

# The IAM District 190 Sparkplug



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June/July 2008

Serving the Active and Retired Members of IAM District Lodge 190

## Workers want unions, despite employer tactics

As wages stagnate, as companies cut back on health insurance and pensions and as work hours grow longer, more and more workers are turning to unions to represent their concerns.

They also want to improve their chances of getting health benefits and a pension. In March 2007, 78 percent of union workers in the private sector had jobs with employer-provided health insurance, compared with only 49 percent of nonunion workers.

In 2006, 15.4 million people were members of unions in the U.S. Despite the hand-wringing over the decline in the percentage of union members over the last ten years, 2.5 million workers have joined or formed new unions in that time.

Across California, workers are contacting District 190's union locals and organizing department to seek union representation. Here are a few recent examples:

- The four service writers at Serra-

monte Dodge/Mitsubishi unanimously voted to join Local 1414.

- By a vote of 23-10, on June 6, the two mechanics and 36 drivers at V Dolan Trucking in Penn Grove voted to join Local 1596 and Teamsters Local 624, respectively.
- Niles Machine bought a non-union company in Sunnyvale and wanted to keep the 31 employees non-union when they moved over to the company's Livermore facility. Local 1584's shop steward notified the union office, and after negotiations were done, the employees were all union members.
- Because of the positive outcome of contract negotiations with Capitol Dodge in San Jose, the employer agreed to make the same deal available to his Hayward Dodge employees—who quickly agreed. They now have a contract that provides them a better health plan and the IAM National Pension.
- An election has been set for June

17 at Sysco Foods in Fremont. Those 14 employees want to join Local 1546.

- Thirty-five of 50 mechanics at Stevens Creek Lexus donned Local 1101 union buttons and told the employer that they want a union. An election date will be set soon.

### Employers use power to stop union drives

Independent polling shows that as many as 58 million workers in America would join a union if they had a chance—but few ever get that chance because employers routinely block workers' efforts to improve their lives through unions.

The District 190 organizing department has been feeling the heat from workers across Northern California who want a union, and has gotten burned by employers who brazenly use illegal tactics to threaten, harass, and intimidate those workers.

Last fall, a group of employees at the Henkel Corporation in Bay Point, came to the IAM to represent them.

"We started the campaign with about 40 organizer-activists," says Area Director Jesse Juarez. "We thought the unit was going to have

about 85 members, but when we filed for the election, the company convinced the Labor Board to add another 70 employees to the unit—people we hadn't worked with before."

Juarez says that as soon as the election date was set for May 22, Henkel campaigned relentlessly against the union. They used all of the classic fear techniques, including captive audience meetings and threatening to fire union supporters.

In the end, the vote was 80-67 against the union. "Our activists were really surprised, because they thought we'd win with 87 votes. Local 1584's organizing committee did a fantastic job, but clearly, the company's scare tactics succeeded."

Juarez says he usually doesn't like to talk about organizing drives that went down to defeat, but this one just illustrates everything that's wrong about the system. "Workers wanted the union but the company used every strategy in the books to make sure it didn't happen."

The union has filed charges with the Labor Board, protesting the company's actions and challenging the election results. "We feel confident that the election will be overturned, but it will take a while," Juarez adds.



### Members strike BMW of Mountain View

Going on strike is always a decision of last resort, but the 70 members of Local 1101 who work at Alison's BMW (also known as BMW of Mountain View) and their Mini Cooper store unanimously decided to strike, and went out on Sunday, June 1.

"The company decided to take away four holidays, remove all sick pay, take them out of AI medical plan, which costs them \$120/month and move them to a company plan, which is an inferior plan and would cost them \$700/month," explained Business Rep Rich Breckenridge. In addition, the company wanted to introduce a tiered system for journeyman techs, freezing everybody's wages for two years and then only giving a small increase to those with a higher level of training. "Our

members who have less training would be getting a \$3-4 pay cut.

The company made their proposal on May 15. The members rejected it unanimously on May 31 and 100% voted to go on strike.

"The company proposed a complete gut of the contract," Breckenridge says. "This is the richest Auto Nations contract in the country. They claim that they were instructed to get this contract in line with what they pay at their non-union facilities. In the last five years, this dealership has doubled in size and has been completely remodeled. We know that they are doing very well, but the contract was just too rich for their taste."

Federal mediation has tentatively been scheduled, as this paper goes to press.

### Local 1484 joins march from Hollywood to the Docks



Local 1484 members joined the march from Hollywood to the Docks that began on April 15th in Hollywood, where actors represented by the Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists are in the midst of contract negotiations. The march concluded on April 17, at the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro, where the International Longshore Warehouse Union face contract negotiations in July. More than 300,000 Los Angeles-area workers will have contracts expiring by the end of the summer.

All along the 28-mile, three-day march, route workers and community members held events highlighting the issues impacting working families such as the Governor's proposed budget cuts, a lack of affordable housing, and the healthcare crisis.

## UNION PEOPLE

### Cortese passes the torch of running the IAM apprenticeship program to Fowkes

#### Karl Cortese

After a 40-year career of building cars, repairing cars, and running the Northern California Machinists Apprenticeship Program, Karl Cortese is retiring. His plan? To build street rods. "I guess 40 years of cars just wasn't enough!" he says with a laugh.

Since 1998, Karl has coordinated the Joint Apprenticeship Program for Locals 1546, 1173, 1414, 653 and 1101. In those 10 years, the program has graduated 316 apprentices.

"My number one priority when I started in this position was to ensure that the class credits apprentices earned would apply toward their college degree. I also wanted to improve the classroom curriculum and upgrade to the latest technology," says Cortese. "I feel I was successful. We just got ASE certification, so when you complete your four-year apprenticeship now, you'll be a certified ASE master tech."

"It's been very rewarding to see some of the kids change their lives. They start out with nothing and after four years, they're making good money and they have a career. It makes it all worth it," Cortese adds.

Cortese grew up in San Jose and his first real job was at the Ford plant in Milpitas. "I was a member of the UAW. I started as a driver and worked my way up to become a motor repairman."

