Busts to Booms

"3 Strikes & You're Out!"

How Calif.'s "3 strikes" law will affect prison construction

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A case for revamping California's transportation funding program

Winston Churchill once said: "The nation will find it very hard to look up to the leaders who are keeping their ears to the ground." In California, we have far too many political "leaders" whose ears are worn raw from this despicable practice - particularly on the issue of funding our essential transportation system. And what do they hear from all this time spent on the ground? It is not the sound of an oncoming train or even a semi freight truck. No, it is the deafening sound of silence; the uneasy stillness that follows when the engines of commerce grind to a halt.

The lifeblood of California's economy has always relied on two things: our water and our transportation system. Forty years ago, we had leaders who recognized this. They possessed enough vision and backbone to levy the taxes that were needed to build what was then the finest highway and water systems in the world. This precious infrastructure - which our union members played an integral part in building - paved the way for three decades of prosperity.

Even during the years when the rest of the nation languished in deep recession, California's suffering was never as painful. Why? Because we possessed a state-of-the-art infrastructure. California was a good place in which to conduct business. Indeed, corporations flocked here with their billions of dollars to build their "Silicon Valleys," office buildings and factories.

Those golden days are gone. Our glistening image is tarnished from over a decade of neglect. It is now cause for celebration when a major business chooses California. More often we see the tale lights of a U-Haul van as another family leaves, driven out of the state because the job that kept them here is also gone.

Now, we are the ones in pain. While the rest of the nation pulls itself up by its bootstraps from the terrible slump that ushered in the nineties, California continues to wallow in economic despair.

What must be done? I can't speak for all the ills that plague our state, but our transportation system is one thing I know something about. It is time for our leaders to get up off the ground, dust themselves off and look to the horizon. There, they will see that we have a critical and urgent need to get our state's transportation system off life support. Here are my suggestions:

- Sacramento needs to re-acquaint itself with the principle of integrity. With respect to transportation funding, those elected and hired to serve the public need to do what they say they're going to do. Otherwise the voters will turn their backs on government forever. Case in point. When we helped to spearhead the coalition that backed Propositions 111 and 108 back in 1990, it was with the promise that the money would be used for specific projects and programs to relieve traffic congestion. Voters - never anxious to impose new taxes on themselves - supported these measures because they believed in those promises.

What happened in the meantime? California had two disastrous earthquakes and the worst recession in 60 years. Politicians, with their ears to the ground and their fingers to the wind, thought they heard the masses tell them that earthquake retrofit was where we should put our money. In knee-jerk fashion they hastily passed legislation mandating that ne'er a mile of highway would be built until every bridge everywhere was earthquake safe.

This was not leadership. This was spineless genuflecting to the crowd. By mandating such a
program without providing funding for it, Caltrans was forced to dip heavily into Proposition 111 funds to pay for all those reinforced bridges.

No one denies that we are in need of retrofitting our bridges and overpasses for earthquake safety. But we are robbing Peter to pay Paul when we mandate such programs without securing the funds to pay for them.

What we needed from the politicians— and failed to get— was some backbone. They should have told the public up front that there was no money in the till to pay for earthquake repair and that a temporary sales tax increase would be the cheap- est and least painful way to pay for it. That’s not what we got. Oh yes, a temporary tax increase was proposed, but the politicians ran from the dreadful “T” word and instead put a bond measure on the ballot last June (Proposition 1A) that was far more costly.

The voters didn’t buy it. In fact, they have turned down just about any ballot measure that seeks to put capital improvements on a credit card.

The politicians then added insult to injury. In complete violation of the public trust, the folks in Sacramento last July said they were going to pay for the earthquake retrofit anyway. Less than a month after the failure of Proposition 1A, Caltrans issued a decree that nearly all current and future highway construction in California would be halted indefinitely until the earthquake retrofit program was fully financed, as mandated by the legislature.

Once again there was the sound of spineless slithering in Sacramento. No one had the backbone to stand up to the public and say: “We’re sorry, but if you are not willing to pay for earthquake retrofit, then it can’t be done.”

It took a month of very intense discussion and arm-twisting to convince the Governor that to shut down California’s highway construction industry would be disastrous.

• To save our transportation system, we must break down the traditional methods of funding stone by stone. It is time to design a better way to pay for our roads and our railways.

Fourteen years ago, we saw the handwriting on the wall. It said: “The times are changing. Cars are more fuel efficient. Less money is being generated from fuel taxes and it’s happening at a time when highways and mass transit systems are much more costly to build.”

We appealed to then Governor Jerry Brown for an increase in the fuel tax. He resisted. After two years of wrangling and a lot of pressure from State Senator John Foran, we finally got Brown to sign off on a two-cent fuel tax increase. It wasn’t enough, but it was better than nothing. It was one of the last things Jerry Brown did as governor.

Three years later, we were facing the same dilemma. We appealed to Governor Deukmejian, but he couldn’t hear us because his ear was to the ground. He did what most politicians were doing and have been doing ever since. He refused to look at any recipe that contained “tax increase” as an ingredient. Despite all we could do, we were unsuccessful in securing a 5-cent gas tax increase.

By 1986, the transportation funding problem was severe. Even Deukmejian knew he had to do something. A coalition of business, government and labor leaders forged a plan which eventually became Propositions 111 and 108. It was a plan to provide modest increases in gas taxes and user fees to generate $18 billion in transportation revenues. Again, it was only a compromise, but it was the best thing in town.

The Operating Engineers were the first to put money on the table to get these ballot measures passed. Our contribution spurred contractors, businesses and other unions to put their money where their mouths were. We all worked hard during those early months of 1990 and in June, both propositions passed by slim margins.

At last, we thought we could breathe easy for awhile, but we were wrong. Earthquakes and a terrible recession threw transportation funding in a tailspin.

Our problem is painfully obvious. Fuel taxes and user fees alone cannot build and maintain our highways and mass transit.

There are also those who still lean on the over-used and abused “bond measure” to fix our transportation problems. It’s not working. The public isn’t buying “credit card construction” anymore. If you raise a billion dollars in taxes, you have a billion dollars to spend on building something.

• A sales tax increase dedicated to transportation is the most productive, least painful way to keep our transportation system healthy.

Let’s face it, nearly everyone living in this state — and millions more who visit — use our transportation system. We are all beneficiaries, even if we are one of the rare few who never get behind the wheel. Every product we buy, every meal we make comes to us by virtue of our transportation system. To say that a general sales tax is not a user fee for transportation is plain wrong.

A modest increase in the general state sales tax would generate far more money for our roads and transit than similar hikes in fuel taxes could produce. According to Californians for Better Transportation, each cent of general sales tax generates $2.8 billion per year. Our transportation system currently needs $7.6 billion a year — $6.3 billion to cover existing expenditures plus an additional $1.5 billion for projects that are needed but have no funding. One option would be to eliminate the state fuel tax entirely and replace it with a 2.75% to 3% general sales tax. This would spread the cost of paying for our transportation system to everyone — resident or tourist — who buys something in this state. It would also lower our fuel taxes.

