Flood Repairs

RGW Construction is rebuilding the Carmel Bridge in Monterey County after it was washed out during the worst flooding in California history.

Semi-Annual Meeting Notice, p. 18
Local 3 responds to ‘inaccurate and irresponsible’ news report on union’s pension investment loans

and reporting on rumors told by anonymous “sources,” these articles suggest things that just aren’t true.

The Examiner suggests Assembly Speaker Willie Brown used his political connection with Local 3 to help secure a loan for the Harbor Bay Development in Alameda.

This is false. As a trustee and chairman of our pension trust fund, I take my responsibilities very seriously. Trustees by law are personally responsible for the manner in which they carry out their fiduciary responsibilities over pension trust funds. I’m confident I speak for all the trustees in saying that none of us are willing to risk going to jail to do a favor for Willie Brown or any other politician.

Furthermore, McMorgan and Company, the investment managers of our pension fund, wrote a loan for the developer that they say contains “extremely favorable terms for the two pension funds involved. In fact, the terms were so favorable that the borrower makes allegations in a lawsuit that the loan was unfair and oppressive.”

In other words, the borrower claims our fund wrote a loan that was too difficult for him to pay back! That’s hardly the reaction of someone receiving a political “favor.”

The Examiner claims the Operating Engineers and Carpenters pension funds suffered a “big loss” on the loan made to Harbor Bay Developer Ron Cowan.

This is false. We have been told by McMorgan that Local 3’s pension fund has not lost a dime on this loan, and they don’t anticipate losing any money on it, even if the borrower defaults.

Let’s separate fact from fiction. According to the Examiner, the developer received $11 million from the Local 3 pension fund. According to McMorgan, the actual principle loaned from the fund was $5.5 million. With taxes and other fees associated with the loan, our pension fund has paid out $8 million. That represents just over one fourth of one percent of the pension fund’s portfolio.

If the developer pays on the loan, our pension fund will earn a very high return of 15%. If he defaults on the loan, our pension fund will own 100 acres of the Harbor Bay Development, which was valued at $45 million at the time the loan was made. In addition to the Harbor Bay property, the borrower has signed a guarantee making him personally responsible for the loan.

The bottom line is, this is a good loan and it’s very well secured.

The Examiner states that investment manager McMorgan & Co. has “lost big” and “taken a beating” on its real estate investments.

This is the kind of statement made by someone who doesn’t know what he is talking about. Our pension fund retains McMorgan as an investment manager because they have shown solid, consistent performance on their pension investments and also because they don’t deal in high risk ventures.

McMorgan & Co. has been involved in literally thousands of real estate loans involving over $2 billion dollars. The Examiner could find only three loans involving Local 3 pension funds that it even considered controversial enough to write about.

- The Harbor Bay loan already spoken of;
- A loan made to the developers of Laguna West, a major subdivision near Sacramento that has provided thousands of hours of work for Local 3 members;
- A loan made to a developer of a project in Santa Rosa.

The Laguna West project consisted of two loans totalling $38 million for the development of 217 homes. Local 3's pension fund was only one of nine different union pension funds that participated in the project.

The loan performed as projected for approximately one year until the summer of 1992 when the California housing recession and state budget crisis eroded consumer confidence. For over a year, McMorgan worked with the borrowers in an attempt to help them ride out the recession. Finally, McMorgan made a demand to the borrowers for their personal guarantee.

In December 1993 the pension funds received title to the property in a settlement which included the payment of $5.2 million by the borrowers.

All of the homes built so far have been built by union labor and they are all sold. The remaining finished lots are held by the pension funds that issued the loan. There is full expectation that the current housing recovery will eventually result in the sale of the remaining lots and earn a profit for the pension funds.

All the Operating Engineers work performed on this project was done by Granite Construction, a union employer.

The third loan in question was made from four union pension funds to the developer of a Fountain Grove subdivision in Santa Rosa. Sometime after receiving the loan, the developer defaulted on the loan and was subsequently indicted in a federal grand jury for embezzlement and tax evasion.

McMorgan has sued on behalf of the pension funds to secure its investment.

What the Examiner has clearly done is look for a dark speck in a huge white cloud. The real story isn’t the two or three loans they chose to write about; it’s the 75 pension funds that are winners — which they, of course, ignored.

McMorgan & Co.’s portfolio shows that during the last 15 years, it has invested over $2.3 billion in construction. These investments have created 73 million man-hours of union employment.

Since 1989, McMorgan has earned a total net cumulative return of 51% on its real estate investments. Our pension trust fund is worth over $2 billion and to date has paid out nearly $8 billion in pension benefits to our retirees and their beneficiaries.

con't on next page
The Examiner claims McMorgan was the subject of a Labor Department racketeering review.

This is absolutely false. McMorgan & Co. has never been the subject of a racketeering probe and they stated that very clearly to the Examiner.

McMorgan has been cooperating with the Department of Labor on an investigation that focuses on other people. McMorgan & Co. indicates they stated that very clearly to the Examiner.

One thing many people don’t realize is that a pension fund the size of Local 3’s is routinely subject to review from any number of federal regulatory agencies, including the IRS, the Securities & Exchange Commission and the Department of Labor.

This is all done to insure that your pension money is being handled properly—and that’s as it should be. The trustees have always given these government agencies their full cooperation.

A final word

In our view, the Examiner news articles are little more than a smear piece targeted primarily at Assembly Speaker Willie Brown and some of his political allies (including us). We deplore such shoddy reporting but have learned to expect it from time to time.

The Operating Engineers Local 3 makes a big target for anyone who wants to take a shot at us. We represent 35,000 members. We have a $2 billion pension plan. We are actively involved in the political arena and we make no apology for the efforts we make on behalf of our members.

What really matters in the end is whether or not we do an effective job representing our members. As far as Local 3’s pension is concerned, we stand behind it 100 percent. There isn’t a better pension to be found in the industry. Year after year, it gains in value and performance. That speaks much more clearly on the issue than a poorly written hit piece.
By James Earp
Managing Editor

The fight we are waging on the prevailing wage issue offers some rather eye-opening lessons about the way politics is being run in our country, now that the Republican Party is flexing its newfound power. Having spent many weeks working on the prevailing wage campaign, there is one thing that is glaringly apparent: It’s power, not principle, that determines the fate of legislation with the new Republican Congress.

The Republicans as a whole are not interested in the merits of the prevailing wage issue. We can win a debate on Davis-Bacon every time, because the facts are on our side. But the Republicans aren’t interested in the facts. For them, it’s payback time. The only way we are going to save our prevailing wage laws is to take off the gloves and slug it out in a bare knuckles street fight – and right now, there’s more of them than there are of us.

The GOP’s hit on the federal Davis-Bacon law is part of the fine print in Newt Gingrich’s “Contract with America,” (or should we say “Contract On America”). On January 4, the very first day of the new session, Senator Nancy Kassebaum introduced S 141 to repeal the Davis-Bacon law. A companion bill, HR 500, was also introduced in the House.

Because of Gingrich’s promise to pass the “Contract” bills through the House in the first 100 days, there was tremendous pressure to move HR 500 quickly to the floor. Local 3 was one of the first unions in the nation to start a grassroots movement to save Davis-Bacon. We circulated petitions throughout our jurisdiction. Thousands of members, friends and co-workers signed them. Over 1,000 members sent in an Engineers News clip-out urging our congressional representatives to oppose HR 500. Others took time to write letters.

What did we do with these responses? Armed with stacks of letters, post cards and letters from our members, I walked the halls of all three House office buildings and personally delivered the petitions and postcards to every congressional office that serves our jurisdiction. We met with numerous representatives, including Vic Fazio (Solano County), Ron Dellums (Alameda County), Gary Condit (Merced County) and U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer. All gave us their full support and vowed to go to the mat to protect Davis-Bacon.