But when the plant closed, he was back to square one, starting as an apprentice at Capitol Ford. "I joined Local 1101, and eventually became a master tech with Ford. I worked there from 1983 to 1998, when I was offered this position. I had six apprentices at Capitol Ford plus my son—and he's now an instructor."

Cortese says that he's had a great career. "It all worked out for me. My



Cortese (L) will retire at the end of July after running the apprenticeship program for 10 years. Fowkes (R) did this interview on his first official day on the job.

advice to all IAM members is don't stop your education. That's your chance for a great career. Get all your licenses. Even when you've finished your apprenticeship, you're not done—keep on going."

In addition to building cars, Cortese plans to get more active in his family trust, managing buildings the family owns in San Jose. "And amazingly, I never finished getting my own AA degree. So, I look forward to doing that and to taking some fun classes."

#### Jon Fowkes

"I come to this position from the opposite place of where Karl started," says incoming Apprenticeship Program Coordinator Jon Fowkes. "I have an MBA and have worked in management most of my life. I ran dealerships for Caterpillar and Cummins and ran my own computer consulting business." He was also a part-time college instructor, teaching business classes at Casper College and at the University of Wyoming.

Fowkes says that Cummins brought him out from Wyoming in 2004 to join the management team at Cummins West in San Leandro. "Our biggest challenge was to develop the technician pool. When I started, we

had one apprentice. I moved that number up to eight, and quickly came to recognize the tremendous value of the apprenticeship program."

As a result, he volunteered to be a management rep on the Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC), and served in that position for three years. However, with the downturn in the economy, he was laid off. When he called Karl to resign from the JAC, Karl invited him to apply for the Coordinator position.

"I thought about it a lot because running a program like this was like nothing I had done before. But, working with the apprentices was the most rewarding part of my work."

Fowkes believes that his best qualifications for the job are:

- 1) His passion for apprenticeship;
- 2) His ability to run the program

like a small business;

3) Recognizing that the weakest link is employers developing positions for apprentices. "I want to take my positive experience with apprentices at Cummins and use it to sell the program to other employers."

"This is the first time the apprenticeship program has had someone come in from the management side. It's exciting for me to work on the other side of the fence."

At Cummins, Fowkes had 85 employees, 50 of whom were union. "I felt it was important to work cooperatively with the union, not as an adversary. Local 1546 was very receptive to the concept that we were working toward a common goal."

"Even though there's a downturn in the economy, vehicles will still break down and you can't outsource getting them repaired," Fowkes says. "The workforce is getting older, and we have to fill the pipeline. This position is critical for the long-term success of the industry, because we have to find ways to grow the talent pool."

Fowkes is also excited to have the opportunity to stay in California. "I love to sail and mountain bike, but you can't do that year-round in Wyoming. Here, I live on a sailboat with my wife in Alameda, and I plan to ride my bike in to work as often as I can. We enjoy it here."

### Correction and opportunity

In the last issue of *The Sparkplug*, we showed a picture of District 190 and Local 1528 members giving a donation to the re-election campaign of Congressman Jerry McNerney. The funds, however, did not come from the coffers of Local 1528; they came solely from the Machinists Non-Partisan Political League (MNPL).

Union dues are never spent on political candidates. However, your union has significant clout in the political process through the donations of individual members. If you would like to add muscle and money to the IAM's political work, you can donate on-line at:

[www.goiam.org/mnpl.cfm](http://www.goiam.org/mnpl.cfm)

### New organizer for Foster Farms workers

After working for Foster Farms for 17 years, Ruben Zesati still goes to the plant every day but in a very different capacity. In November 2007, District Lodge 190 hired him to serve as an organizer.

In order to get a first contract at Foster Farms, the union gave up one of its most important demands—having a closed shop. That means that members join on a voluntary basis.

"Almost half the employees here are members, but we focus on reaching out to the new hires," Zesati explains. "We had a union here five years ago that we had to kick out, so unions don't have such a great reputation with some of our employees. But the IAM is new and different. I



Ruben Zesati

can see that they're putting in a lot of work to support us, and that they are honest guys."

Zesati says he doesn't feel like an organizer. "I just want to help people when the company doesn't treat them right. And I don't try to convince people to join the union. I just invite them to our meetings and let them make their own decision. It's been slow growth, but we're definitely getting more members every month."

Zesati went to the IAM training school in May. "I learned a lot about how to represent people and present their grievances. I start at 3 a.m. to work with the night shift people, but I end up staying all day. I can put what I learned in Maryland into practice every single day."

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We'll be glad to print "Letters" when we get them, but none were received this edition. Please feel free to write in if something in *The Sparkplug* makes you happy or mad or inspires you to action.

All letters will be used, space per-

mitting. They may be edited for length or grammar, but not for content.

Letters may be submitted as follows:

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The IAM District 190

**Sparkplug**

Debra Chaplan,  
Managing Editor



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Postmaster: Send address corrections to: The *Sparkplug*, 7717 Oakport Street, Oakland, CA 94621.



## AROUND THE LOCALS



### Local 653

#### First renewal at TMH

The 29 members at **Toyota Material Handling** in Fresno have ratified a new five-year agreement. The company is growing and has moved to a new and bigger shop. Just two years ago, when the shop was first organized, they had 11 members.

The contract includes a wage increase of \$1/hour each year, and the company will pay up to \$1.35/hour for training and ASE certifications. They'll share the cost of health and welfare, with the employer paying 80%.

The company wanted a system of on-call workers, but the members agreed that this should be staffed by those who volunteer to do it; if there are not enough volunteers, then the work will be filled in reverse seniority.

"Special thanks to Shop Steward Dan Hunt for his help in the negotiations," says Business Rep Tom Rotella.

#### Happy fishing

The fishing charter on May 17, 2008 from Monterey was a great success. The sea was calm, the weather was beautiful, the fish were biting and everyone got their limit. Thank you George Robles for organizing the trip.