Another option would be to keep the current system of taxes and fees in place and increase the sales tax by .5 cent to cover our current shortfall.

A parting comment

I am fully aware that any proposal in the present political climate that asks for a tax increase is facing almost insurmountable opposition. Governor Wilson wants to cut taxes by 15% for businesses and individuals. We would all like to pay less taxes. But to slash taxes across the board now is fairy-tale economics. Anyone who thinks that a huge cut in taxes will generate enough business to overcome an already bankrupt state budget is dreaming.

What we need are real leaders; those with the integrity and strength to tell a patient on life support that he will die unless bold measures are taken. Right now, they are not to be found. Who will step forward and be counted?

See semi-annual meeting article, p. 20
Busts to booms

How California’s ‘three strikes’ law will affect prison construction

By Steve Moler
Assistant Editor

The day California enacted the “Three-Strikes-and-You’re-Out” sentencing law for repeat criminal offenders in March 1994, state lawmakers not only dramatically altered the course of the state’s criminal justice system, they may have given the construction industry a considerable boost.

If “three strikes” is fully enforced - and that’s a big “if” given the state’s financial status - the California Department of Corrections estimates the state will have to build 23 new prisons by decade’s end to handle the burgeoning prison population, which is expected to double by 1999, from the current 121,800 to over 240,000. A fully implemented “three strikes” law will add within five years 70,000 new inmates to California’s inmate census and cost an extra $2 billion annually.

What’s even more astonishing, according to the Department of Corrections, is that even if all 23 new prisons are built quickly, the facilities, given the current inmate growth rate, will be filled to capacity soon after opening and jump to 140 percent of capacity within five years.

Like California and most other states, the federal government is also having trouble keeping up with its prison population explosion. Although the number of federal penitentiaries has risen from 43 in 1982 to 77 today, they still house 30 percent more inmates than they were designed to accommodate.

Why so many convicts

The nation’s prison population has been rising steadily over the past decade due primarily to tougher sentences for drug offenses. The number of inmates in state and federal prisons hit the 1 million mark last year, a three-fold increase since 1980, with half the increase linked to drug offenses. California now locks up one in every 146 residents, up from one in every 1,006 residents in 1980.

But “three strikes” is expected to increase prison head counts in California even more. The law requires anyone convicted of a felony to receive twice the normal prison sentence if there’s a prior conviction for a serious or violent felony. A third conviction for any felony requires a 25-year-to-life sentence. And those convicted of a third felony after two previous convictions for serious or violent felonies must serve at least 80 percent of their sentence.

Another bill signed into law in September of last year imposes even stiffer penalties than “three strikes.” Inmates used to be able to cut their sentences in half for work and good behavior. But under the new sentencing law, people convicted of most violent felonies will be required to serve at least 85 percent of their prison term even if it’s a first offense.

Footings the bill

The big question concerning “three strikes” is: how is the state going to pay for the required prison expansion? Californians, who overwhelmingly approved the “three strikes” initiative Prop. 184 in last November’s midterm election, have turned down two recent prison construction bond measures. Moreover, the state Legislature passed the “three strikes” law early last year without allocating any money for new prison construction.

Gov. Pete Wilson, who made “three strikes” the cornerstone of his re-election campaign, has yet to submit his budget for fiscal 1995-96, but two recent studies put the cost of “three strikes” at between $3.5 billion and $5 billion annually. A study by the California Higher Education Policy Center, a San Jose-based independent research organization, says “three strikes” will require a 75 percent increase in spending for new prisons between now and 2003, from $2 billion in 1995-96 to $3.5 billion by 2003-4.

A similar analysis of “three strikes” by the Rand Corp., the Santa Monica-based think tank, estimates the cost of the law at $5.5 billion annually, or $300 per California taxpayer, with most of the money going for new prisons and their operating costs. The Department of Corrections puts the cost of “three strikes” at between $1.1 billion to $1.8 billion annually.

Federal crime bill funding

If California and other states can’t foot their entire prison construction bills, the federal government is ready to help. The federal crime bill enacted last summer authorized $7.9 billion over six years in grants to states for prisons, with most of the money expected to go for construction, though operating costs are eligible for funding. Although the federal crime bill authorizes only $175 million this year, the funding pace picks up sharply during the remaining five years: $750 million in 1996, $1 billion in 1997, $1.9 billion in 1998, $2 billion in 1999 and $2.07 billion in 2000. States would have to put up 25 percent matching funds.

Impact on Operating Engineers

If most or all of the 23 needed California prisons are built over the next decade, the impact on the building trades would be fairly significant. Constructing a medium or maximum-security prison of the 2,000-bed variety today costs between $180 million to $220 million and can put as many operators to work as a decent-size subdivision, up to 80 to 90 operators in the early stages of construction.

Site preparation for new prisons, which are often located in isolated, undeveloped areas, can require moving between 1 million and 2 million yards of dirt. During construction of the Coalinga Prison in Fresno County, for example, a facility that just started receiving inmates last November, Operating Engineers moved about 1.7 million yards of dirt.

After extensive site preparation, prison construction contracts usually call for the building of large on-site infrastructure such as water and wastewater treatment plants, as well as the usual storm drains and underground utilities. At the Coalinga Prison during the summer of 1992, crews excavated for sewage treatment ponds and in some areas had to dig down 10 feet and recompact the soil in order to make the site suitable for construction. Even the pre-cast concrete construction...
stage for housing units and guard towers puts a fair amount of crane and other hoisting operators to work.

The drawbacks

A possible disadvantage of substantially increasing prison construction is that it might drain funds from services such as parks and recreation and higher education. While funding for kindergarten through community college is guaranteed by Prop. 98 at 40 percent of the state budget, the same is not true for the state university system. Fifteen years ago, 2 percent of California’s general fund went for prison costs compared with 12.8 percent for higher education. This year, spending on the two will be about the same, with higher education at 9.8 percent and prisons at 9.6 percent. And under “three strikes,” the prison budget will almost certainly exceed that of higher education in fiscal 1995-96.

Where will they be built

Another big question, if the state finds the necessary revenue, is will a proportionate amount of prisons be built in Northern California? If Northern California has roughly a third of the state’s population, then it follows that seven to eight of the 23 prisons should be constructed here.

But Northern Californians have demonstrated more resistance to building new prisons than their counterparts in Southern California. Department of Corrections officials responsible for searching for new prison sites have received positive overtures from several Southern California cities and counties, but in Northern California the atmosphere has been almost hostile.

