



SURGE

For Members of IBEW Local 18 and their Families

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

By Brian D'Arcy



You may remember that we voluntarily reopened our contract in October in order to save the City \$330

million and to ensure that our pension system was financially sound and would not require additional city resources unlike the other pension systems in the City. In early January, the City Administrative Officer (CAO), Miguel Santana, decided to repay us by trying to force a two-tiered retirement system on us without going to the bargaining table.

Under the CAO's proposal the retirement formula for DWP new hires would have been reduced from 2.1% for every year of service to 1.75%, maximum pension would be reduced from 100% of salary to 70%, and the employee contribution would be increased from 6% of salary to a sliding scale from 8% to 12.9%. In other words, new hires would receive greatly reduced benefits and would have to contribute much more for it. New hires generally receive lower wages and yet they are asked to contribute more to the pension system than their fellow employees.

These cuts for DWP workers were much greater than for the other affected

employees. Santana justified this by saying that DWP workers make more than City workers so the proposal was designed to "level the playing field."

Where Santana got the idea that he had the authority to do this is a mystery. However, he promptly declared that collective bargaining law did not cover new hires and that he, as CAO, had the right to impose a new pension plan for new hires. We filed a grievance with the DWP. On January 22nd, the DWP agreed with us that pensions were a mandatory subject of bargaining and that the CAO did not have the authority to take the actions that he did.

Santana included in his presentation to the City Council the threat that if the employee organizations did not cave in to his demands, that the Council should place a charter amendment on the ballot for the June election a measure that would give them the power to impose a new two-tiered pension system on all City employees. Last week, the Mayor and the Council, after a couple of weeks of vacillating and game playing, declared that nothing would be placed on the ballot.

What does this all mean? Well, it means that these are tough times for public sector workers and that politicians have not become any more

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“Two-tiered systems are inherently divisive”

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Holiday Party 2009



Holiday Party 2009



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We want to put the spotlight on you, our members. What's happening in the field? We will publish what you send to us 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
- 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.*

Business Manager's Report (continued from page 1)

honorable or trustworthy than they usually are. Pensions have become a focus for anti-worker rhetoric and some politicians are seeking to take advantage. Former Republican legislator Keith Richman has submitted a statewide initiative that would impose a two-tiered system on all public employees including those working for the LADWP. This initiative is currently being circulated.

The proposals focus on new hires for two reasons. First, federal law prohibits modifying benefits for vested employees. Secondly, two-tiered systems, those that only affect newly hired employees, are easier to sell to voters. What the proposals all have in common is that they treat all retirement systems equally. If you have made mistakes in your pension system and it is underfunded or if you have done a good job and your pension system is sound—as is the case with the DWP—it makes no difference.

Some might ask: “Why should we care about a proposal that doesn’t affect current employees, but only new hires?” For one thing, two tiered systems violate basic principles of fairness. They allow management to treat employees who perform the same work differently. Employees hired before a certain arbitrary date will receive better benefits than those hired after that date.

Two-tiered systems are inherently divisive and undermine the solidarity that is fundamental to our strength in bargaining. People who work side by side will be paid differently based on an arbitrary standard. When management inevitably comes after the employees with the higher benefits, those with lower benefits have little motivation to stand together with those who agreed to them having reduced benefits in the first place. It is the same old “divide and conquer” game that management always tries to play. If we fall for it, shame on us.

In unity.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Our featured member this month is Jackie L. Bell Jr., an Electrical Distribution Mechanic who has been with Local 18 for twenty years.

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

A. I became a member on May 1, 1990.

Q. Where have you worked over the years?

A. I have worked all over the place. As an apprentice I worked at West LA, Palms, Sun Valley, Valley Underground, Lincoln Heights, Central Yard and Wilmington/San Pedro. As a Journeyman I have worked at Lincoln Heights, Wilmington/San Pedro and I currently work out of West LA.

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

A. I would have to say that my favorite part has to be the good people and their professionalism.

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

A. I would have dinner with Jesus Christ to give me more faith.

Q. Do you have a favorite saying or motto?

A. Yes. Think more highly of others than you do of yourself.



“ My favorite part has to be the good people ”

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 **March 2nd - 9th, 2010**. For more information, please call (888) 724-8439.



