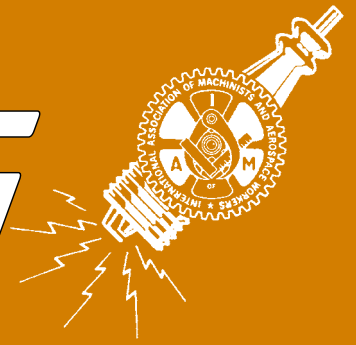


The IAM District 190

SPARKPLUG



VOL. 28 NO. 1



JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026

Serving the active and retired membership of IAM District Lodge 190

Industry-leading contracts at So Cal Ports

Dockside Machine and Ship Repair

Never underestimate the power of workers' solidarity and the power of a union!

The 15 Local 1484 members at Dockside Machine and Ship Repair in Wilmington came very close to striking just before Thanksgiving. The good news is that, after a long day that stretched into the evening, they ratified a historic, industry-leading four-year agreement.

"My two committeemen, Jason Pettijohn and Alfonzo Moreno, did an outstanding job! Working together in close communication with the rank-and-file, after 13 negotiating sessions, we reached a final agreement that everyone was happy with," says Area Director Kevin Kucera. "We made some real memories together. I am so proud of these men who were willing to fight for what they deserved and ultimately for what we achieved."

The contract includes different wage rate increases for four classifications, with the base rate increasing by almost 9% in year

one, 6.69% in year two, a 6.5% average in year three, and about 6% in year four.

ITS ConGlobal

At ITS ConGlobal, a container supplier in Wilmington, the employer has big projects coming up and wanted to hire outside labor because the IAM doesn't have a hiring hall. But what the local does have is a Terminal Services Agreement that requires ITS to use the IAM-signatory companies, Marine Dockside and Oceanside, exclusively. This means union members can handle all the work the employer needs, making it a win-win for IAM members across the port.

"In the midterm contract reopener, our 55 members wanted a contract that matched what we got for members at SSA. In the end, they got their largest wage increase ever," says Kucera. But it didn't come easily. The first contract the negotiating team brought back to the group showed a 22% wage increase. "They voted it down and unanimously voted to strike."



Local 1484's bargaining team at Dockside:
(From L) Jason Pettijohn, Area Director Kevin Kucera, and Alfonzo Moreno

Kucera says the members were ready to walk out, and he advised them to start packing up their toolboxes. "Even though it was a great deal, they wanted one last thing. Ultimately, that thing was another 25 cents on the front end. This was coming from workers in total control, knowing exactly what they needed. I was proud of them."

By year four, wage rates will be

\$47.25 for ship repair, \$52.75 for terminal services, and \$58.50 for LMG bunkering (an alternative fuel process). Plus, they will get double time after 8 hours. "It's a service industry; they need to do the work until it's done, and this is dangerous and physically demanding work. They earn every penny."

Workers at SMART may strike

As the Sparkplug goes to press, Local 1414 has filed Unfair Labor Practice charges against the Sonoma Marin Area Rapid Transit District (SMART). Twenty-six train mechanics and cleaners work for SMART Train. Their contract expired on October 2, and reaching

agreement on a new contract has been elusive. While there is still a chance to settle the contract, the Local must give the Agency five-days-notice that a 5-day strike, from January 26-30, will occur if the parties cannot reach a settlement.

"We've met 11 times," says Business Rep Cindy Gagliardi. "This agency is used to getting its way, and our guys are fed up with that."

Gagliardi says the union and the transit agency are arguing over 1%. The company budgeted 3% each year, and the guys don't want to settle for less than 10%. "It's really not the money, however. The agency keeps committing unfair labor practices, and



the morale is terrible," she says.

On January 20, the union filed charges with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB). The charges include surface bargaining, in which the employer rejects union proposals without making any counterproposals; a manager kept

shadow personnel files on members and issued discipline that a member was unaware of; members' meal breaks were regularly interrupted for work-related activities; the agency video surveilled members in the lunchroom as they discussed the state of the contract talks, which is considered a protected activity; and the agency refused to provide requested information to the union.

If the agency refuses to bargain in good faith, members will have gone on strike for five days at the end of January. Watch this space in the next issue to see how these talks turned out.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Retired and active members: Please write in if something in *The Sparkplug* makes you happy or mad or inspires you to action. 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, 10260 MacArthur Ave., Oakland, CA 94621

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Local Lodge websites:

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Union Organizer: [@union1484](https://twitter.com/union1484)

Facebook pages:

Local 1101: facebook.com/

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Local 1546: facebook.com/iam1546

The IAM District 190 SPARKPLUG

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Debra Chaplan, Managing Editor

UNION PEOPLE

Local 1414 awards annual scholarship



From Left: Local 1414 President Bruce Keller; Miles Hampton, retired local 1414 auto shop volunteer; Rich Del Rosso, Auto Shop instructor and Local 1414 Executive Board, and scholarship winner Camila Ku-Ortiz.

To fulfill its commitment to excellence in training students for careers in the automotive industry, Local 1414 helped establish and has, for years, helped run the automotive program at George Washington High School in San Francisco. Each year, the local awards three scholarships to graduating automotive students. These include small grants and toolboxes containing quality tools needed for today's cars.

This year, Camila Ku-Ortiz received a toolbox and tools at the Local 1414 general membership meeting in October 2025.