In the small town of Gridley just north of Marysville, about 200 people packed a special meeting last April and convinced the city council not to put the issue of constructing a prison on the ballot. Voters in the city of Ione in Amador County overwhelmingly rejected a ballot measure that would have paved the way for construction of a second prison there. And the same thing happened in Siakiyou County, where voters defeated a ballot measure that would have allowed construction of a prison in Weed at the foot of Mount Shasta.

The one major exception has been Soledad in Monterey County, which already is home to a 6,800-inmate state prison. The community, in stark contrast to other Northern California communities, vigorously pursued the construction of a $368 million, 2,200 bed medium and maximum-security prison next to the state Correctional Training Facility. The project, which is expected to create 1,200 jobs and 800 indirect jobs, got underway last fall and will be completed in 18 to 24 months.

If more communities like Soledad open their doors to new prisons, Northern California stands a good chance of getting its fair share of new prisons — and the work that goes along with the projects.
GOP's anti-unionism jeopardizes prevailing wages, safety

Business Manager Tom Stapleton, during his semi-annual meeting speech, put one aspect of the Republican mid-term election victory in perspective. Despite winning support from many union members on November 8, the Republicans, he said, are no friends of labor.

Some good examples that support Stapleton’s argument are emerging in Washington as Capitol Hill convenes the 104th Congress this month.

While many working Americans enthusiastically endorsed the Republicans’ “Contract with America” on election day, they may not have realized the adverse consequences of supporting a party that historically has been hostile to workers and their unions.

For most of this century and beyond, the Democratic Party has been the primary vehicle behind which organized labor has successfully campaigned for many of the federal laws that today provide workers with fair wages and safer working conditions.

But now that Republicans have captured majorities in both the House and Senate for the first time since 1954, workers will likely see an entirely different attitude prevail in the 104th Congress, one that won’t likely favor trade unionists.

Consider what’s happening with the Davis-Bacon Act, the law that guarantees that construction workers are paid prevailing wages on federally financed building projects. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.), who will chair the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, is expected to introduce a bill early in the new session calling for the outright repeal of Davis-Bacon. Kassebaum has long been an ardent opponent of the law, saying it no longer serves its original purpose.

Sen. Don Nickles (R-Okla.), a member of the GOP Working Group responsible for setting the Senate agenda for the new session and a staunch advocate of Davis-Bacon repeal, considers the law a “discriminatory law that raises the cost of government construction, ensuring the hiring of skilled labor for jobs in which many unskilled workers could be hired and develop skills.”

In the House, Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-NC), who will chair the Sub-committee on Worker Protection with jurisdiction over OSHA, the Fair Labor Standards Act and Davis-Bacon, will likely introduce a companion repeal bill early in the session.

If Republican lawmakers successfully repeal Davis-Bacon, union contractors will have much more difficulty bidding successfully on federally funded projects because non-union companies won’t be required to pay their workers the higher prevailing rate.

If outright repeal becomes politically unfeasible, the Republicans will likely settle for substantially scaling back Davis-Bacon, such as increasing the law’s threshold from the current $2,000 level to as high as $1 million.

Another area under Republican attack is occupational safety and health. For the past 25 years, the Occupational Safety and Health Act has helped provide workers with a reasonably safe and healthy work place. But the law hasn’t been upgraded since it was enacted in 1970.

For the past two congressional sessions, organized labor, with the help of congressional Democrats, has tried but failed to enact OSHA reform legislation, which would basically overhaul the law in order to better meet the demands of today’s work place.

The legislation would require businesses to establish worker-employer health and safety committees, impose stiffer penalties for companies that violate safety regulations, extend OSHA protection to 7.4 million federal and state public employees, require stricter record keeping by businesses, and enhance OSHA’s oversight of the construction industry, to name a few of its provisions.

But because of the Republicans’ anti-union, anti-regulatory attitudes, the chances of OSHA reform passing in the new session are “very bleak to non-existent,” according to AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue. He told the AFL-CIO National Safety and Health Conference December 5 that, although labor would continue to press the Clinton administration for regulatory changes to enhance work-place safety, unions can expect little help from the Republican-controlled Congress.

As a result, unions will have to win through collective bargaining what they can’t gain from a new Congress that’s likely to be more hostile to union concerns.

“What we can’t get government to do for us,” Donahue said, “we’re going to have to re-learn to do for ourselves.”
Hazmat schedule for 1st quarter of 1995

The following classes have been scheduled for the first quarter of 1995. The start time for all 40-hour classes and refreshers is 7 a.m. Students more than 45 days past their eight-hour due dates will be required to attend an interview.

San Francisco District
8-hour class - January 21, at the Oakland District office, 8105 Capwell Drive in Oakland

Fairfield District
8-hour class - February 9, at the Fairfield District office, 2540 N. Watney Way in Fairfield

Santa Rosa District
8-hour class - March 17
8-hour class - March 23
Santa Rosa classes will be held at the Labor Center, 1700 Corby Ave. in Santa Rosa.

Reno District
40-hour class - Feb. 10
8-hour class - Feb. 11
40-hour and 8-hour classes will be held at the Carpenter's Hall, 1150 Terminal Way, Reno

Elko District
(1094 Lamolle Hw.)

Interviews - Jan. 10, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Oakland District
(5105 Capwell Drive)

8-hour class - January 12
8-hour class - January 13
8-hour class - January 14
8-hour class - January 20

Due to limited space, students who want to attend the Oakland classes will have to call the district office, (510) 638-7273, to reserve a slot.

Stockton District
(1916 N. Broadway)

8-hour class - February 10
8-hour class - March 10

Call the Stockton District office at (209) 943-2332 for arrangements.

Eureka District
(2806 Broadway)

8-hour class - March 10

Marysville District
8-hour class - March 4

Class will be held at Sutter-Yuba Assoc. of Realtors, 1558 Starr Dr., Yuba City.

Redding District
(20006 Engineers Lane)

40-hour class - Jan. 23-27
8-hour class - Jan. 28

Interviews - Jan. 25, 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Sacramento District
(4944 N. Freeway Blvd., Suite 200)

8-hour class - January 9
8-hour class - February 13
8-hour class - March 13

Students who want to attend in Sacramento please call for arrangements at 916-655-6170.

San Jose District
(760 Emory Street)

8-hour class - March 23
8-hour class - March 24
8-hour class - March 25

Students must call the district office at (408) 295-8788 to reserve a spot.

HINTS THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

Hints that could save your life. People who abuse alcohol and drugs often engage in various risky behaviors they themselves would normally not condone. In light of current medical and public health research, the following is presented as a source of information regarding the HIV and AIDS crisis in the United States.

How you become infected
You can become infected with HIV in two main ways: First, by having sexual intercourse with an infected person, and second, by sharing drug needles or syringes with an infected person.

