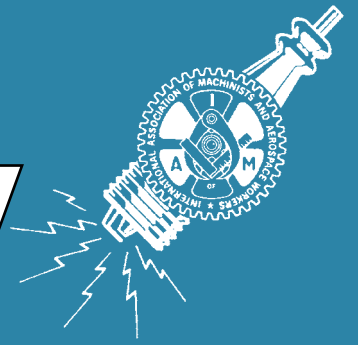


The IAM District 190

# Sparkplug



VOL. 25 NO. 1



January/February/March 2023

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190

## Labor on the upswing!

The surprise, at least to some who have long predicted the demise of labor, is that 2022 was a year of enormous upsurge in union activity. This was marked by unparalleled organizing, significant strikes, and record contracts. Support for unions is now at 71%, its highest in more than 60 years and the Machinists Union has been at the forefront of this historic trend.

### Organizing and strike resurgence

Workers are organizing at Amazon warehouses, Starbucks coffee shops, and Apple stores. There have been winning drives at Trader Joe's, REI, and videogame company Activision Blizzard.

District 190 has won its share of organizing drives as well, although getting to a first contract has been daunting if not impossible. Some of the winning organizing campaigns over the last few years include Lexus of San Diego, Acura of Escondido, Tracy Toyota, and Audi Concord.

Along with the increase in organizing, workers have been more willing than ever to take their fights to the streets. According to Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, as of December 1, there have been 374 strikes in 2022—a 39 percent increase over 2021—from the bakers at Kellogg's and Nabisco to teachers, nurses, mental health workers, fast food workers, and the workers at the *New York Times*. Cornell counts 78,000 workers who walked off the job in the first half of this year—nearly three times the 26,500 who struck in the first six months of 2021.

On November 14, when 48,000 University of California researchers and teaching assistants, represented by the United Auto Workers, walked off their jobs statewide to demand a living wage, labor was with them in solidarity.

The good news that resulted from the larg-



Some of the 48,000 University of California grad student workers who struck for six weeks for better wages—which they won in December. (Photo by Ian Castro)

est academic strike in history is that after years of working for poverty wages, workers won a contract with raises of up to 66% over three years. The better news is that this strike is an inspiration to the academic workers at hundreds of public and private universities who have been struggling for years.

What do many of these actions have in common? They're being launched by young people. An unprecedented share of election requests to the NLRB are coming from college students and graduate employees at private universities, museums, think tanks, nonprofits, and groups of young workers at retail establishments such as Starbucks. Unions are more popular among young people than any other age group, which bodes well for the future of our movement.

### Winning the best contracts

The challenge of actually being able to negotiate a good contract remains, but even in that department, change may be afoot. After nine years during which its budget had not increased by even a penny, the National Labor Relations Board has

finally secured an increase in the 2023 funding bill. While the agency won't be fully funded by any means, they also won't be compelled to furlough staff and should be able to make some badly-needed hires in the coming year. That should help ensure that the Labor Board can do more to promote fair union elections and combat the union-busting and negotiation-delaying tactics that prevent workers who vote for union representation from actually getting it.

And as we see throughout this issue, our Locals are winning some of the best contracts ever. From Penske Truck Leasing to the City & County of San Francisco to Hertz, and from Reyes Fleet to Coca-Cola to several auto dealerships, employers are recognizing that if they're going to successfully recruit and retain good employees, they must increase the wages and benefits they pay.

"The IAM is gearing up for bigger battles in 2023," says District 190 DBR Don Crosatto. "We are confident that our members are ready to fight for the improvements in their contracts that they deserve."



Starbucks workers who voted for the union take action across nation in December to get first contracts.



Get your  
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on the web!

Visit the  
District 190 website at:  
[iamdistrict190.org](http://iamdistrict190.org)

The International IAM website is at:  
[goiam.org](http://goiam.org)

Local Lodge websites:  
Local 1101: [www.iamlocal1101.org](http://www.iamlocal1101.org)  
Local 1414: [facebook.com/IAMLOCAL1414/](https://facebook.com/IAMLOCAL1414/)

Twitter  
Union Organizer: @union1484

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Local 1101: [facebook.com/](https://facebook.com/)  
Search for IAMAW-Local 1101  
Local 1546: [facebook.com/iam1546](https://facebook.com/iam1546)

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](mailto: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

Welcome Donte Vickers - New business rep for San Francisco (public sector) members

Long-time car enthusiast Donte Vickers is now taking his skills to represent IAM public sector workers in San Francisco.

"I've been working on vehicles, cars, and trucks since I was 9 years old," he says. His work experience includes owning his own business as a mobile mechanic; maintaining the equipment and vehicles for a general contractor; and working at U-Haul for about 15 years. His first union experience was being an ironworker for three years.

In 2014, Donte started working at MUNI in San Francisco, at first as an operator. The next year, he became a mechanic at Central Shops and worked there through 2021. This is when he first joined the IAM. In April 2022, he became an automotive machinist and did that work through the end of that year. "And now, I am a business rep for District 190.

Donte says that he was involved in the 2022 negotiations on behalf of the workers for the City/County of San Francisco. "It was really interesting," he says. "The experience reminds me of being a lawyer, DA, and investigator all rolled into one. And then you have to babysit cats," he says.

Donte recalls that when he was at Central, he served as the unofficial shop steward. "It's all about the rapport you have with upper management and with your fellow brothers."

Thinking about his work as a business rep, Donte says, "My responsibility is to make sure that the members are being treated correctly, the company is following the contract, and everybody is working safely. I expect that I will have to start doing Skelly hearings and arbitrations as



Local 1414's newest business rep Donte Vickers

well." At this point, Donte will represent about 450 members who work for the City and County of San Francisco & SF MTA.