FROM THE TRENCHES



Sean Nicklaw, Dave Schneider, Graham Peace, Randy Pierson, Mark Garcia, and Sotero Ramos taking the 1st and 2nd Place trophies for Journeymen Municipal

Unit 1 – Electrical Distribution by Russ Butow

It was a good day for DWP teams at the Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City. Graham Peace, Dave Schneider, and Sean Nicklaw won the 1st Place trophy for Top Municipal. Sotero Ramos, Mark Garcia and Randy Pierson took home 2nd Place in the municipal division. David Kelly, Derek Wert and Erik Jacobsen also placed in the competition, ranking 11th. Our apprentice teams also did a great job, with John Russo winning 1st Place in the Apprentice Mystery Event and Ben Rodriguez coming in 2nd overall in the municipal division. Look throughout the "Trenches" to check out pictures from the event. Way to go guys!

Unit 1 – Electrical Distribution by Martin Marrufo

Greetings! It has been a great experience over the last few months getting to meet some of you out in the Districts. The first exposure Gus Corona and I had with you was during the site visits to discuss the proposed extension of our

contract. Thanks for your open and uninhibited discussion on that topic!

I have been assigned to represent the Wilmington, Palms, and West Los Angeles Districts. We have had a few issues in the Wilmington yard regarding call outs and the order of operations once a call for support goes out. Management had tentatively agreed to identify the issues and find a possible solution to this issue, but the "A Phase" was not able to respond in a timely manner so a grievance has been filed and a meeting has been scheduled to resolve this issue.

A grievance has been filed regarding Senior Electrical Distribution Mechanics (SEDM) training and evaluating Electrical Distribution Mechanics (EDM) on lead work. I do not pretend to know all of the issues associated with this topic, but it has been expressed to the Reps at Local 18 that taking six or more EDMs off a crew in order to work with a SEDM for a six month or more time period would have a negative impact on the crews, and there is a chance that a lead-trained EDM may not end up being promoted to Senior at all. The current policy has been in place for quite some time, and is agreed upon by Labor and Management. On the other hand, it may not be equitable for a SEDM to observe and evaluate an employee at an equal level and have influence over continuing or completing his/her probation. I will be sure to keep you informed of any updates on these issues.

Unit 3 – Electrical Testers by Leslie Abbott

I have to congratulate Unit 3 on our spectacular unit meeting attendance overall in 2009. Some of the highlights include the dinner meeting, where turnout was 40% of the unit! There was also the packed-to-the-rafters meeting where Unit Chair Peter Liwag conducted the "How to do well on your next interview"

training, and the bursting-at-the-seams, what's-going-on-with-the-MOU meeting in October. Van Nuys had a great turnout for the December unit meeting held there – particularly fabulous considering what a small reporting location it is (was it the pizza they provided?). I give a lot of credit to the 44 new Testers who were hired last spring. As a group, they have been great with attendance. Artesian wins hands-down over Main Street. Meters is beating out all the other sections!

I also want to give props to Unit 3 on being a long-standing 100% membership unit. Good job, everyone!

I also want to remind you to give me your personal email address for my Tester Unit distribution list.

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

Unit 5 – Electrical Mechanics by Russ Butow

Local 18 would like to thank Unit 5 members for their great work at the Hall installing the panels and switchgear for the 480-volt panel to be used by the Body Scan International Mobile Unit. Thanks to Stan Deichen, Chesley Kelly, Joe Peralta, Robert Meister and David Asness for donating their time on many Saturdays to do this. Nice job Brothers, the membership thanks you too.

The work picture is looking good; we have been dispatching lately and will be doing more soon. Solar work will be starting soon, as well as work in Adelanto and other areas. Ten Senior Electric Mechanics are now in Unit 5 and other JLM items are still being looked into by Management.



Kansas City Lineman's Rodeo Group 2009

FROM THE TRENCHES

(continued from page 5)

Unit 15 – Pasadena by Gus Corona

We have been meeting with DWP General Manager Phyllis Currie to address issues that affect all our members at the Department. Our first priority was to establish a structured safety and training program that includes input from our membership. We believe it is important for our members out in the field to have a say about what kind of training and tools they need to do their jobs safely and efficiently.

Our contract is due to expire this year, so we have sent out a survey asking the membership to prioritize which items they would like us to bring up during negotiations. Thank you to those of you who took the time to complete the surveys.

