



SURGE

April, 2006 • Published for the members of IBEW Local 18 and their families

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

OUR HEALTH PLAN IS THERE FOR YOU!

Open Enrollment Opportunities Now Available

By Brian D'Arcy
Business Manager, Local 18

By now, brothers and sisters, you have received extensive information from both Local 18 and the Department of Water & Power about the open-enrollment period, during which you can make changes to your medical and dental insurance plans. Our goal at IBEW Local 18 has *always* been to try to find the best and most comprehensive health-care coverage for every one of our members and families.

Over the years, we have continually worked towards vastly expanding and improving your benefits, and supporting your health-coverage needs in every way possible. We still offer you the choice of the Blue Cross *Power Care/Advocate*

PPO or the Blue Cross *CaliforniaCare HMO* plans, and HMO and PPO Dental Plans.

Our health-coverage plans have many highlights, none of which is more important than the *Body-Scan Benefit* that is available under Local 18's Blue Cross Medical Plan. A body-scan is an excellent *preventative* CT scan that utilizes state-of-the-art technology to detect diseases early—*before* they become serious.

For more information regarding your medical and dental coverage plan choices, please log on to the IBEW Local 18 website at www.ibewlocal18.com Please remember that this is your annual opportunity to change your Local 18-sponsored medical and dental plans. Take advantage of all of the excellent benefits in our plans!



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Cooperation Between IBEW Local 18 And DWP General Manager is Shattered

It has come to this, and there simply is no way to sugar-coat the news: productive cooperation between our Union and DWP General Manager Ron Deaton is *dead*. At this moment, the general manager has three petitions before him. They concern the grievance procedure, use of power-purchasing agreements for renewable energy sources, and selection of very important Retirement Board Plan Manager.

These have been festering, on-going problems facing our Union and its members.

There is some positive news to report, however. Members of the DWP Commission, as well as Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, are conducting research in two areas that are important to us: training and workforce attrition.

I will keep you informed about these significant matters.

We Welcome Maria Elena Durazo As New Leader of the County Fed

Recently, Maria Elena Durazo was elected as the new Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, replacing Martin Ludlow.

Sister Durazo, a fiery, outspoken and highly successful leader of H.E.R.E. Local 11, has compiled an outstanding record of service and achievement on behalf of her members. Her vision, passion and *unswerving* dedication to the needs and goals of working men and women, and families, have made her the model of today's activist, involved labor leader. She is someone to be reckoned with—and respected. We know that Sister Durazo will continue to make the Fed a powerful force in progressive, people-oriented politics and causes.

Welcome, Sister Maria Elena Durazo!
In unity,

Do Not Dismiss Chronic Heartburn Symptoms!



Next time you reach for that heartburn medication—whether it is after a long, stressful day of work, or after a particularly spicy meal—you may want to make a mental note to discuss this common condition with your doctor. Why? Because chronic heartburn is a key risk factor for esophageal cancer, which is one of the nation's fastest-

growing types of the disease.

Indeed, the American Cancer Society estimates that in the United States, there will be about 14,550 new cases of esophageal cancer in 2006. About 13,770 people will die of the disease. This cancer is three to four times more common among men than among women, and 50% more common among African-Americans than among whites. Most of these patients have a kind of esophageal cancer called "esophageal adenocarcinoma", the kind that is linked to severe chronic heartburn.

What then is esophageal cancer, and what does chronic heartburn have to do with it? According to the National Cancer Institute, esophageal cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the esophagus—the hollow, muscular tube that moves food and liquid from the throat to the stomach. The wall of the esophagus is made up of several layers of tissue, including mucous membrane, muscle and connective tissue. Esophageal cancer starts at the inside lining of the esophagus and spreads outward through the other layers as it grows.

Gastric reflux—which is the medical term for heartburn—can be dangerous because it involves the backing up of stomach contents into the lower section of the esophagus. Those contents cause the "heartburn" many people feel. Over a long period of time, chronic gastric reflux may irritate the esophagus to the point that it causes a condition called Barrett's Esophagus.

Barrett's Esophagus poses a danger because five to 10% of people with the condition develop cancer of the esophagus. With Barrett's, the cells lining the lower part of the esophagus have changed or been replaced with abnormal cells that could lead to cancer of the esophagus. Because of the cancer risk, people with Barrett's Esophagus are screened for esophageal cancer regularly.

The National Institutes of Health warns that people who have had regular or daily heartburn for more than five years may be at risk for Barrett's Esophagus. They should discuss the possibility with their doctor. Symptoms include waking during the night because of heartburn pain, vomiting, blood in the vomit or stool, and difficulty swallowing. Some people do not show any symptoms.

