



SURGE

For Members of IBEW Local 18 and their Families

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

The Challenges That Lie Ahead

By Brian D'Arcy



Four years ago we negotiated a 5 year agreement with LADWP. As with every agreement since

1996, the agreement includes Consumer Price Index (CPI) language that generates salary increases to Local 18 members based on increases in the CPI. The language includes a floor and ceiling – a minimum and a maximum increase – of 3.25% and 6%.

As you are probably aware, the language calculates the CPI from August to August. Last August the calculation came in at a remarkable 5.9% and you received that increase on October 1st. This year the CPI seems to be tracking in the negative 2% range, but the floor of the calculations guarantees you a 3.25% increase.

The use of the CPI formula allowed us to reach a long-term agreement with the LADWP. The formula offered the assurance that our salaries would keep pace with inflation while allowing the Department a predictable and manageable increase in its labor costs. As such, it represented a good

deal for both the Department and its employees.

However, times have changed. This year, the increase will play out against the backdrop of the City's budget deficit: Furloughs, layoffs, ill-advised early retirement incentives and generally dysfunctional dialogue between the city unions and elected officials.

The Early Retirement Incentive Package (ERIP) is a good example of the craziness. The theory behind such incentives is that by offering an incentive to high-wage employees to retire, the City will avoid layoffs and reduce its payroll. Unfortunately, that only works if the plan is set up in a way that actually reduces costs. It soon became apparent that the figures ERIP was based on didn't add up.

In a remarkable act of courage the manager of Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System and the actuaries who advise the retirement system have harpooned the financial underpinnings of the ERIP plan. It is anybody's guess how this will come out, but it has increased

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New website coming soon!

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“Times Have Changed”

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Local 18 Members Called Heroes after Fire Rescue



Michael Brackin

Local 18 members Michael Brackin and Darren Arjoon of Burbank Water and Power were out in their utility truck on a routine call when they discovered that a nearby building was on fire. They were able to get residents to safety and called emergency services to the scene. Their actions have been called heroic by the residents and witnesses and, thanks to them, no one was injured in the fire.

Q. How did you discover the fire?

MB: We were walking back to the vehicle to get some tools and we noticed smoke. Ironically, we had just driven by there 2 minutes prior and there wasn't smoke.

Q. Tell us what happened when you approached the house.

MB: We saw an elderly woman sitting on the stoop in the front, and we assisted her. We thought if she was home then it was possible that others could be inside the building. We knocked on the door and we were able to notify a young woman, she was completely unaware that there was a fire. She got some of her personal belongings. Still concerned that others could be home, we threw some rocks at a window hoping to get someone's attention if they were home.

Q. Have you ever had any emergency training, or did you just know what to do?

DA: We've had basic training at every safety meeting, other than that we haven't had any formal training. What we did was just an automatic response.

Q. How do you feel about being called a hero?

DA: We don't feel like heroes, we were just in the right place at the right time and we did the same thing any other human being would do.

MB: It was a very humbling experience to have our co-workers and family look at us in that way.

Q. How has your family reacted?

MB: My kids and family thought it was great, it's been a very fulfilling experience.

DA: My family called me when they saw the article in the paper, they couldn't believe it. They asked why I didn't call to tell them what happened and I told them I'm not a hero, I just did what was needed.

Q. What did you do after the fire?

MB & DA: We got back to work.



Darren Arjoon

“ I just did what was needed ”

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Body Scan International

For Local 18 members enrolled in the Anthem Blue Cross plan there is NO OUT OF POCKET EXPENSE (effective July 1st, 2008) for the BSI program. This benefit also includes one adult dependent.

For more information, please call: (888) 724-8439

Medical & Dental Plans

For information, contact our Benefit

Service Center at (800) 842-6635 or the Local 18 offices at (213) 387-8274.

Life Insurance

Local 18 provides \$5,000 life insurance coverage for active members in good standing.

Scholarship Fund

Local 18 offers two Trade School Grants per year to Union members enrolling in technical, industrial, or trade schools - \$250.00 yearly for two years (a

total of \$500 per student). In addition, the International Union Office offers a maximum of twelve scholarships yearly to members for undergraduate study. The scholarships are each worth up to \$3,000 per year for a maximum of eight years.

Educational Assistance

Local 18 will finance tuition fees and 50% of the cost of required books for Union labor-oriented classes.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Local 18 Member earns City Career Service Award

We are pleased to announce that Gregory Silva, Customer Service Representative, was recognized with the Los Angeles City Council's Career Achievement Award.

