



SURGE

For Members of IBEW Local 18 and their Families

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Naughty or Nice?

By Brian D'Arcy



The Holiday season is a time for reflection on the events of the past year and consideration of the challenges presented by the coming year. The verdict of whether we have been naughty or nice depends on whom you ask. According to the wingnuts and self-appointed "ratepayer advocates" we have been very naughty indeed. On the other hand, I think any rational person would conclude that we made significant progress on the issues confronting our membership and the city as a whole.

Take, for instance, the new contract that the City Council approved on December 11. Our new agreement, which will extend through 2014, saves the city money while at the same time preserving our working conditions and the concept of a cost-of-living formula. Furthermore, it guarantees stability and labor peace at a very critical time for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the membership.

I am particularly proud of the

ratification vote. 66% of the membership voted and 82% of those voting voted to ratify the contract. This is a level of participation that most other unions can only dream of. I am gratified that so many of you chose to make your voice heard on this important issue and pleased that you validated my confidence in the contract extension being the right thing to do.

I think we can also be proud of our effort to pass Measure B. It was the right thing to do for the city and for the future of the planet. We took the lead on a very important issue. It brought us a lot of criticism, mostly for the way the politicians mishandled placing it on the ballot. However, it also brought to the forefront the issues of green energy and good jobs.

Measure B failed by a narrow margin. Although we lost that battle, we are going to win the war in the end. The DWP is implementing the core principles of Measure B right now. That would not have happened unless we took the risk to put it on the ballot. Until we did that, the important issues of renewable energy generation, owned by our public utility and implemented in a way that

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“ I am proud
of the
ratification vote ”

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Retiree Corner

by Shawn McCloud

We have had a wonderful year and our Retiree meetings have been well attended. Thanks to our informative guest speakers, we were educated on health and welfare issues and helped people get enrolled in social security and other services that are available to retirees.

We would like to give a special thank you to all of our 2009 guest speakers. Thank you also to Adrienne and Lilly for helping out with our quarterly meetings.

Our last meeting was about the benefits available to retirees through the DWP Employee's Association.

Fifty retirees gathered together for lunch to learn about what services the Employees' Association offers. The information was provided by guest speaker Ms. Ann Marie De La Riva, who gave an informative overview of how to obtain hospital equipment while recuperating from surgery. As always I gave the group an update on what is happening with IBEW, Local 18 and the Department of Water and Power.

The Retirees were given an assignment from me to talk to their family and friends about the importance of unionism. I asked them to share their

stories of being in the union with others like they have shared with me. We must work together to keep unions alive, and we can do that by teaching future generations about the importance that unions have played in our lives.

At each meeting I'm given a history lesson about working for the DWP and being a Local 18 member, and I look forward to these historical lessons and our next gathering. I would like to wish a safe and happy holiday to you and your families. I look forward to seeing everyone next year.



Local 18 Retirees gather for lunch at one of the 2009 quarterly meetings

Guest speakers are invited to the meetings to educate retired members about issues such as DWP Employees' Association benefits



WHAT'S HAPPENING

- THANK YOU -

A special thank you to all the members and their guests who attended our Annual Holiday Party on December 10th.

We had a successful event that was a great start to the holiday season.

Look for photos in the next issue of Surge!

We Want to Hear from YOU!

We want to put the spotlight on YOU, our members. Send us your photos, drawings or cartoons and we will feature them in the next issue of the *Surge*. Tell us about:

Special events, innovations in the field, teamwork, announcements for fellow members, special projects or recognition.

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

jhadley@ibewlocal18.org

(remember not to send from your DWP email account)

Thank you for your participation!

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.

The Scan Van will be at Local 18 on the following dates in 2010:

January 4th - 8th
February 1st - 9th
March 1st - 9th

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.



Business Manager's Report *(continued from page 1)*

produced jobs for the citizens of Los Angeles was being given only lip service by the politicians and fake environmentalists. Without Measure B, we wouldn't have the solar program being implemented today.

These are accomplishments that we can be proud of. But we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. Looking forward, there are serious issues that confront us. First and foremost is our retirement system. Like all public pension systems, it is under pressure from both the state of the economy and from those who would like to see all public pension systems reduced or eliminated.

We made a start with our contract agreement. By not placing the 3.25% on the salary schedule we relieved some of the pressure on the pension trust. However, we have more work to do to ensure that our trust stays solid. And we will have to stay vigilant and prepared to fight off attempts by those who would like to balance the budget on the backs of workers.

Another challenge is getting good leadership for the Department of Water and Power. It is time that we have a real utility professional run the Department rather than recycled bureaucrats and political hacks. Our utility has reached a critical time in its history. It is clear that we have to move away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy sources. Unfortunately, some see the move to renewables as a chance to privatize energy generation. At the same time, we are seeing the effects of the understaffing and delays in updating of our water and power system.

We need a competent manager for the Department who supports utility owned generation and who will finally do something about the longstanding staffing and maintenance problems that cause black-outs and sinkholes. That is the best gift we could receive this holiday season.