What are some of the other risk factors for esophageal cancer in addition to Barrett's Esophagus?

Here is what the American Cancer Society says:

- Long-standing heartburn increases the risk of esophageal cancer, even if it hasn't progressed to Barrett's Esophagus.
- Using any form of tobacco raises the risk, and the longer the person uses tobacco, the greater the risk. More than half of all squamous-cell esophageal cancer (another kind of esophageal cancer) is linked to smoking.
- Long-term heavy drinking is a major risk factor for cancer of the esophagus. For people who both smoke and drink, the risk is further increased.
- The risk of esophageal cancer is higher for people who are overweight or obese.

The most common signs of esophageal cancer are painful or difficult swallowing and weight loss. The National Cancer Institute recommends consulting your doctor if any of the following problems occur:

- Painful or difficult swallowing
- Weight loss
- Pain behind the breastbone
- Hoarseness and cough
- Indigestion and heartburn

When esophageal cancer is found very early, there is a better chance of recovery. However, due to its lack of symptoms, or presence of very subtle symptoms, esophageal cancer is often in an advanced stage when it is diagnosed. At later stages, esophageal cancer can be treated but rarely cured.

What is the lesson here for IBEW Local 18 members? Pay attention to the frequency of your heartburn symptoms, which can include burning, pressure or pain below and behind the lower part of the breastbone. Do not dismiss the symptoms as a minor nuisance. IBEW Local 18 members who experience occasional episodes of heartburn can find relief with over-the-counter medications. However, those who suffer heartburn more frequently should see their physician. While esophageal cancer is rare, it is still a reality for thousands of Americans.

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Through your Blue Cross CaliforniaCare HMO plan and Power CareAdvocate PPO plan, you and your family have access to the finest doctors and one of the most extensive networks in the state. With CaliforniaCare, you can build a relationship with your own network doctor with almost all benefits including doctor visits, hospitalization, well baby care, surgery, eye and hearing exams, for little or no out-of-pocket cost. With the Power CareAdvocate PPO plan, you have the freedom to choose medical services from within Blue Cross' expansive PPO provider network, or from a non-PPO provider.

From the Trenches: Reports from your Business Reps

Unit 1 – Electrical Distribution

By Barry Poole

We have come to a major crossroads with management. Programs like joint labor-management committees for Power Distribution and separation of the Electrical Distribution Mechanic Trainee program into a Cable Splicer and Lineman program have *not* been put into place.

Labor and management put together a proposal for separation of the Electrical Distribution Mechanic Trainee program over a year ago. It was sent up to Assistant General Manager Henry Martinez, and it has just sat on his desk. We have frequently asked him to implement the program. *His most recent response was that it might create more positions!* This is in a unit that has at least 130 journey openings! The system our workers support is deteriorating at an alarming rate.

Labor has also crafted a proposal to have joint labor-management committees put together for the Power Distribution Section. They include Transmission, Trouble, Overhead and Underground Distribution, Meter Setters and others. We need to have input on vital issues such as trucks, tools, safety, and equipment used by you in the field everyday. Other groups with these committees have consistently proven that they benefit labor, as well as the Department's bottom line.

This proposal has set on Mr. Martinez' desk for a year and a half. Now he is telling us that he needs to study the structure further before making a decision. We have asked that he put together a basic common-sense committee structure and fine tune it as we go along.

However, management seems unable or unwilling to make a business decision on any of these beneficial programs. We continue to be at odds with the Department over these issues. We will keep you informed of any action necessary by you in the future in order to persuade management to do the right thing!

Unit 4 – General Construction

By Martin Marrufo

◆ First and foremost, I would like to thank some members for your help and participation in the move to our new location at the UCLA Labor Center. Our new offices received some much needed TLC from a few of our "Trouble Painters". Mr. Michael Featherston (Senior Painter), Mr. Gilbert Sanchez (Painter), Mr. Jeffrey Howell (Painter) all took time away from their busy lives to help us on a weekend. Please do not mistake the title of "Trouble

Painters" to mean that they are always in trouble! On the contrary, when there is trouble they are always willing to help.



◆ You now have the opportunity to make changes in health-benefits plan. I urge all of our members to review the Local 18 Blue Cross medical plan. The one item that stands out in my mind as a true benefit is the Body Scan that is offered through Body Scan International. I cannot overstate the importance of early detection of an illness! Please attend the IBEW Blue Cross presentations that are scheduled in late April and early May.