The award honors his outstanding job performance and dedication to duty as a Customer Service Representative with the Department of Water and Power. He was nominated for the award by City Attorney Pam Douglas.

Gregory has been with DWP for 24 years and became a member of IBEW in 1987. He started in security then went to Customer Service



Gregory Silva receives his Career Service Award

Division in the Customer Call Center for two years, then worked in the Account Services Unit until 1994.

Since then he has been working in Special Account Management Unit (SAMU) for the City Attorney, where he handles accounts that are closed over \$5,000 and prepares the account for the attorney to sue. Gregory collected \$1 million from one account, and last year collected over \$3 million from past due accounts.

Congratulations on earning this special recognition.

SPECIAL REPORT:

Pine Tree Wind Generators Project

by Russ Butow

Things are looking much better for the building and maintenance of wind generators in the Mojave Desert. This work is challenging because it is not familiar to our DWP workforce, and many new problems arise every day. Training workers to do maintenance is crucial, and it has been difficult to recruit and keep workers due to the desert location.

However, a full time maintenance crew is now reporting and will be working on the start-up and maintenance of the wind generators. The crew currently consists of the following members:

William Nicholson, SEM	Rich Whites, EM Supv
Bruce Zigmata, SEM	Allen Birdwell, ESO
John Glover, SEMS	Mike Montgomery, ESO
Mike Mallon, EM	Ellen Burd, SCT
Shannon Glover, EM	John Glaze, EM

There have also been a number of Electric Mechanics who have been assigned temporarily on this job. They were greatly needed and helpful in getting the units online and meeting warranty issues.

Because there are plans to build more of these units, there will be an even greater need for more personnel in the future. Phase 2 for this work should start in Summer of 2010.



DWP wind generator maintenance crew at work

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We want to put the spotlight on you, our members. What's happening in the field?

Tell us about:

Special Events, Innovations in the field, Teamwork, Announcements for fellow members, Special projects or recognition.

Submit your photos, drawings or cartoons.*

Please help us know "What's Happening" by sending in your announcements and photos to Jennifer Hadley by mail or email her at:

jhadley@ibewlocal18.org

(remember not to send from your DWP email account)

Thank you for your participation!

** Please note that we will not be able to accept items such as grievances, complaints, or political views for this section -- save that for your union reps! We want to highlight positive happenings in your unit.*



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



“ Hello, this is Operator 14, how may I help you? ”

Our featured member this month is Arlette Jones, who has been a member of IBEW Local 18 for twenty years.

Q. *When did you become a member of IBEW Local 18?*

A. I have been a member of IBEW Local 18 for 20 years.

Q. *Where have you worked over the years?*

A. I work in the VOC (Voice Operation Center) located at the JFB. I have worked for DWP for 23 years as a Communication Operator/Communications Information Representative.

Q. *What is your favorite part about working for the DWP and being a member of IBEW Local 18?*

A. Working for the VOC has given me the opportunity to be able to assist my fellow co-workers and the residents of Los Angeles. Some of the duties that I enjoy doing are answering the telephone trouble lines which receive all types of equipment trouble reports, and monitoring a computerized system that reports equipment alarms from hundreds of microwave sites and other DWP facilities. I follow up by generating trouble reports and dispatching them to the proper areas for repair.

I assist Telecom Personnel and the Aviation Services via LA Radio. I answer and direct incoming calls and assist Department employees with outgoing calls via the Department's corporate switchboard. I answer as "Operator 14" and enjoy talking with people, but it is most rewarding to be able to assist people in need. Being a member of Local 18 gives me comfort and in knowing that IBEW assures me job security and a solid family of Brotherhood and Sisterhood. I have been a member of the JMLC for the VOC for 8 years.

Q. *If you could have dinner with any one person dead or alive who would it be and why?*

A. If I could sit down and have dinner with President Barack Obama, it would be one of the greatest honors I could ever experience. I feel he is really trying to bring the world together and make a positive change for the better for everyone.

Q. *Do you have a favorite saying or motto?*

A. My favorite saying is, "You have to laugh a little in order to stay sane."

FROM THE TRENCHES

Unit 6 – Stores by Shawn McCloud

We have a joint labor committee for stores and warehouse. Our mission: Through a partnership between Labor and Management, the Materials Management and Logistics Joint Labor Management Committee and its sub-committees, address and resolve issues that affect warehouse and stores employees Department-wide with the objective of constructively arriving at decisions that respectfully consider the interests of labor and management for current as well as for future challenges.