"My goal is to learn as much as I can and make us the best union in the nation. It takes time. It's a process," Donte says. "Everybody is looking at me to make big changes, but I tell them that we're not going to play the whirlpool system, but the drip system. We're not going to stir everything up unless and until we're ready."

"The most important thing is for our members to turn out for the union's business meetings for one key reason: because they are the union. I just represent them," he adds.

Meet District 190's Secretary-Treasurer Cindy Gagliardi

Growing up in a union family, Cindy Gagliardi always kept an eye out for a union position. "My father and brother were in the IBEW [electrical workers union]. My other brother was an Antioch Police Officer. And my grandmother was a public school teacher," she recalls.

It took a while, however, for her to get into a union position. The first 16 years of her career were as a project coordinator and executive assistant at a boutique graphic design company in Walnut Creek. When she heard about an opening at Local 1173 in 2006, she jumped at it.

Initially, Cindy's work at the Local focused on dues and member support. In 2015, when long-time office manager Rhonda Gonsalves retired, she took over.

Throughout her time at Local 1173, she put her graphics skills to work, helping Area Director for Organizing Jesse Juarez prepare flyers and communications. "It taught me so much about all that goes into union organizing," Cindy says.

Over the years, as Recording Secretary for the Local, delegate to District 190, and member of the District's Executive Board, Cindy gained a solid understanding of how a union local works and how it interfaces with the District and the International. "It seemed like a natural transition when the position of Secretary-Treasurer



District 190 Secretary-Treasurer  
Cindy Gagliardi

opened up," she said.

Cindy was elected to that position in December 2021 and took office on January 26, 2022.

Cindy says that her first year of serving as Secretary-Treasurer has been fascinating and challenging, and she's learning a lot. "The District Lodge has a \$12 million budget," she explained. "There are a lot of moving parts. Salaries, insurances, managing the business agency. We deploy an army of people out there."

She adds that there are occasional conflicts, "which one would expect. That's a

good thing. It's a balancing act between the needs and philosophies of the different local lodges. They each have unique characteristics that they bring to the table."

Cindy adds that she's glad that, as an administrative staff person, she was able to be a Machinist, rather than be in a clerical union. "This has opened up possibilities for me to walk picket lines and serve as an officer. I'm grateful to be a Machinist," she adds.

One of Cindy's goals is to bring the organization into the modern age. "Traditions and 'we've done it this way for years,' are all well and good, but some things need to be updated," she says. "Let's spend our money in the right places, keep our budgets on the right track, and put our resources in place so they take care of our members," she adds with conviction.



## NEWS FROM THE TRUST FUND

### Automotive Industries Pension Plan: Special Financial Assistance Update

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was signed into law on March 11, 2021. One of the main provisions of ARPA is the “Special Financial Assistance Program for Financially Troubled Multi-Employer Plans,” which will provide funding to troubled pension plans so they can pay their benefit obligations to their participants through the plan year ending in 2051.

The Trustees of the Automotive Industries Pension Plan have been informed by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) that the Plan has been placed into Priority Group 6. This is good news because Priority Group 6 will allow the Plan to submit our application for funding relief in March 2023.

The Trustees are currently working with their actuary and other professionals in preparing the application and the required information for submission in March 2023. The ARPA special financial assistance program is administered by the PBGC and funded by the Treasury’s general revenue. The PBGC will have 120 days from the date of submission to review and approve the application.

We will continue to provide you with updates on the progress of the application process as more information becomes available.

### Pension Plan 2022 Year-End Tax Documents

The Trust Fund Office will be mailing the Pension Plan 2022 1099-R Tax Forms no later than January 31, 2023, to all retirees receiving monthly pension payments. If you have moved in the last year, please make sure your address is updated with the Trust Fund Office before December 31, 2022.

After January 31, 2023, the 1099-R Tax Forms will also be available on the Trust Fund website

at [www.aitrustfunds.org](http://www.aitrustfunds.org) and can be downloaded or printed directly from the website. If you don’t already have access to the website, creating an online account is simple and takes minutes to complete. Visit [www.aitrustfunds.org](http://www.aitrustfunds.org) for details on how to create an account so that you can review your benefit information.



### Your Rights and Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills

Effective January 1, 2022, the “No Surprises Act” went into effect. A surprise medical bill (also called a “balance bill”) occurs when you go to a health care facility, like a hospital or a lab in your plan’s network, and end up with a doctor who is not in your plan’s network and you are charged more than you would have to pay for an in-network doctor. A surprise medical bill can also happen if you are taken to a non-contracted facility in an emergency, and the facility bills you for the remaining balance for the services you got that were not covered by your health plan.

This new law ensures that you are protected from balance/surprise 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 ser-

vices. 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 balance billed for these post-stabilization services.

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 intensive 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](mailto:AISupport@hsba.com), or by visiting [www.aitrustfunds.org](http://www.aitrustfunds.org) for assistance. Visit [www.cms.gov/nosurprises](http://www.cms.gov/nosurprises) for more information about your rights under federal law.

### Reminder: 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 an 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 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.

## Machinists Grand Lodge Convention highlights the union’s successes

The Las Vegas Hilton was the site for the International Association of Machinists’ 40th convention, held on October 2-7, 2022.

President Robert Martinez, Jr., opened the convention by calling attention to the many organizing wins the Machinists Union has achieved. Martinez highlighted historic campaigns that brought into the union 450 Baltimore County Public Library workers, 75 Milwaukee Art Museum workers, 400 Lufthansa Technik workers, 130 veterinary specialists, 2,400 Canadian and 100 New Mexico health care workers, the first Apple retail store workers, and New York architects.

President Martinez also outlined successes in the union’s program, including:

- The IAM initiated the Veterans Services Program to help members who are veterans file VA claims.
- The LEADS Program is designed to continue the advancement of IAM women by offering new pathways to leadership through education and career training at the W3 Center.
- The IAM Addiction Services Program has saved countless lives with a 24-hour hotline.
- The world-class IAM Employee Assistance Program continues to help members find mental



40th IAM Convention delegates in Las Vegas and IAM Leadership team (inset).

health counseling.