Also, a woman with HIV can infect her baby during pregnancy, during birth or by breast feeding. HIV-infected women have about a one-in-three chance of infecting their baby during pregnancy or delivery.

Some people have become infected receiving blood or blood products such as a blood transfusion or blood clotting factors (for hemophiliacs). However, careful screening and laboratory testing of all blood donations since 1985 have greatly reducing this possibility.

A person doesn't have to look sick to spread the virus. An HIV-infected person can infect others without even knowing it.

How you cannot get HIV
- You won't get HIV through everyday contact with infected people at work, home, school or anywhere else.
- You won't get HIV from clothes, phones or toilet seats. It can't be passed on by things like forks, cups or other objects that someone who is infected with the virus has used.
- You won't get HIV from a mosquito bite. HIV does not live in a mosquito, and it is not transmitted through a mosquito's bite like other germs such as the ones that cause malaria. You won't get it from bed bugs, lice, flies or other insects either.
- You won't get HIV from sweat or tears.
- You won't get HIV from a simple kiss. Experts are not completely certain about HIV transmission through deep, prolonged, or “French” kissing. Most scientists agree that although transmission of HIV through deep or prolonged kissing may be possible, it would be unlikely.
- You won't get HIV from giving blood. Needles used to give blood are sterile and used once, then are destroyed. There is only a very small chance of infection with HIV through blood.

ADDICTION RECOVERY PROGRAM

Attention BATT students
The Bay Area Training Corp., formerly the Bay Area Training Trust, has announced the requirements for its updated BATT training.

Beginning in January, the Operating Engineers will no longer be teaching the classes. The refiners have completely revamped their program to include process safety management, and special teaching credentials will be required to instruct these classes.

We have also been advised that refresher classes will be required every two years and 30 days. BATT will make arrangements for those students who have gone beyond their time requirements in order to maintain their cards. Arrangements to attend future classes can be made by calling the Concord office of BATC at (510) 602-3810.

Bob Baroni and I would like to thank those of you who took time out to attend the BATT classes that we have put on over the past three years and hope that you will continue with the BATT training.
Surveying apprenticeship loses one of its finest

Apprenticeship has lost one of its finest, Eugene “Berkey” Berkebile, who passed away December 10 in Nevada City, Calif.

Berkey worked for the Division of Apprenticeship Standards as an area administrator and took a well-earned retirement in 1992. He was always available to give valuable information to any of the apprenticeship programs.

Berkey helped start new programs and kept the older programs updated. He took new coordinators under his wing and guided them in the apprenticeship direction. Berkey was always there when needed, and his contribution to apprenticeship will never be forgotten. Our sincerest sympathy goes out to his wife, Anne, and family.

How apprenticeship is structured

It takes many people at all levels of government to make apprenticeship work. The Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training is the federal governing body. It organizes apprenticeship nationwide and oversees many state apprenticeship programs. There is also what is called SAC (State Apprenticeship Committee) states, and these states not only have to follow the BAT regulations but have additional regulations of their own. California is a SAC state and has its own Division of Apprenticeship Standards, which falls under the Department of Industrial Relations.

Then there is the California Apprenticeship Council that approves new programs and sets the standards for all programs. Council members are appointed for three-year terms by the governor. Additionally, joint labor-management committees are set up to oversee each program.

When you hear about an apprenticeship program, you hear mostly about individual requirements to be met for that particular program. The requirements are part of state law and each program must abide by these laws. So for each apprentice that enters the Northern California Surveyors Joint Apprenticeship Program all of these items have to be in place.

Contract talks focus of Tech Engineers activities

Surveyors’ work hours are beginning to improve once again. Looking back over the past five years, the two worst years were 1992 and 1993. Hours reported for 1994 are estimated to be 540,000-plus.

Below is a list of work hours for the past five years:

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>663,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>558,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>498,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>540,000 (approx.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contract negotiations

Contract negotiations and ratification meetings have been concluded with San Jose Water Company. Local 3 has represented the employees in the company’s Engineering Division for many years. The new two-year agreement was by far the best agreement negotiated over the past 10 years. Special thanks to Shop Steward Vicki Larson for her invaluable help and expertise.

In the Fresno area, a new three-year agreement was also negotiated and ratified with Hanna and Manna Inc. This new contract will improve wage and fringe benefits.

Also in the Fresno area, the newly organized firm of Espinosa Surveys signed a new three-year agreement. Company owner Pete Espinosa began his career as a Local 3 survey apprentice in 1977. He completed his apprenticeship in 1980 and became a certified party chief. Pete continued his surveying studies and in 1990 successfully passed his licensed land surveyor exam.

Future negotiations

A pre-negotiation meeting is scheduled January 11 at the Santa Rosa District office for the employees of Carille & Associates, Breije & Race, Cinqui & Passarino and Carlenzoli & Associates. Contract negotiations are scheduled for mid-January. We will keep you informed on our progress.

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Also in the Fresno area, the newly organized firm of Espinosa Surveys signed a new three-year agreement. Company owner Pete Espinosa began his career as a Local 3 survey apprentice in 1977. He completed his apprenticeship in 1980 and became a certified party chief. Pete continued his surveying studies and in 1990 successfully passed his licensed land surveyor exam.

Future negotiations

A pre-negotiation meeting is scheduled January 11 at the Santa Rosa District office for the employees of Carille & Associates, Breije & Race, Cinqui & Passarino and Carlenzoli & Associates. Contract negotiations are scheduled for mid-January. We will keep you informed on our progress.
Northern Nevada concludes great work year

RENO - Last year northern Nevada had Project C, the big hotel casino in downtown Reno, where four tower cranes and three manlifts running double shifts kept 17 operators busy for the last nine months.

Project C is the biggest commercial building project the Reno construction work force has ever had to staff.

Now when looking across the Truckee Meadows you will see crane booms filling in spaces between the high rises. Besides the four tower cranes, we have cranes on the federal building, Eldorado Hotel addition and the new Washoe County Courthouse. Reno has never had this many cranes at one time downtown.

The mining industry has proven again to be a big employer for our members in 1994. At one time we had over 300 equipment operators working in the gold mines at Carlin and Ely. The mines are continuously developing new properties and using our members to work these jobs.

Our road construction was very good in 1994. The big job was the 395 South extension, a $52 million, two-year job that will continue through 1995. We also had many overlays throughout northern Nevada.

Many smaller jobs of utility work, subdivision and commercial size work helped make 1994 one of the best years northern Nevada has ever seen.

Predictions for 1995 sound even better as good as 1994. The Pinion Pine Power Plant, a $250 million rebuild of the Tracy Power Plant from gas fired to coal fired, and the Hotel-Casino additions are in the news. The Peppermill, Clarion and Nugget all have plans to build hotel towers. The state has proposed over $60 million of road work to bid by spring. As far as the mine work goes, we never have any advance notice of any new projects. With jobs to finish from last year we will have an early start in 1995.