As instructor Rich Del Rosso says, "Camila not only showed great interest and talent in hands-on car repair but also served as the 2025 Auto Club president at Washington High School. She did an incredible job organizing, planning, and running the student-run Washington High School car show, which benefits the auto program." In addition to the Local 1414 award,

she also won the 2025 Principals Cup, awarded by the San Francisco Unified School District to one graduating senior from the automotive program. "On the auto shop floor, she was always involved in major repairs, such as removing engines and transmissions from vehicles. She is currently attending the automotive program at City College of San Francisco," Del Rosso adds.

If you have tools, toolboxes, or vehicles to donate, please contact Rich Del Rosso at delrossos@sfusd.edu. All donations are tax-deductible. "The students will benefit mightily from your donation," he adds. The local will announce the date of the 2026 car show soon.

Guide Dogs of America's Tender Loving Care Event

District 190 turned out in force to the Guide Dogs of America annual event in Las Vegas in November. "Pedro Mendez, Mark Martin, and I presented a \$100,000 check to the charity that we raised at our Golf Tournament and Lobster Feed," said Directing Business Rep Don Crosatto.

The theme of the event was "baseball," and everyone wore their team colors. Local 1484 had a full table and were proud to wear their World Series winning jerseys "just like the World Series winners that we are! Go Dodgers!" said Area Director Kevin Kucera, with pride for both the Machinists Union and for the Dodgers.



Local 1414 was decked out for the Guide Dogs celebration in Las Vegas. In fact, everyone in attendance was wearing their sports colors.



The Oceanwide crew turned out for the holiday meeting and party.

Local 1484's Holiday Meeting and Celebration

Local 1484's December 2 meeting was also a holiday celebration. "We had a full house and it was a good meeting," says Area Director Kevin Kucera. The local provided holiday gifts for all shop stewards and officers. "There were also raffle prizes, gift cards distributed, and some really good tacos! A great time had by all," Kucera adds.

In Memoriam — Bob Kelly

Bob Kelly was a member of Local 1305/1484 for nearly 20 years working at the SSA Terminal. He left the union to continue on at SSA as an M&R manager. "He was an honorable businessman who stood firmly on principle, always choosing to do what was right even when it was difficult," says Area Director Kevin Kucera.

Bob died on December 8. At noon, all cranes at the terminal were boomed up. "We hit the horns on those for five minutes, and then held a moment of silence," Kucera notes.

According to the tribute page, "Bob was a devoted father and the ultimate San Francisco 49er fan. His strength of character, hardworking spirit, and generous heart were evident in every chapter of his life."

The District sends condolences to Bob's family.

Congrats to New Journeyman



Fernando Jimenez Lozano (R) completed his apprenticeship and was presented with his certificate by Business Rep Eric Banh. Fernando has been working at Serramonte Ford and can now proudly call himself a journeyman mechanic and collect the pay to go along with the title.



UNION PEOPLE

Between September 2025 and this March, three of District 190's long serving business reps will retire. We honor their years of service to the members with these brief articles.

Steve Older — Area Director Local 1173



Steve Older's dedication led him through numerous pivotal roles, shaping both his life and the lives of many he worked with.

"I began at gas stations before my first dealership stint at Walnut Creek Toyota from 1982 to 1989," Steve recalls. After opening his own shop for a few years, he returned to dealership work, joining Concord Lexus around 1991. "It wasn't a union shop, but it was a startup that paid us well, until it didn't," he explains.

The drive for better conditions led Steve to help organize that shop in 1996. "We spent several years fighting for our first contract. In about 1999, we pushed our toolboxes onto the sidewalk and went on strike," he recounts. "But after four weeks, we saw the writing on the wall and quit that shop."

Fortunately, he recalls, "Management at Concord Toyota across the street had let us store our toolboxes there during the walkout. Soon, four of the five master techs who had gone on strike got jobs with the Toyota shop." He worked at Concord Toyota for eight years when, in 2007, he was offered a position as a business rep at Local 1546.

During that time, Steve was also serving as president of Local 1173 in Concord and was actively involved with the Contra Costa Labor Council.

"As the new guy at 1546, I worked all over the place—dealerships, body shops, forklift repair, and at Safeway's

Tracy terminal," he says.

In 2015, Steve took on the role of Area Director, overseeing shops across the North Bay, including a merger with Local 1596. "We covered a lot of ground, from dealerships to manufacturing, all the way up to the Oregon border," he notes.

One of the highlights of his career has been witnessing members standing up for their rights. "It's very satisfying when members realize they've empowered themselves to negotiate a good contract," Steve reflects. "Successful strikes, especially, are moments of pride."

He also cherishes working with members at diverse workplaces, from NASA's wind tunnel—the largest in the world, to shipyards. "Dealing with the politics behind the scenes has always been fascinating, and reconnecting with dealerships I'd once worked in has been rewarding."

Steve served as chair of the Apprenticeship Committee, helping struggling apprentices get back on track, and was President of the Contra Costa Labor Council for 12 years. "Stepping down in 2025, I'm proud of the thriving union landscape I leave behind."

His most demanding strike was at Henkel, in Bay Point. The strike lasted three months, but he says it resulted in an excellent deal. "That was as contentious as it gets, but we achieved good changes."

Looking ahead, Steve plans to spend more time with his grandkids in Arizona, pursue his drag racing hobby, and travel—Australia being at the top of his list. "Retirement has opened up new projects around the house and on my cars that I didn't have time for before."