- The IAM’s Critical Incident Response Team has comforted members after workplace violence, on-the-job tragedies, and more.

- The IAM’s Disaster Relief Program has helped members get back on their feet after hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, wildfires, and other natural disasters.

District 190 delegates were impressed with the number of young members in attendance who were “full of fire.” Also of note was the number of women who attended and who were enthusiastic about the LEADS program. Every local was encouraged to start a Women’s Committee. “Given the breadth and depth of our members, it was refreshing to see the International make commitments to our wide diversity,” said Local 1414 member Shelley Kessler.

Attendees said they appreciated the emphasis on organizing campaigns in less traditional sectors, like the successful Apple retail store campaign in Maryland. Several also appreciated the union’s new emphasis on federal and public employees.

On top of all the positive policies that the International institutionalized, many speakers reminded the delegates of how pro-worker legislation and elected officials have impacted the lives of IAM members across the nation.

Liz Shuler, President of the AFL-CIO came to honor the role of the IAM in the labor movement. Other leaders from across the labor and political spectrum also addressed the convention, reminding us that our engagement in communities beyond our own union is important for all working people.

“That is why we need to stay involved and engaged in electing strong voices who will advocate on our behalf and assist us in promoting our quality of life,” Kessler added.

“COVID may have slowed us down a bit, but we are getting booted up now and look forward to building the IAM into an even stronger union for all of us,” she concluded.

—from *San Mateo Labor Paper*



## Local 1101

### Local 93 merges into 1101

In October, the membership of Local 93 voted to merge into Local 1101, and the membership of Local 1101 voted to accept the merger. “The IAM International has approved the merger, and it was finalized as of October 31, 2022,” reports Business Rep Richard Breckenridge. “This merger now doubles the size of Local 1101.”

While representation for the members of the two locals doesn’t change, members on both sides will see a reduction in their dues. Local 93 members will now have access to a strike fund through Local 1101. “That was a key benefit for those members,” Breckenridge adds. “And as Local 93 members put money into the strike fund, that fund is expected to grow by at least 45%.”

### Best Hertz contract ever

The 12 techs who work at Hertz, both at the San Jose Airport and also off-airport, recently ratified their best contract ever. “They’ll be seeing an 11% wage increase over the next three years, with a \$2 bump coming in year one,” Breckenridge reports.

### Another good agreement

The 15 techs at Ryder Truck in San Jose will see their wages increased by 12% over the coming three years. “This is definitely a bigger increase than we’ve seen in a while,” adds Breckenridge.

### Keeping union security

In November, the 13 techs and service writers at Hopkins Honda in Sunnyvale ratified a new two-year agreement.

Business Rep Pedro Gonzalez reports that they saw a \$2/hour increase upon contract ratification and an additional \$1/hour in the second year.

“The company’s attorney turned this into a long, contentious negotiation,” reports Gonzalez. “They were gunning for union security. But, after a long battle, we still have it in the contract.”

### Solid increases at Akima

At Fort Hunter Liggett, in Monterey County, 15 members who work for Akima Support Services on a government-sponsored logistics and support contract have ratified their own new agreement.

“These members support military units on a variety of things, from gunsmithing to ammo supply,” explains Gonzalez. In October, they ratified a three-year agreement that increases their wages by 4% in year one, and 3.5% in years two and three. They’ll also see small increases in the health and welfare contribution made by the employer each month.

## Local 1173

### Local 1596 merges into 1173

The members of Locals 1596 and 1173 have voted to merge. The merger plan has been approved by the IAM, and by February, members will vote in a special Executive Board election to ensure that the Board includes members from both areas.

“We will hold monthly meetings—both in-person and on zoom—at our Concord office and at the Plumbers Hall in Santa Rosa, giving all options for members to participate,” says Area Director Steve Older.

Probably the most challenging part of making the merger work was the differential in the dues structure between the two locals. “We promised Local 1596 members that we wouldn’t change the dues structure when they merged into Local 1173, but that doesn’t mean there will never be a dues increase,” Older explained. “We will have to pass through increases that come from the International and/or District. And if members get a wage increase, as always, that is directly related to their dues rate.”

For instance, Older explains, Local 1596’s biggest shop is MGM Brake in Cloverdale. “These members just got a significant wage increase, which jumped them to the next level of wages. But even that \$7/month increase in dues only

comes to \$0.04 per hour. It might feel like a big leap, but compared to the raise they got, it’s just not that much money.”

### Member involvement is key

Fifty members who work in the service and parts departments at the Antioch Auto Center ratified a new contract in October, reports Business Rep Brian Fealy. The Center is composed of four dealerships: Chrysler Dodge-Jeep- Ram, Hyundai, Nissan, and Toyota

“The usual situation is that negotiations are contentious but an agreement comes together in the final minutes of the final hour,” Fealy says. “This time was no different. But what really made the deal come together was the members.”

Fealy explains that the employer tried to lowball the members on retro pay and they were having none of it. “After voting down three offers, they authorized a strike on October 26 and approved a counter proposal that was presented to the employer the following morning as a final attempt to come to an agreement.”

Fealy says that after a minor adjustment to the new proposal, “we came to terms and subsequently ratified the agreement on the shop floor at the end of the shift.”

The members won wage increases over the two-year term of 8-13% depending on classification. They’ll also see a dispatch premium of 5% for those members who dispatch work. “Importantly, we also held the line on cost sharing of future medical cost increases, which is huge,” Fealy adds.

### Not your dad’s Buick contract

The 18 members working in the service and parts departments at Lehmer’s Buick-GMC in Concord ratified a two-year agreement on October 11. Depending on their classification, the members will see wage increases ranging from 8-13% over the term.