#### Out of work list

If you are out of work or know someone who needs full or part-time work, let Tom Rotella know! Local 653 is starting an out-of-work list that they will make available to Fresno-area employers who might need fill-in help. All types of positions are needed: machinist, auto mechanic, welder, maintenance mechanic. This is temporary work but may work into something more permanent.

To get on the list, e-mail your name and resume to: [IAMAW653@comcast.net](mailto:IAMAW653@comcast.net). Be sure to explain the area of work you are interested in. You do not have to be a current union member. This program is open to anybody qualified to do the work.

### Local 1101

#### New contracts

Six members at **Hertz** in San Jose just ratified a new three-year contract that gives them a 3.25% wage increase and no reduction in their health and welfare and pension plan.

The local also completed new three-year contracts for several small shops, including **Lee's Forklift** in Hollister, **Nunes Service** in San Jose and **Ronnie Dutra Service** in Gilroy. Each of these got 75¢/hour wage increases each year, and the pension was kept at the same level.

### Local 1173

#### Fastest contract

The members at **Mazzei Pontiac** in Pittsburg ratified a six-year contract on April 26. "This was one of the fastest contracts I ever got settled," says Business Rep Rick Rodgers. "I met with the owner at 10 a.m. We negotiated the contract in an hour. I took it to the members at noon, and they accepted it unanimously."

"The owner specifically requested the long contract in order to keep the pension options open for one long-time employee," explains Business Rep Rick Rodgers. "The members will get wage increases of 75¢/hour per year. They also got four floating holidays turned back to fixed holidays,

which was a real plus. And, we froze the health and welfare contributions at their current rate for the first year, with employees paying 30% of future increases. In the previous contract, they paid 50% of increases, so this too was a better deal."

#### New deal at Macy's

The members at **Macy's Transmission** in Concord unanimously ratified their new five-year contract on April 16. "They get a 50¢/hour wage increase each year and maintenance of benefits for their health and welfare," Rodgers reports.

### Local 1414

#### Welcome new members

The service advisors at **Serramonte Dodge/Mitsubishi** asked for union representation. While Business Rep Pedro Mendez worked with them closely and filed with the NLRB for the election, when the day came, on May 20, he was assigned to a work on a campaign in Yuma, Arizona. Business Rep Don Barbe reports that, nevertheless, 100% of the unit voted for IAM Local 1414 representation. Welcome, guys!

#### Contract at Bayshore

The members at **Bayshore International** San Mateo ratified a five-year agreement in May, which gives them a 3.5% wage increase each year.

#### Important grievance win

Back in November 2006, **Golden Gate Transit** suspended, and then terminated two employees for issues related to their at-work conduct. The union took up their case. "After many delays, the grievance process worked," reports Business Rep Don Barbe. "One of them took a buy-out and the other, a 21-year member who also happened to be the shop steward, is back to work with about 17 months of back pay and benefits paid. This case took a lot of time and work for both me and for Area Director Tom Brandon, but it was time and money well spent."

### Local 1528

#### JM Equipment talks slow

Negotiations with **JM Equipment** started on March 15 and are still going on. "Our members, who work at sites in Fresno, Modesto, Paterson, West Sacramento and Stockton, have been working without an extension, but the company has kept all provisions in place since the contract expired. Except one," explains lead negotiator and Local 1528 Business Rep Gilbert Gonzalez, "and that's that the company is not making the union dues deductions." This contract covers members in Locals 1528, 653 and 2182.

The members rejected the company's last offer by a vote of 68-1. "The biggest issue is health care. The company wants to pay one flat rate for everybody, replacing the current tiered system. This would be a real hardship for those members who have spouses and families."

Talks are continuing, and Gonzalez is hopeful that a new agreement can be reached as this paper goes to press.

### Local 1584

#### Contract extended

The four members who work at **Continental Machine Works** in Oakland agreed to a one year contract extension that gives them a wage increase of 50¢/hour. "We'll go back to the table in a year," says Business Rep Chris Rasmussen.

### Local 1546

#### Easy deal at Cemex

When the **Cemex** contract came due four years ago, the IAM had to go on strike to get a decent deal. This time, Area Director Don Crosatto was able to negotiate the contract over the phone. "We got \$3 in wage increases over the four-year contract and we preserved the retirement rules for four of our five members there. Considering how slow construction's been, that was a good deal."

The members at **Groth Brothers Chevrolet** in Livermore ratified their new four-year contract. "We got a dollar wage increase in years one, three and four, with a free in year two. This is a pretty fair deal, given how bad the economy is for car dealerships," Crosatto adds.

The International successfully organized a national agreement with **Interstate Brands**, which led to a new contract for Local 1546 members there and at **San Francisco French Bread**. The company has been in bankruptcy since 2004. The contract preserves the pension and the health and welfare plan and provides 3% wage increases for each of the four years. The company will also pay some money for those with Commercial Drivers Licenses and ASEs.

Contracts have also been renewed or extended with **Svenhardts Bakery**, **Richmond Sanitary**, **East Bay Sanitary**, **Automotive Aces**, **DW Nickelson**, and **Transbay Container Terminal**. SSA agreed to a four-year extension, so the contract now runs through 2015. With an extra dollar/hour per year, the journeymen will top out at \$44.70/hour.

The members at **Shaw GDB** in Alaska also have a new contract, which gives them 4% increases each year.

And over at **Autowest Honda** and **Shamrock Dublin Ford**, members will get 90¢/hour increases in year one and then efficiency-based wage increases of 30-80¢ each year, based on the percentage of efficiency targets that each person reaches. Members also got back into the AI plan and got disability, vision and life insurance reinstated. These benefits had been discontinued when the shops moved to a company plan.

### Local 1596

#### Seven contracts, but who's counting?

Area Director Tom Brandon reports that nine of the Local's shops got new collective bargaining agreements in time to meet the deadline for the rule of 85. These include three year agreements at **Novato Toyota**, **North Bay Nissan** and **Toby's Trucking** in Petaluma, **Chuck's Brake and Wheel** in Santa Rosa, and **J&V Machine** in Willow Creek. **Vincent Whitney** in Sausalito got a two-year agreement, and **KVAL Machinery** in Petaluma got a one-year agreement.