Unit 6 - Stores

By Shawn McCloud

◆ The Material Management and Logistics Joint-Labor Management Committee (MM&L JLMC) has worked very hard on lots of issues, including training and staffing. Subcommittee members are Steve Bassett, Elliott Oliver, Joe De La Cerdá and Ralph Bravo. They submitted a training matrix to the MM&L JLMC; we will set a meeting with the Joint Training Institute in order to discuss the matrix. In the meantime, a training position has been re-established and committee members are providing input on the position. Also, all committee members were given a copy of the Letter of Agreement concerning special assignments; it was signed by former General Manager David Wiggs and Local 18 Business Manager Brian D'Arcy. It outlines the process of filling such positions as "Trainers". I will keep you posted on the progress.

◆ Congratulations to our members who received emergency appointments in purchasing for Buyers positions. This was made possible by labor and management working together to resolve workplace and staffing issues.

◆ An issue came up in our Materials Management JLMC about the AUB and Buyer exams, and how our members can qualify to take the exam. Labor and management reached agreement that this should happen, and management has been working aggressively to convince the

City of Los Angeles Personnel Department to change the bulletin requirements.

◆ We had our Dinner Meeting at the Damon Restaurant on April 13. Lots of questions were asked and answered. I thank everyone who attended. Please remember that Joint Labor-Management Committee meetings are held on the *first Wednesday* of the month. If you have an issue that you would like the committee to address, please forward the details to Mark Miller, Val Fernandez or me.

Unit 8 – VOC

By Lilly Calvache

The VOC Joint Labor-Management Committee is moving to address several issues. One of them is putting a call-out policy for the VOC Staff. This will eliminate miscommunication when operators call out. When this policy is put in place, the committee will make sure that everyone gets a copy. We are also working on a VOC Web page. One of the committee members is heading this project and seeking feedback. If you have suggestions for the web page, please inform any of the committee members. Another issue is the consolidation of the switchboard and corporate telephone directory. Engineers and Database Programmers are working together to implement this directory. The committee realizes how important communication is, and we will be addressing ways of improving communication between supervisors and the staff in the VOC. As more information becomes available, I will keep you posted.

Unit 8 – Clerical

By Lilly Calvache,

Geralyn Washington-Tatum &

Shawn McCloud

◆ The disability portion of your Retirement Plan protects you against financial emergencies that can occur if you are unable to work due to an *off-the-job* illness or injury. It can also supplement Worker's Compensation payments if you are disabled due to an *on-the-job* illness or injury. The Plan covers short-term disability, as well as long-term illnesses. Benefits associated with the first two weeks of disability are administered by your business unit, according to the provisions of the Plan and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which covers you. If you are absent for more than two weeks, disability claims are processed in the Retirement Plan Office, and the Board of Administration of the Retirement Plan must approve

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payment. If you have questions about this, please call the Retirement Plan Office or your Business Representative.

◆ If you are having trouble with math, the Joint Training Institute still offers the ALEKS workshop. The workshop will walk you through the program step by step and help you decide if ALEKS/Net Tutor is right for you. ALEKS/Net Tutor, a self-paced and private on-line math tutorial, can get you going for the next exam. Brush up on the math for your promotional exams. Any questions on this workshop, please call 818/771-4695, or call your Business Representative.

◆ If you know of someone who is *not* a member of Local 18, and needs a membership application, please contact Local 18's office at 213/387-8274, ext. 0. We ask you to become more involved in issues that affect you and *your* Union. The Parent Body Meeting is at 6:00 p.m., on the *fourth Thursday* of the month. Your Unit 8 meeting is at 6:00, on the *second Tuesday* of the month at the Union Hall (don't forget, we have moved). Remember, this is the best way to hear the latest issues that affect our Union and the workplace.

Unit 8 - The Districts

By Shawn McCloud

I have been making my rounds to the different locations to visit you at your work locations. My goal is to reach every non-CSBU District location by the end of the year. As always, if you want to schedule a lunch-time meeting at your work location, please call me at 213/387-8274, ext. 111. Remember, this will be on *your* own time. If you want a safety tour at your location, or want to be trained in conducting safety tours, contact me. Also, if you want to find out how to become more involved in *your* Union, I would love to hear from you.

Unit 8 – Clerical

By Shawn McCloud

General information

Let's set the record straight: Local 18 has contacted the City of Los Angeles Personnel Department to *oppose the tentative bulletin changes for the Management Aide* that include college requirements. This is a five-year bridge class and training period. To shut down the opportunity to bridge over to the administrative side by requiring college units, negates the original intent for promotional opportunities.