Fealy reports that the members also gained improvements in compensation for travel time, car rental and per diem when attending training. “Retro pay was also an issue but we were able to come to agreement,” he adds.

### Early deal at CCTA

For 30 bus technicians, cleaners, and fuelers at CCTA, Contra Costa’s bus company, solid wage increases, and a \$2,500 signing bonus were enough for them to unanimously ratify a three-year agreement early. Area Director Steve Older adds that the Teamsters got a “me-too” deal, and the bus drivers are holding out for a bigger raise.

## Local 1414

### Hertz blinks

The 13 techs who work for Hertz Rent-A-Car at the San Francisco Airport (located in South San Francisco) turned down two offers from the employer. “They were on the verge of taking a significant labor action when the employer blinked and sweetened the offer enough to gain ratification,” says Fealy.

“This is a strong and determined group that understands their value and the cost of living in the San Francisco area.”

In October, the group ratified a three-year contract that includes wage increases of 9.5-11.8% depending on classification. Fealy notes that all members will receive a \$1500 signing bonus, an increase in the level of tool insurance, and two additional ASE certifications that qualify for an additional \$0.25/hour in pay.

## Local 1484

### Port electricians get an increase

The 34 members who work at Tony DeMaria Electric (TDE) in Wilmington, doing preventative maintenance and general repair at the ports and refineries, ratified a new agreement for the coming year. Area Director Kevin Kucera reports that they got “respectable economic increases.”

### Strike continues in San Diego

What started as an Unfair Labor Practices strike at Mercedes Benz of San Diego back in June continues into the new year.

Kucera reports that the talks are completely stalled. “It looks like the shop has hired about 18-19 scabs, and as far as we can tell, none of those are certified techs. On a recent Saturday, we counted 7 come-backs—cars that were supposed to have been fixed but that came back to the shop on the back of a tow truck.”

“We don’t have all the facts,” Kucera is quick to add, “but from our vantage point, it looks like they’re not doing even 50% of the business they were doing before the strike.”

Kucera says that while most of our members there have gotten other jobs and therefore can’t show up to the picket line as steadily as before, there still is a solid core who show up regularly to keep the line going.

“This is a one-day-more situation. We’ll see who can outlast the other—the company or our members,” Kucera adds.



# 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

175 days on strike!!!!



Shop Steward Pedro Gomez keeps his TikTok followers updated about the ongoing strike at Mercedes Benz of San Diego.

## Local 1528

## Upcoming talks

Business Rep Paul Abarca reports that negotiations are coming up in February at JM Equipment. “That contract covers W. Sacramento, Manteca, Fresno, Patterson and Merced,” he says.

## Local 1546

## Trouble at Safeway

So far, bargaining with Safeway to renew the contract for the 25 members who do truck maintenance out of the Tracy warehouse has been a long slog.

“Unfortunately, the lead negotiator quit and his replacement is not as easy to work with,” says Crosatto. “Also, the facility is in Tracy, so they’re paying valley rates—and are not offering even as much as our other valley employers. But our members can get so much more if they come over to the Bay Area, so it’s not surprising that they’ve lost a bunch of guys.”

Crosatto says that the company is taking the slow road even getting to the wages. “They seem stuck on work rule stuff, like bringing in outside vendors when they can’t find people to do the work; shift issues; and vacation schedules.”

Crosatto adds that a possible sale of the company has thrown another wrench into the talks. Watch this space!

## Success story

The 30 members at Coca Cola in San Leandro ratified a deal that recognizes the different skill levels of mechanics and has a pay scale to match.

“In years past, we fought for \$1/hour each year,” says Crosatto. “This year, we based pay rates on the prac-

tical things that our members do on a daily basis.” The lowest rate goes to new people with limited experience. The middle rate is primarily for plant maintenance and covers most members there. The highest level is for “A Mechanics” – who are our very skilled members with plumbing, welding, electrical, and mechanical skills.

“The net result is that entry-level folks will get a \$2/hour increase; the middle level will see a \$4/hour increase; and the A Mechanics will get a \$6.50 raise. Next September, everyone will get an additional \$3/hour, bringing the three levels up to \$39, \$42, and \$50, respectively.

## Throw money at it

After management at Reyes Fleet in San Leandro recognized that they’re struggling to recruit mechanics and that their workforce is all moving toward retirement age, they decided to sweeten the contract substantially.

Crosatto says that the company had the foresight to see that they could lose a huge chunk of their crew and have nobody to do the truck and forklift repair work. “They need to hang on to who they’ve got and try to recruit. This is the only way they can be attractive,” he adds.

In the end, the company increased the starting wage by \$5/hour, and truck mechanics will get an additional \$7/hour. Everybody will see \$1.50/hour increases in subsequent years of the contract.

## Moving on up

About 35 members repair containers at ConGlobal, a container service depot at the Port of Oakland. In December, they ratified a new four-year agreement overwhelmingly.

“This is traditionally a fairly low-wage industry but it’s slowly coming up,” says Business Rep Robbie Pintos. “Not only did they get decent wage increases each year, but they’ll also get an annual bonus of \$520. We also switched them into the Plan K health and welfare, providing savings for both the members and the company.”

## Working on it

Business Rep Brian Fealy reports that he is currently in negotiations with McKevitt Volvo in San Leandro and McKevitt Dodge/Jeep/Ram/Alfa/Fiat in Berkeley. “While this employer has historically dragged out negotiations and refused retro pay, I feel we are making reasonable progress since the contract expired back on Oct. 31,” Fealy says. “We have had numerous negotiation sessions and the bargaining committee is working diligently to secure a strong agreement as soon as possible.”

## Local 1584

## Off-topic probing can be Unfair Labor Practice

When Local 1584 took on Chemtrade West in a wage/hour dispute, Business Rep Brian Fealy didn’t realize that the case would result in a significant Labor Board win, but it did. And that victory was recognized in *Law360*, a legal publication.