The GOP’s trying to move quickly with HR 500 before labor’s grass-roots efforts reached full swing, moved the bill for a vote on March 2 before the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Subcommittee on Workforce Protection. The Democrats made a motion to delay markup of HR 500 so that it could receive adequate debate. The Republicans weren’t interested in debate. In fact, they only let one person speak against the bill.

When it became clear that the Republicans were prepared to move the bill forward without adequate testimony, the Democratic committee members, led by Congressman George Miller of Contra Costa County, stood up and walked out in protest. Minus the Democrats, the Republican committee members voted unanimously to move the bill onto the full committee.

It was obvious that nearly all the Republicans were bowing down to Gingrich’s 100-day blitz. No one on that side of the aisle was willing to stand up and evaluate the Davis-Bacon law on its merits. They just wanted to get all Gingrich’s bills through in the first 100 days – and damn the consequences.

We may not have the votes to keep HR 500 from getting through the House. But the bill will eventually have to go through the Senate, and there we have a better chance of making our stand. There appear to be the 40 votes necessary to force any bill to repeal Davis-Bacon to a filibuster. We also have President Clinton’s commitment that he will veto any Davis-Bacon repeal bill.

By the thinnest of threads, we will hopefully be able to derail the effort for a total repeal of Davis-Bacon.

The California fight

While the federal Davis-Bacon fight is waged cont’d on p. 16

**A contractor’s perspective on Davis-Bacon**

We rebuilt the world’s busiest freeway in just 86 days. Part of our success came from contracting with private firms – to speed rebuilding and to keep down the cost.

-Gov. Pete Wilson, 1996 State of the State Address

Government workers – hand-in-hand with private business – rebuilt Southern California’s fractured freeways in record time and under budget.

-President Clinton, 1996 State of the Union Address

By C.C. Myers, President of C.C. Myers Inc., a Local 3 signatory contractor based in Rancho Cordova, Calif.

It made me proud when the governor of California and the president of the United States publicly recognized the tremendous success we had in rebuilding the Santa Monica Freeway after the Northridge earthquake. We just repeated that performance rebuilding in 21 days the twin bridges wiped out in 4½ after the recent floods.

Like air and water, the highways, dams, bridges, schools, sewage systems and other infrastructure elements that make society run are easy to take for granted – until they’re missing. When commerce stops, paychecks stop, families get hungry.

These of us in the construction industry know what it takes to build a first-class infrastructure: government, commitment, quality contractors and a skilled, hard-working labor force. Each member of my crew, from top management to the newest apprentice, has a job to do in a tough, dirty and dangerous occupation. These are skilled, rugged individuals who take great pride in their work. Many of them have devoted more than 5,000 hours to learning their trade. They put in a full day’s work and they get a decent day’s pay.

At the end of the day they go home tired, but proud. They’ve earned enough to take care of their families, including good medical and dental benefits. Using their hands and their heads, they’ve built some of the most sophisticated and durable structures in the world. Every construction worker I’ve ever known points with a special pride as he or she tells the kids, "I built that."

A solid, safe infrastructure has served business and the public well. Government construction, around 25 percent of all construction, has also served the construction industry well. High quality construction standards are enforced. Extensive training of apprentices, including growing numbers of minorities and females, is required. Area wage standards, known as "prevailing wages," are mandatory. In that way, labor is not driven down through efficiency and competition, not wages cut. Federal law, the Davis-Bacon Act, and state laws, called "Little Davis-Bacon" laws, have kept careful control of a dog-eat-dog industry.

That’s why I’m distressed to see the Sacramento Bee expressing support for those politicians who want to change all this. They want to repeal these laws or tinker with the wage protections. I say to them, lower wages don’t mean lower costs. Lower wages mean shoddy work, more accidents, more injuries, more repairs.

What can and should be reformed are the burdensome regulations and the enormous paper work required on government projects. Rather than cutting wages, we should be looking for ways to put more people to work. One “endangered species," such as the fairy shrimp, can stop an entire development project and the thousands of jobs that go with it. It’s time to take a hard look at laws such as the Endangered Species Act. It’s time for government to stand up for hard-working productive Americans. I haven’t built my company and my reputation using low-wage, unskilled workers. We come in ahead of schedule and under budget because we use the best skilled workers and run the job with a talented management team. That kind of operation doesn’t come cheap, but investing in skills is what brings the overall cost of construction down.

I witness close up every day the core values that have made America great: hard work and the dignity that comes with it; individual responsibility combined with teamwork; and most of all, a fierce love of family and country. These are the people who work for me. They work hard. They work right, and they get the job done. Why would anyone want to screw that up?

This article was originally printed as an editorial column in the May 1 Sacramento Bee.
Davis-Bacon repeal headed for showdown in House, possible filibuster in Senate

Labor’s sense of urgency regarding the possible repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act heightened in March when the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Subcommittee on Workforce Protection approved HR 500, a bill that would abolish the federal statute requiring contractors on federally financed construction projects to pay prevailing wages.

The Senate version of Davis-Bacon repeal, S 141, was also approved March 29 by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee by a vote of 9-7.

In another setback for working Americans, the Senate committee also rejected Sen. Paul Simon’s Davis-Bacon reform bill, which, rather than repeal the 31-year-old law, would have instead raised the contract threshold from $2,000 to $100,000 for new construction.

At an April 4 rally by thousands of union construction workers at the U.S. Capitol, Democratic lawmakers vowed to fight Davis-Bacon repeal with a filibuster should the legislation reach the Senate floor. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) told the crowd that S 141 “is never going to get past the Senate floor because I’m going to sit there and see that it doesn’t get passed.”

Two Republican House members, Rep. Jack Quinn of New York and Rep. Don Young of Alaska, surprised everyone by speaking out against Davis-Bacon repeal, saying they will join with the majority of Democrats in opposing HR 500. Young said he would vote to sustain a veto by the president and has told fellow Republicans that “this is a fight we don’t need.”

At the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department legislative conference April 3-4, President Clinton reaffirmed his commitment to veto any Davis-Bacon repeal legislation that crosses his desk, saying: “We need to make this economy more competitive. We don’t need a low-wage strategy. The government should stand on the side of wages that are fair. We have a common public interest in having a high-wage, high-growth partnership economy, not a low-wage, stagnant, divided economy.”

One of Local 3’s strongest supporters in Congress, Rep. Lynn Woolsey, a Santa Rosa Democrat and member of the House labor subcommittee, said at the April 4 rally that she’s discouraged by the Republican Party’s priorities: “It’s very frustrating to me because I came to Congress to improve the lives of working families and working Americans. Instead of making things better, I’m spending my time fighting the attacks from (House Speaker) Newt Gingrich and his cronies.”

If Davis-Bacon is abolished, non-union contractors would begin to gain an unfair advantage when bidding on federal contracts because they pay their workers far less in wages and benefits than union employers. As a result, non-union employers would begin to grab a larger share of the construction market. As cutthroat competition intensifies, some union contractors, in a desperate struggle to survive, would seek new union contracts with lower wages and fringes benefits or simply go non-union.

House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) pointed out at a March 31 IBEW conference in Washington D.C. that the Republicans, in pursuing their Contract with America, are looking for ways to provide a tax break for the wealthy.

“The people who are protected by the Davis-Bacon Act are exactly the hard working, middle-income people we should be fighting for by keeping Davis-Bacon in order,” Gephardt said. “These Republican-proposed cuts that are an effort to balance the budget in favor of the wealthy amount to ‘Robin Hood in reverse.’ They want to cut the wages of middle-income construction workers to get a tax cut for people who already have it made.”