I would like to remind everyone of our district meeting date and time change to February 16 at 7 p.m. I expect to see a better turnout in 1995.

All of us in the Reno office would like to wish everyone and their families a happy and prosperous New Year.

Last year was good, but '95 should be even better

SACRAMENTO - Local 3 had a much better year in 1994, and we believe 1995 will be even better with projects like Apple Computer in south Sacramento and the $97 million wastewater treatment plant in Sacramento. The Del Webb Sun City project in Roseville will carry over into 1995, and many other projects are still going. These bigger projects have been going seven days a week. This has been good for many members.

Upcoming job prospects are SMUD co-generation plants and the 65-mile pipeline mentioned in last month's Engineers News. Also, there is a $13 million Business I-80 sound wall that Granite wants to start soon. RGW will be starting an $8 million Harbor Boulevard project, plus many other projects will soon start.

The AFL-CIO Operating Christmas Basket given to needy non-working union families aided over 50 families of various trades in the Sacramento area. The baskets included canned goods, pasta, beans, rice, potatoes, the whole nine yards, plus a ham and a turkey for each family. A special thanks to our union members in District 80 who volunteered to help pack and deliver baskets to our Local 3 families. The quality of the Christmas baskets was unbelievable. A special thanks to California Emergency Food Line and Mona Mansfield of the AFL-CIO Community Service Liaison for their efforts.

Now that we have the AHI Hearing Aid provider in our building, our Northgate office is now a complete service center. In our building we now have downstairs a branch of the credit union, American Diversified Pharmacy and AHI, while upstairs we have the Unit 12 Division, dispatch hall and apprenticeship offices.

A reminder, if anyone is unable to use the stairs, you may ask the credit union or pharmacy to call upstairs and someone will be down to assist you.

We were all very sad to hear about the accident that left Sharon Hannon of the Sacramento branch of the credit union seriously injured and her husband even more seriously injured. It will take Sharon a while to recover. We will keep you updated since so many of you have been asking. Your prayers and good wishes will be appreciated.

A trust fund to help Sharon and her husband has been established. If you would like to make a contribution, you can do so at any branch of the credit union under the Sharon Hannon Trust.

On a lighter note, Business Agent Gary Wagner is back from successful back surgery. He thanks all of the concerned members who called to wish him a speedy recovery.

The SELEC items you have been asking about are now in the Sacramento office. We have limited sizes on some items, but a pretty good selection of the new navy blue and gray jackets, hats, sweatshirts. Call the office to see if your size is available.

If you are on the out-of-work list, don't forget to re-register. If you are unsure of when your registration expires, check with the office.

At the upcoming district meeting January 26 we will present service pins to members with 25 or more years of service.

Remember, district meeting time has been changed to 7 p.m.

Don't forget the refresher course for Hazmat if you need to recertify. We have a refresher course scheduled for February 13 and March 13. Contact the Sacramento District office at (916) 696-6170 to enroll.

The agents and personnel of the Sacramento office would like to wish you and your families a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.


Help build a fishing pier

Local 3 member David Gelser of Livermore and his wife Sharon are coordinating the construction of fishing piers at this site at Pinecrest Lake in the Stanislaus National Forest in memory of their son, Lon Gelser, who, at age 27, was killed in an automobile accident last summer. Lon and his family spent many summers camping and fishing at the lake. Although construction should begin next month, the project is still short of funds. If you'd like to help, a donation would be greatly appreciated. Send to:

Lon Gelser Memorial Fund: Account # 900-00-0069
Operating Engineers Federal Credit Union
P.O. Box 2082, Dublin, CA 94568-9943

You can reach David and Sharon at (510) 443-6813.

January 1995/Engineers News
Bright outlook for subdivision work

SANTA ROSA - When we look back at 1994, it's clear that District 10 underwent many positive changes that came about because of strong leadership from Local 3's Vice President and Director of Organizing Jerry Bennett and the good work of Business Agents Jim Killean and Greg Gunheim.

Fourteen new companies signed with Local 3, providing jobs for our members and increasing our union market share. Several of the new larger employers are Carlile & Associates (six jobs), Mendocino Construction Services (10 jobs) and Cinquini/Passarino (six jobs). Most of the construction companies of any size in Sonoma County are now union, with two notable exceptions being FEDCO and Pipeline Excavators.

Politics

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our members, we now have the ability to "count to 3" with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and the Santa Rosa, Petaluma and Windsor city councils. These are the important ones, for they control the potential growth areas along the U.S. 101 corridor.

Even though we don't have the majority of supervisors in Lake and Mendocino counties, the efforts of local political coordinators Tom Card (Lake County), John Kvasnicka (Mendocino County) and Marshall Bankert (Sonoma County) paid off because we were "in the door." This is the first time we've been behind any of the winners in either county, and with two Local 3-backed victors in Lake County and one in Mendocino County, there will definitely be a change in our favor.

Work picture

Dispatcher George Steffensen notes that in 1994 our out-of-work list was at its lowest point in three years, with dispatches up 13 percent over 1993.

Two large projects, now mostly completed, provided many jobs for our people: the $12 million Fountaingrove extension (O.C. Jones) and the $12 million Hidden Valley Sewer Expansion (Argonaut, F&H and Earthworks). Two other big jobs are in their early stages and will overlap well into 1995: the $25 million Santa Rosa wastewater expansion (C.W. Roen) and the $10 million Pacific Gas and Electric fish screen (Dillingham).

The private work for 1994 picked up significantly as interest rates stayed down and housing starts jumped.

Looking ahead

FEDCO and Pipeline will be our two major targets for construction organizing in Sonoma County for 1995. It may be time for a new approach, and we may be asking for help from our members because you are the power.

In Lake County, we will concentrate on Epindendio Construction, and in Mendocino County on Valley Paving. We also plan a major effort in Sonoma County to get the quarries organized, namely Mark West Springs, Stony Point, Canyon Rock, Blue Rock and Chaney Gulch. Our goal is long-term, large-scale jobs for our members.

We are focusing on two other areas: a ballot measure to widen U.S. 101 to three lanes from Windsor to the Marin County line, and a huge expansion for Sonoma County's sewer capacity. Both projects would provide "megawork" and healthy growth.

Several other areas we'll be working on are a Sonoma County airport expansion, the Eureka-to-Marin rail line, the southeast and southwest housing developments in Santa Rosa, and helping our signatory employers obtain aggregate permits.

Moreover, we are expecting the $12 million Squaw Rock/ U.S. 101 job to bid this spring and the $40 million Geysers Effluent Pipeline to start early in 1996. Both projects would provide a lot of jobs for our people.