Thanks to all of you who called with your concerns about this change. Just so you know the process, the City of Los An-

geles Personnel Department notified Human Resources of the proposed changes. In turn, Human Resources stated it discussed these changes with DWP management and it was *not opposed* to the changes.

We urge everyone who qualifies to take the exam and pass with flying colors. *You can do it!*

Unit 8/18 – Supervisory Clerical

By GERALYN WASHINGTON-TATUM

◆ During the week of April 18, Shawn McCloud and I made our annual visit to the Owens Valley. We conducted a number of Worker Safety Tours in Lone Pine, Big Pine, Independence and Bishop. We thank every member who offered their assistance. Also, a huge *thank you* to everyone who attended our unit meeting Wednesday night.

◆ I have been approached by members for a unit meeting. In the past, these meetings have *not* been well attended. However, it is a new year, and I will give it another try. The Unit 8/18 meeting is set for 4:00 – 6:00, *Wednesday, May 10*, in Room A5A of the JFB Building. At this time, we will discuss recommended modifications to the Management Analyst Bulletin. I want your feedback! If you attended the DWP Commission meeting, please bring any notes you took. If you have any specific topics you want to discuss, please fax them to me at 213/739-6937. Include your name, work location and Civil Service classification. Prior to May 10, I will send out a meeting reminder. *I really hope to see you there!*
Note: this meeting is for Supervisory and Administrative members. If you would like to become a member, I will have membership cards available.

◆ Because of our move to the new Union Hall, we *cancelled* the April unit meeting. Please note that the regularly scheduled meeting for next month is set for 6:00 p.m., *Tuesday, May 9*. Look for a meeting-confirmation card in the mail, and please note the new address.

Unit 9 – Generation

By Gus Corona

Despite all the forewarnings of looming retirements given to him by our Union, General Manager Ron Deaton is still *refusing* to address the issue of staffing. In generation alone, there are at least 38 employees who can retire this year, or who have already retired, and yet Mr. Deaton has no plan as to how he is going to address this ever-growing prob-

lem. Local 18 fought long and hard to get management to hire the recent class of steam plant assistants, *but this is just a small portion of what is actually needed*. Fortunately for the Department, the employees continue to get the work done despite the shortage in both the staffing and support from the general manager!

Unit 15/20 – Pasadena

By Barry Poole

Unit members have completed surveys for the upcoming negotiations. The results were tabulated by the negotiating committee. Committee members are Mohamed Youines, Chris Alexander, Geoff Barsi, Sonny Brassie, Mike Coil, and Larry Husted. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact me or one of the negotiating-committee members. Information on all issues will be discussed at our unit meeting, at 4:15 p.m., on the *first Thursday* of the month.

Unit 17 – Field Groups

By Nancy Romero

Field Investigations

I am pleased to congratulate the four successful candidates for the Field Investigations positions. They are Dave Calderon, Gary Hamai, Genaro Rodriguez and Karen Wun. They are currently getting trained by the Field Training Unit, and are well on the way to becoming great Field Investigators. We anticipate that there will be more opportunities in this classification in the near future because of promotions and retirements. I ask everyone still on the FI list to be patient because there will be many future opportunities.

Commercial Field Representatives

Per our recent conversations with CSBU management, an agreement has been reached that both Field Service Reps and Field Collections should *not* be working orders that are not safe to perform. Unsafe orders include, but are not limited to, access to the meter through normal pedestrian passageways is not possible, unleashed dogs have been identified, customers have had verbal or physical confrontations with our members, and the customer has failed to provide the Department employee the required 3' foot clearance in front of the meter.

Under *no* circumstances should any employee feel that they must take extraordinary risks/measures to turn a service on or off. Your safety should always be at the forefront. Remember, other members will follow you to perform their work, and they may not be willing to take the same ex-

traordinary measures you did.

I ask you to forward these orders to supervisors. They will follow-up with customers to resolve the identified issue(s). I applaud the supervisors who have been actively engaged in this process, and who have succeeded in resolving many of the issues that have already been identified. They have succeeded by visiting the customer, forwarding cases to Building and Safety, or contacting the local Fire Department. Supervisors have become very good at dealing with these difficult orders themselves, and escalating the issue to other levels if they must.

I remind you *not* take it personally when a customer refuses to pay or grant you access to a residence. While it is tempting to find a creative way to SOD the service, ask yourself if it is worth the possible pain of getting hurt/bitten, or getting into a verbal confrontation with a customer. As noted above, refer the matter to a supervisor; supervisors are committed to address each case.