#### Welcome new shops

By a vote of 23-10, the two mechanics and 36 drivers at **V Dolan Trucking** in Penn Grove voted on June 6 to join Local 1596 and Teamsters Local 624, respectively. "The Teamsters were trying to organize the drivers, and asked us to represent the mechanics," Brandon explained. When the company threatened to add the mechanics to the Teamster unit, the Teamsters agreed that they should be unionized, but said that the IAM had agreed to represent them. Not expecting that, the owner is very unhappy that he'll now have to deal with two unions instead of just one."

Brandon is also pleased to welcome **Earl Whitney LLC**, an owner-operator auto shop in Sonoma.



# CHANGES IN THE AI PENSION PLAN

As a result of the recently-enacted Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA), the AI Pension Plan was reviewed and deemed to be in the “red zone.” This means that the trustees immediately needed to devise a rehabilitation plan to move the plan toward greater stability for the long-term. The cause—primarily four bad years in the stock market—negatively impacted about 70% of all multi-employer pension plans and was discussed in full in the last issue of *The Sparkplug*.

Following is a series of questions and answers intended to address how these changes will generally affect the benefits of Plan participants. As each person’s individual situation may be different, these Q&As will not answer all of your specific questions. For more definitive information, call the Fund Office at 510-846-2484 or write them at ATPA, 1640 South Loop Road, Alameda, CA 94502. Please attend one of the area meetings scheduled for this summer (see list at right). You’ll get an opportunity to ask questions of your union trustees and plan administrators.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

**1** Are Pensioners who retired before April 27, 2008 affected by the benefit reductions described in the “Notice of Proposed Benefit Changes” mailed on March 28, 2008?

**No.** Pensioners, surviving spouses and beneficiaries who were receiving benefits from the Plan prior to April 27, 2008 are not affected by these changes.

However, the benefits of participants actively working in covered service and those who are “terminated vested” will be subject to the rehabilitation plan reductions described in the notice. (See Q-7 to determine if you are an “active” or “terminated vested” participant.)

**2** What is a Rehabilitation Plan?

A Rehabilitation or “Rehab” Plan consists of the specific actions that the Trustees are proposing to enable the Plan to reach the PPA’s statutory funding requirements. The Rehab Plan includes the reductions in benefits described in the “Notice of Proposed Benefits Changes” mailed on March 28, 2008.

**3** Will the provisions of the rehabilitation plan eliminate my accrued normal retirement benefit?

**No.** Before and after the rehabilitation program takes effect, the amount of your accrued benefit earned prior to that date is not reduced. Your accrued benefit is the benefit that is payable to you upon attaining your “normal retirement age” (in most cases, age 65) when there is no reduction for age.

However, the rehabilitation program reduces certain “adjustable benefits,” including:

- ▶ The new early retirement reduction formula will result in a smaller monthly benefit if you retire prior to age 65.
- ▶ The “rule of 85” unreduced early retirement benefit will no longer be available.
- ▶ The Plan’s disability benefit will no longer be available to new applicants.
- ▶ The 36-payment pre-retirement death benefit is eliminated.
- ▶ Payment forms, except for a life annuity or automatic joint and 50% survivor annuity, will no longer be available to new retirees.

These plan changes were described in greater detail in the prior notice that was sent to you.

**4** Will these adjustable benefit reductions apply to my benefits – even if I earned them prior to the benefit reduction effective date?

**Yes.** The reductions to the above “adjustable benefits” will apply—regardless of when you earned your benefit. However, as previously mentioned, the reductions do not affect the benefit payments of pensioners and their beneficiaries.

**5** What is a “collective bargaining agreement” (CBA)?

A collective bargaining agreement or “CBA” is the contract between your employer and the union.

## Area Q&A meetings about AI Pension Plan changes

**Oakland** Saturday, June 14, 2008

**June 14** 9:00 AM - 12 Noon

Oakland Airport Hilton  
One Hegenberger Road  
Oakland, CA 94621

**Burlingame** Saturday, June 21, 2008

**June 21** 9:00 AM - 12 Noon

Hyatt Regency — SF Airport  
1333 Bayshore Highway  
Burlingame, CA 94010

**Modesto** Saturday, July 12, 2008

**July 12** 9:00 AM - 12 Noon

Doubletree Hotel Modesto  
1150 Ninth Street  
Modesto, CA 95354

**Sacramento** Saturday, July 12, 2008

**July 12** 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Sheraton Grand Sacramento Hotel  
1230 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Long Beach** Saturday, August 09, 2008

**August 9** 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Hyatt Regency Long Beach  
200 South Pine Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90802

## SHOP TALK: Foster Farms workers explain why the union is important and why



**Carlos Valenzuela**  
Foster Farms - 21 years  
I do every job!

“We need a raise and for insurance not to go up. It’s not good anyway—we pay a lot of deductible. I’m happy with the union. I haven’t had to use it but it’s good to have in case I have a problem.”



**Esteban Miranda**  
Foster Farms - 20 years  
Supply/Deboning

“We need to get our double-time on holidays and Sundays and vacation pay back. We lost these benefits when we didn’t have a union. We need them back. With Ralph Meraz leading the union, we’re doing better.”



**Jose R. Florez**  
Foster Farms - 28 years  
Machine Attendant

“We need a wage increase. I’m responsible for operating a lot of machinery; two of us operate 13 machines. It’s a lot of pressure and responsibility. We just want to get back what we lost.”



**Margarita Desaldana**  
Foster Farms - 7 years  
Degutting

“I hope we can settle the contract without going on strike. Our salary has stayed the same, but our expenses keep going up. The company has no conscience. I haven’t needed the union yet, but I want it here. It’s insurance for me.”



**Rose Alcazar**  
Foster Farms - 33 years  
Trimmer

“We need to recuperate what we lost—holidays and double-time. Thank god I haven’t needed the union, but I’m glad it’s there for us. I’ll be at the meeting on Sunday!”