In the course of the case, the company deposed several mechanics and specifically asked about discussions they had had with their union rep. “It was a fishing expedition,” Fealy said. “The employer was looking to unearth who was talking about the issue and whether the union was involved. The Labor Board ruled that they can’t do that because workers should be able to have confidential conversations with co-workers and their union rep.”

In fact, the Labor Board ruled that those questions violate workers’ rights under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Asking questions in a wage and hour deposition to uncover if employees discussed pay concerns could give rise to an allegation that the probe violated workers’ rights to act collectively.

Caren Sencer, the IAM’s attorney from Weinberg Roger & Rosenfeld, hailed the judge’s decision as a sign that discovery can’t be a tool for shaking down workers. “Although we think of discovery as a broad standard, it has its limits, and employee rights to self-organization is one of those limits,” she told *Law360*. “Questioning that shakes employees’ faith in their union can intimidate them out of their legally protected right to collectively exercise their voice,” she said. “The employer doesn’t have the right to interfere with that relationship between an employee and their union.”

The NLRB general counsel’s brief said it wanted to strike the information Chemtrade gained through illegal questioning to neutralize the chilling effect on employees’ protected concerted activity.

## Local 2182

## Old company/New owner

Harrold/Downtown Ford was sold in 2022 and the new owners, the Price/Sims group, took over the operation on September 1. They brought in the notoriously anti-union law firm of Littler Mendelson to represent them.

“Their approach has been to propose an “at will” contract with no work rules, where discipline and terminations can happen at the whim of the company,” says Area Director Mark Martin, who notes that the new owners also changed the name of the dealership to Downtown Ford, eliminating the legacy of the Harrold Ford name that’s been in existence since 1911.

“We represent a solid group of members at ‘Harrold,’ and we will strive to work through this and arrive at a fair contract,” Martin adds.

## Focus on 401K

Negotiations for Walsh Station, Sacramento, wrapped up in December. The members will see an increase of \$0.10-\$1.00/hour for carrying a smog license.

Most importantly, the “B” Technicians will go from a \$200/month 401K match to a \$200/month direct contribution. In addition, that dollar amount increases with years of service, topping out at \$500 per month for 15 or more years of service.

## Upcoming talks

Local 2182 has upcoming or ongoing negotiations in January with:

- A&A Ready Mixed Concrete, West Sacramento
- Caietti’s Truck Repair, West Sacramento
- Riverview International, West Sacramento
- Panella Trucking, Stockton
- Brooks Body Shop, Manteca
- Cal Tank Lines, Stockton

Watch this space in the next issue to learn how they went.

## Locals 1101, 1414 &amp; 1546

## Keep on trying

After several turn-downs, the 80 or so members at Penske Truck Leasing who work on heavy-duty diesel trucks have finally ratified a new and lucrative contract. There are three contracts (San Jose—Local 1101, San Mateo—Local 1414, and Oakland—Local 1546) covering seven facilities around the bay.

“The members were ready to strike, but finally got an offer they could ratify fairly overwhelmingly,” says Robbie Pintos.

In addition to significant wage increases for journeymen each year, the agreement also raises the shift premiums by \$3/hour for the swing shift and \$4/hour for the graveyard shift. And if the techs possess a Commercial Drivers’ License or attain one during the contract period, they’ll get an additional \$2/hour.

## More locals than members

Three members who work as techs at Loomis Armored Car have a new contract that they ratified in October. “Two members are in Local 1414, and one is in Local 1101 and they work out of five locations,” says Older. “They’re all serviced by Local 1546.”

The company used to have shops in the jurisdiction of all three locals, but has consolidated them down to one main location in Hayward.



IN THE NEWS

Union representation petitions soar 53% in a year

The U.S. National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) reported in December that union representation petitions increased by 53% in fiscal year 2022 when compared with 2021 and were at the highest since 2016. “Given the spike in case intake we are seeing in the field, we can expect even more cases to come before the Board in fiscal year 2023,” NLRB Chairman Lauren McFerran said in a statement.

The NLRB said 2,510 union petitions were filed by the time fiscal year 2022 ended September, up from 1,638 petitions in the same period a year ago. Unfair labor practice charges filed with NLRB field offices increased by 19%, the agency added.

Striketober returned as workers fight to close the wage gap

Workers across the country are joining picket lines to secure higher wages, affordable healthcare, and better working conditions at a rate that might outpace last year’s explosion of strike activity. In 2021, the wave of workers who walked off the job in October inspired the term ‘Striketober,’ and since then strike activity has grown.

Since the start of 2022, there have been more than 280 strikes or protests—up from 158 during the same period in 2021, according to Cornell University’s Labor Action Tracker. Strike activity is cutting through industries and geography. In October alone, 15,000 nurses throughout Minnesota, 6,000 educators in Seattle, 4,500 teachers in Columbus, Ohio, 1,000 food workers in San Francisco, and over 1,000 mill workers in Lebanon, Oregon were among the workers who went on strike.