I have recently discussed with CSBU management the matter of reimbursement of costs incurred by members when they use their personal cell phones. I am primarily concerned with the fact that several members have had their requests for reimbursement denied.

I remind you that the use of your personal cell phone is voluntary, and that the Department provides you with two methods of communicating with the field offices. While we know that there have been problems with the 900 Mhz radio system, management has committed to improving the system to allow for a more reliable radio connection. The CF 34s pose a different problem. We have had to accept the fact that the reliability and connectivity that the CF 34s provide will probably never be 100 percent.

Since we are just having initial discussion regarding this matter, I ask you to contact your CFR joint labor-management committee members with any ideas. The proposal that Department-issued cell phone for all CFRs has already been brought up as a possible solution. We will work with management to see if this solution, along with any others, will resolve this issue.

Meter Reading

Please be aware that the Department has had a contract to purchase over 180,000 AMR meters. They will be installed at locations identified as commercial accounts (A-1, A-2 and A-3).

We have asked the Rates Office to con-

tact us regarding the timing on these meters. Once that information is secured, we will meet and confer about the effect this timing will have on your working conditions (specifically the designation of the routes). We also are equally concerned about the installation of these meters. To date, we believe that there are currently not enough meter setters to install the meters that have been purchased.

I ask Meter Readers to come to a meeting to discuss this very important issue. We have heard too many instances of other utility companies completely eliminating their entire Meter Reading Sections because of the full integration of AMRs. The Department already has a recommendation to do just that, through the Barrington Wellsly Report that was issued in April. It recommends that DWP fully automate the entire system and eliminate the entire field groups, not just the meter reading. Stay tuned; discussions have just begun. Participate and let your voices be heard. Please contact your Shop Stewards, Meter Reading JLMC members or me regarding any recommendations or concerns you may have.

All

I am becoming very concerned that several members are being asked to opt for a 1014 transfer to another position, or risk being terminated once they have been on disability for a prolonged period of time and they can no longer remain on light duty. Please contact me if you are currently in a light-duty assignment and the CSBU ASO office has contacted you about transferring to another classification. Agreeing to a 1014 transfer has many repercussions, not just losing the pay, but possibly impacting your retirement and your ability to bid in your current class.

Update on the grievances that were filed by Local 18 regarding the Special Assignments in the CSBU: I want you to know that, to date, there have been four grievances filed on behalf of the entire membership, both in the field and on the clerical side. Specifically, these grievances revolve around full-time permanent positions in the training units. We strongly believe that the intent of the Special Assignment Letter of Agreement requires that all training positions, whether permanent or not, be deemed special assignments, and therefore must be filled by using the language of the SA LOA—by consensus between labor and management. We look forward to having this matter resolved through the grievance process, and hope that a resolution can be reached that will

address the issues that have been identified by both sides.

CSBU

As a matter of interest, I want to let you know that since the retirement of Fred Puglia *last* April, the CSBU has been without a business unit director. I also want you to know that as of April 1, 2006 Moe Chaudhry also retired, thereby leaving the CSBU without an assistant general manager.

You may ask, how do these retirements affect me?

In reality, they will not—*until something happens and a decision about you, or your issue, has to be made at the very top of the CSBU organization.* For some seven months now, the CSBU has operated by having a two-week rotation of the three USM IVs (Lance Brown, Betty Carleton and Odell Mathieu). If you think convincing one supervisor to do something was tough in the CSBU, think about how much harder it has become to simultaneously convince *three*. Just figuring out which one is in charge, which week, has become a tedious chore.

The CSBU canoe has been moving with one oar and three rowers. But it has been moving around and around in a spiral. We need a true designation of leadership in this unit before it becomes a *downward* spiral. This bad April Fool's Day joke should not last for years.

Unit 19B – Shops

By Martin Marrufo

◆ Our grievance procedure continues to be a challenge and a point of contention. There has been a change in the way that the leadership at Local 18 is enforcing the grievance procedure. This is due to the resistance we are facing from DWP's general manager when trying to resolve grievances.

◆ There are inequities and payroll issues in our units that have taken an extended time to process. Some of these issues have been addressed in our organizations, but have not been signed or forwarded to the appropriate forum for finalization. Management seems to have taken a hard line that some of you who have seen different general managers over the years might recognize.

◆ Yes, we have a great contract. Yes, our wages for the duration of our five-year contract have been negotiated. Still, the fight remains and in some ways grows harder. *We need to remain united and stand together.* Respect your Shop Stewards,
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they fight first. They are there every day to hear your complaints and argue on your behalf.