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), the ranking minority member of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, strongly opposes S 141, pointing out that the average income in the construction industry is less than $30,000 and without Davis-Bacon would suffer a further loss in income on top of the decline in their real income over the past decade.

Bernard E. Anderson, assistant secretary of the Department of Labor’s Employment Standards Administration, made some of the most insightful comments at the building trades conference. He told delegates April 4 that repeal of Davis-Bacon would accelerate the improvement in the 1990s of the economic status of the top 40 percent of Americans at the expense of the other 60 percent, or those making less than $65,000 per year.

“Davis-Bacon is as relevant today as it was when it was adopted in 1931,” Anderson said. Without Davis-Bacon, he said, more than a half-million construction workers would suffer reduced earnings and a lower standard of living. Contractors trying to compete without Davis-Bacon would be driven to compete for federal contracts by reducing their labor costs rather than improving workers’ skills and productivity. In this environment, he said, workers would once again have to choose between accepting lower wages on federal projects or the risk of losing jobs to workers from lower wage areas.
From apprenticeship to ownership

Mike Fuller, a 28-year Local 3 member and owner of Mountain Cascade Inc., used his experience as an equipment operator to launch what has become one of Northern California's most successful underground construction companies.

When Mike Fuller of Mountain Cascade Inc. tells his life story, you can't help but draw one conclusion -- that he truly epitomizes the American Dream. You can say Mike is one of those naturally talented individuals who, over the course of his adult life, has literally pulled himself up by the bootstraps, from his teenage years as a novice dozer operator to becoming one of the most successful underground contractors in Northern California.

You'd never know, judging from his company's impressive new $3 million headquarters in Livermore, that Mike comes from such humble roots. In fact, when you enter Mountain Cascade's administrative offices on Exchange Court -- its walls plastered with color photographs of past achievements -- you gain the false impression the company's success is grounded in a family dynasty.

But looks are indeed deceiving. Mike, with only a Toyota pickup and a maxed-out credit card to his name, joined forces with two fellow Local 3 members to form the original company in 1975 using a rented backhoe, loader and dump truck.

But it has been Mike and a team of talented and loyal employees, who, over the past 10 years, have built the company into what it is today -- one of the largest underground construction firms in Northern California that employs up to 60 Operating Engineers during peak season.

Making things look easy

Mountain Cascade is well known in the industry not only for its quality work but for its knack for making difficult projects seem easy. A good example occurred when Mountain Cascade was hired by the Modesto Irrigation District in fall 1992 to construct a 16-mile water pipeline. The pipe had to be laid in an extremely confined work area, making importing backfill material somewhat impractical.

Mountain Cascade came up with an innovative and cost-effective way to backfill the trenches by mixing cement with native material using a specially made mobile soil processor, a method that allowed the 25 Operating Engineers working on the job to finish about 400 feet more per day than originally estimated.

It has been this type of good old-fashioned American ingenuity under Mike's leadership that has taken the company from about $12 million in gross revenue in the early 1980s to upwards of $35 million in gross revenue last year. While other contractors struggled to survive during the recent recession, Mountain Cascade not only held its own but actually thrived.

Mike's early years

The company's success can be largely attributed to the fine staff Mike has recruited over the years, but it also has a lot to do with the experiences that shaped Mike's life during his formative years.

Raised by his grandparents on a ranch in Pleasanton, Mike dropped out of high school in his junior year to take his first construction job operating a dozer on the Castlewood Country Club project in Pleasanton.

Accustomed to plowing his grandfather's barley and oat fields with an old Case wheel tractor since the eighth grade, Mike had no problems adjusting to his new career. As site preparation at Castlewood progressed, Mike soon settled into a specialty that would become a Mountain Cascade niche -- underground construction. Mike would dig sewer and storm drain trenches two days a week, haul pipe the third day, and backfill the next two days.

When work slowed for a short time, Mike enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1957. After basic training, Mike received training as a construction engineer, working a short time as a carpenter, then a truck driver before settling into operating heavy equipment.

He spent a year in South Korea running heavy equipment on construction of missile installations, then spent his final year operating crawler cranes at Fort Baker near San Francisco.

Getting into the union

Armed with plenty of heavy equipment experience following his military discharge in 1960, Mike went down to the Oakland District office and signed up on the "C" list. Before Mike could even make the 30-minute return trip to Pleasanton, the union left a message with his grandmother that Mike was to go to work the next day for McGuire and Hester operating a dozer on a storm canal project in Fremont.

Mike ended up staying with McGuire and Hester for 15 years, until the day he went into business. During the early part of his career with McGuire and Hester, Mike married his wife, Sharon, and the couple had two children, both of whom now work for Mountain Cascade. Duke, 31, is the company's operations manager and Sekelly, 27, is the company's dispatcher.

Drag racing years

Mike's decision to go into business came at a time when his life was at a crossroads. Throughout most of the 15 years he worked for McGuire and Hester, Mike was also drag racing in his spare time, competing nine months out of the year in local National Hot Rod Association top-fuel dragster meets, at places like Vacarelle, Fremont and Lodi raceways. Mike competed at the semi-professional level for five years. But in 1973, after returning home from an exhausting and somewhat disappointing road trip to the Indianapolis Raceway, Mike decided to quit drag racing.

At about this time, Mike also wanted to take his construction career to the next level. He got to talking to two McGuire and Hester friends and colleagues: superintendent Allen Bredy and mechanic Julian Morales. The three agreed their combined talents would make a winning team, with Allen doing the estimating, Mike the excavating and Julian the equipment repair and maintenance. They rented a backhoe, loader and dump truck.
from Local 3 member Harry Cleverton. Because their first job was on Mountain Boulevard in Oakland, they decided to name their new company Mountain Construction.

About a year later, Allen decided to go into business for himself, so Mike and Julian hired another McGuire and Hester colleague, General Superintendent Bill Peck, to do the company's estimating. The three became partners and worked together for nearly eight years until Julian decided to go into business for himself in 1984.

The change to Mountain Cascade

After Julian's departure, the company took on four minority shareholders and changed the company's name to Mountain Cascade. Throughout most of the 1980s, the company grew steadily, taking on more private jobs while maintaining its usual share of public works. By the summer of 1988, the company was routinely putting 44 to 50 Operating Engineers in the field.

After Bill retired in 1989, Mike became Mountain Cascade's principal shareholder— and the company really took off. Today, Mountain Cascade does around $35 million in gross revenue and employs about 120, with up to 60 of those being Operating Engineers during peak season.

Believing in the union philosophy

Ironically, Mike is more involved in the union movement as an employer than he was as an operator. He serves on the Operating Engineers Joint Apprenticeship Committee and is chair of the labor committee of the Engineering and Utility Contractors Association.

Most recently, Mike was selected, along with Local 3 Business Manager Tom Stapleton, to co-chair the California Alliance for Jobs, a union-employer program aimed at coordinating legislative, organizing and marketing strategies to increase market share of the unionized construction industry in Northern California.

The alliance, among other projects, has been vigorously campaigning against Republican attempts in Congress to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act, the federal statute that requires contractors on federally financed construction projects to pay prevailing wages.

"I have always believed in the union philosophy, as far as health and welfare and getting paid a good wage are concerned," Mike told Engineers News. "If this industry is to stay union and the wages are going to stay the same, we need to address the work rules, such as 4 x 10s, Saturday make-up days and alternating start times."

Labor makes up about 20 percent of the cost of a job and equipment about 15 percent," he said. "A union contractor that pays almost twice as much for his labor has to either make the difference in productivity or equipment costs. The one thing everyone needs to realize is that a union contractor these days is not the rule, he's the exception. So when you're working you need to protect the contractor and his equipment. You need to help make him profitable. You'll not only be helping the contractor but you will be protecting a way of life as we know it today."
Can employer require you to strip for drug test?

