 October 13 • November 10 • December 8 Membership/Shop Stewards’ Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month October 13 • November 10 • December 8		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 October 11 • November 8 • December 13 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: October 19 • November 16 • December 21
Local I414 150 South Boulevard San Mateo, CA 94402 650-341-2689	Shop Stewards’ Meeting: 5:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month October 20 • November 17 • December 15 Executive Board Meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month October 13 • November 10 • December 8 General Membership Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month via Zoom. Please contact the office for the meeting link. October 20 • November 17 • December 15 Retirees’ Club: 11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of March, June, Sept., Dec. All are welcome! December 7, 2022 • March 1, June 7, Sept 6—2023		