**Migdale Foster Farm**  
Help food

“We need to have a shop—everyone dues. We also need to get the line—it’s too long. We should introduce but that won’t help everyone’s a union.”

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## BENEFIT REDUCTION EFFECTIVE DATES

## IMPORTANT—EFFECTIVE RETIREMENT DATES

Retirements are always effective on the first of the month. In order to be retired as of the first of a month, your application for retirement must be received by the Fund Office no later than the last day of the prior month. For example, if you are a “terminated vested” participant who must retire prior to July 1, 2008, you must have filed your application for retirement no later than May 31, 2008 in order to have a June 1, 2008 effective date for retirement. If you filed after that date, you will *not* be retired prior to July 1, 2008 and will not be able to “lock-in” your prior benefits.

**6** Will there be different benefit reduction dates depending upon whether you are an “active” versus a “terminated vested” participant?

Yes.

**7** How do I know if I am considered an “active” or “terminated vested” participant?

For purposes of determining the benefit reduction effective date:

- ▶ An “active” participant is one who has not incurred a one-year break in service as of December 31, 2007 or one who has an employer contribution required for any month between January 1, 2008 and June 30, 2008 and a total of five months of required employer contributions in 2008.
- ▶ A “terminated vested” participant is a participant who has incurred a one-year break in service as of December 31, 2007 and who either:
  - does not have an employer contribution required for any month between January 1, 2008 and June 30, 2008 or
  - has an employer contribution required for any month between January 1, 2008 and June 30, 2008 but does not have a total of five months of required employer contributions in 2008.

**8** When will benefits of “active” and “terminated vested” participants be affected?

Benefit reductions for active participants become effective when their employer’s collective bargaining agreement (also called a “contract”) is renewed on or after April 27, 2008 – but no later than 180 days following the expiration date of the prior collective bargaining agreement.

Benefit reductions for terminated vested participants become effective July 1, 2008.

**9** If I am an active participant but change employers between now and when I retire, which employer is used to determine the benefit reduction effective date?

As an active participant, your “employer” is your most recent employer prior to your retirement date. Once your employer is determined, the Plan will search its records to determine when that employer’s collective bargaining agreement expired and when the benefit reductions for its employees became effective.

**10** What if I am a non-collectively bargained active participant (e.g., owner-operator, alumni, etc.) in July 2008 and have contributions made to the Plan under the terms of a “pension agreement” (sometimes called a “subscription agreement”)?

The effective date will be July 1, 2009.

**11** Are any other categories of active participants automatically covered by the July 1, 2009 effective date?

Yes. The following active participants who are not working under a collective bargaining agreement in July 2008 will also be subject to the benefit reductions effective July 1, 2009:

- ▶ Participants whose employer ceased to be a contributing employer prior to July 2008.
- ▶ Participants currently under a Plan “grace period” due to (1) incapacity based on a disability that prevents them from working in covered service, (2) serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, or (3) engaged in this industry in an ineligible classification.
- ▶ Participants receiving workers’ compensation benefits.

**12** Since the benefits of pensioners and beneficiaries are not affected by the rehabilitation plan’s mandated benefit reductions, can I “lock-in” the prior benefit levels by retiring immediately prior to the benefit reduction effective date and then returning to work in covered service?

Yes. If you retire with a pension effective date prior to the applicable date shown below, the amount of your pension benefit will be calculated under pre-benefit reduction terms of the Plan. If you return to work—after being retired for a minimum of 90 consecutive days—that portion will not be reduced. However, any new benefits that you earn while returning to work will be calculated and subject to the post-benefit reduction terms of the Plan.

- ▶ If you are an “active” participant [see Q-7], you must retire prior to the renewal date of your employer’s collective bargaining agreement (CBA or “contract”) – but no later than 180 days following the expiration date of the prior CBA. If you are working under an expired CBA on April 27, 2008, that date will be deemed to be the expiration date of your prior CBA.
- ▶ If you are a terminated vested participant [see Q-7], you must retire prior to July 1, 2008.
- ▶ If you are a non-collectively bargained active participant (e.g., an owner-operator, alumni, or other non-bargained participant working in “related non-covered employment”), a participant working in a covered position covered under a “related plan,” a participant working in “recognized unrelated service,” a participant whose employer ceased to be a contributing employer prior to July 2008, a participant under a “grace period” (due to disability, service in

the Armed Forces, work in the industry in an ineligible classification) or a participant receiving workers’ compensation [see Q-10 and Q-11], you must retire prior to July 1, 2009.

**13** What happens if the renewal of my employer’s CBA is the subject of litigation?

In general, for active employees covered by expired collective bargaining agreements on April 27, 2008, the effective date of the Pension Protection Act benefit reductions will be the date the collective bargaining agreement is renewed, but not later than October 24, 2008. In some situations, however, the effective date of the benefit reductions could depend ultimately on the outcome of any litigation.

## OTHER PENSION PLAN PROVISIONS

**14** Does the adoption of the rehabilitation plan make other changes to my Pension Plan benefits?

No. Only the changes mentioned in these Q&As and the prior notice sent to you have been made to your Plan.

**15** Will there be more changes in the future?

Neither the Board of Trustees nor any of its professional advisors can predict if additional steps will be required to address Plan funding or issues mandated by law or federal regulations. However, please be assured that the Trustees are carefully monitoring the position of the Pension Plan.

**NOTE:** All of these changes apply only to the Automotive Industries Pension Plan, and *not* to any other benefit plans.

## What they want to see in their next contract . . .



Gadea s - 29 years Inspector

“I would like to see a closed shop. We should pay more. We need to slow down the line speed. And, we need a pension—open unless on member.”



Abel Garcia Foster Farms - 22 years Line worker

“Not increasing the cost of our medical insurance is number one. They need to slow down the line speed. And, we need a wage increase—food, gas and utilities are all high. The union is a necessity; they helped me out when I had a problem.”