He leaves with words of encouragement: "The key challenge is keeping focus on the local and the whole union. I'm grateful for my time here and confident in the crew stepping up after me."

Jesse Juarez — Area Director for Organizing



With a career in the IAM spanning over three decades, Jesse Juarez's journey in the labor movement is both inspiring and instructive.

Jesse got a job as a tech at Magnusson Dodge in Concord in 1990. Over the next few years, then-Business Rep Don Crosatto organized the shop. Five years later, when the company was sold, Jesse wasn't offered a position by the new owner because, he says, "they knew I supported the union."

So, Crosatto and then-Area Director Vern Dutton recruited him to work for the union. "I started as an organizer in 1997," Jesse recalls, "and I lasted through 150 campaigns over 28 years." His commitment to workers' rights and his strategic approach to organizing have left an indelible mark.

Jesse's work took him across industries and states, often facing formidable challenges. "Weak labor law is one of the biggest hurdles," he explains. "Employers bribe, fire, threaten, and hold captive audience meetings. We were never successful in getting labor law reform passed. Bills like EFCA and the PRO Act would have given workers a better chance at organizing without fear of retribution."

Despite these obstacles, Jesse's tactics proved effective. "My strategy changed to militant style organizing," he says. "We'd march on the boss in person, wear union buttons, put stickers on toolboxes. The work-

ers learned to act like a union from day one." His win ratio for elections was in the 90th percentile, bringing in hundreds of new union members.

Among his proudest achievements, Jesse highlights the civil contempt order from the Ninth Circuit Court that he secured against anti-union lawyer John Boggs, which mandated that Boggs meet with the union eight times a month for a year to hammer out a contract with Audi of Concord.

"Winning the Mercedes campaign in San Diego was also huge, despite Roger Penske and all the lawyers. We won the first-ever election at a dealership in San Diego and then secured a contract." That led to lots more dealership organizing in the San Diego area. He also had campaigns in Los Angeles, "where there are no automotive unions, employers fight twice as hard to keep unions out."

His daily grind was relentless, but he found purpose in helping workers succeed.

Former Area Director Vern Dutton said that when he first met Jesse, he was a master mechanic who was well-respected at the shop. "He was smart, nice, and he had it all," Vern says. "Just like a company wants to recruit the best, that's what I saw in Jesse, and Don and I recruited him to work for the IAM. He turned out to be the IAM's best organizer in the country. He's one of a kind."

Now transitioning to retirement, Jesse plans to dedicate time to his family. "I'm helping raise four grandkids. I'm grateful to the union for my pension—without it, retiring would be difficult."

Reflecting on his career, Jesse emphasizes its significance. "It's more than a job—it became a mission. The labor movement is tough, but winning is very satisfying. When you win, it never gets old."

Pedro Mendez — Area Director Local 1414



Pedro Mendez' first union job was as a painter at California Porsche Audi Ferrari in San Francisco in 1979. But in 1985, the workers struck for a year until the company completely busted the union. After a period in a non-union shop, Pedro

moved on to Falore Chrysler Jeep in Sunnyvale in 1988, where he became deeply involved in union activities, eventually serving as shop steward.

His passion for organizing was sparked when he was approached by then Business Rep Andy Mattos, who saw his potential. "Andy called me and asked if I wanted to work for the union instead of going to a new dealership when Falores decided to sell," Pedro explains. This led to a career change,

and he began shadowing experienced organizers, reading labor law, and visiting shops.

When asked what he's been most proud of during his career, Pedro immediately recounted helping to found the Labor Immigrant Organizing Network (LION), advocating for the right to organize and tying it to amnesty. "We made resolutions and pushed for changes at the state and national levels," he says. "While some local leaders wanted me to drop it, IAM President Tom Buffenbarger brought it to the AFL-CIO and got it passed. I was so proud of that."

Over the years, Pedro worked on high-profile projects such as the SFO Organize pilot program at the airport in 1999. "We passed the Quality Standards Program (QSP), which allowed us to unionize upon winning card checks and being able to avoid NLRB elections," he says. His efforts contributed to successful campaigns that brought members into various unions, and ultimately, that brought more than 500 members who worked at Swissport into Local 1414. The IAM Union hon-

ored District 190 with a GROW award for this organizing work.

In 2014, when he was servicing the Foster Farms local, Pedro was named Labor Leader of the Year by the Merced-Mariposa Labor Council.

Throughout his career, Pedro faced numerous challenges. When asked about his biggest successes, he reflects, "I'm proud. I went to school to be a chemical engineer, but my heart was to be a union representative—to make life better for the members." He emphasizes the importance of respect and relationship-building in successful negotiations: "How do you make people give you everything you want? It's about respect."

Now approaching retirement at age 69, Pedro looks back with pride. "I'm proud of my family, of my kids—I raised them with union wages and values. They are proud of what I've accomplished." His next chapter involves traveling the world and spending time with his six grandkids, as he continues to value the union legacy he has built.

Local 653

Veterans' committee forming

As this paper goes to press, Business Rep Jeremy Celaya reports that Local 653 is in the early stages of forming a veterans' committee. "We are seeking participation from all members in good standing." The first meeting was held on January 21. Contact the local if you'd like to get involved.

Sun-Maid Growers

The 30 maintenance mechanics and sheet metal workers at Sun-Maid Growers in Kingsburg ratified a new three-year agreement that includes a general wage increase of \$1.25/hour each contract year and a \$.10/hour increase to the pension plan.