On the private front, local Economist Ben Stone predicts that Sonoma County will be one of the top spots in the state for housing starts in 1995. Of course, this may hinge on interest rates, but the outlook is positive. Subdivision work puts a lot of members to work, and we expect it should continue to improve.

Several things won't change here in District 10. First, our firm belief that service to you, the members, is our top priority. Second, our open door policy will continue so your problems and concerns remain very important to us. Let us know, for our door (and mine personally) is always open.

Our office wish for 1995 - that each of you has a great upcoming year.

Bob Miller, District Rep.
Scholarship Contest Rules for 1995

General rules and instructions for Local 3 College Scholarship Awards 1994/1995 school year

Four college scholarships will be awarded to sons and daughters of Local 3 members. Two scholarships of $3,000 each will be awarded to the first place female and male applicants. Two scholarships of $2,000 each will be awarded to the runner-up female and male applicants.

These scholarships must be used for study at any accredited U.S. College of university. The Local 3 Federal Credit Union will contribute half the amount of each of the four scholarships.

The Local 3 scholarships will not impose restrictions of any kind on the course of study. Recipients may accept any other grants or awards which do not rule out scholarship aid from other sources.

Who may apply

Sons and daughters of members of Local 3 may apply for the scholarships. The parent of the applicant must be a member of Local 3 for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the date of the application.

Sons and daughters of deceased members of Local 3 are eligible to apply for the scholarships. The parent of the applicant must have been a member of Local 3 for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the date of death.

The applicants must be senior high school students who have, or will be, graduated at the end of either: (1) the fall semester (beginning in 1994), or (2) the spring semester (beginning in 1995), in public, private or parochial schools who are planning to attend a college or university anywhere in the United States during the academic year and who are able to meet the academic requirements for entrance in the university or college of their choice. Students selected for scholarships must have achieved not less than a "B" average in their high school work.

Applications will be accepted between January 1, 1995 and March 1, 1995.

Awarding scholarships

Upon receipt of the application and required forms, Local 3 will not exercise any choice among the various applicants or indicate in any way that one applicant should be favored over another. Based on the above criteria, the University Scholarship Selection committee will submit to the Local 3 Executive Board recommendations for finalists. The list of potential winners and their qualifications will be reviewed and studied by the Executive Board and the scholarship winner selected.

Scholarship winners will be announced at the July semi-annual meeting of Operating Engineers Local 3. The checks will be deposited in the winning students' names at the college or university they plan to attend.

All of the following items must be received by March 1, 1995:

1) The application to be filled out and returned by the applicant.
2) Report on applicant and transcript: to be filled out by the high school principal or person he or she designates and returned directly to Local 3 by the official completing it.
3) Letters of recommendation: applicants should submit one to three letters of recommendation giving information about their character and ability. These may be from teachers, community leaders, family, friends or other work and school recommendations. Please submit all letters of recommendation with the application.
4) Photograph: a recent photograph, preferably 2 inches by 2 inches, with the applicant's name written on the back. The photo should be clear enough to reproduce in the Engineers News.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to see to it that all the above items are received on time and that they are sent to:

Robert L. Wise
Recording Corresponding Secretary
Operating Engineers Local Union No. 3
1620 South Loop Road, Alameda, CA 94502-7090

PRE-RETIREMENT MEETINGS

AUBURN
Thurs., Jan. 19
Auburn Recreation Center
123 Recreation Dr.

SACRAMENTO
Wed., Jan. 11
Operating Engineers Bldg.
4044 N Freeway Blvd.

FAIRFIELD
Thurs., Jan. 12
Operating Engineers Bldg.
2540 N Walton

EUREKA
Tues., Jan. 17
Operating Engineers Bldg.
2006 Broadway

REDDING
Wed., Jan. 18
Operating Engineers Bldg.
25088 Engineers Ln.

MARYSVILLE
Thurs., Jan. 19
Veterans Memorial Bldg.
249 Sycamore, Gridley

OAKLAND
Tues., Jan. 24
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1820 S Loop Rd., Alameda

CONCORD
Wed., Jan. 25
Concord Elks Lodge
3984 Willow Pass Rd.

STOCKTON
Thurs., January 26
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1916 N Broadway

WATSONVILLE
Tues., Jan. 31
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1900 Freedom Blvd.

SAN JOSE
Wed., Feb. 1
Holiday Inn Park Center Plaza
282 Almaden

MARIN
Tues., Feb. 14
Alvarado Inn
280 Eastada, Novato

SAN FRANCISCO-SAN MATEO
Wed., Feb. 15
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1820 S Loop Rd., Alameda

SANTA ROSA
Thurs., Feb. 16
St. Elizabeth's Church
Magnolia Bldg.
2323 Montgomery

SALT LAKE CITY
Tues., Feb. 21
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1908 W N Temple

RENO
Wed., Feb. 22
McCarren House
1505 E. Nugget, Reno, NV

FRESNO
Thurs., Feb. 23
Veterans Memorial Bldg.
249 Sycamore, Gridley

All meetings convene at 7:00 p.m.

RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

UKIAH
Thurs., March 2, 10 am
Discovery Inn
159 W. Railroad, Ukiah

SANTA ROSA
Chapin
Tues., March 2, 2 pm
Luther Burbank Centre
650 Marin West Spring Rd.

OAKLAND
Chapin
Wed., March 15, 1 pm
Lakeview Inn
977 Golf Links Rd., Oakland

CONCORD
Chapin
Thurs., March 15, 10 am
Concord Elks Lodge
3984 Willow Pass Rd.

WATSONVILLE
Chapin
Tues., March 23, 1 pm
1983 Freedom Blvd., Freedom

SAN JOSE
Chapin
Thurs., March 23, 2 pm
Italian Gardens
1300 Milpitas Rd., Salinas

EUREKA
Chapin
Very, April 4, 1 pm
Monarch Lodge
300 Lake Blvd., Eureka

MARYSVILLE
Chapin
Very, April 11, 2 pm
Veterans Memorial Bldg.
249 Sycamore, Gridley

CERES
Thurs., April 13, 10 am
Tea Room, International Hotel
1915 Broadway, Stockton

STOCKTON
Chapin
Thurs., April 27, 10 am
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1915 Broadway, Stockton

AUBURN
Chapin
Thurs., April 27, 2 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.
4044 N Freeway Blvd., Auburn

SACRAMENTO
Zeta Chapter
Thurs., April 27, 2 pm
Veteran's Memorial Bldg.