Maria Madrigal Foster Farms - 19 years Line worker

“We need better benefits. They have to treat us better and give us a good wage increase. I asked the union to check out the line speed, and they did.”



Maria Hernandez Foster Farms - 27 years Trimmer

“We need a wage increase, better benefits and better treatment of the people—respect. The previous union we had was bad, but this one is good. We have good leadership and they’ve been there for me when I needed them.”



Maria Florez Foster Farms - 16 years Line worker

“We need good wages and to get back the vacations and benefits that were reduced. We also need better health insurance. There’s a lot of pressure here and we need the union to reduce the pressure.”



Juanita Santiago Foster Farms - 22 years Salvage

“Increase our pay—everything is going up, especially gas. We’re trying to get more people to join the union. We’ve gotten a lot in, but we need more because we need a better contract.”

# CALIFORNIA MACHINISTS 401(k) PLAN

## Retirement plan offers range of investment options

As a participant in the California Machinists 401k Plan, you have access to professional investment management of your savings and the opportunity to diversify your investments in a manner which suits your personal objectives and risk profile.

You can build your own portfolio using one or more of the 15 different mutual funds available to you in the Plan or you can direct your investments to one of the five diversified funds ("investment models") which are each allocated among the 15 mutual funds referenced above.

We have illustrated below how each of the funds is currently allocated among stocks, bonds and money market instruments

("cash") depending on the model's specific risk profile from conservative to moderate.

To the right, our Plan Administrator, Kaufmann and Goble, has provided the investment returns for each model for the first quarter of 2008 as well as for the 1, 3 and 5 year periods that ended March 31, 2008. For example, participants who invested in the Moderate Conservative portfolio for the past 5 years, earned 9.0%/year (on average—returns varied year by year) if they were in the fund from March 31, 2003 through March 31, 2008.

Please call Kim Jackman or Angela Zapien at 408-298-1170 for information on the Plan .

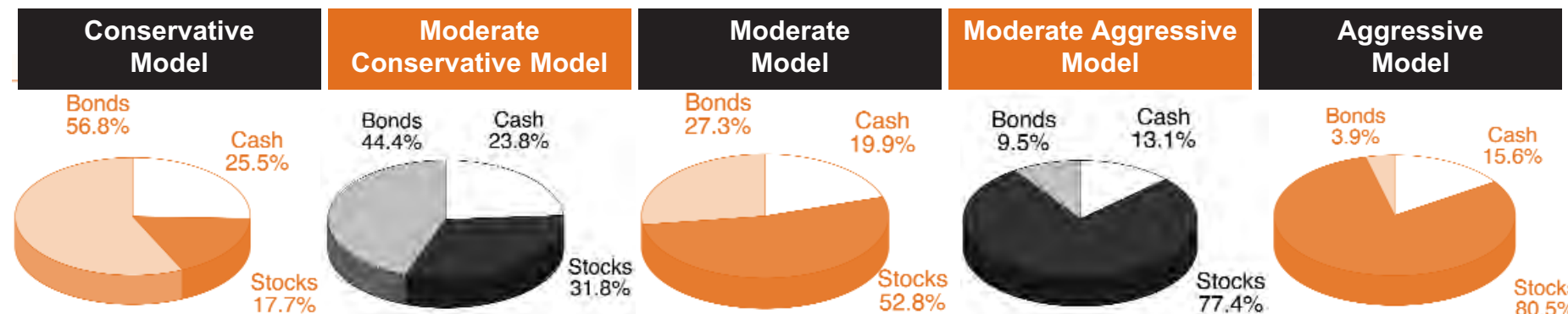
## California Machinists 401(k) Plan

Asset Allocation Model Returns (as of 03/31/2008)

Model Name	Q108	1 YR	3 YR	5 YR
Conservative	-3.6%	1.3%	7.0%	9.1%
Moderate Conservative	-5.7%	0.7%	6.0%	9.0%
Moderate	-9.4%	0.3%	9.0%	12.0%
Moderate Aggressive	-12.5%	1.2%	10.3%	14.8%
Aggressive	-12.3%	3.5%	11.3%	15.8%

Other investment options are available in the Plan.

The above summary/prices/quote/statistics have been obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, but we cannot guarantee its accuracy or completeness. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.



**WORKING WEALTH. AT SMITH BARNEY**

### Before, During, and In-between

Retirement has three phases. Will you succeed in all of them?

**Planning:**  
People work and live longer. Healthcare costs are rising. And family needs can now present new and even conflicting challenges. Smith Barney understands these changes and has the resources to help prepare you for them.

**Transitioning:**  
As you get closer to retirement, you may find you have new opportunities, new dreams or new challenges. We'll help you re-evaluate your portfolio, consolidate your resources and keep you on track.

**Living in retirement:**  
Retirements are lasting longer and the old formulas won't necessarily work. We'll work with you, to help your portfolio maintain a proper balance between your need for growth and the protection of your principal.

Please call for an appointment.

Clinton Graves, Financial Advisor (510) 486-2403  
1995 University Ave., Suite 500  
Berkeley, CA 94704  
www.fa.smithbarney.com/graves  
clinton.g.graves@smithbarney.com

Jay Schurman, Financial Advisor (510) 486-2423  
www.fa.smithbarney.com/schurman  
jay.schurman@smithbarney.com

**citi smith barney**

• Save the Date • Save the Date • Save the Date •

### Local Lodge 1414 Car Show

August 23, 2008

150 South Blvd., San Mateo

This year, Local 1414 will combine forces with our neighbors, IBEW Local 617, to plan the event. We're still working out the details about entry fees, awards, food and beverage. Hope to see you there!

**Moving?**

Send the mailing label on this newspaper to your Local Union office.

See Calendar on Page 8 for your local union's address.

# ATPA

**ASSOCIATED THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATORS**

ATPA is the administrator for the Automotive Industries Health & Welfare and Pension Trust Funds.

**Contact us at 510-836-2484**

## SHOP TALK: Why is the union important and what must be in next contract?



**Enrique Cobarroblas**  
Foster Farms - 28 years  
Machine attendant

"I'd like to make more money. I'd like to see the benefits that we had before—vacation and holidays. I haven't needed the union, but it's good to have."