"We were able to add an additional PPO healthcare plan as another option to meet the needs of our members," Celaya adds. "In addition, we added up to 12 months of extra healthcare coverage if you're out on injury."

Also in the contract is an increase in the life insurance policy from \$50,000 to \$100,000. In addition, the company and the union have agreed to meet quarterly to discuss work assignment issues.

Bimbo Bakeries

The eight techs at Bimbo Bakeries in Fresno recently ratified a new four-year agreement that provides a \$1.75/hour wage increase in year one and 50 cents in each of the following years. "And, they'll add a dollar/hour if you hold a commercial drivers license," Celaya says.

Fresno BMW

The 12 technicians at Fresno BMW ratified a two-year agreement in November. "They'll receive a 2.8% wage increase each contract year as well as an increase in their productivity bonus," reported Celaya.

Local 1101

Polycorp

Business Rep Pedro Gonzalez reports that he negotiated a three-

year deal, and members ratified it at Polycorp US LLC (formerly Burke Industries). Forty-two members work at this San Jose manufacturing facility, and additional hires were made in January.

The group will see wage increases of \$1.50/hour in year one, \$1/hour in years two and three, and significant health care savings now that they are in the union medical plan.

"There was an amazing turnaround with a lot of new capital invested in the facility," Gonzalez says. "It wasn't long ago that our members were working only two to four days per week, and we didn't know if there would be a future for the company. But so far, this private equity company, rather than stripping Burke of its assets as so many do, has taken out a new 10-year lease and they seem to be bought in to making the company work."

While Burke had government contracts for aerospace projects, Gonzalez says there have been many changes since December, and he's not sure what the members will be making in the future. "All we know is that the new company has to fulfill both old and new orders."

BAE Systems

BAE Systems in San Jose employs 10 IAM members who work as material handlers, electricians, and firearms technicians. Gonzalez says this number is down from hundreds of employees several years ago, and the company expects to be out of business within the year.

Nevertheless, Gonzalez was able to negotiate a one-year contract extension. The latest agreement includes a 6% wage increase, as well as résumé-building, retirement, and career services to help members during the phase-out.

Sunnyvale Ford

In November, the 39 techs and service writers at Sunnyvale Ford ratified a new three-year contract. The techs will receive wage increases of 4% in year one and 3% in years two and three.

Area Director Richard Breckenridge adds that the service advisors

will move to a new "Effective Labor Rate," which should yield higher pay. The contract sets a time frame for the transition. If the new pay plan doesn't work, they'll revert to the old pay plan.

Ryder Truck, San Jose

The 15 techs and fuelers who work for Ryder Truck on the San Jose/Milpitas border ratified a new four-year agreement in November.

Breckenridge says they'll see a total wage increase of 14.25% over the contract term (5%/3%/3%/3.25%). A refrigeration certification will bring them \$1.50/hour more. Sick leave is now calculated as part of Personal Time Off (PTO).

Hertz — San Jose

Five techs work at the Hertz car rental agency at the San Jose Airport, and one is at a remote building nearby. Breckenridge reports that securing a contract those members could live with was a struggle.

"There were significant differences between where the guys and the company wanted to be," he explains. "Ultimately, the members agreed to a \$4 raise in year one, which brought them up to \$46.50/hour in the first year. And then they'll get \$1/hour more in years two and three."

Local 1173

Contra Costa County Transit Authority

The 30 bus mechanics and cleaners who work for the County Connection in central Contra Costa County ratified a three-year contract in November.

Business Rep Cindy Gagliardi says the contract was settled after a 15-minute meeting. "And the guys are happy," she says. They'll receive a 10% increase over the three-year term.

Audi of Concord

Negotiations at the Audi of Concord dealership are reportedly going nowhere fast.

After the employer refused to bargain in good faith, the Ninth Circuit

Court of Appeals ordered the parties to meet eight times a month for a year to hammer out a first contract.

At this point, few of the original union supporters still work at the dealership. Gagliardi and Organizer Will Uthman met with the unit and received a positive response. But Gagliardi admits, "it's unclear whether there's a there there... We remain hopeful."

Directing Business Rep Don Crosatto explained that the court's decision was intended to be punitive toward the employer, which is a bad actor and not interested in good-faith bargaining. "It's as onerous as they can get without imposing an agreement."

Unfortunately, it ties up the union as much as it does the lawyer. The difference is that the lawyer gets paid a hefty hourly fee.

Local 1484

Tony Demaria Electric



Jaime Yberra (R) helped negotiate the TDE contract with Kevin Kucera (L).

Area Director Kevin Kucera is pleased to report that members of Tony Demaria Electric (TDE) unanimously ratified a new three-year agreement.

"Shop Steward Jamie Yberra is not only one of the best electrical engineers in his class but also a very seasoned negotiator," said Area Director Kevin Kucera. "It's a real pleasure to represent such a professional group of tradesmen and tradeswomen. TDE is an amazing company that values its workforce and our labor-management relationship."

Oceanwide Ship Repair

At presstime, members at Oceanwide Ship Repair in Long Beach voted down the contract presented to them and unanimously voted to strike.

"Negotiations are ongoing," says Kucera. "I'm actually optimistic that we'll get a deal done. If not, we'll be on the picket line." Stay tuned!