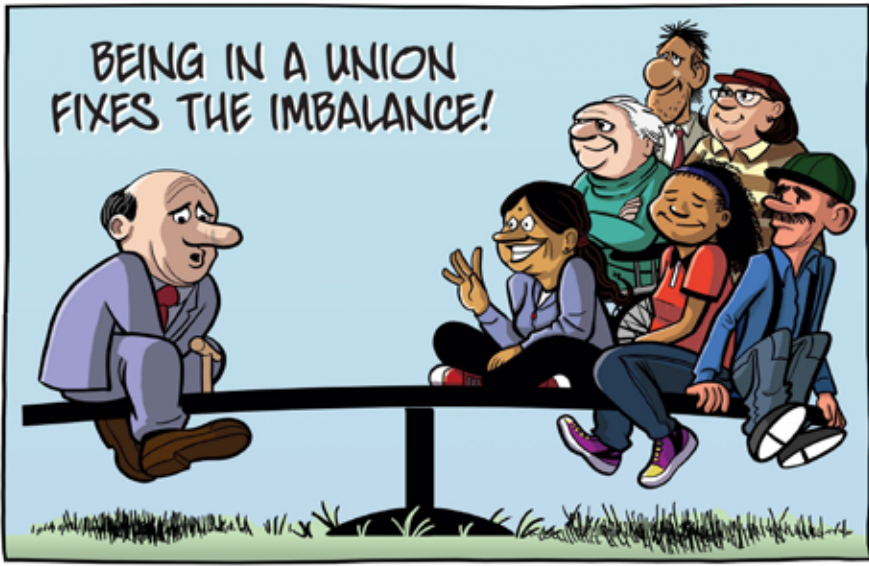
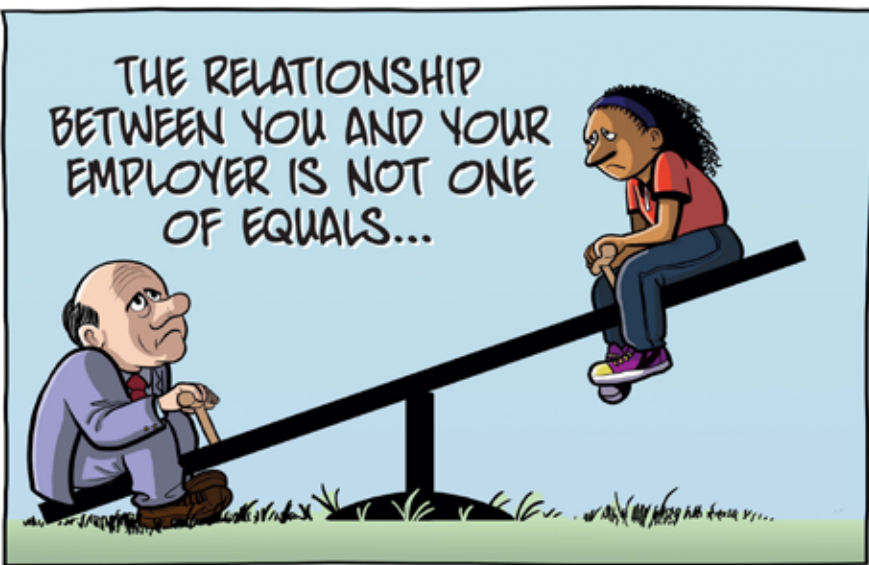
GOP promises to gut your social security, medicare when it takes power

It used to be a truism that no elected office-holders would dare to tamper with Social Security if they wished to keep their jobs. That must not be true any longer, judging from the surge in threats to the revered program coming from the GOP lately.

In its latest manifestation, four Republicans angling to become chair of the House Budget Committee in a Republican House talked openly about holding the federal debt ceiling hostage to an agreement on ‘entitlements’—that is, Social Security and Medicare—plainly aimed at cutting benefits.

Workers mobilize for a union at Amazon’s largest air hub in the world

The union push at Amazon is now occurring at one of its most important locations. The *Guardian* reports: “Amazon workers at the air hub outside the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky international air-



port, Amazon’s largest air hub in the world, are pushing to organize a union in the latest effort to mobilize workers at the tech company. Workers say they are dissatisfied with annual

wage increases this year. About 400 of them have signed a petition to reinstate a premium hourly pay for Amazon’s peak season but that hasn’t been enacted at the site yet. Their main demands also include a \$30/hour starting wage, 180 hours of paid time off and union representation at disciplinary hearings. “We have to operate a lot of heavy machinery, freight loaders, cargo tractors, and things like that, and people aren’t paid any extra to do that work,” said Griffin Ritze, an air associate and ramp agent at the Amazon air hub, and a member of the organizing committee. “They just cross-train you in as many roles as possible and you’re constantly shuffled around.”

About 4,500 workers are employed at the expanding air hub in Kentucky. Those organizing have already filed two unfair labor practice charges over Amazon’s response to the unionization effort. These include anti-union talking points on its employee communications system that characterize the effort as a third-party scheme. “We’re the lifeblood of the company—not corporate, not upper management. We’re actually the ones who are sorting the freight and loading the freight,” said Jordan Martin, a ramp associate at the air hub. “That’s why the workers are organizing this effort and why we’re pushing for better benefits.”

Sahid Fawaz, *The Guardian*



UNION-MADE

Investing in union-made tools

“The best investment is in the tools of one’s own trade.” Benjamin Franklin said that 250 years ago, and thousands of IAM members who regularly rely on toolboxes worth of tools will likely agree.

When judging the quality of tools, it’s got to add points to know that the tools themselves were produced by union workers. Here are some popular tool brands and the unions that represent their workers.

Armstrong	IBEW, UAW
Black & Decker	UAW
Channellock	IBEW, UAW
Craftsman	IBEW, IBT
Eklind Tool Co.	IBEW
Hardcore Hammers	IBEW
Klein Tools	IBEW
Loggerhead Tools	IBEW
Moody Tools	IBEW
Park Tools	IBEW
Rigid	IBT
S-K Handtool	IBEW
SnapOn Tools	IBEW, UAW
Stanley Hand Tools	IBEW
Stilleto Tool Co.	IBEW, UAW
Wilde Tool	IBEW
Wright Tool	IBEW

List compiled by Labor411.org



## IN THE NEWS

### California is right: When bosses steal pay from workers, it should be a felony

Thirty-one California workers will get more than \$216,000 in overtime pay they earned but were cheated out of by their employer—Martinez Pallets. But the Labor Department's investigation and action against the Sacramento pallet manufacturer that employed the workers sadly shows why a company would break the law by not paying overtime to begin with. A recent California law provides a fix, but only if the state can beef up its enforcement.