FRESNO
Chapin
Wed., May 3, 2 pm
2323 Monterey, Fresno

S.F.SAM MATERE
Zeta Chapter
Thurs., May 4, 10 am
4141 Rollins Rd., Burlington

SALT LAKE CITY
G Chapter
Wed., May 10, 2 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.
1984 W Temple, Salt Lake City, UT

RENO
G Chapter
Very, May 11, 2 pm
25088 Engineers Ln., Reno, NV

FAIRFIELD
G Chapter
Very, May 15, 2 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.
25088 Engineers Ln., Fairfield

FRESNO
G Chapter
Very, May 18, 2 pm
Lisbon Inn
5451 E. Hughes, Fresno

Eureka Crab Feed

Sunday, Feb. 19, 1994
5:30 pm to 8:30 pm
The Eureka Elk's Club
445 Herrick Ave.
No Host Cocktails 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Dancing 8:00 pm to Midnight
Crab, pasta, salad and trimmings
Door prizes
Cost: $15.00 per plate
Retirees: $10.00 per plate
Limited seating; tickets must be purchased in advance.
Eureka office will assist with motel reservations.
Call (707) 443-7328

We're Back!
When it comes to safety, those on the front lines often know best.

Back in the late 1980s, the Stockton Unified School District was having too many preventable school bus accidents. In just one school year alone, 1989-90, the district, one of the largest in the state, suffered 34 accidents that the district determined could have been prevented.

Rather than accept the status quo, the district’s 67 bus operators, technicians, and specialists, who have been represented by Local 3’s Public Employee Division since 1977, took it upon themselves to turn things around.

The bargaining unit, with support from Local 3 and the district’s Transportation Department management, persuaded district administrators to form an Accident Review Committee, which would evaluate each accident and determine if the mishap was preventable, then recommend any safety improvements.

Before the committee was established, the responsibility of determining whether or not an accident was preventable was left to one individual – the department’s safety training officer. Now those decisions are made by the seven-member Accident Review Committee, which consists of two bus drivers, a bus mechanic, a school district police officer, and the Transportation Department’s director, safety trainer, and risk manager.

Since the committee was formed five years ago, the district has improved its preventable accident rate by 75 percent, from the 34 in 1989-90 to just eight during the 1993-94 school year.

What’s impressive about the turnaround is that the accident rate has been coming down steadily every year. For example, there was a 33 percent lower accident rate in 1992-93 over the previous year, and a 25 percent improvement in 1996-94 over the previous year. These are indeed impressive figures considering the district transported the equivalent of 1.6 million children over 1,054,000 miles during the school year 1993-94.

The Transportation Department recently held its annual awards presentation to recognize those drivers with outstanding safety records. Drivers received patches and pins for consecutive years of service without a preventable accident.

Two top drivers, John Vezaldenos and Shirley Decker, each received awards for driving 17 consecutive years without a preventable accident. The entire unit was recognized for having a combined total of 400 consecutive years of driving without a preventable accident.

“We’ve got a great bunch of drivers,” said Transportation Department Director Beth Scott. “They deserve a lot of recognition for turning things around the way they have. We are really pleased with the entire group.”

To better understand just how challenging it is to attain these impressive statistics, Engineers News accompanied bus operator Joan Milburn on one of her afternoon runs. Before rolling out of the yard, Milburn took the first step towards preventing an accident by conducting a pre-trip safety inspection that included checking wheels, breaks, emergency doors, lights, flashers and other items for any malfunctions or problems.

After picking up the first load of students at Hamilton Middle School, the challenge of driving a 36-foot-long, 16-ton yellow beast through the streets of Stockton carrying 45 to 50 spirited children became apparent. Milburn not only had to maintain discipline inside the bus, but contend with traffic.

Safety concerns abounded along Milburn’s route. It was a surprise to learn that many automobile drivers nowadays don’t stop when the school bus’ two rear red warning lights are flashing. The problem has gotten so bad that when bus drivers want to stop traffic to let students cross the street, they not only turn on their flashers, they exit the bus and, like a crossing guard, stand in the middle of the street holding a hand-held stop sign.

The run concluded about two-and-a-half hours later after picking up and dropping off students from three other schools. It became clear following the ride-along that Stockton Unified’s bus drivers are part of an elite group of professionals nationwide who don’t often receive the recognition they deserve for saving hundreds of lives.

In a recent study conducted by the National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration of highway-related fatalities that involved youth under age 20 during the weekday morning and afternoon commute hours during 1993-94, there were 488 deaths. Some 338 were killed in passenger cars and light trucks, 96 as pedestrians, 28 on bicycles, 16 on motorcycles, and just two inside a school bus. This means that only 7 percent of all fatalities in this age group were school bus related, while 93 percent were related to other forms of transportation.

Furthermore, of the 23.5 million children who were transported nationwide by school bus during the 1993-94 school year, which represents about 52 percent of all school-age children in the United States, there were only 33 fatalities. These statistics show just how safety campaigns, such as the one at Stockton Unified, are saving children's lives. Not only that, the decrease in accidents saves the school district thousands of dollars in lower insurance costs.

Just think, had it not been for the initiative of Stockton Unified's bus drivers back in the late 1980s, the district might still be hampered by unacceptably high preventable accident rates — and the potential for injury or death to the bus drivers and Stockton's school children.
**Election of Geographical Market Area Addendum Committee Members**

Business Manager T.J. Stapleton has announced the election of Geographical Market Area Addendum Committee Members at each of the Northern California and Reno regular scheduled district meetings during the first quarter of 1995 with eligibility rules as follows:

1. No member shall be eligible for election, be elected or hold the position of Geographical Market Area Addendum Committee Member unless they are:
   a. living in the committee's Geographical Market Area,
   b. an employee in the construction industry in the area,
   c. an "A" journeyman,
   d. a member in good standing.

2. No member shall be nominated unless they are present at the meeting and will accept the nomination and the position, if elected.

3. No member is allowed to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms on the Geographical Market Area Committee.

4. No member may be an owner-operator.

The schedule of the meetings in which these elections will be held appears on this page under "District Meetings." Freedom and Auburn Committee members will be elected at San Jose and Sacramento district meetings.

**Bring your dues card**

All members are reminded to carry their paid up Local 3 dues card with them when attending a semi-annual, quarterly district or specially called meeting of the union. Your paid up dues card is proof of your good standing status as a member of IUOE Local 3 and your right to vote in such meetings and/or participate in the business of the union.

For Pre-Retirement Meeting Schedule, see page 15

**San Jose Grade Checking Classes**

The San Jose office will be holding gradechecking Classes beginning Thursday, Feb. 9, 1995 at 7 pm.