Local 1528

Silgan Doherty

Asst. Directing Business Rep Mark Martin reports that negotiations have just opened for the

Local 1484's Annual Retiree Banquet

For over a decade now, the retirees and spouses of Local 1484 are invited to partake in an annual holiday banquet celebration. The

2025 event was held on December 10 at Tepechi Mexican Restaurant in Long Beach.

"All of the retirees in attendance

had a wonderful time, sharing a meal and visiting with old friends and co-workers," said Local 1484 administrator Lynette Singleton.



Retired members from left: Adolfo Zuniga, TDE; Jorge Valdez, TDE; Tony Reyes, TDE; Area Director Kevin Kucera; Pedro Ibarra, SSA.



Getting ready for lunch.

THE LOCALS

70 members who work at Silgan Doherty, which makes gallon-sized cans. More news to come.

Local 1546

Hertz Rent-A-Car—Oakland

Area Director Brian Fealy reports that the seven members who work at Hertz at the Oakland Airport both unanimously rejected the contract offer and voted to strike in August.

“The employer tried to sweat the guys out by waiting until after the contract expired to improve the offer, but the members stuck together and didn’t blink,” says Fealy. “It took a little while, but the employer eventually put an offer on the table that was acceptable to the bargaining unit.”

In October, the seven members ratified a new three-year agreement. It includes wage increases, depending on classification, of 7.2% or 5.1% the first year, and 2.6% or 2.1% the second and third years. In addition, they gained improvements in the seniority language, increased recall from lay-off rights by three months, gained an additional \$5,000 in tool insurance, got the option to convert some sick days to PTO, and brought the bereavement leave into compliance.

McKevitt Volvo

The 13 members who work at McKevitt Volvo in San Leandro ratified a new three-year agreement on November 25. “We updated the bereavement leave language, aligned the classification requirements in the contract with the factory training classification terminology, and addressed safety concerns related

to a leaky roof,” recalls Brian Fealy. The members secured wage gains of 4.0%, 3.5%, and 3.25%, along with a modest signing bonus.”

Svenhard’s Bakery

Even though Svenhard’s Bakery was sold to another bakery in 2018, they still had a pension withdrawal liability to pay. “We went to mediation and got \$750,000 toward the \$2 million owed,” reports Don Crosatto. “We ended up with 40¢ on the dollar, which sounds bad until you realize that we started with 0 on the dollar.”

Crosatto reports that the members who worked there were all vested and are eligible to collect their pensions, if they’re not already. “That money goes into the pension fund.”

California Waste Solutions

The four clerical workers at California Waste Solutions in Oakland unanimously ratified a new 8-year contract in January. The previous contract had expired in 2023, and for three years, the company’s proposals were both insufficient and infrequent. It wasn’t until Business Rep Robby Pintos filed unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB that the owner’s daughter, Christina Duong, and the new General Manager, Matt Bussing, reached out to the union to settle the contract.

After two meetings, the union and company reached a deal.

“We agreed to an 8-year term because the first three years were already behind us,” says Pintos. “Importantly, we agreed to retroactivity back to July 1, 2023.” Wage increases were 4.5%, 4%, and 10% for 2023-2025, and 3.5% per year

for 2026-2030. They also secured maintenance of benefits for the AI Plan-A health insurance and first-time employer contributions to the IARP account. Finally, workers will be able to take MLK Day as a holiday.

Local 2182

A&A Ready Mix

Business Rep Paul Abarca says he looks forward to beginning negotiations for a new contract with A&A Ready Mixed Concrete at the Port of Sacramento. Talks are set to start as the Sparkplug goes to press.

A&A is a 10-member shop. “Over the past two contract cycles, our members have achieved significant improvements by standing united and working cohesively as a team,” says Abarca. “This collective approach has not only strengthened their agreement but also provided the company with a strong return on investment.”

City of Sacramento

“Negotiations continue with the city of Sacramento,” says ADBR Mark Martin. “Not surprisingly, they’re still pleading poverty. We hope to reach an agreement soon, but it’s been exceptionally challenging because the city is unwilling to spend any money on wages in year one.”

Martin notes that the city has two IAM contracts: the automotive/fleet group with about 50 members and the building trades group with about 65.

Waste Management

Martin reports that the Waste Management contract in Lodi is opening as the Sparkplug goes to press. “We have 35 members at WM

and fully anticipate favorable negotiations there,” Martin says. “We’re following some good patterns with WM at some of the other locations, and the Oakland contract set a favorable trend. We anticipate ending up with a very good contract.”

Following a former shop steward’s initiation of a union decertification campaign, the members voted 33-8 on January 24 to retain the union. “This puts us in an even stronger position for negotiations,” said Martin.

Local 2182 & 801

Bimbo Bakeries

The union represents nine members at Bimbo Bakeries in Sacramento and Reno. “We’re close to reaching a tentative agreement that covers Locals 2182 and 801,” says Area Director Mark Martin, who adds that they’re also bargaining on Local 1546’s contract, though that’s a separate agreement for the five members in San Leandro.

Locals 2182, 653 & 1528

JM Equipment

Business Reps Paul Abarca and Jeremy Celaya are hopeful that by the time this paper comes out, the 68 members in Fresno, Manteca, Patterson, and West Sacramento will have a new contract. “Negotiations are ongoing,” Abarca says.

“While progress has been gradual, the parties have now exchanged economic proposals. We anticipate having a tentative agreement ready for the membership to vote on.”



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Local 1484 member Neil Sepulveda shares passion for teaching and industry growth

Neil Sepulveda loves his career as a high-voltage electrical tester so much that he shares information about it with students, other electricians, and the general community.