In Unity.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



“ I enjoy helping people ”

Our featured member this month is Mark W. Miller, who is the Labor Co-Chair of Materials Management JLM as well as a Shop Steward and Unit Chair for Unit 6.

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

A. I became a member as soon as I began working for the Department of Water and Power in February of 1987.

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

A. I started out as a helper, and then I became a warehouse worker at the Van Nuys district. I am currently working at the Castaic District.

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

A. I enjoy helping people and making sure they have what they need in order to get their job done. I am a Shop Steward and Unit Chair for Unit 6, and I am glad to be a part of a union that invests time and money in educating their stewards so that we are equipped to handle situations in the workplace. I have family and friends that belong to unions and their unions don't even come close to the training and unity of our union. In fact, I have asked questions of Local 18 Business Representatives in an effort to help out my family and friends with their workplace concerns. Being a part of Local 18 is awesome!

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

A. Two people I would love to dine with are my youngest brother who passed away in 1989 and my maternal grandmother who passed away in 2006. We used to have such wonderful conversations and I just miss that.

FROM THE TRENCHES

Unit 3 – Electrical Testers by Leslie Abbott

The 44 Electrical Testers who were hired in April ALL passed probation at the end of October. Congratulations to everyone!

We just made it official! I would like to welcome Unit 3's new shop steward, Louie Hernandez. Louie is a Senior Electrical Tester with the Meter Group at Artesian Street. He has already been doing a great job of keeping members informed, helping with turnout to meetings, and pitching in to help with the unit.

I am sorry to announce the passing of Mahmoud Jalali, an Electrical Tester in the Meter group. He was dearly loved by his family and highly regarded by his colleagues both professionally and personally. He will be missed.

• **Next Meeting:** 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4:15pm, odd months at Artesian Street and even months at Main Street.

Unit 17 – Customer Service Field Units by Nancy Romero

As a follow up to the Dinner meeting that we had in October, I want to thank the members for submitting their survey on Field Confrontations. We collected many surveys and we are in the process of tabulating our results. We will share the results with everyone as soon as they become available.

We also want to recognize the

Division's effort to get more information on field confrontations. Their survey was done independently. It is truly a testament of just how important this issue is to both labor and management. We need to collaborate on how to continue tackling this issue. While some efforts have been made in the right direction, we believe that more can, and should, be done in supporting our Unit 17 members out in the field when they are involved in a confrontation. We applaud the recent efforts Management



Unit 17 members David Jones, Ignacio Andrade and Crystal Sells at Unit 17's Annual Dinner Meeting

has made in responding to confrontations, and we are looking forward to our discussions.

I also want to take the time to thank all of the Unit 17 members who participated in our Unit meetings, Joint Labor Management Committees and many other union activities. Our efforts this year are reflected in our unity, our strong commitment to each other, and our ability to get the job done for our members. Thank you.

Unit 19 – Electric Station Maintenance by Luis Lozano

Updated Portable Ground Requirements:

Due to a recent study on system currents, it is now necessary to use 4/0 portable grounds instead of 2/0 portable grounds in all DWP electrical stations. This will require a bit more muscle and a little better planning when handling these heavier grounds. They will be more difficult to control at the end of a shotgun or hot stick. 4/0 grounds weigh about 47% more than 2/0 grounds. Therefore, the further the 4/0 ground moves away from your center of gravity the more difficult it will be to handle at the end of a stick.

I'm sure this will take some time to get used to. So be sure to use your PPE, take your time, consider your options (such as where will you be applying the grounds), plan ahead, and properly position yourself considering the weight of the 4/0 ground. Please always have a safety observer. Be safe!

In Unity.

Unit 19B - Shops by Luis Lozano

We have restarted the CR&FS Joint Labor Management Committee, which I will co-chair with Dave Thrasher. I am hopeful that we will have success in providing solutions for the many different issues that will

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FROM THE TRENCHES

(continued from page 5)

be brought up in this committee. Just about any issue can be addressed at the JLMC. However, the first step of any issue is to follow the proper chain of command. If the issue cannot be resolved this way, then it should come to the JLMC for discussion.

In order to address the concerns from different work groups, we have assembled the committee with labor reps from different sections. The current labor members of the JLMC are Ralph Ronda, Greg Fuller, Kelly Valdez, Andy St. Pierre and David Gomez. If you have a concern that needs to be addressed you can contact any of the committee members or call me at (213) 387-8274 x112.

In Unity.

Unit 25 – Landscape by Nancy Romero

Unfortunately, there was a problem in preparing the necessary payroll documents to pay our members for the amount that has been owed to them from the Grievance Resolution. The Business Support Services Division was hit with the same overtime restrictions as other areas and to make matters worse, it faced the additional issue of lack of available staff. Through these unintentional consequences, the processing of the Time Roll Corrections came to a stop.

We have been working with the Division on how to move this item forward. As of the writing of this article, we have spoken to Division management and they have committed to assigning this work to two individuals. They will prepare the necessary Time Roll Correction documents for

the more than seventy members of our unit. They are trying diligently to complete all of the necessary TRCAs by the end of the year. Once completed, our members need to sign and return them. As in the past, it will take a few payroll periods before our members receive their pay. Any member who wishes to find out how much they will be receiving should call Nancy at extension 113.