**Ramon Quezada**  
Foster Farms - 23 years  
Stack boxes

"The way the economy is, with the cost of gasoline and food, we need more wages. Right now, we can't make ends meet. I want back the things the company took away."



**Isaura C. Hora**  
Foster Farms - 13 years  
Line worker

"I want back everything that the company took away—all the benefits—and more money. When I needed the union, they were there. I tell people to come in and enjoy the union. What the company does is only because of the union."



**Trinidad Diaz**  
Foster Farms - 42 years  
Pool/Back-up

"We want a lot of changes, especially benefits, wages, and returning the takeaways. The company only looks at production numbers; they don't care for the employees much. We give all our life, but when we get out of here, all we have is pain and suffering."



**Amelia Curiel**  
Foster Farms - 17 years  
Weigher

"We expect a wage increase because we really need it. We also want better medical coverage. The union really helped me when I needed them. We try to get more people to join the union."

# MEMBER PROFILE

## From truck repair to children's hospice, member retires to make a difference



It's the last day of work at Golden Gate Freightliner for George Warren.

After 29-1/2 years at Golden Gate Freightliner in Oakland, George Warren is retiring and embarking on a new career.

"I'm looking forward to not eating at the lunch wagon any more, and maybe now, I'll be able to lose 20 pounds," Warren says. "But what I'm really looking forward to is getting to work at the George Mark Children's House (GMCH), where I'll be doing building maintenance on a part-time basis. And, I'll continue to volunteer to work with the kids, and will probably do some fundraising, as well."

Warren says that his wife, Alice, is an RN and has been doing hospice work for years. She came to work at the GMCH when it first opened, and recruited him to be a volunteer. "I've been working with the kids for the past two years. The main focus of the place is hospice and end of life care," he explains. "Although a lot of the kids, while quite ill, are not yet at that stage. They can come to GMCH for respite care, so their parents can take a vacation, or they can be in a different location."

"At first, I didn't know if I could

do it," he says. "It can be a really sad deal—I can't imagine losing a child. But, it's really true when they say that you get more out of this than you put in. For instance, we have a spa/therapy program. My job is to help out the nurses by lifting the kids in and around; I play the 'crane.' It's amazing to see their reaction to feeling weightlessness for the first time in their lives."

Warren says that GMCH will accept anybody. "It's a good thing for the parents, so they can be with their kids during the hard time, but also so that they can catch a break."

The House is all run on donations. "They don't refuse anybody for lack of money. It's the first place I've found that you make 100% of a dif-

ference. No money goes into big salaries or bureaucracy. I'm honored to be able to work with them."

"I was a rough kid myself, causing lots of people a lot of grief. Working here gives me an opportunity to turn my life around in the second half of my life."

### A good career in truck repair

When *The Sparkplug* visited with Warren, it was his last day of work before retirement. "I've done my whole career here. When I started as an apprentice, in January, 1979, I think I was making \$5/hour and we put \$25/month into the pension. We're getting substantially more these days!"



The George Mark Children's House (GMCH) opened in 2004 in the San Leandro foothills. The first hospice for children in the U.S., GMCH offers free end-of-life, respite and transitional care to children, and supports the whole family with practical, emotional and spiritual support.

GMCH was conceived by Dr. Kathy Nicholson Hull, as a memorial to her two brothers. One brother, Mark Nicholson, died in an automobile accident in 1962 at the age of 16. The other, George Nicholson, died of cancer in 1969 at age 30. She experienced first-hand, as a sibling, just how devastating the loss of a child is to a family. The House is named for George and Mark.

GMCH is a welcoming, home-like refuge for the most seriously and terminally ill children and their families — before, during and after their child's illness and life, is over. The facility includes eight bedrooms, each with an extra bed for a parent/caregiver, two family suites, music, art and play activity rooms, a computer room, a state-of-the-art multi-sensory room, a spa for water therapy and relaxation, an outdoor play structure and outdoor pet kennel, and a multi-denominational sanctuary.

For more information, or to make a donation, go to: [www.georgemark.org](http://www.georgemark.org). The House is located at 2121 George Mark Lane, San Leandro, CA 94578.

He says that his clock number is 65 but the number for the next person hired will be around 570. "We've gone through a lot of mechanics and a lot of service managers," he says.

Warren adds quickly that Golden Gate Freightliner has been a great place to work. "It's certainly one of the premier truck shops in the Bay Area. I've enjoyed it, but frankly, I'm tired of trucks. I think I'm getting out at the perfect time, as the technology really starts to change."

Warren says he mostly did gear work—transmissions and rear ends. "But I've also done some electrical and new multiplex systems," he adds.

"I care about where I work. It's where my paycheck comes from and everybody else's. I want to see things done right. I've always spoken my mind and was labeled a troublemaker. They may be glad when I'm gone."

Warren says that the union's been good to him. "Sometimes I think the business agents could have done a better job on some of the grievances, but then I don't always know the whole story."

"Ultimately, I think they've worked hard for us. I especially respect Don Crosatto and the Trustees for doing what's right with the pension plan so that it will remain solvent. I know those weren't easy decisions they had to make."

Warren said that during his last few weeks on the job, he was hearing from people he hadn't spoken to in 15-20 years. "They are all wishing me well."

In addition to working at GMCH, he plans to do some carpentry work with a good friend who's a general contractor. "Oh yes, and I also have a huge landscaping job to do at home. I'll be plenty busy."

## SHOP TALK: Why is the union important and what must be in next contract?



**Alfredo Colima**  
Foster Farms - 6 years  
Packing

"I want to see things much better. More money—that's the most important. Sometimes the line is too fast, sometimes it's okay."



**Magdalena Valencia**  
Foster Farms - 24 years  
Laborer/I do everything

"I want to get back all the benefits we lost. And they need to give us a raise—the pay is low and the cost of life is very high. The union is very good; if we didn't have the union, we'd be lost here."