Neil’s journey is deeply connected to the local industry. Having earned his engineering degree from UCLA, he is a licensed Professional Electrical Engineer in the state of California. For 12 years, he has worked for Tony Demaria Electrical (TDE), a company rooted in Wilmington and affiliated with Local 1484. “We work at the ports, so even though we’re electricians, we’ve always been tied to the Machinists’ union,” Neil shares. TDE was founded by Tony Demaria, Sr., a marine electrical engineer at the San Pedro ports, and now his son, Tony Demaria Jr., continues the legacy.

In addition to his day job, Neil has been a dedicated educator at Long Beach City College (LBCC) for over six years, shaping minds and careers. “I teach the high-voltage electrical test technician course,” he explains. “By training people to work with high voltage, we’re meeting an industry need for well-trained, safe workers. It’s about helping people find fulfilling, rewarding careers and achieving career satisfaction.”

“Until we got this class going, there wasn’t a direct track to our specialty—High Voltage Electrical Testing,” Neil notes. “But since TDE has a history with LBCC, we launched this program to meet industry needs and support the community.”

Neil’s passion for teaching shines through, and his efforts have already borne fruit: “After our first class at LBCC, Tony hired two of the top students because they were field-ready, highly capable, and

understood safety. In their first week on the job, they could perform like long-timers. It was great for them and for TDE.”

Outside the classroom, Neil and TDE are active community participants. “We’re involved in the Labor Day parades every year, and we speak at high schools to let students know this career is out there. It’s a rewarding, secure industry if they choose it,” he emphasizes. He’s also active with Local 1484, attending meetings and advising Area Director Kevin Kucera.

“I really respect Neil. He’s always got a great attitude, and he truly cares about the workers, the company, and the community,” Kucera says.

And, on a personal note, Neil shares, “I just turned 35 and got married over a year ago.”

Reflecting on his attitude toward new opportunities, Neil states, “Whenever I’m asked to do something, I say, ‘Hey, why not?’ Maybe that’s the attitude that helped launch the LBCC program.”

Neil Sepulveda’s story is a testament to the power of industry engagement and dedicated teaching, inspiring the next generation of high-voltage electrical technicians.



Neil Sepulveda makes a presentation at Local 1484’s December meeting.



IN THE NEWS

US labor unions gear up to fight against Trump's 'Billionaire First' agenda

Donald Trump has launched a year of “unrelenting attacks on working people,” according to the head of the AFL-CIO, the country’s largest labor federation. They’re preparing to fight back.

Liz Shuler, AFL-CIO president, said they’re ready to challenge Trump’s “Billionaire First” agenda in 2026 and support candidates for struggling Americans. She described efforts to restore federal workers’ collective bargaining rights and lawsuits against Trump’s moves to weaken unions. “People were pissed,” she said.

The House passed a bill on December 11 to restore these rights, responding to Trump’s executive orders that affected more than one million federal employees. Shuler called it good old-fashioned organizing and accused Trump of overseeing “the biggest attack on unions in our history.”

The AFL-CIO aimed to pass the bill in the Senate in January, amid threats of government shutdowns and debates over ACA subsidies. “We’re organizing now,” Shuler said, emphasizing national outreach.

With inflation high and bills rising, the federation plans to build momentum into the 2026 elections on kitchen table issues, reaching out to workers. She said trust in unions is rising as confidence in institutions and media wanes. According to the latest annual poll, about 68% of Americans support unions, amid increasing income inequality. Trump promised to lower costs and create jobs but has not delivered, downplaying affordability concerns as a “hoax,” despite many struggling with rising debt, rent, and healthcare.

“People are running up credit card debt just to cover basics,” Shuler noted, highlighting issues like housing and healthcare. Trump favors big corporations and the wealthy, while many Americans struggle. Shuler warned that inequality and technology threaten to worsen the divide if not regulated.

In January, the IAM Union joined the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) and other federal worker unions at a Washington, D.C. rally calling on U.S. Senators to pass the Protect America’s Workforce Act (PAWA), critical legislation that would restore collective bargaining rights and protect the voices of federal workers nationwide.

Michael Sainato, The Guardian

Whatever Happened to Trump’s “Golden Age” for American Workers?

Although Donald Trump’s Department of Labor claimed in April 2025



that “Trump’s Golden Age puts American workers first,” the facts tell a different story. Trump has decreased workers’ incomes by reversing policies. For instance, on March 14, 2025, he issued an order nullifying a Biden regulation that raised the minimum wage for private workers with federal contracts—affecting 327,300 workers, who faced potential pay cuts of up to 25%. Many farmworkers are also seeing wage losses due to the H-2A visa program bringing in lower-wage immigrant labor, costing U.S. farm workers an estimated \$2.64 billion annually. Meanwhile, efforts to increase the federal minimum wage, stagnant at \$7.25 since 2009 and eroded by 30% inflation, have been blocked by Trump and the GOP, leaving it below the official poverty line by 2025.

Trump’s administration reinstated subminimum wages for workers with disabilities and proposed stripping 3.7 million home-care workers of their minimum wage protections. It also canceled Biden’s plan to expand overtime rights to 4.3 million workers and moved to classify many employees as independent contractors, denying them wages and overtime. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a 0.8% increase in real wages from November 2024 to November 2025.