We urge all members to attend the unit meetings to stay informed about all the important happenings in the unit.

Unit 17- Field Groups by Nancy Romero

We want to start the year off by reminding the members of Unit 17 that we have four CSD Joint Labor Management Committees where our members can make recommendations for improvements or resolve any issue of concern. Those committees are the Customer Service Division JLM, the Meter Reading JLM, the Commercial Field Representative JLM and the Senior Commercial Field Representative JLM. All four of these JLMs have been successfully working towards jointly resolving many of the issues that come up during the year. We want to encourage our members to submit their JLM related item to any Labor side JLM member or Shop Steward.

Let's give a warm welcome the new class of meter readers that have been hired by the Department in the past few months. The Division has committed to hiring up to fourteen new meter readers by February 2010.

Congratulations to former UMRs brother Eric Branche and sister Robbie Wright on their promotions to Utility Services Specialist. We will miss you in our Unit and we wish you well.

We are currently working with CSD management to expeditiously fill the vacant SCFR-Assistant Supervisor positions -- more to come on this item.

We want to encourage our members to attend the monthly Unit meetings, we need your participation and input as we make decisions regarding our Unit.

Unit 25 – Landscape by Nancy Romero

I would like to encourage all of the members who received time roll correction forms to return them as soon as possible. According to the Division, once the time roll corrections forms are returned the payroll office will process the payments only after the B-Time, Sick Time checks and 3.25% checks are issued. Payroll has been focused on getting those payments out first and then they will work on all the other payroll requests that are pending, including the ones for our Unit.

I want to thank the Division for prioritizing the completion on the payroll documents. We appreciate the tremendous effort it took to



John Russo competes in the
Apprentice Mystery Event

gather the appropriate payroll records from years past and then prepare the many TRCAs needed to appropriately compensate our members and partially resolve our grievance. In many cases, there were approximately forty TRCAs prepared for each employee.

Thanks also go to the members for your patience and understanding with this matter. As you have read in this and previous newsletters, we believe the Division has worked in good faith in the processing of the payroll documents. We now will continue the discussion with management on how much farther we will need to go before we can completely resolve the grievance that was filed.

I also want to congratulate and introduce Kerry McCorkle, who will be taking over Unit 25 as your Business Representative as of February

1, 2010. Kerry has already had a chance to work on some of our Unit issues. He is eager to meet and work with you. I encourage everyone to continue to call and offer him your support and thoughts as he begins his work on behalf of our Unit. He is planning on making the rounds and meeting everyone soon, and we will jointly conduct the Unit meetings through February. Please make every effort to attend that meeting and meet your new rep.

Thank you everyone for stepping up and getting involved at whatever levels you could. I am going to ask that you increase the level of your participation. We have several items that we are working on and Kerry is going to need the full support of the Unit. We have made great strides in our unit in the last couple of years, but there is still much more to be done. Solidarity of the unit will be essential to its continued success!

Next Meeting: February 16, 2010, 4:30pm at Saticoy Yard

Unit 31 – Professional by Leslie Abbott

The Power System has recently adapted the Training Guidelines of the Water Engineering & Technical Services (WETS) Division for its engineering employees. Each supervisor and employee are to meet annually to craft an individual training plan for the employee for the coming year, and review the training plan for the previous year.

The Power Station Design & Construction Standards Committee has been meeting for several months to update the backlog of old receiving and distributing station standards. The committee, comprised of engineering and field personnel, is making good progress and is publishing newly adopted standards on the DWP intranet (Power Engineering, Table of Development & Standards, Station Design Standards). The Standards Committee is a sub-committee of the Electric Station Maintenance & Construction JLMC. Contact Pravin Bhakta or Jesse Ibarra for more info.

The IBEW Local 18 LADWP Joint Safety Institute (JSI) is in the process of creating a customized "Safety by Design" workshop for 2010. The workshop will focus on designing facilities with an emphasis on ergonomic safety for operations and maintenance personnel.