(Located at 760 Emory St., San Jose)
FOR SALE: 5th Wheel. 33 1/2' long. ‘1993 Regal Prowler. Fully loaded. 14' slide out.hook-up for water & dryer. $325,000.00. Phone (209) 672-0787. Reg # 1754322 1/95

FOR SALE: 1985 GMC 7000 Dump Truck with sleeper, air conditioned, CD stereo, 25,000 original miles. Excellent condition. Excellent for 303/307/308 use. Call (503) 352-6660. Reg #0381659 1/95

FOR SALE: 1989 GMC 7000 Dump Truck with deluxe sleeper, air conditioned, CD stereo, 25,000 original miles. Excellent condition. Excellent for 303/307/308 use. Call (503) 352-6660. Reg #0381659 1/95

FOR SALE: Holiday Adventure Resort, (Keokea Time Resort) PO Box membership. 699.00 per year. Includes access to over 500 miles of hiking. $5,000.00 per year. Call (707) 329-2481 Reg #1196400 12/94

FOR SALE: Mobile home. 6' x 22' with large porch on 60 x 90 lot close to shopping, 1/2 mi. from Clearlake. CA. $45,000.00 or trade. Phone (707) 895-7101. Reg #1196400 12/94

FOR SALE: 12' Radio Arm Saw. 3 blades, runs good. $200.00. Call (408) 258-9924. Reg #1196400 12/94

FOR SALE: 1992 Ford Victoria Hand Top, electric windows, power steering, completely restored. $1,000,000.00. Call (510) 671-0555. Reg #1745122 1/95


FOR SALE: 1982 Dodge Van, 5.2V, auto. OD, lift, gis. air, power windows & door, A/C, fuel tank. $5,000.00. 10 acres at Berry Ck. at end of road with power, with speakers. $400.00. (916) 589-2646. Reg #1754890 1/95

FOR SALE: 1992 28’-1/2’ Fireball Fifth Wheel. 16’ x 10’. Double beds, 2000 lbs., trailer. High $5700.00 or B.O. Reg #159570 1/95

FOR SALE: TV. G.E. 26” H.I.H. screens. 100 watts of power, with speakers. $400.00. (916) 589-2646. Reg #1754890 1/95

FOR SALE: 1992 112’ x 60’ Mobile Home. 2 Br., 1 Ba., $100,000.00. Call (408) 258-9924. Reg #1196400 12/94


SWAP SHOP ads are offered free of charge to members in good standing for the sale or trade of personal items and/or real estate. To place an ad, simply type or print your acl legibly and mail to Operating Engineers Local 3, 1620 S. Loop Rd., Alameda, CA, 94502, ATTN: SWAP SHOP. *All ads must include Member Registration Number. Social Security Numbers are not accepted. All ads should be no longer than 50 words in length.

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PERSONAL NOTES

The Santa Rosa District office wishes to congratulate Joe and Becky Henderson on the birth of their baby boy, David Christopher, on Dec. 12, 1994. They would also like to express their condolences and extend their prayers to the families and friends of the following departed Gerald D. Deal, 12/27/94; James McCaffrey, 12/94; Alvin Balian, 9/3/94; Chester Mayhew, 11/9/94; Deborah Anderson (wife of Blaine Anderson), 11/9/94; Betty Lou Nyholm (wife of James H. Nyholm), 12/23/94; William Vick, 12/23/94; Julie Fletcher (wife of William Fletcher), 11/30/94; Douglas Koskinen (son of Oscar Koskinen), 2/22/94; Natalie Johnson (mother of James Johnson), 12/3/94.

Come from previous page

Deceased Dependents

Isman, Frances, wife of Bob Isman.......
Anderson, Darlene, wife of Blair Anderson.......
Dietz, Dorothy, wife of Paul Dietz.......
Carstensen, Mary, wife of Richard Carstensen.......
Dowsewe, Sybil, wife of Henry Dowsewe.......
Fletcher, Julie, wife of William Fletcher.......
Houwealing, Gretchen, wife of William Houwealing.......
Johnson, Jane Natalie, mother of James Johnson.......
Koskinen, Doubie, son of Oscar Koskinen.......
Morton, Delia, wife of William Morton.......
Pigkins, Maxine, wife of Dyke Pigkins.......
Sims, Annie, wife of Homer Sims.......

Correction: Last month the name of deceased member Rudy Wright O’Hagan was misspelled. We regret this error.
Stapleton tells members GOP sweep nothing to cheer about

While many Local 3 members applauded the Republican landslide in last November's mid-term election, Business Manager Tom Stapleton, in his January 7 semi-annual meeting address, told the members the GOP sweep was nothing to smile about.

“I know the political events that unfolded in November made a lot of people happy,” he said, “but what we’re going to reap from the last election is really bothersome to me. Even though Republicans historically have shown that they’re not your friends, we still have folks who keep voting for them. How serious trouble we are in depends on the political issue. Don’t think it’s going to be peach-ache pie.”

Stapleton was referring to the November 8 election in which the nation saw the biggest GOP sweep since 1946. Republicans not only won majorities in both houses of Congress for the first time since 1954, but they won 10 new governorships and captured majorities in 18 state legislatures. Not a single Republican incumbent lost on election day.

Particularly troublesome for Local 3, Stapleton said, is the California Assembly, where before the election the democrats enjoyed a 47-32 majority but on election day lost seven seats, leaving the chamber with 40 Republicans, 39 Democrats and one independent. With the shift in power, Democratic Assemblyman Willie Brown, an ardent union supporter, could lose his speaker's position to a Republican, a change that would seriously jeopardize labor's ability to attain its legislative goals.

What some union members may not realize, Stapleton said, is that Willie Brown has been one of the few -- if not the only -- assembly member that has been able to hold all the various political factions together in Sacramento. Brown also has been a strong political ally of Local 3 since becoming speaker in 1980.

“A lot of times I’ve had to get on the phone and express my opinion to Willie Brown, and we were able to get his ear,” Stapleton said. “If he goes out, I’m going to have very few people to talk to. Up until the election we were able to block legislation that did harm to our members. But now it’s possible we won’t be able to do this anymore. Any influence we might have had will keep deteriorating.”

The Republicans, Stapleton fears, may also use the Assembly gains to attempt a repeal of the state's prevailing wage laws, which would spell disaster for the construction trades.

Stapleton pointed out that if California's little Davis-Bacon law is repealed, union contractors will have great difficulty competing for public works contracts.

When Utah repealed its prevailing wage law in 1980, the state "came about as close as you can to getting rid of labor," he said. The repeal accelerated the decline in the union share of the state's construction market, drove down average wages and decreased apprenticeship training. The same would likely happen in California.

The problem with the last election, Stapleton said, is that too many Local 3 members voted with their emotions rather than their pocket books. "We get caught up in issues that really don't have that much impact on us," he said. "Look at Prop. 187 (illegal aliens), it got Gov. Pete Wilson re-elected. We've got picture stabilized in 1994. Even though membership in construction was 4 percent less than last year at this time, the union's income was 2 percent over expenses. Disposal revenues were up 3 percent over last year.

If the Federal Reserve Board doesn't raise interest rates too much, next year looks pretty good, Stapleton said. However, if the board doesn't meet its goal of keeping inflation under control and has to raise interest rates more than expected, there could be a mild dip in the work picture, he said.