Unemployment also rose, with 7.8 million workers unemployed—700,000 more than the previous year—and the unemployment rate climbing to 4.6%. Trump’s policies led to severe job cuts, including the chaotic firing of 317,000 federal workers and the shutdown of major renewable energy projects, such as offshore wind farms. Despite claims of revitalizing manufacturing, 58,000 manufacturing jobs were lost between April and September 2025.

Workplace safety has deteriorated, with workplace hazards causing approximately 140,000 deaths annually, reduced OSHA inspections, and funding cuts to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Trump’s administration also blocked heat safety rules, opposed silica exposure protections, and proposed

weakening mine safety enforcement. Moreover, executive orders abolished collective bargaining rights for over a million federal workers, ending union protections for 1 in 14 unionized employees.

In a December 2025 AFL-CIO report, leaders condemned these actions as an assault on workers and democracy. Overall, Trump’s second term has benefited corporations and billionaires but imposed hardships on American workers.

Dr. Lawrence Wittner

Twenty new workplace laws in 2026

Over 20 new California workplace laws take effect this year.

Notably, employers can no longer require workers to repay retention bonuses, relocation costs, or training expenses if they leave before an agreed period, except under specific, technical exemptions. This aims to increase employee mobility and restrict “stay or pay” clauses, especially common in healthcare and other industries. This law provides important flexibility to IAM members who get training and certifications on their employer’s dime.

In important new “Know your Rights” legislation (SB294), employers must now provide employees with clear written notices about their rights, including workers’ compensation, union organizing, notification of immigration enforcement, protection from unfair immigration practices, and constitutional rights during law enforcement interactions at work. Employees must also have the option to name an emergency contact if arrested or detained at work.

SB642 tightens pay transparency rules, requiring more accurate pay ranges in job postings and redefining “sex” to include nonbinary employees under the Equal Pay Act. It also broadens the definition of “wages” to include all forms of compensation and increases the time allowed for employees to recover lost wages due to discrimination.

There are also some new laws that apply to specific industries. These include:

- AB1340 applies to rideshare drivers covered by Proposition 22, which classified some app-based drivers as independent contractors. The new law gives these drivers the right to form and join a union.

- SB648 beefs up protections against tip theft, including employers deducting them from service workers’ wages, by giving the California Labor Commissioner the ability to investigate potential violations of the state’s tip rules and take action.

- AB858 extends the sunset date of a law requiring employers to offer jobs to former employees — primarily in the hospitality, service and travel industries — who were laid off as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The date previously was Dec. 31, 2025; the new law extends it to Jan. 1, 2027.

Kathleen Pender, SF Chronicle

Fair Games coalition calls for mega sporting events in LA to leave positive legacy

Over the next three years, Los Angeles will become the first city to host the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic & Paralympic Games back-to-back, making it the world’s mega-events capital of the world.

The Fair Games Coalition, comprising more than 60 organizations—including major tourism-related unions—launched a campaign for a “New Deal for our Future” to ensure the games benefit working families. The group demands that these mega-events serve working people’s communities and leave a positive legacy. Launched in January 2026, the campaign called on LA28 and corporations to negotiate a New Deal for Our Future—or face the possibility of massive protests and strikes on the opening day of the 2028 Olympics.

FROM THE TRUST FUND



Pension Plan 2025 Year-End Tax Documents

The Trust Fund Office will be mailing the Pension Plan 2025 1099-R Tax Forms no later than January 31, 2025, to all retirees receiving monthly pension payments.

After January 31, 2025 the 1099-R Tax Forms will also be available on the Trust Fund website at www.aitrustfunds.org and can be downloaded or printed directly from the website. If you don't already have access to the website, creating an online account is simple and takes minutes to complete. Visit 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 that required medical providers not to balance bill when you get emergency care or get treated by an out-of-network provider at an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center.

“Surprise billing” is an unexpected balance bill. This can happen when you can't control who is involved in your care—like when you have an emergency or when you schedule a visit at an in-network facility but are unexpectedly treated by an out-of-network provider.

You are protected from balance billing for:

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

your protections not to be balance billed for these post-stabilization services.

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

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

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

The Member Assistance Program Can Help With Many Life-Related Stresses

The Trustees of the Automotive Industries Welfare Fund partnered with Uprise Health to provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and a Legal/Financial Program (LFP). These resources can help you resolve personal problems in the early stages.

Uprise Health offers a confidential support service and referral program. It is designed to help you and your family with personal issues (see list in next column.)

Customer Care Professionals will help you find the right resources and services including counselors, legal representatives, and financial professionals who can provide counseling sessions, coordinate the appropriate treatment, and provide referrals if needed. Office hours are 6am to 5pm PST. After hours calls will be returned the following day. Crisis support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The services provided under the EAP and LFP program are 100% confidential and are at no cost to you or your dependents. For more information or to get assistance in making an appointment, call Uprise Health at 1-888-690-1349 or visit hmc.personaladvantage.com using the word AUTOMOTIVE as the access code.

We're here to help

1-888-690-1349
<https://hmc.personaladvantage.com>

- Stress
- Real estate
- Parenting
- Criminal issues
- Aging
- Tenant's rights
- Grief/Loss
- Divorce
- Anxiety
- Family
- Relationships
- Marriage
- Adoption
- Work issues
- Estate planning
- Alcohol/Drug issues
- Bankruptcy
- Finances
- Immigration
- Depression
- Child custody

Pension Plan Searching for Former Participants

About 2,000 participants are entitled to receive a pension payment under the Automotive Industries Pension Plan but have not made application for their money. If you know someone who used to work in the industry during the 1970s or 1980s, is over age 65, and is not receiving a pension payment from the Trust Fund, they could be missing out 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.