Unit 24 – Water Supply

Unit 60 – Waterworks Mechanics

By Ken Delgado

◆ Over the past year, DWP upper management has been completely *uncooperative* with respect to the Joint Labor-Management process, especially the grievance procedure. The directives are coming straight from the top, down to the middle managers—essentially reducing the little authority they have to almost none. Grievance meeting have gotten to a point where the section manager could not resolve the issues without getting the okay from his manager! All this simply delays the process, and keeps the grievance committee from resolving the problems at the lowest level. I ask for your continued patience on your grievance as we move forward to correct this situation.

◆ Jurisdictional issues are still on-going, and progress is being made. Hopefully, we as a committee (labor and management) can put this to rest. We all realize that this has been on the table for far too long, but for us to give up now would benefit no one. Our committee truly believes this, and we will continue to build on our progress until we have an agreement from all the classifications involved.

Unit 25 – Landscape

By Nancy Romero

We will now meet on a quarterly basis at the Temple Street Yard. Our next meeting will be held in June. I will try to get postcards out to everyone to remind you of the exact date.

Unit 26 – Custodians

By Nancy Romero

The two Local 18 grievances that were filed on behalf of the unit regarding the Emergency Custodians on the AOTLS and the Seniors being brought in to do Custodian work on overtime at JFB have been moved to review under the Business Unit level, and should be heard shortly.

We had a first meeting for the grievance that was filed regarding the Overtime after Shift. We hope that we can resolve this grievance at the joint labor-management committee level. We have received great information from several sources, and I thank Shop Steward Cecil Wilson, for his leadership and participation during these grievance deliberations.

Welcome back to all of our brothers

and sisters who are returning to their emergency assignments as Custodians with the Department. Unfortunately, to date, we do not have any new information about whether a test will be given for Custodians through the City Personnel office, or if an agreement will be reached about a different approach to fill Custodian positions in DWP.

One thing for certain, under *no* circumstances is an Emergency Custodian to believe that if he/she gets letters/petitions/notes signed by customers that this is an indication that they will be hired permanently.

There seems to be a deep misunderstanding about the status of the Emergency Custodians. Let me be perfectly clear: you have *no* standing in the classification of a Custodian, you have *no* protection under civil service, nor the OM& S MOU, and you are *not* earning any seniority rights. There are many benefits that are enjoyed by the permanent Custodians that can never be extended to any Emergency Custodian. One example is vacation pay; in order to qualify, you must be here for a consecutive 12-month period of time. As an Emergency Custodian on an emergency assignment, no one should be working for the Department for more than 240 days (8 months). Therefore, Emergency Custodians will never earn vacation time, since their assignment has to be “reset” every time they come back to work, regardless of how often they have been asked to return to work. As long as it is not a permanent assignment, your position is reset every time.

On another note, as some of you know that for many years we have been attempting to get all of the business units under one business group. That day has finally come. The last remaining Custodians in the Power section have now been transferred to the FMBG organization of the CSO.

We welcome our four brothers into the business group! We look forward to having them join the rest of you during safety meetings and other business group events.

As a follow up to last month’s article regarding gaining access to facilities, to date I have not heard from one Custodian regarding this issue. I assume that since no one has called, you are resolving these issues internally, or that there are no access problems left to resolve.

Unit 28 – Reprographics/Print Shop

By Lilly Calvache

The Reprographics/Print Shop Joint La-

bor-Management Committee continues to meet monthly. Committee members are putting together an outline of the job duties they perform. We are also ensuring that everyone has an ergonomic workstation. If you feel that you need your workstation evaluation by the ergonomist, please inform any of the committee members, and we will address your concerns. Remember that safety is one of our main concerns. Please be safe in the workplace. If you have questions, or you need to speak to me, I can be reached at 213/387-8274, ext. 140.

Unit 31 – Professional

By Leslie Abbott

The web has sites that you should check regularly for information and opportunities that could be useful to your career. Please put the following sites in your web favorites, and take advantage of them!

LADWP Labor Relations: <http://labrel.ladwp.com/> Links to MOUs, salaries and classification specs.

City of Los Angeles Personnel Department: <http://www.lacity.org/PER/index.htm> On the home page, click on “City Employees” for open exams, career ladders and classification specs.

LADWP Joint Training Institute: <http://jti.ladwp.com/> Links to opportunities for training and development.

LADWP Joint Safety Institute: On the DWP *intranet* at “JSI”. Check out safety workshop descriptions and schedules.