Here’s the problem: Tech Tool Grinding and Supply Inc. manufactures industrial cutting tools. The tools produced by Tech Tool are razor sharp and must be handled with care by employees and customers.

The arrest of two employees on drug charges and the placement of another on a drug rehabilitation program, plus signs of marijuana use on the company premises, led Tech Tool to institute a drug testing program. The testing procedure required each employee to disrobe in a private room and dress in a hospital gown. The employee then went alone to a bathroom to produce a urine sample, while a medical practitioner waited outside. The specimen was sealed and delivered to a testing laboratory.

Beverly Folmsbee, one of Tech Tool’s best tool grinders, refused to take the drug test, which she characterized as “degrading.” When the company refused to release her from the test, Folmsbee found herself without a job. She retaliated with a lawsuit against Tech Tool for violating her right to privacy. In her legal papers, she maintained:

- I am not a drug user and would not have objected to a test that would have respected my personal dignity.
- But the inspection required by Tech Tool involved a virtual “strip search,” which I consider to be demeaning, degrading and a breach of my right to privacy.
- Tech Tool’s breach of privacy violates the law of our state, Massachusetts.

Tech Tool rejoined:

- Folmsbee is hypersensitive about privacy. In our testing, each employee disrobes in the examining room in private. The employee goes alone to produce the urine specimen, while a doctor or paramedic of the same sex waits outside.
- We don’t see anything degrading in this.

The answer: Case dismissed. The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts noted that Tech Tool had good reason to suspect that some of its employees were using drugs. The company also was motivated by a serious concern for the safety of its employees and customers. The court also reviewed Tech Tool’s drug testing policy and agreed with the company that its procedures were “not unnecessarily intrusive.”

“In light of the nature of Tech Tool’s business, the evidence of employee drug use, and the procedural safeguards to guarantee privacy...the drug testing policy was reasonable.” (630 N.E.2d 586).

Comment: Similarly, a California tribunal held that a company did not violate employee rights to privacy when it required prospective employees to accept urinalysis tests for drugs and alcohol usage. The employer’s case was strongly supported by proof that the tests did not unduly intrude into the job applicant’s privacy (264 Cal.Rptr. 194).

Addiction Recovery Program

Where to find the world’s best safety device

Last week, Don Hotaling, the western region construction manager for Jacobs Construction Inc., asked me to visit his company’s job at the Chevron Refinery in Richmond. Don said he and his company had major concerns regarding safety due to the amount of people and equipment working in such close proximity to each other.

Don took us for a tour of the site, the main portion of which covered an area a little over an acre. The job site looks congested now, but they are going to add a lot more workers and equipment. During the height of the operation they will be employing about 600 construction hands in this one-acre area. Having so many employees working together inside such a small area is hazardous enough, but there will be additional factors.

Picture about 600 employees from several different crafts, 14 cranes, iron and vessels all within one acre. Everything has to be coordinated, and everyone has to be in tune with everyone else. These crane booms cannot move until the adjacent rigs are advised of what is taking place. One major screw-up and these cranes could fall like dominos. It would make the November 1989 tower crane accident in San Francisco look like a minor occurrence.

Don asked me to write an article or give another talk to his hands to make them more aware of the safety problems that they would be facing every day on this site.

I looked all around to find an article that would appropriately cover all of the problems that were inherit on the site and could not find one. There is just too much that could go wrong and too much to take into consideration. I’d have to cover weather conditions, electricity, signals, communications, boom-stops, load-charts, physical and mental health. There’s no end. No one article or lecture would cover everything that could possibly go wrong.

I did, however, find the main ingredient while combing my sparse crop of hair the other day. I was looking into the mirror in one of our hiring hall rest rooms when I noticed a sticker attached to the top of the mirror. The sticker simply read, “You are looking at the world’s best safety device.”

As I started to leave, I did a double-take. I have been looking into the mirror for more years that I care to remember and I never thought about it, but that sticker was right. No matter where I was with a safety problem, that person looking back at me in that mirror was indeed the best safety device. No one on any job watches out for me any more than the person in that mirror.

I figure that the best way to keep safe is to protect myself. In keeping safe, I will be watching those around me and keeping them safe also. Everything safe on this job depends to some extent on me. Everyone of those 600 construction stiffs on that job are depending not only on themselves but on everyone else around them, and that is the way it should be. But we must rely mostly on ourselves to keep us safe.

The only way to ensure that all of these folks go home safely at night is for all of us to keep that person in the mirror physically and mentally aware of what’s going on around us. I know a lot of you out there will read this article and it will run off your back like water off a duck, but a great number of the wiser ones out there will do a double-take in that mirror just as I did. They will figure out that they are looking at the world’s best safety device.
Big turnout expected at May 13 hands-on competition

The season has begun. Work is picking up and the construction season looks as if it will give us a good year. But working steady is no excuse not to attend classes. What you learn today you can use tomorrow. But if nothing is accomplished today, tomorrow looks pretty bleak.

The Northern California Surveyors Joint Apprenticeship Committee is here for your use, so please use it. We encourage input from all members to help keep the program updated and to make sure we are teaching the necessary topics. We have reviewed our existing curricula and plan to make some changes. Some will be to cut the amount of study now in the program and to add such things as Data Collection and GPS. The basics of surveying are still a vital necessity, but we do have to update and rework our training program.

Our May 13 hands-on competition is moving along. This competition, which starts at 8 a.m., should be the best ever as a lot of work has gone into making it so. Remember, sign-ups are mandatory. We will need extra equipment, specifically 200-foot chains, Phil's rods, hubs/markers and theodolites. If your employer would like to help, we would be very appreciative of any help we can get.

The competition should be a great chance for apprentices and journey upgrades to strut their stuff. There will be money prizes and Local 5 jackets, T-shirts and caps for the winners, plus food donated and prepared by the law offices of Thornton & Thornton. If you can be of help, please call our office at (510) 635-3255 and let us know. Thanks.

On April 22, we oriented and tested 95 new applicants. We are getting some new people into the program to keep the industry flow going. We now have 50 new people who have passed the entrance test. This is many more people than we can use in a year, but it gives us a good bank to draw from. These new eligible applicants have been oriented about surveying — tools, work ethics and such — and have also completed their initial safety training. We will be looking for a good year to put some of these new surveyors into the field. Hope it is this year.

Some thoughts on collective bargaining

Without collective bargaining, an employee has no voice and is subject to every arbitrary decision the employer makes. But when there is collective bargaining, an individual worker has a voice and is not subject to arbitrary decisions. That worker shares with other employees and with the employer the responsibility for establishing orderly procedures for determining wages, work hours, rates of production, promotion and layoffs, policies, and just penalties for the violation of work rules.

As a member of a union, you have the strength that comes in numbers. You are also provided competent professional services: negotiators, lawyers, research specialists, and others who are skilled in collective bargaining.

Only as part of a group do you have the economic strength that permits bargaining on a level playing field with your employer.

Collective bargaining is a rational, democratic and peaceful way to resolve conflict. In recent years, some 150,000 collective bargaining agreements have been made nationwide. Only 2 percent of them have resulted in strikes. In other words, in 98 percent of all cases, collective bargaining was successful. Not a bad record.

It took a lot of nerve for employees to stand up for their rights in the days when there were fewer unions and no laws legalizing collective bargaining. There were no job safety standards, paid vacations, sick leave or retirement plans. Hiring and firing, promotion and layoff policies were under the exclusive control of employers.

But employees did stand up for their rights, and today we are enjoying the results. You can't put a price tag on the human dignity individual workers feel when they stand up for their rights.