Our committee meets monthly on the 1st Wednesday. We encourage you to contact a committee member if you have an issue at your work location (excluding grievable issues) that you want the committee to address.

Committee Members: Joe Augino, Val Fernandez, Al Sanchez, Steve Bassett, Ben Jimenez, Gary West, Joe De La Cerda, Debra King, Jan Diechen, Shawn McCloud, Lou Feldmeier (Co-Chair), and Mark Miller (Co-Chair).

• Next Meeting: September 10, 2009
Dinner Meeting at Damon's Steakhouse

Unit 8 – Clerical by Shawn McCloud

The Districts:

I have been making site visits to many of the district locations. I believe the biggest complaints I'm hearing are staffing issues - more work with less staff and overtime being cut for clerical personnel, especially when field crews are still working.

On the staffing issues component I have been meeting with Mike Coia and Eileen Lau to track vacancies and backfilling of positions. Because Water System in the Districts has been pretty consistent in backfilling their positions, I have not received any complaints. Remember you are the eyes and ears in the field, so if you have a clerical vacancy in the district for more than two months, please let me know.

Stress - more work and less staff:

Remember, do an honest day's work for honest day's pay. I encourage you to make the most of your day, however I urge you to take your breaks and lunch period. I can't tell you how many times I have heard some of you say "we are short staffed so I work through my lunch and break time to try and keep up with my workload." Remember stress invites unwanted health-related issues, and taking your breaks and lunch period gives your mind and body the opportunity to refresh, replenish and reflect. You only have one body, I encourage you to take care of it.



The 2009 Student Worker Program concluded with a ceremony on August 13, 2009 with 120 students receiving Certificates of Appreciation. Thank you to all the mentors for their hard work and dedication!

Overtime:

Remember overtime is not an entitlement, however if you are working and your supervisor or manager decides to distribute your work to others in an effort to get the work completed and it results in overtime for another person, you need to get in contact with me.

CPR, First Aid & AED Training Available:

Thanks to the Clerical Worker Safety Joint Labor Management Committee, training is available for all personnel in the districts. If you have not attended the training inform your supervisor that you want to attend and get a charge number for him/her. Next, call Jaime Hernandez in Corporate Safety at (213) 367-8637 to sign up for the class.

• Next meeting: September 15, 5:30pm
at Local 18

Unit 8 – Clerical by Adrienne Johnson

Customer Service Representative 2009 Summit:

Thank you to all who contributed to the Annual CSR Summit in May 2009 from our Business Manager Brian D'Arcy, staff, members and CSD management. Every year an IBEW Local hosts a summit through out the country and 2009 was our year. We had CSRs from Baton Rouge, LA, Kansas City, MO, Topeka, KS and Seattle, WA. We had a great discussion on different Call Center techniques and issues, stress management, the Employee Free Choice Act and we even took a tour our the JFB building. Many thanks to Wanda Barnett and her staff for setting up the tour.

We have a few ongoing Joint Labor Management Committees for the Customer Service Division, and at those meetings we discuss issues brought from the field. One common issue is lack of staffing and how you work has piled up. We meet with management and together we are continuing to work on this and many other issues. Please remember not to stress and do what you can with the time you have in the day! We all are working together as a team, so let's continue to use the experience and knowledge we have to help our coworkers in all of the units.

If you have issues that you want to bring to the JLMCs, speak to a Shop Steward or call me directly at (213) 387-8274 x105. If it is a grievance; remember you only have 14 calendar days from the date of the incident to file.

• Next meeting: September 15, 5:30pm
at Local 18

Unit 8 – Clerical by Lilly Calvache

JFB: It has been brought to my attention that members are having problems when they are applying for Disability Benefits. Please remember that when

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FROM THE TRENCHES *(continued from page 5)*

you become disabled due to an off-the-job illness or injury, notify your supervisor immediately of the reason you will not be at work. If your absence extends beyond the 10 working days your time-keeper will notify the Disability Office. Once you receive the Disability forms, you must complete and return them to the Disability Office. Disability payments will not be made to you until the Disability Office receives the completed forms. If your forms are not completed correctly and turned in on time this may delay payment of benefits. If you have any questions or your claim has been denied please call me immediately so we can work in resolving your situation. Don't wait because your disability benefits can be affected.