We continue our discussions regarding our Unit members' ability to work in and around energized services and equipment. To that end, we will be meeting with the Electric Station Maintenance group in early December. Our main objective is for the work to be done safely by the members who are trained to do the work. We will have more about this item as our discussions move forward.

• **Next Meeting: 2nd Tuesday of the month at 4:30pm, location rotates between the Saticoy Yard and Local 18**

Unit 26 – Custodians by Nancy Romero

In an unprecedented turn of events, there have been many opportunities created for permanent custodians in the outlying facilities. This opportunity has generated mutual interest in updating the Custodial Bid Plan. It has now been updated and the bidding season will be from November 30 through December 30, 2009.

After this initial implementation, we have tentatively agreed that the bidding process will be held in

February for the Outlying Facilities and March for JFB every year starting in 2011. We are expecting many members to take this opportunity to bid to a work location of their choice, which is an opportunity that most have not ever enjoyed due to the lack of available positions. All Unit 26 members in the Department will be given an opportunity to bid to a work location and work shift they would like. For now, the majority of the assignments will be Monday through Friday from 6:00am to 2:30pm.

The next round of hiring of permanent custodians is expected to come from the "One Time Custodial Bulletin". All Emergency Custodians will be able to participate in this new process and if successful, get a direct path toward becoming a permanent DWP Custodian.

This has been a long-term effort and we thank the members of our Utility Vocational Worker Custodian Committee for their participation and hard work in completing this item. The "One Time Custodial Bulletin" is an interim step towards the real goal of finding a solution to the hiring of permanent Custodians in the DWP. That solution is ultimately the creation of the Utility Vocational Worker-Custodian program. We have made great strides towards the implementation of this program as well. We are hopeful that it will successfully pass the City Council.

• **Next Meeting: 3rd Thursday of the month at 3:30pm at Local 18**

• **Continued on Page 7 •**

FROM THE TRENCHES

Unit 33 – Administrative by Shawn McCloud

We had a great turnout for our last meeting of the year. Our dinner meeting was held at Damon's Restaurant and we discussed training for the Management Analyst classification. I shared how Loretta Dotson, under Jim McDaniel's leadership, has developed a training component ensuring that water personnel are getting core training in budget, personnel and general administration. On the other hand, Eileen Lau and Aram Benyamin have power personnel going through FSO budget training, then follow up within their organization for one-on-one peer training when needed. I look forward to these concepts expanding Department-wide. Human Resources Director Shannon Pascual is currently outlining his action plan to ensure the analysts in his organization are supplied with the training and tools needed to be proficient and successful.

I was shocked to hear from some of our members about being mistreated by their managers. It is disappointing to hear about managers yelling and being disrespectful of our members. We went over the Department's policy of a workplace free of harassment. I encourage all of you to let me know if this unacceptable behavior continues.

Happy Holidays to you and your family. Look for the postcard in the mail for details of our next meeting in 2010.

Unit 55 – Telecommunications by Nancy Romero

I want to thank the members of the Metro Radio shop for contacting

us about the elimination of their shop from the Telecommunication Bid Plan. Your calls prompted a visit to the Valley Shop and an immediate reaction from Management. The unilateral decision to close that shop was just as much an issue as the lack of notification about the elimination of the shop. The Bid plan allows management to close the shop but they have an obligation to contact us about that decision. In this case, they moved the members without notifying us, and therefore they violated the Bid Plan.

We met with top ITSD Management in an effort to resolve this matter informally. We discussed the continued need for a Metro Area Radio Shop as well as the notification requirements in the Bid Plan. We tentatively agreed that the shop was necessary and would continue. We went over where the shop would be located and what their primary responsibilities will be in the future, and discussed two alternate work locations which Management agreed to follow up on. We also opened a conversation about one shop being primarily responsible for the radio installs and another shop being responsible for the maintenance and troubleshooting of equipment. In the meantime, it was agreed that the members originally assigned to the Metro Shop would remain there until further notice.

We want to thank everyone for their participation in our Unit 55 meetings this year and we look forward to seeing more of you at our meetings in 2010!



In Memoriam

Honoring our Members Who Have Passed On

Robert E. Harris

Retired Steam Plant Supervisor
Initiated July 1, 1957
Passed away October 13, 2009

Jacqueline J. Boddie

Retired Clerk Typist
Initiated June 1, 1960
Passed away September 28, 2009

Darrell L. Mathis

Retired Line Patrolman
Initiated April 4, 1953
Passed away November 6, 2009

Harley D. Bowen

Electric Station Operator
Initiated November 1, 2002
Passed away November 13, 2009

Mahmoud Jalali

Electrical Tester
Initiated May 1, 1987
Passed away November 9, 2009

Leland A. Sickler

Retired Maintenance Supv
Initiated September 1, 1974
Passed away November 2009

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SURGE

For Members of IBEW Local 18 and their Families

DECEMBER 2009



Tis the season...

Happy Holidays
to you and your loved ones!

~ From all of us at IBEW Local 18 ~