Martinez Pallets, Inc. and its owner, Miguel Arturo Cruz, dodged overtime laws by paying cash or using separate paychecks to pay workers their regular rate, rather than the time-and-a-half they were legally entitled to, for the hours they worked over 40 per week. The company also violated child labor laws by having a 16-year-old and a 17-year-old operate equipment that's considered too hazardous for minors.

In addition to paying the workers what they should have gotten to begin with, the company was fined less than \$14,500 for overtime and child labor violations. Fourteen. Thousand. Five hundred. Dollars.

*Laura Clawson for Daily Kos Labor*

### Amazon loses \$8 billion a year because it treats workers too badly to keep them on the job

Amazon seems to be pushing toward a future in which every American has worked for the company ... and hated it. According to leaked documents obtained by Engadget, attrition is costing Amazon \$8 billion a year. That's not just warehouse workers—people at every level, up to vice presidents, leave Amazon in staggering numbers. And it's not the company shedding dead weight—according to the documents, “Regretted attrition occurs twice as often as unregretted attrition.” In other words, people are twice as likely to leave on their own rather than to be fired or laid off, a proportion that held true at every level.

Maybe the most staggering number in the documents is this: “Only one out of three new hires in 2021” stayed with Amazon for 90 or more days.

Gee, it sounds like it's not just warehouse

workers who need a union at Amazon. There are clearly plenty of salaried workers who are not willing to put up with how the company treats its workers. In fact, the dominance of this kind of employer-employee relationship—Amazon is the second-largest private employer in the U.S., behind Walmart—might be a clue as to why public approval of unions hit its highest point since 1965 this year, for the second year in a row. A 2021 survey of tech workers found that 50% were interested in joining a union, a figure that rose to 60% among millennial workers.

*Laura Clawson for Daily Kos Labor*

**Union membership is like a gym membership.**

**You can pay your monthly dues, but if you don't show up and participate, you do not become stronger.**



@unions4workers  
on Facebook/Twitter

### UC strike largest academic strike in history

Demanding better pay, more benefits, and job security, 48,000 academic workers in the University of California system have been on strike since November 12, resulting in canceled classes, halted research, and lack of graders for final tests. This is the nation's largest-ever strike of higher-education academic workers.

Academic workers and their supporters formed picket lines across the university system that includes 10 campuses and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Some disruptions were a result of teaching assistants' absences, but some professors also canceled courses in solidarity with strikers.

The strike involves postdoctoral scholars, academic student employees such as teaching assistants, graduate student researchers, and academic researchers in California's preeminent public research university system. Strikers teach many undergraduate classes and often lead discussion sections in courses.

“We teach the classes, grade the papers, and perform the cutting-edge research that has earned UC its reputation as the best public university in the world and the global leader of research institutions,” said a statement from Student Researchers United. “In short, UC works because we do.”

University of California Student Association is encouraging undergraduate students to support the strike by joining the picket line, encouraging professors to cancel classes and donate to the strike fund.

“It looks like campus is completely shuttered at the moment, and it's real proof of our power,” Tanzil Chowdhury, a bargaining team member with UAW and a graduate student research assistant at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, told UC Berkeley's The Daily Californian.

Workers are demanding higher wages, improved parental leave and child care support, reduced housing costs, and increased support for international scholars. All four bargaining units are represented by the United Auto Workers.

The academic workers have found support from 33 members of the State Assembly who signed a letter in November urging UC President Michael Drake to cease “unfair labor practices” and warning that the strike could result in “mass disruption.” It noted that the union filed over 20

unfair labor practices against the university.

“The UC is one of the top public university systems and research institutions in the world, in no small part because of its ability to attract the most talented scholars from a wide array of backgrounds,” the letter read. “But the UC system cannot live up to its mission and reputation if its own employees do not feel respected.”

EDITOR'S NOTE: The strike lasted almost six weeks. In late December, the academic workers ratified a new contract that called for increases that will range from 55% to 80% over three years through a combination of implementing experience-based pay structures, standardizing pay across campuses, raising minimum starting salaries and providing extra bumps for workers in the highest-cost areas.

*Emma Gallegos and Betty Márquez Rosales, EdSource*

### More than 8 million workers got a raise on New Year's Day

On January 1, 23 states and Washington, D.C. increased their minimum wages, raising pay for an estimated 8.4 million workers across the country. In total, workers' wages will increase by more than \$5 billion, with average annual raises for affected full-time workers ranging from \$150 in Michigan to \$937 in Delaware. In addition, 27 cities and counties increased their minimum wages on January 1, adding to the number of workers likely to see increased earnings.

The greatest number of impacted workers is in California, where 3.2 million workers—or 18.9% of the workforce—will see raises to bring home a minimum wage of \$15.50/hour.

The state with the stingiest increase is Michigan with a 23-cent raise bringing the total to \$10.10 an hour, while the biggest hike of \$1.50 an hour is in Nebraska, raising the rate to \$10.50 an hour. Washington, D.C. will not increase its regular minimum wage but will increase its tipped minimum wage by 65 cents to \$6.00 an hour as a result of a ballot measure to eliminate the tipped minimum wage by 2027. Washington will be the state with the highest minimum wage of \$15.74 an hour.

These increases—including those prompted by automatic inflation-linked adjustments, state law triggers, and legislative action—will benefit workers nationwide, from rural states such as South Dakota to coastal urban states like New Jersey. Most of the affected workers (54.9%) are age 25 or older, and nearly half (44.8%) work full-time. Importantly, more than 2 million parents will get a raise, including more than a million single parents. In total, the Economic Policy Institute estimates that more than 5.7 million children live in households that will see an increase in earnings at the start of the new year.