Unit 32 – Technical

By Kerry McCorkle

◆ In my last article, I overlooked mentioning your Shop Stewards and officers by name. Unit Officers are John Lockett (Chair), Robert Estrada (Vice-Chair), and Dennis Skelton (Recorder). Shop Stewards are Robert Estrada, Willie Gaskins, Norman Lim, John Lockett, Gerry Pallones, Luis Partida, Walter Ramirez, Dennis Skelton, and Bruce Untiedt. They continue to be very committed to fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as Shop Stewards. Please do not hesitate to contact them if you have representation needs or have questions.

◆ There are several Technical Unit members who are participating in Business Process Improvement Joint Labor-Management Committees. These members have been working hard reviewing contracts to purchase hardware and software. They are also involved in establishing Department hardware and software standards. I want to acknowledge all the hard work of Bruce Untiedt (who is the Labor

Chair of the Contracts and Standards Sub-Committees), Jim Levesque, and past participation by Fred Moe. Members from other units are Lizette Cotangco, Peggy Mizumoto, Chin Chang, Alan Wann, and Randy Morimoto. Participating representatives from IBEW Local 18 are Kerry McCorkle (Contacts and Standards) and Gerilyn Washington-Tatum (Contracts)

◆ In October 2003, the Joint Labor-Management (JLM) Committee for IT Projects (BPI) was chartered to help guide the Department with Business Process Improvement and Information Technology initiatives at LADWP. The goal of the BPI Joint Labor-Management Committee is to optimize resources, eliminate duplication of efforts and systems, and to support an integrated approach to the Department's implementation of more effective business processes.

The decision-making body of the JLM is the BPI Oversight Committee, which is made up of the leadership of BOTH labor and Management. Supporting the Oversight Committee are the Steering Committee and a series of sub-committees: Contracts and Standards. The Contracts and Standards Committees consist of both labor and management meeting on a set schedule to discuss, resolve, and recommend solutions to the issues within their purview.

Integral to the goal of the BPI JLM Committees is Union and Management leadership that is visible and committed to this very productive and important Partnership. Local 18 Leadership on these committees, which consists of Local 18 Business Manager Brian D'Arcy, Local 18 President Frank Miramontes, Local 18 Business Representative Kerry McCorkle, and Local 18 Shop Steward and Labor Co-Chair of both the Standards and Contracts Sub-Committees Bruce Untriedt, continues our commitment to partnership. A significant effort has been made to achieve all of the positive gains achieved through this JLM Partnership.

The same commitment to partnership has not been made by the General Manager. The General Manager refuses to meet and confer with Local 18 Business Manager Brian D'Arcy on a variety of important issues that affect you. The General Manager refuses to attend and participate on the standing monthly BPI Oversight Committee Meetings. The General Manager has also refuses to act upon recommendations and proposals made by the BPI Oversight Committee (most importantly a new proposed IT Operating Mod-

el that was proposed almost 1 year ago). The General Manager should be an active partner but he refuses to be a partner. Rather than be part of the solution and help make progress, he has become the problem preventing progress. So if you are curious why progress is slow, ask the General Manager.

◆ We finally have all the members of the Technical Unit Bid Plan Committee identified. I am working on getting a meeting set. We will soon begin negotiating the new bid plan. Please attend upcoming unit meetings because they are the best opportunity to participate in this very important negotiation.

◆ If you would like monthly e-mail updates sent to your home, please contact me with your home e-mail address.

◆ The Technical Unit meeting is held at 5:00 p.m., on the *second Wednesday* of every month, at the Union Hall (please remember our new address).

Unit 33 – Administrative

By Shawn McCloud

Management Analysts and Management Aide Exams

The City of Los Angeles Personnel Department has proposed changes in the bulletin requirement of both exams. They include restricting who qualifies, or adding requirements like college units. We oppose these changes.

Thanks to all of you who called to notify me of the changes. I was gratified to receive calls from members who are already in the classification; *they were looking out for their co-workers*. That is the spirit of unionism!

Unit Meetings

In response to your requests, I am trying to schedule a unit meeting at JFB for May. I will keep you posted. Look in your mail for meeting notice.

Being more involved

If you want to become more involved in *your* Union, please contact me at 213/387-8274, ext. 111.

Safety Tours

I am looking for members who want to be trained in how to conduct safety tours. If you are interested, please contact me.

Unit 34 – Supervisory Professional

By Kerry McCorkle

◆ I would like to thank all of the members who attended this year's Supervisory Professional Unit Dinner Meeting. Dinner was catered by Claim Jumper. Local 18 President Frank Miramontes attended the meeting to brief the membership on

Union issues, and conduct a question and answer session.