Give just a moment of thought to the long history of the trade union movement in the United States and Canada and compare the days of the past with the here and now, then look to the future. Think about what it has meant to be a union member — about collective bargaining, about industrial democracy and peace, prosperity and security, and individual dignity on the job. It's something to think about.
Flood repairs

RGW Construction rebuilt the Carmel Bridge in Monterey County in 33 days, 17 days ahead of schedule, after it was washed out March 11, the day after the Arroyo Pasajero Bridge on I-5 collapsed, killing seven people.

By Steve Moler
Assistant Editor

The day after the Arroyo Pasajero Bridge on I-5 in Fresno County collapsed on March 10, killing seven people, another important bridge 80 miles south also failed.

The Carmel Bridge, which links the Monterey Peninsula with the scenic Big Sur country just south of Carmel, could no longer withstand the onslaught of the rising Carmel River on the morning of Saturday, March 11. The closely placed columns of the 62-year-old cast-in-place concrete bridge began to collect large amounts of debris and vegetation, and the soil supporting the piles began to rapidly erode. The two ingredients caused the span to collapse, sending huge chunks of the bridge into the rain-swollen river and out to the Pacific Ocean. Fortunately, no one in this collapse was killed or injured.

The collapse not only cut off Carmel Highlands and Big Sur from auto and truck traffic, but it also severed major utility lines that were built into the bridge structure. Residents of Carmel Highlands were within a stone's throw of the Safeway supermarket at the Crossroads shopping center, yet in order to drive there, they had to endure a 6 1/2-hour, 250-mile detour through Ft. Hunter Liggett and over to U.S. 101 via King City and Salinas.

Within five days of the collapse, Caltrans was able to erect a temporary one-way steel Bailey bridge while plans were being drawn up for a permanent replacement. Bids went out at 10 a.m. on April 1, with the low bidder being RGW Construction Inc. at $4.5 million, and work began at 4 p.m. that same day.

The contract called for RGW to build the two-lane, six-span cast-in-place concrete bridge adjacent to the original bridge in 50 days, or by May 22. RGW would receive a $20,000 bonus for each day it finishes early and will pay a $20,000 penalty for each day it is late.

When the Carmel Bridge washed out on March 11, it severed a vital transportation and utility link between the Monterey Peninsula and the Big Sur country.

RGW's Project Manager Curtis Weltz thought crews would need the full 50 days to complete the project because the bridge is fairly complicated: six bents, 40 piles and eight different utility conduits.

But typical of what good union contractors with the skilled hands can do in a pinch, RGW and its subcontractors finished the job in 33 days, 17 days ahead of schedule.

Operating Engineers, including about eight from RGW and about the same number from subcontractor Granite Construction, which did the grading and paving of the realigned approaches, worked two, 12-hour shifts, seven days a week. CF&T Concrete Pumping pumped the bridge's 2,000 yards of concrete. The bridge's 40, 36-inch-diameter piles, driven by RGW, were bored 120 feet below ground to prevent any repeat of March 11.

To get the big Manitowoc 4000 into position on the south side of the Carmel River for pile driving and hoisting, a Local 3 crew spent 12 hours transporting the rig via the infamous 250-mile detour: south on U.S. 101 to San Luis Obispo, over to Morro Bay and north on Hwy. 1 through Big Sur.

The effort was well worth it, though. To the delight of local businesses, the bridge was completed just in time for the beginning of the region's normally robust tourist season.
C.C. Myers finishes I-5 bridge 17 days ahead of schedule

C.C. Myers of Rancho Cordova has completed the permanent replacement of the Arroyo Pasajero Bridge on I-5 near Coalinga in Fresno County in just 33 days, 17 days ahead of schedule.

The company was awarded the $5.15 million contract to build the twin replacement spans in 50 days after MCM Construction of Sacramento built a temporary bridge using flatbed railroad frames in the days following the bridge's March 10 collapse, which killed seven people when four cars plunged into the rain-swollen creek during some of the worst flooding in California history.

For finishing 17 days ahead of schedule, C.C. Myers received a $870,000 bonus from Caltrans. Congratulations to all the Local 3 members who worked around the clock on this important project.
Credit union sets course to remain ‘biggest and best’

Today over 60 million Americans belong to credit unions and the numbers are growing every day. Why? Surveys show that well-run credit unions generally charge lower fees, pay higher savings rates and offer better rates on loans to their members than most banks and other financial institutions.

Yet, even though there is greater demand for credit union membership, the economy is forcing credit unions to take steps to remain competitive or go out of business. There are now 4,000 fewer credit unions today than there were 15 years ago. By the year 2000, there will be several thousand fewer credit unions than there are today.

Our credit union was first organized in 1964. Today we are the largest “labor union” credit union in the United States and the 95th largest credit union overall.

To maintain our position as one of the nation’s top-rated credit unions, our Board of Directors recently approved a policy that will open the field of membership to other building trades unions and companies who have collective bargaining agreements with Local 3. Of course, our Board of Directors will have complete authority to review and either approve or reject any request for membership by a building trades local or company.

This is a good move for our credit union. There are a number of reasons it will benefit those of us who already hold membership:

- Many building trades unions are too small to have their own credit unions. By opening up membership to them, our credit union can expand its base to others who share the same union values and traditions as Local 3 members. This will help our credit union keep its competitive edge.
- Even though our credit union has been very aggressive in opening up branches throughout our jurisdiction, there are still areas where a credit union branch is not conveniently located. Without a larger membership base, the chances of opening up branches in some of these areas is not very likely. We anticipate that, as more members from other crafts are accepted into our credit union, we will eventually be able to open branches in areas that still don’t have them.
- A local union lives or dies by the quality of service it provides its members. The same is true of credit unions. In today’s highly competitive climate, our credit union must be able to offer state-of-the-art services to its members or go the way of the dinosaur. More members means more assets which means more resources to offer new services.

I’m sure there are some Operating Engineers who take pride in the fact that Local 3 has its own credit union when darn few unions anywhere can make that claim. We can all be proud that our union has earned a reputation as a forward thinking organization that doesn’t take a back seat to anybody when it comes to providing great service to its members.

The same kind of leadership that keeps Local 3 ahead of the pack is also taking bold steps to ensure that the credit union will be here to serve our children and their children. We’re excited by this new development and confident that all our members will enjoy the benefits that come from maintaining our position as the “biggest and the best” credit union in the labor movement.

Members can now get vision care service in Sacramento

Union Vision Services, a full-service vision care provider, has opened an office at the Sacramento District union hall. Union Vision Services provides Operating Engineers and their families with state-of-the-art eye care, a wide range of high quality and designer eye wear and contact lenses. For those covered by the California Active and Retirees Health & Welfare’s Vision Service Plan, most of these services will be covered by the plan’s $7.50 deductible.

Along with your new eye care office at the Sacramento hall comes the services of Optometrist Dr. James Wu, an honors graduate of UC Berkeley who has over 20 years of experience in optometry.

To obtain vision care benefits at Union Vision Services, simply call (916) 567-0888 locally or 800-567-0188 outside Sacramento to register and make your appointment. Dr. Wu and his staff will provide you with friendly, personalized service designed to maximize your vision care benefits.

Retiree Association meetings

The current round of Retiree Association meetings will conclude this month, so be sure to check the schedule on page 18 and come out to the meeting in your area. We welcome those new to the retirees ranks. We’d like to see you at the meetings. You’ll meet some of the people you’ve worked with over the years, and you’ll probably make some new friends.

Attention Hawaii retirees

Retiree Association meetings will be held during the first week of June. Hawaii retirees will receive an invitation that gives the date and location for the meetings on each of the islands. All retiree meetings will be held at 2 p.m. You may also call your district office for information on these meetings. Be sure to come to the meeting in your area. Come join us and have a good time. We need your input regarding the union and the benefit plans. See you there.