Because of long-standing discrimination and occupational segregation, women and workers of color make up the majority of low-wage U.S. workers. Consequently, it is not surprising that the majority (58.7%) of workers affected by these minimum wage hikes are women and workers of color. The most concentrated impacts are among Hispanic workers (21.8% affected), Black workers (12.2%), and multiracial and Native American workers (14.4%)—groups that make up 20.1%, 9.5%, and 2.0% of the overall workforce in the affected states, respectively. These increases will also have a meaningful impact on workers struggling to make ends meet: 23.2% of affected workers have incomes below the poverty line, while another 26.5% have incomes below twice the poverty line.

*Economic Policy Institute*

### Potential Bylaws Change Notices

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

**LOCAL 653** will hold a first reading of potential by-laws changes at its March General Membership meeting on March 15, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. This meeting will be held at the Local's office: 5726 E. Shields Avenue, Fresno, and on Zoom. The second reading will take place at the April 19 meeting and the vote will be held at the May 17 meeting (same time and location.)

**LOCAL 2182** will hold a first reading of potential by-laws changes at its February General Membership meeting on February 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. This meeting will be held at the Local's office: 967 Venture Court, Sacramento. The second reading and vote will take place at the March 14 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.

**1,460%** The amount CEO pay (including stock awards and options), is up since 1978. (The increase since 2020 is 11.1%.)

Not surprisingly, this increase was not matched by increased pay for typical workers: The ratio of CEO-to-typical-worker pay soared to 399-to-1 under EPI’s realized measure of CEO pay, the highest ratio on record, up from 366-to-1 in 2020 and a massive increase from 59-to-1 in 1989.

Economic Policy Institute

UNION MEETINGS			
<div></div> <div><b>District Lodge 190</b> 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621 510-632-3661</div>	<p><i>Meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month</i> January 24 • February 28 • March 28</p> <p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>General Delegates’ Meeting:</b> 7:00 p.m.</p>	<div><b>Local I484</b> 1261 Avalon Blvd. Wilmington, CA 90744 310-835-6688</div>	<p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month January 19 • February 16 • March 16</p> <p><b>General Membership Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month January 3 • February 7 • March 7</p> <p><b>Retirees’ Club:</b> 1:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month: January 18 • February 15 • March 15</p>
<div><b>Local 93</b></div> <div>Local 93 has merged into Local 1101. See Local 1101 box for meeting and contact information.</div>			
<div><b>Local 653</b> 5726 E. Shields Avenue Fresno, CA 93727</div>	<p><i>Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month</i> January 18 • February 15 • March 15</p> <p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 5:00 p.m. <b>Membership Meeting:</b> 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><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></p>	<div><b>Local I528</b> 713 16th Street Modesto, CA 95354 209-529-9210 machinists2182@gmail.com</div>	<p><i>Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month</i> January 4 • February 8 • March 8</p> <p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>General Membership Meeting:</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Shop Steward Meeting:</b> 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month January 21 • February 18 • March 18</p> <p><b>Narcotics Anonymous:</b> 5:30-6:30 p.m. every Tuesday</p>
<div><b>Local 80I</b> 8201 Capwell Drive Oakland, CA 94621 800-655-2182</div>	<p><i>Meetings are the third Thursday of the month</i> January 19 • February 16 • March 16</p> <p><b>Membership Meeting:</b> 4:00 p.m. <i>Meetings are held at the Carpenters’ Hall, in Reno.</i></p>		
<div><b>Local I10I</b> 2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-440-8716</div>	<p><b>NOTE NEW MEETING DAY &amp; TIME:</b> <i>Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.</i> January 10 • February 14 • March 14</p> <p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 5:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>Meetings will be held on the Bluejeans App for the foreseeable future. Email: aab1101@att.net to learn how to join in.</i></p>		<p><i>Meetings are now hybrid - in person and on zoom. Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in on zoom.</i></p>
<div><b>Local I173</b> 1900 Bates Ave., # H Concord, CA 94520 925-687-6421 LL1173@sbcglobal.net</div>	<p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month January 12 • February 9 • March 9</p> <p><b>Membership/Shop Stewards’ Meeting:</b> 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month January 12 • February 9 • March 9</p> <p><i>Meetings will be held on zoom and in person at both the Concord office and at the Local 38 Plumbers Hall (3473 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95407). Contact the Local at 925-687-6421 for zoom address and passcode.</i></p>	<div><b>Local I584</b> 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-632-3661</div>	<p><i>Meetings are the third Thursday of the month</i> January 17 • February 21 • March 21</p> <p><b>Membership Meeting:</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>Retirees’ Club:</b> 12:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month: January 3 • February 7 • March 7</p> <p><i>Meetings will be hybrid (in person and on zoom) for the foreseeable future. Email Tom.Swanger@atlasapacific.com to learn how to join in on zoom.</i></p>
<div><b>Local I414</b> 150 South Boulevard San Mateo, CA 94402 650-341-2689</div>	<p><b>Shop Stewards’ Meeting:</b> 5:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month January 19 • February 16 • March 16</p> <p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month January 12 • February 9 • March 9</p> <p><b>General Membership Meeting:</b> 6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month via Zoom. Please contact the of-fice for the meeting link. January 19 • February 16 • March 16</p> <p><b>Retirees’ Club:</b> 11:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of March, June, Sept., Dec. All are welcome! March 1 • June 7 • September 6</p>	<div><b>Local I596</b></div> <div>Local 1596 has merged into Local 1173. See Local 1173 box for meeting and contact information.</div>	
		<div><b>Local 2182</b> 967 Venture Court Sacramento, CA 95825 916-929-1040 For dues questions, call Debbie Bird: 559-269-6386 machinists2182@gmail.com</div>	<p><i>Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month</i> January 10 • February 14 • March 14</p> <p><b>Executive Board Meeting:</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>General Membership Meeting:</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Retirees’ VISTA CLUB:</b> 11:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month: January 18 • February 15 • March 15</p>