We thank all the members that have been attending our Unit 8 Meetings. Attendance is improving especially the Saturday meetings. I encourage all of you to get involved and participate in your union. We are having such good meetings, let's keep it up and continue to be united!

- **Next Meeting: September 15, 2009 at 5:30 pm at Local 18**

Unit 18 – Clerical Supervisors *by Lilly Calvache*

There has been very little participation in the Unit 18 meetings. We meet every quarter and I would like to see higher attendance at the meetings. Our meetings alternate between the JFB and Local 18. If you have specific topics that you want to discuss, please fax them to me at (213) 739-6937. Please include your name, civil service classification and work location along with your extension prior to our next meeting. I will be sending a meeting reminder to all Unit 18 members.

- **Next Meeting: October 21, 2009**

Unit 22 – Electric Service Reps *by Shawn McCloud*

Safety Tours for ESRs are coming soon. We had a grievance on the application of Article 33 for the lead ESR to Senior ESR. Once the joint labor management

investigatory report is completed copies will be distributed at our unit meeting.

Staffing continues to be an on-going problem with the ESRs. I applaud W.C. Byrd for submitting a budget for an increase in staffing levels and will continue to encourage those managers that rejected his requests. As the backlog continues, I encourage all of you to work safely.

I applaud the ESR's shop stewards for working with supervision and Management to ensure that Article 9.4 (d) of MOU (posting of overtime reports) is being adhered to. Job well done utilizing the mutual gains process. No grievance had to be filed on this issue.

- **Next Meeting: 1st Thursday of the month (look for your postcard in the mail)**

Unit 24 – Water Supply *by Ken Delgado*

Brothers and Sisters, we are in the middle of a dispute regarding the Water Utility Workers (WUO) bidding rights. For the past three years the bids have been awarded by seniority. At the WUO meeting back in July out at Tujung, supervision decided to change the process of awarding bids to interviews only. The WUOs disagreed with the change and expressed that to supervision with a majority wanting the bids by seniority. Supervision made it clear that this is not a democracy but it is a dictatorship and it doesn't matter what you prefer, this is how it's going to be. We have filed a grievance on this issue. A job well done to all the Operators for staying together and opposing this as a unit. More to follow...

Regarding the Regulator Section: The request to have all the Seniors returned to the Senior Specialist DDR is finally going through the process to have that done. How long that will take I don't know. The main thing is that it is approved and going forward.

- **Next Meeting: September 9, 2009 at 4:00pm at LAAFP**

Unit 26 – Custodians *by Nancy Romero*

We have been very busy working out

the details of Custodial Bid Plan for the Outlying Facilities. This Bid plan was last updated on December 2, 1992! To the best of our knowledge, this Bid Plan has not been used in the past decade. The content of the bidding procedure was not changed but the locations and assignments were updated. It is our expectation that by the time this article is published, the permanent custodians in the Department will have had a chance to bid on a new work location for the first time in recent memory! I want to thank Shop Steward Cecil Wilson on his great work advocating for our members in our bid discussions with Management.

We want to welcome our new brothers and sisters who are joining us as transfers from the City of LA. Our ranks will grow by approximately 36 new custodians when all of the transfers are completed. I want to encourage everyone to support them and assist them with their transition into the Department as they rotate among different facilities in their first three months.

We are making great progress in making the new Utility Vocational Worker-Custodian program a reality in the Department. We strongly believe that this program is the only true solution to meet the Department's needs of hiring permanent custodians. Emergency Custodians, stay tuned!

- **Next Meeting: 3rd Thursday of the month at 3:30pm at the Union Hall**

Unit 28 - Print Shop/Reprographics *Lilly Calvache*

I have been asking Management to appoint a Manager who has the authority to make decisions to the Print Shop Reprographics JLM Committee, but management has not contacted me with an appointment. The JLM Committee has not met for a long time. I will be calling Management and speaking to the JLM Committee Coordinators to request that management assign a manager so that we can reconvene and start meeting on a monthly basis.

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FROM THE TRENCHES (continued from page 6)**Unit 32 - Technical by Kerry McCorkle**

We are resuming negotiations with the Department to revise Appendix E of the Technical Unit MOU. Appendix E is the Bid System to be used in filling vacancies. I am processing several grievances and receiving complaints about how Appendix E is interpreted and implemented. Our goal is to negotiate a new bid plan that is more consistent with other Local 18 Bid Plans. We also have to tighten up some of the language that the Department is very loosely and incorrectly interpreting. The grievances will be processed but we need to fix the problems with the language.