Specially called meetings underway

Specially called meetings for Local 3 active engineers and their spouses are currently being held and will discuss all aspects of the fringe benefit programs. Representatives from the union and trust fund will attend to listen to your concerns regarding the benefit plans. They will also share information regarding the operation of the plans, including proper claims filings for medical, dental, prescription drugs and vision care. We will also discuss the pension and annuity plans, how they work, how the funds builds for your retirement, the differences between the two pension funds, and much more.

Members and spouses will receive an invitation to the meeting in their area. All meetings will begin at 7 p.m. and are listed on page 18. We hope you and your spouse will plan to attend this very important meeting.

Hawaii specially called and pre-retirement meetings will be held at 6 p.m. just prior to the June district meetings. Reminder cards will be sent. Call your district office if you need additional information.

Relationship with your doctor

Members and their families should establish a good relation-
Kaiser's Felton Plant running new Cat 633E scraper

It's been awhile since Caterpillar Inc. has made 633 scrapers, the last model being the 633D. But last year the world's largest manufacturer of earth-moving equipment decided to bring back the 633, producing a much improved 633E.

One of the few 633Es sold in the United States thus far was purchased recently by Kaiser Sand & Gravel Company for use at its Felton Plant near Scotts Valley in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Sitting atop one of the best natural sand deposits in the western United States, the plant produces sand primarily for concrete, plaster and mortar for mostly South Bay customers. Because the sand is of such good quality, about all Kaiser has to do to prepare the sand for distribution is do a small amount of washing.

One day last March, San Jose Business Rep. Lew Bratton took Engineers News out to the Felton Plant for a look at the new scraper. One of the first characteristics you notice about the 633E is that it's much quieter than previous models, a nice feature to have when a plant, such as the Felton Plant, is situated adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

Mechanic Fred Serpa told us that the 633E has more horsepower than the 633D and features a variable-speed paddle, which allows the rig to load about 20 percent faster than previous 633s. Because the elevator isn't as steep, the load rest farther back. The rig also has a separate filter system for hydraulic pumps.

Operator Dennis Dewicki likes the new 633 because it's much quieter inside the cab, which is larger than the 633D's cab and has a great air conditioning and heating system.

PHOTOS
1: Operator Dennis Dewicki in Kaiser Sand & Gravel's new 633E scraper.
2: Dozer operator Jim Sowards
3: Plant operator and steward Marvin Yegge
4: At the Felton Plant are from left: Business Rep. Lew Bratton, Jesus Espinoza, Fred Serpa, Dennis Dewicki and Gene Hicks
5: The Felton Plant's washing unit
Work picks up in Redding area

REDDING - Now that the weather has improved, work is starting to pick up in the Redding area.

J.F. Shea has picked up three more jobs: the first being the twin bridges on Hwy. 273 in south Redding, the second the 7.3-mile overlay and widening between Madeline and Torno on U.S. 395 in Lassen County. The third is a 6.8-mile overlay in Trinity County, with 40,000 yards of dirt and overlay through the town of Weaverville. Lee Whitehurst will be the field superintendent for this project.

Rumor has it that J.F. Shea has purchased a portable hot plant. Looks like things are going to get very competitive.

Hardrock is still slow because of the weather. It has a couple of people working at Mercy Medical Center. The dump project is still too wet.

The project in Paso Robles doing insurance work on the 17 miles of pipe is partially shut down due to rains. Gale Easley and Terry Smith said they will soon be going strong, as they have the dirt on part of this job.

W. Jaxon Baker and Blandalow outbid everyone on the Bomreyview Bridge and 1-5 project. This is a City of Redding contract with a little state money involved. Lyle Tullis of Tullis Inc. hired one of our good members, Gary Hiser, to be general foreman.

The Susanville Prison project is starting to pick up because of the dry weather. Ford Construction is hiring operators to do the finish work. Ford Superintendent Randy Vargas and Foreman Ron McGilvary said work is going well; they should begin paving soon. McCarthy Western is a little behind on the prison because of the wet weather. The company used Bragg Crane all winter in the frozen ground and snow.

Spencer Thomas, one of our best finish blade operators, now has his own blade and is working for McCarthy Western along with brothers Kenny Dickerson and Jack Griner, who are cleaning up winter damage around buildings.

Kiewit is moving its crusader to MacCleod. The company still has its 1.5 to pave this year. Chuck Hollar is the superintendent. Fletcher General has worked about three to five operators on and off over the winter at the Res. But since 1967, Dan Rauzy Young is our job steward for this project.

Fletcher General is also moving along on the Shasta Dam project. Crews are using television cameras to photograph and survey the dam’s face. The steel will be arriving about August. We currently have two operators there and will be adding more as the project progresses.

The pipeline from Malin, Ore. to the Tracy Power Plant near Sparks, Nev. consists of 229 miles of 20-inch and 12-inch laterals to Alturas and Susanville plus a line to Herlong. We know as of this date that Tuscarora is the owner, and the bids should go out in mid April.

Stimpel-Wielhaus is doing well at Salyer in Trinity County with its bridge project. It has both abutments just about dug out and is getting ready to start piling and forming. This company has also picked up another bridge and road connection at Clear Creek south of Redding in Shasta County. There was only $1,600 separating the two bids.

I want to express to all our members that we are in the fight of our lives to save our wages. As you know by now, Republicans in Congress are pushing to get the Davis-Bacon Act repealed. We need to write to our representatives and tell them what it is going to do to everyone, not just to the union worker. Sign and send in the information form on page 3 of the March issue of Engineers News. I believe these Republican politicians are just like little kids, you give them a hammer and they just wonder just how much damage they are going to do before you can get it away from them.


Storm damage will keep construction crews busy

SANTA ROSA - Will the rains ever end? It seems the members just get started on a spring job when another storm barrages in. Rainfall in Santa Rosa has reached over 40 inches this season. Casadero, a small town near the coast, has exceeded 100 inches. One storm alone has caused over $31 million in damage to Sonoma County; much of the necessary cleanup, which will provide many local union jobs.

The rains, however, have created emergency work for local construction crews, and Caltrans is planning to advertise bids on many storm damaged roads and bridges this spring. Some of the major roadway damage includes two large slides on Geysers Road and a major slide near Cummings on U.S. 101.

Other flood damage includes many slippages on local roads at Warm Springs Dam, and slope problems on U.S. 101 near Willits north of Cloverdale and on the Cloverdale Bypass. Guerneville Road slid into the Russian River at several locations, and Hwy. 1 was closed due to landslides near Ft. Bragg and Gualala.

California and the federal government have declared Sonoma County a disaster area, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds should help finance much of the necessary cleanup, which will provide many jobs when the sun finally comes out. It’s been a long winter for our members.

Gravel wars update

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors recently approved a new gravel pit near the Russian River for Kaiser Sand & Gravel Company. This will allow mining of an 18-acre area and will provide about 1.4 million tons of sand and gravel. It will also put about 40 Operating Engineers back to work and supply the community with affordable aggregate.

I spoke at a packed hearing, informing the supervisors that our people have been laid off since last November and want to return to work. I went on to say that the Aggregate Resource Management Strategy (ARMS) plan had been approved, all the necessary environmental studies have been completed and the proper permits are in place, so let’s focus on jobs. Many thanks to the 30 or 40 members and their families who attended the hearings and provided their support.

What’s new with the geysers

Sonoma County officials have approved 12 new geothermal wells to be drilled at the geysers; the first new wells approved in over four years. Geothermal Energy Partners Ltd. will drill the wells over the next few years on a 320-acre site in the northwest corner of the steam field.