◆ A growing number of Supervisory Professional Unit members are joining Joint Labor-Management Committees. Members actively participating in these committees are Fred Barker, Chin Chang, Don Christie, Anselmo Collins, Kevin Garrity, Leland Gong, Michael Grahek, Marc Hendon, Nelson Liu, John Miller, Robert Tokashiki, Stephan Tucker, and Bradley Walker. Eric Hartman has previously participated in the BPI Contracts Committee.

◆ If you would like monthly e-mail updates sent to your home, please contact me with your home e-mail address.

◆ The Supervisory Professional Unit meets at 5:30 p.m., on the *first Tuesday* of every month, at the Union Hall (please remember our new address).

Unit 35 – Supervisory Technical

By Leslie Abbott

Super Tech is in da Steak House! Nine of us (hey, that's 25% of the unit!) got together at Damon's, in Glendale, for the Second Annual Super Tech Dinner Meeting. Unit members Robert Garcia, Robert Mendoza, Peggy Mizumoto, Ross Moran, Joe Roy, Ellen Schneider, Thomas Spence, Juan Zamora, and I laughed, talked and broke bread together. We brought a camera to take a picture for the *Surge*, and show you what a nice time we were having. *We had so much fun, we forgot to use it!* Please mark your calendars *now* for our February, 2007, Dinner Meeting. *You do not want to miss it!*

Unit 52 – Owens Valley

Unit 52A - Mojave

By Ken Delgado

◆ Over the past year, DWP upper management has been completely *uncooperative* with respect to the Joint Labor-Management process, especially the grievance procedure. The directives are coming straight from the top, down to the middle managers—essentially reducing the little authority they have to almost none. Grievance meeting have gotten to a point where the section manager could not resolve the issues without getting the okay from his manager! All this simply delays the process, and keeps the grievance committee from resolving the problems at the lowest level. I ask for your continued patience on your grievance as we move forward to correct this situation.

◆ I thank every member who takes the time every other month to participate in

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your Union's activities by attending our unit meetings. I also thank those members who are stepping up to be involved as Shop Stewards and on worker-safety group tours. I encourage all members who have not attended a unit meeting to do so. *See you at the next meeting.*

Unit 53 – Water

By Ken Delgado

◆ Over the past year, DWP upper management has been completely *uncooperative* with respect to the Joint Labor-Management process, especially the grievance procedure. The directives are coming straight from the top, down to the middle managers—essentially reducing the little authority they have to almost none. Grievance meeting have gotten to a point where the section manager could not resolve the issues without getting the okay from his manager! All this simply delays the process, and keeps the grievance committee from resolving the problems at the lowest level. I ask for your continued patience on your grievance as we move forward to correct this situation.

◆ The sewer-repair issue is still on-go-

ing. The latest is repair on a sewer main. Up in Stone Canyon, there was a main blow-out that washed out the sewer main. Supervisors made all the necessary calls to have the main repaired but, while waiting for the crews to arrive, our leak crews continued to prep the hole for repair. *This means that our crews were working in hazardous conditions.* As we all know, a broken sewer main does *not* stop flowing.

◆ We currently have a sewer-repair procedure in place (Sewer Lateral Repair—DWP) that is for sewer *laterals* only. This procedure does *not* cover sewer main repair. Laterals are controllable repairs—we shut off the feed to a particular apartment, house, or business. Because of the situation that came up with the Stone Canyon blow-out, we are now in the process—through the efforts of your Water Distribution Joint Labor-Management Committee—of putting together a procedure for sewer-main repair. If a situation arises, make the call to get sewer-repair crews out *as soon as possible*. Sewer Mains are very different from a sewer lateral. Wait for sewer repairs to be made before making repairs on our mains!

A core value to remember: *No Job is so important that is cannot be done safely!*

Unit 55 – Communications

By Nancy Romero

◆ We sincerely thank Brother Frank Govea for assisting the Union Hall in our time of need. Brother Govea was called after hours, to assist with an extensive phone-system problem we were experiencing during the first week of our move. He came in and proudly represented our Telecomm brothers and sisters. He did a great job, and all of you should be proud! And, for those of you wondering, he did *not* get paid for a call out or a disturbance call. He has our most sincere gratitude! Now, we can rely on our phone system to conduct our very important work. *Again, thank you, Brother Frank!*

◆ We continue to meet on a monthly basis at the Boylston yard. Our numbers are beginning to dwindle; please resume your participation. We were having such good meetings, let's keep them going!

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