Automotive Industries (AI) Trust Fund Office:
800-635-3105 • www.AITrustFunds.org

Union Buying Guides

Union-Made Valentine's Day Gift Ideas

Sweets

See's Candies • Jelly Belly
Hershey • Ghirradelli
Frankford Candy

Champagne

Chase-Limogere
Cook's • Tott's

Wine

Chateau St. Michelle
Charles Krug • Balletto
Gallo of Sonoma

March Madness

March Madness is coming! Enjoy the thrills of the tournament by choosing union snacks and drinks for your viewing party. We've put together a list of union-made items so that you can use your wallet to support good jobs today.

<p>Drinks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7UP A&W Barq's Canada Dry Coca-Cola Dr. Pepper Gatorade Mountain Dew Pepsi Sprite 	<p>Snacks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheez-It Cheetos Chex Mixes Doritos Lays Chips Nabisco Planters Nuts Rold Gold Slim Jim Sun Chips Wheat Thins 	<p>Popcorn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachman Popcorn Better Made Bickel's Fiddle Faddle Jiffy Pop Orville Redenbacher's Poppycock Savor Street Snak King Wise
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From labor411.org

These lists are developed by Labor411.org, which supports union workers by educating the public about the products that union members produce. Check them out!

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

Send the mailing label on this newspaper to your local union office. Please note: Even if you send your notice to the Pension Fund or the Health & Welfare Trust, that won't change your address as the union has it. Be sure to contact your local union!

See calendar below for your local's address.

Note about union meetings

Most union meetings are now being held in person, but since the heat of the pandemic, others are hybrid, meaning you may attend on Zoom (or similar) video-conferencing program. If you wish to attend online, check with your local to ensure you have the web address and are properly registered.

ELECTION NOTICE— Local 1546

Attention Members of Local 1546

NOMINATIONS: At Local 1546's regular meeting in March, a Special Order of Business will be called at 6:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, March 3, 2026**. The meeting convenes at 5:30 p.m.

The positions listed below will be opened for nominations: President • Vice President • Secretary-Treasurer • Recording Secretary • Conductor-Sentinel • Three (3) Trustees • Six (6) Executive Board Members • Three (3) Auditors • Four (4) Central Labor Council Delegates • Two (2) California Conference of Machinists Delegates and One (1) Alternate. Each office is for a three-year term ending on December 2027. Members nominated for office must meet all the "Qualifications of Candidates" as listed in our bylaws and the IAM Constitution.

ELECTION DAY: If needed, a formal Election of Officers will be held on **Tuesday, April 7, 2026** at 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. Polls will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Absentee Ballots: Members who reside in out-lying area more than 25 miles from the balloting place, members who are ill and confined under orders of a physician and members temporarily absent from the City may be furnished absentee ballots. Any member entitled to receive an absentee ballot shall make written request to the Recording Secretary of Local 1546 by delivering or mailing such request not later than ten (10) days before the election.

Qualifications to become a Candidate for Election: In accordance with Article XII, Section 2, of the Local Lodge By-laws, to be eligible a member shall attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the regular Local Lodge meetings held during the twelve (12) month period ending the date of close of nominations.

Qualifications to Vote: Only members in good standing and free from delinquency of any nature to the Local Lodge shall be allowed to vote.

UNION MEETINGS

<p>DISTRICT LODGE 190 10260 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland, CA 94605 510-632-3661</p>	<p>LOCAL 1484 1261 Avalon Blvd. Wilmington, CA 90744 310-835-6688</p>
<p>LOCAL 653 5726 E. Shields Avenu Fresno, CA 93727 559-264-2815</p> <p><i>Note: Per the bylaws, the Nov. and Dec. meetings are held on the second Wednesdays. Meetings are held 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, 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.</i></p>	<p>LOCAL 1528 713 16th Street Modesto, CA 95354 209-529-9210 machinists2182@gmail.com</p>
<p>LOCAL 801 10260 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland, CA 94605</p>	<p>LOCAL 1546 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-638-6705</p> <p><i>Meetings are hybrid - you can join in person or on zoom. Email zr1zo6r@sbcglobal.net to learn how to join in on zoom.</i></p>
<p>LOCAL 1101 2102 Almaden Rd., #105 San Jose, CA 95125 408-440-8716</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>LOCAL 1584 10260 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94605 510-638-6705</p> <p><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></p>
<p>LOCAL 1173 1900 Bates Ave., # H Concord, CA 94520 925-687-6421 LL1173@sbcglobal.net</p> <p><i>Meetings will be held on zoom and in person at the Concord office. Contact Cindy at 925-687-6421 for zoom address and passcode.</i></p>	<p>LOCAL 2182 967 Venture Court Sacramento, CA 95825 916-929-1040/800-655-2182</p> <p>For dues questions, call Andrea Cruz at 510-638-6705 x11 or email machinists2182@gmail.com</p>
<p>LOCAL 1414 150 South Boulevard San Mateo, CA 94402 650-341-2689</p>	<p>LOCAL 2182 967 Venture Court Sacramento, CA 95825 916-929-1040/800-655-2182</p> <p>For dues questions, call Andrea Cruz at 510-638-6705 x11 or email machinists2182@gmail.com</p>