• **Next Meeting: 1st Wednesday of the month at 5:15pm, odd months at Local 18 even months in JFB Room ASA**

FROM THE TRENCHES

Unit 33 – Administrative *by Shawn McCloud*

Due to staff reassignments I will no longer be the representative for your unit. Nancy Romero will be your new representative. Nancy and I will be working closely together during and after the transition. If I am working on a case for you, I will continue the case until its completion. However, Nancy will be coming with me to the meetings so she can get up to speed on the issues. I have truly enjoyed working with this unit. I hope to see you at the next unit meeting where I will introduce you to Nancy.

- **Next Meeting:** Look for your postcard in the mail for details

Unit 53 – Water *by Ken Delgado*

Brothers and Sisters, we are still in the process of working on a Letter of Agreement (LOA) that is at the Joint Resolution Board (JRB) for review. This LOA will address the issue of zone pay and how it applies to TLC per the MOU.

Recently, Labor and Management have agreed to make some changes that are in line with the LOA so that we may reinstate the zone pay provision to those crews that have not been receiving it. We are anticipating that the LOA will be the way to modify the language to reflect how TLC now operates.

I would like to thank all of TLC for being patient with this process and for continuing to do a great job working toward the goal of preserving the experience and expertise of TLC. Keep it up and always work safe.

In Unity.

- **Next Meeting:** February 23, 2010 at 5:00pm, Central District Water Yard

Unit 55 – Telecommunications *by Nancy Romero*

We continue to work with Division management on resolving the space issues that we identified at the Boylston Yard. We took a look at some of the proposed office space for the Metro Cable Shop, the Data Shop and Radio Shop and there are some serious health and safety concerns with the proposed office relocations. For example, the proposed future location for the Data Shop is currently an unused, dirty, musty and dusty old shower room. This location will need to be gutted and reconstructed completely.

There is a space that would be more suited for what the Data Shop needs and it is located right next to the proposed location, on the same floor. It appears that it will not need as much construction.

In regards to the Metro Cable Shop, it is incomprehensible why anyone would relocate this shop to the current Radio Shop facility. We have been informed that many of the buildings at the Boylston Yard will be upgraded in the future but we cannot allow these kinds of changes now.

We will be calling on our members to participate in any discussions regarding these matters when the time comes. We need all of you to be ready to share your issues and concerns with their relocation plans.

There have been no changes to the Radio Shop agreement from the last article. We continue to seek an alternate solution there as well.

We want to thank Brother Mike Herrmann for his support on moving our issues forward in his role as member of the Telecom JLM. He is moving on and will no longer be a JLM member. Thanks, Brother Mike, you will be missed!



Sotero Ramos, Mark Garcia and Randy Pierson's 2nd Place-winning performance



In Memoriam

Honoring our Members Who Have Passed On

Nathan Sanshuck

Retired Electrical Inspector
Initiated February 5, 1948
Passed away November 14, 2009

Jasper E. Kelly

Retired Journeyman Lineman
Initiated February 1, 1979
Passed away November 30, 2009

Ronald W. Moisan

Electrical Craft Helper
Initiated November 1, 1990
Passed away December 2, 2009

Zena Tessema

Lab Technician, Initiated May 1, 2004
Passed away December 5, 2009

Richard R. Holden

Retired Elec. Serviceman
Initiated April 7, 1941
Passed away January 5, 2010

Nicholas Vitale

Retired Cbl Spl Pump Truck
Initiated November 1, 1962
Passed away January 15, 2010

LaMar Fortner

Sr. Clerk Typist, Initiated July 1, 2002
Passed away January 24, 2010

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SURGE

For Members of IBEW Local 18 and their Families

JANUARY 2010

FROM THE TRENCHES

(continued from page 7)



David Kelly, Derek Wert and Erik Jacobsen compete in the Journeyman Mystery Event

Unit 63 – Power Underground Construction by Ken Delgado

Brothers and Sisters, we have the Letter of Agreement (LOA) for contracting out underground work in the final steps toward signature. Currently, Underground is working the agreed overtime per the LOA and that will be in effect for the duration of the contracts. Management and Labor have also agreed to add five more construction crews. We are also

considering having Maintenance & Construction Helpers (MCH) on the construction crews. This makes sense since the MCHs are the main feeder class into the Underground Conduit class. We believe that this will increase the knowledge and training for those MCHs looking to make careers as Underground Conduit Mechanics. In unity.

- **Next Meeting: February 24, 2010, 5:00pm at Local 18**