The geysers, the world’s largest geothermal resource, are producing 25 percent less power than normal. At one time, power generated from 445 wells produced more than 10 million megawatts of electricity, enough for 600,000 homes. But since 1967, steam levels have gradually fallen. The new wells will be isolated from the majority of other wells, so production is expected to be good. However, an industry executive cautioned that drilling for geothermal energy is a lot like drilling for oil—it’s very risky.

In another effort to recharge the steam, the Lake County Board of Supervisors approved a 36-mile, $40 million pipeline to transport treated wastewater to the geysers. The project is expected to bid this summer and provide many local union jobs.

Remember the gray whale?

After weeks of worry over a dead and stinking gray whale that washed up at Sea Ranch beach in March, mother nature finally did what no one else could. The rotting carcass provided a political stink because federal, state and local agencies refused to take responsibility for the whale because it was on a private beach.

After nearly a month of wrangling, Rep. Lynn Woolsey finally called Local 3 in desperation. Our office was able to arrange for disposal of the whale within an hour, thanks to Precision Crane and Gaulais Aggregates, which volunteered to heist, truck and bury the carcass.

But before the Operating Engineers could act, high seas and crashing surf from yet another winter storm dislodged the 28-foot whale. Bud Eliff of Precision Crane said, “The great whale adventure is moving south. If it lands somewhere and we can get it, we’ll take it.”

The whale was last seen drifting out to sea, gradually decomposing. It seems that only Local 3 or nature itself could actually do the job, and in this case, nature came through under budget, if not on time.

District picnic

Mark your calendars for Sunday, July 30. This is the date of the big District 10 barbecue to be held at The Windsor Water Works. This year the cost will be $12 for active members, $9 for retirees and $1 for children under 12. Discounted slide tickets are $6, providing access to four water slides and two pools. There will also be horseshoes and volleyball.

The menu will include your choice of chicken or tri-tip, rolls, beans, salad, hot dogs and unlimited soda and beer. We’ll have a huge raffle with 12 prizes. Park hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Remember, we always sell out, so plan now to get your tickets early.

Bob Miller, District Rep.
El Dorado Hills teeming with subdivision work

SACRAMENTO – Spring rains have slowed nearly all projects to minimum crews and have put numerous projects on hold until the ground dries.

The rock, sand and gravel crews have been working steadily at Loomer and Industrial Asphalt. The work picture looks good again for all the plants, and repairs and modifications have kept nearly all of the crews busy, allowing several mechanics, welders and crane operators to gain some hours while their normal employers have been down for the winter.

Vidal Construction has been able to keep some of his hands working on a subdivision off Orchard Lane in Placerville.

Water shortages have slowed some of the housing projects in the foothills, except Teichert Construction, which has one of the biggest upcoming housing projects and two golf courses in El Dorado Hills. These projects are about one quarter complete. Word on the street is that it will take five years to complete this scenic estate subdivision overlooking Folsom Dam and the entire Sacramento Valley. Paying crews on this project, using two hot plants, have put 12,000 tons of asphalt roadway down in one shift.

The west slope foothills have numerous smaller projects in the area, with SRC out of Folsom picking up a couple of jobs and bidding on others to complete its work picture.

Valley Crest Landscape is working on the prevailing wage medium landscaping in El Dorado Hills and has a large crew of Operating Engineers and apprentices working rain or shine. T&S Construction is progressing with its underground project off Barton Road in Roseville.

In the Roseville area, near the T&S Construction project, Mountain Cascade Inc. of Livermore is the apparent low bidder on a 12-inch water transmission pipeline, with a bid of nearly $20 million.

Granite Construction has put the subdivision in Folsom on hold because every time it rains the start date has to be moved ahead two weeks.

RGW is working at numerous locations in Sacramento. It has kept a crew working on a “punch list” at Intel at Folsom, and also in the Cobble at Hwy. 50 and Hazel Avenue. Crews have been working Saturdays when possible.

The Sacramento office is looking forward to an extremely busy work season with both the gas pipeline coming through Sacramento and the proposed airport expansion at Metro Airport, as well as the heavy work needed following this past winter’s flooding.

The Del Webb project in Roseville has both RC Collet and Teichert crews working six, 10-hour days when possible. This retirement housing project is similar to – and probably better than – Sun City in Arizona.

We would like to thank everyone who helped get our Davis-Bacon Act petitions signed. They have been forwarded to the appropriate politicians. It cannot be stressed enough how important this is to all working people and to the communities in which they live.

Due to a clerical error Frank Herrera’s name was not noted as the author of last month’s Sacramento Districts article in the Engineers News.


Work in Stockton area ready to take off this season

STOCKTON – Work is rapidly picking up in the Stockton area, with more than $76 million worth of bids let in March and April and another $106 million worth of jobs in the planning stage.

Here’s a county-by-county breakdown of the March and April bid amounts and what’s ahead:

- Amador County: $3.3 million, with $10.9 million planned.
- Calaveras County: $2.8 million, with $24.5 million planned.
- San Joaquin County: $44 million, with $67.7 million planned.
- Tuolumne County: $20 million, with $2.6 million in the planning stage.

San Joaquin County Supervisor Robert J. Cabral met with federal officials to promote the $59 million Altamont Demonstration Raul Service Project. The project will be a commuter rail connecting San Joaquin County with the Bay Area. Look for more details in an upcoming feature story in Engineers News.

Cabral is seeking federal support to complete the project. He states federal response is positive due to already committed state and local funding. With this kind of support from Cabral and other supervisors this project may soon become reality.

Ramos Pipeline has picked up work on the Modesto clay pipe project, which will run about six months. Ramos was also low bidder on a pipe project at Brett Harte, with work beginning by May 15. Ford Construction Company picked up emergency repair work for a section of Hwy. 120 that was completely washed out at Moccasin. Steve Njirich’s scraper and support crews are very busy. Steve has done an exceptional job bidding work for his employees.

RDS has become an equipment rental company, renting equipment in California and Nevada, making work for many members and also providing jobs for some new members.

Dillingham is making emergency repairs on the Oakdale Irrigation District water tunnel near Oakdale. Though repairs should only take two to three weeks, the work will provide a lot of overtime for our members.

In spite of the rain, Al Waggoner Inc. and Clyde Wheeler Pipeline have been catching up on work that was delayed and also have gotten a good start on the summer season.

George Reed Inc. has been keeping its members working in Manteca on two projects. The company’s paving crew is getting some hours now that we are finally getting five dry days in the same week. George Reed’s paving and excavating crews are busy providing plenty of work for its rock-sand and asphalt crews.

The building trades have signed a project agreement with Doctors Hospital for an $10 million addition that will be done all union.

The Diablo Grande project is soon to start, probably within the next four weeks. Ford Construction has begun to stockpile equipment at I-5 and Oak Flat Road for the first portion, which is worth about $10 million.

Eruption has started work on the $3.3 million Naglee Road improvement project in front of the new Tracy Mall site, with construction about half complete.

Granite is also progressing well on its Corral Hollow Road project and is producing rock and sand products six days a week at its Tracy plant. Granite has purchased a state-of-the-art crusher for recycling material and is stockpiling material for local projects as well for the Vasco Road project in Contra Costa County.

Madonna Construction has hired some local operators to run equipment on its $2.9 million Grant Line Road project in Tracy. Teichert’s Tracy Mall project is progressing well, and the company has broken ground on its recently awarded $1.7 million detention basin and drainage improvement project along Hwy. 105 in Tracy.

Teichert is finishing site work at the Flying J Truck Stop in Ripon and at Jack Tune Road. The sandy soil at these locations has allowed Teichert to employ members through the winter despite record rainfall.

RGW started work at its $4.9 million project on I-5 at the Country Club on off-ramps, a project that consists of installing sound walls and relocating the on-ramps to improve traffic congestion in the area.