Another issue I'm hearing a lot about is overtime. Appendix B of the MOU requires the DWP to use at least 10% overtime as an alternative to contracting out. This means that if work that is normally performed by you is contracted out, you are to be offered 8 hours of overtime per pay period when a contractor is performing your work. If you know or think your work is being contracted out and you are not being offered overtime, get in touch with one of your Shop Stewards or with me and we will look into it.

The Power System Drafting Joint Labor Management Committee (JLM) is still meeting and working on issues. We have hit a brick wall over proper staffing of the Drafting Sections. The staffing for Drafting in the Power System is not keeping pace with the new hiring of Engineers. We are getting the usual excuses from Management. I am not accepting their excuses and am going to deal with the staffing issue through the JLM and other venues. More to follow.

Your Local 18 Shop Stewards are: John Lockett, Robert Estrada, Walter Ramirez, Bruce Untiedt, David Alexander, Darryl Pettit, Ruben Najera, Norman Lim, Gerry Pallones, and Dennis Skelton.

- **Next Meeting: 2nd Wednesday of the month, location rotates between Local 18 and JFB**

Unit 34 - Supervisory Professional by Kerry McCorkle

Congratulations to all those who have received promotions and are now in the Supervisory Professional Unit, since the last Surge. There are way too many of you to mention but welcome aboard.

We now have a full slate of elected officers after Rob Freeman's promotion. Your Officers are Vee Miller (Chair), Eric Hartman (Vice-Chair), and Cliff Damron (Recorder). They have been solid and dependable leaders, whom I enjoy serving with.

- **Next Meeting: September 23, 2009 (Annual Dinner Meeting) at Local 18.**

Unit 52 - Owens Valley by Russ Butow

Unit 52 members in the Owens Valley cover Hydro Generation, Power Distribution and Electric Trouble, Transmission and Aqueduct groups. All groups are covered under Joint Labor's Management Committees and meet every other month to discuss a variety of issues. The most active seems to be Aqueduct JLM, with many issues about filling empty positions from Dry Lake to Bishop, and getting DWP Management to have the test given in a timely manner.

Issues like Special Assignment and 1 to 5 appointments are discussed with more to come as Phase 7 at the Lake will start soon and more equipment and workers will be needed. There are various ways to fill these positions and rules to be followed. A.R. Supervisors will soon be hired (two positions are needed), and two Hydrographer positions are to be filled; both in Bishop at this time.

The 4-10 schedule is being worked on a trial basis until November of this year. The JLM Committee will review all comments and issues to see if it will start again; it will not be worked in the winter months.

If any of the members have an issue in any section, contact your JLM Committee member so issues can be taken up at the next JLM Committee.

- **Next Meeting: September 16, 2009 at 6:00pm in Big Pine**

**In Memoriam****Honoring our Members Who Have Passed On****"A" MEMBERS****Lloyd W. Jackson**

Retired Engineering Aide
Initiated January 1, 1948
Passed away July 30, 2009

"BA" MEMBERS**Brent Boden**

Retired Water
Treatment Supervisor
Initiated May 1, 1975
Passed away July 25, 2009

Catheryn Jennings

Retired Senior Clerk Typist
Initiated May 1, 1984
Passed away March 21, 2009

John Mirau

Retired Backhoe Operator
Initiated May 1, 1984
Passed away November 15, 2008

Rosalie Siminoff

Retired Commercial Service Rep.
Initiated March 1, 1981
Passed away May 2006



SURGE

For Members of IBEW Local 18 and their Families

Business Manager's Report

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the drumbeat of criticism against public employee pensions.

The situation has not been helped by the fact that newspapers and blogs have recently taken on the \$100,000 club of City and LADWP employees pulling down pensions in excess of 100K. The focus has been on retired LADWP General Manager Ron Deaton, who retired with a \$318,000 pension (recently increased with cost of living adjustment to \$327,000) and

former General Manager Frank Salas at \$290,000. Both of these individuals spiked their pensions by increasing their own pay significantly and negotiating a 100% payout instead of the historic 90%.

These are the kinds of excesses that give public employee pensions a black eye, despite the fact that average public employees – such as Local 18 members – are not the ones with both feet in the trough.

As you can see the landscape is littered with uncertainty. We can expect the turmoil to increase and for it to be accompanied by efforts to blame us for the city's problems.

We are discussing all options internally and will keep you informed as events unfold.

In Unity.

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