**Maria Guerrero**  
Foster Farms - 19 years  
Deboning

"There's a lot of favoritism and discrimination here; that's why we need the union. We also need a wage increase because we haven't had one for a long time and the cost of living is so high."



**Maria Ceja**  
Foster Farms - 7 years  
Machine attendant

"Money. Everything is so expensive and going up but we stay the same. We can't pay more for our medical or that will eat up any wage increase we get. Not everyone here is in the union, but they should be. It's been important for me."



**Victoria Garcia**  
Foster Farms - 19 years  
Deboning

"First, we need all the benefits they took away. Second, all the people should be united. I want to see everybody come together. Third—better wages, health insurance, vacation, seniority, everything. The union has been valuable—they've backed me up."

# AT THE UNION HALL

## Local 1484 makes its building more attractive and user-friendly

Local 1484's Wilmington office and union hall have had a complete facelift thanks to retired member George Bialeto, who oversaw the entire renovation project.

The project started in August 2007 and was completed in about six months. "It was a long project. We had been looking at the situation for many years," Bialeto says.

Serving as the general contractor, Bialeto oversaw the work of putting on a new roof, repairing leaks that had damaged the walls and ceilings, enclosing the plenum for the air conditioning, installing cabinets and a drop ceiling for the office, hallway and union hall, soundproofing the storage/copier area, improving the lighting, painting and replacing the flooring and carpets.



At left, Office Manager Maria Suarez and George Bialeto enjoy the newly renovated office. At right, the union hall is bright and cheery.

Members from ITS chipped in to buy a wide-screen TV for showing instructional and union videos.

"After all this work, the building is much more

functional for those who work here, and much more attractive for our members. And it came in under budget," Bialeto says. "Now it's a union office we can be proud of."

## UNION MEETINGS

### District Lodge 190

7717 Oakport Street  
Oakland, CA 94621  
510-632-3661

#### Executive Board Meeting

Fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

June 24 • July 22 • August 26

#### General Delegates' Meeting

Fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

June 24 • July 22 • August 26

### Local 653

544 West Olive,  
Fresno, CA 93728  
559-264-2815

#### Executive Board Meeting

Third Wednesday of the Month at 5:00 p.m.

June 18 • July 16 • August 20

#### Membership Meeting

Third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

June 18 • July 16 • August 20

### Local 801

7717 Oakport Street,  
Oakland, CA 94621  
800-655-2182

#### Membership Meeting

Third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m.

June 19 • July 17 • August 21

Meetings are held at the Carpenters' Hall, in Reno.

### Local 1101

3777 Stevens Creek  
Blvd., Suite 320  
Santa Clara, CA 95051  
408-551-2280

#### Executive Board Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

June 12 • July 10 • August 14

#### General Membership Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

June 12 • July 10 • August 14

Check at union office for meeting room.

#### Note change in office hours:

Mon-Thurs: 7:30a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Friday: 7:30a.m.-4:00 p.m.

### Local 1173

1900 Bates Ave., # H  
Concord, CA 94520  
925-687-6421

#### Executive Board Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

June 12 • July 10 • August 14

#### Membership/Shop Stewards' Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

June 19 • July 17 • August 21

### Local 1414

150 South Blvd.  
San Mateo, CA 94402  
650-341-2689

#### Shop Stewards' Meeting

First Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 5 • July 3 • August 7

#### Executive Board Meeting

Second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 12 • July 10 • August 14

#### General Membership Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

June 19 • July 17 • August 21

#### Retirees' Club

First Wednesday of June, Sept., Dec., March at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome!

June 4, September 3, December 3

### Local 1484

1261 Avalon Blvd.  
Wilmington, CA 90744  
310-835-6688

#### Executive Board Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 19 • July 17 • August 21

#### General Membership Meeting

First Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 3 • July 1 • August 5

#### Retirees' Club

Third Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

June 18 • July 16 • August 20

### Local 1528

713 16th Street  
Modesto, CA 95354  
209-529-9210

#### Executive Board Meeting

First Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 4 • July 2 • August 6

#### General Membership Meeting

First Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

June 4 • July 2 • August 6

#### Women's Committee Meeting

Please contact local 1528 for times and dates of monthly Women's committee meetings

#### Retiree's Club

Third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m.

June 18 • July 16 • August 20

Narcotics Anonymous: Every Tuesday, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

### Local 1546

10260 MacArthur Blvd.,  
Oakland, CA 94605  
510-638-6705

#### General Membership Meeting

First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

June 3 • July 1 • August 5

#### Member Education Meeting

First Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

June 3 • July 1 • August 5

#### Executive Board Meeting

Thursday preceding membership meeting at 6:30 p.m.

May 29 • June 26 • July 31

#### Retiree Club Pot Luck Luncheon

First Wednesday of each month at 12 noon

June 4 • July 2 • August 6

Alcoholics Anonymous: Every Saturday, 9 a.m.

### Local 1584

8130 Baldwin Street  
Oakland, CA 94621  
510-635-2064

#### Membership Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

June 19 • July 17 • August 21

#### Executive Board Meeting

Third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 19 • July 17 • August 21

#### Retirees' Club

First Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.

June 3 • July 1 • August 5

### Local 1596

4210 Petaluma Blvd. No.  
Petaluma, CA 94952  
707-795-0085

#### Membership Meeting

Third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

June 17 • July 15 • August 19

#### Executive Board Meeting

Third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

June 17 • July 15 • August 19

### Local 2005

416 Main Street  
Livingston, CA 95334  
209-394-7822

Meetings of the general membership are held at the Livingston Portuguese Hall, usually on the Second or Third Sunday of the month.

June 8 • July 20 • August 17

- English & Punjabi—at 1:00 p.m.

- Spanish & Portuguese—at 2:30 p.m.

### Local 2182

967 Venture Court,  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
800-458-9200

#### Executive Board Meeting

Second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

June 10 • July 8 • August 12

#### General Membership Meeting

Second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

June 10 • July 8 • August 12

#### Retirees' Club - VISTA CLUB

Third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.

June 18 • July 16 • August 20