Teichert Aggregates and Lone Star are operating at near capacity. Crews are working one production shift and one repair shift preparing for the soon-to-come demands for rock and sand products.

Kiewit Pacific’s $15.5 million sludge processing project at the Stockton Sewer Plant is off to a slow start, but its Hwy. 88 realignment project at Pine Grove is beginning to get off the ground despite heavy rain and snow.

DHS has been working all the employees it can given the wet spring. The good news is that work should begin to pick up dramatically as summer settles in.

With the help of Bill Schneider, we have been able to sign up two new surveying firms: Michael D. Parley of Stockton and Delta Survey of Lodi.

Our many thanks to all the members, their spouses and families for helping us with the signing of Davis-Lucey repeal petitions.

District picnics

Our 13th annual picnic will be held Sunday, July 23, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Mickey Grove Park. There will be a steak barbecue, hot dogs, beans, salad, French bread, ice cream and, of course, free beer and soft drinks.

Contact the district office or your business agent for tickets. Price is $10 per person for active members, $5 for retirees, children under 15 are free. Lunch will be served from 12 noon to 2 p.m.

Dave Young, District Rep., Business Agents Tom Aja, Doug Corson and Bob Blagg, and Dispatcher Joyce Sheen
NDT advertises $47 million in Hwy. projects

RENO - Work in Northern Nevada is back to being busy since the weather has finally dried out, and we are looking at a lot of asphalt overlay and subdivision work.

Frehner Construction is busy with overlay work at Dennis-Orovada on I-80 at Hallel, a widening and overlay project at Lamoille, and an overlay at Currie. Frehner has picked up new overlay jobs on the Mountain City Highway and the Eureka-Carlin Highway. Frehner and FNF Construction recently formed a joint venture for a $10 million overlay at Currie and Carlin.

Granite Construction is still working on the new U.S. 395 south extension that will finish with concrete paving. Granite is also working on an overlay at Schur and at many building projects. Granite has new jobs at the Stead Airport, where it will construct a new apron, and overlay projects at Silver City and in Douglas and Lyon counties.

Match Corp. is working on finishing the 1-80 project at Battle Mountain and recently picked up a new overlay project on Hwy. 6. T.W. Construction, meanwhile, is continuing work on the Silver Legacy Hotel in Reno. T.W. is also doing the sitework at a parking lot at the new Pion Power Plant east of Reno while continuing several subdivision and pipe jobs.

Site work at the new International Gaming Technology complex and several subdivision projects are keeping our members very busy at Q&D Construction. Earl Games Construction is staying busy doing building work. Independent Construction, new to Northern Nevada, just started work on a large subdivision in northwest Reno.

We have contractors working on the Chalk Bluff Water Treatment Plant, and crane work for Bragg and A&K W has been plentiful through the winter months.

The Nevada Department of Transportation has advertised over $47 million of work on I-80 to bid in May. $25 million in Elko County, $18 million between Reno and Fernley, and $4 million in U.S. 395 north of Reno.

Now our out-of-work list is short on scraper hands, paving hands and graders. One thing to remember is that a lot of our work is in rural areas, so a member needs to be prepared for that type of travel.

On April 18, we had a very informative meeting on our fringe benefits with representatives from the Nevada Health and Welfare office and our pension department in San Francisco. We had a good turnout and participation.

Please check the new district meeting schedule. The August meeting is scheduled for August 24 at the Airport Plaza Hotel. Remember, district meetings now begin at 7 p.m. We need more involvement from our members at these meetings. In Elko, there is always a membership meeting on the second Tuesday of the month held at the union office.

Harrah's work on our new district office and credit union branch, awarded to Q&D Construction, is underway and will be completed by September 1. The office is in the same complex as the Social Security office at Mill Street and McCarran Boulevard.

We will not have a picnic this summer, but we will host an open house in the new office. Watch for details.

Employees at Q&D Construction recently spent a Saturday morning installing new playground equipment at Sarah Winnemucca Elementary School in northwest Reno. Q&D was the general contractor that built the elementary school, and then officially adopted the school as a partner in education when it opened. Employees have formed a partners committee and routinely participate in projects at the school such as the playground installation.

cont'd from p. 4

in Washington, the Republican caucus has been busy in California to cut the legs out from under our state prevailing wage or "Little Davis-Bacon" laws. Led by Assemblyman Goldsmith of San Diego, the Republican caucus introduced seven bills in the Assembly to "reform" the state prevailing wage law. These bills attempted to exempt prevailing wages on a wide range of construction, from school to jail construction, any project where no state or federal money is involved. Another bill by Senator Tim Leslie would exempt all prevailing wages on locally funded work in all 37 counties throughout California with a population less than 250,000.

Legislative committee hearings were held on all eight bills in Sacramento on April 19th. We were ready. We brought in an economist from the University of Utah who has completed a study showing what happened in nine state that had repealed their state prevailing wage laws. Contractors from several of our employer associations testified. By the time we were done, we had obliterated the arguments put forth by the opposition.

During the testimony, the Republican members of the committee appeared to have taken lessons from the Newt Gingrich school of politics. Only one Republican stayed for the entire hearing. The others milled around, left the room or chatted with one another while our testimony was being given.

Predictably, not one bill was opposed by any of the republicans. The legislation was killed in a straight party-line split.

Grassroots: Does it work?

The question must be asked: If the Republicans don't care about the pros and cons of prevailing wage issue, are our grassroots efforts doing any good? You better believe it! The Republicans may not care about the merits of the prevailing wage issue, but they can count. When they get petitions, postcards and letters from their own constituents demanding their support for prevailing wage laws, they can't help but think twice before they push the button to vote on these bills. In some cases, they think long and hard enough to come over on our side of the fence.

Case in point: District Representatives Bob Baroni, Bob Miller, Lou Franchimon, head of the Napa Solano County Building Trades Council and I met on a Saturday this month with Congressman Frank Riggs. A Republican who defeated Democrat Dan Hamburg last November, Riggs, represents the counties along California's north coast.

We explained to Congressman Riggs how important the federal Davis-Bacon law was, not only to our industry but to the taxpayers. He demonstrated a very thorough knowledge of the issue and gave us his commitment to oppose any attempt to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act. That same week, he met with District Representative Bill Burns in Eureka. Again, he gave us his commitment.

Where to from here?

This war is just beginning. In California, Republican sharpshooters will be hiding behind every bush to try to take us out by one as we march down the road. When the budget comes up next month, they will be there to slip in language to exempt prevailing wage protections everywhere there is an allocation to spend state money on construction - whether it's highways, prisons, schools or homes for wayward pels.

The same thing is going to happen on the federal level. It will be guerrilla warfare.
Geneva Rock purchases Pioneer Sand & Gravel

SALT LAKE CITY — Geneva Rock, a good union contractor, will be buying out Pioneer Sand & Gravel. We want to thank all our members at Pioneer for their dedication to service as Pioneer employees. It looks like this buyout may give these Pioneer members a better future because they'll be going from one union contractor to another. In the long term, I think this change will benefit the members who have worked for Pioneer.

Sundt Inc. started around the first part of March on what looks to be an early construction year that will put a lot of our good members to work in addition to the 25 members who are already working for the company. With any luck, these members will be employed through the entire 1995 work season and into early December.

The fact that Local 3 negotiated this agreement allowed many of our members to be dispatched for employment at the very beginning of the construction year. Sundt hasn't worked under a union agreement for at least 10 years.

District Rep. Kay Leishman and I met with Kennecott and Morrison-Knudsen officials who are responsible for the Kennecott tailings project, which was held up because of required permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

This is a major project with about a half-million dollars worth of work to be let. We'll continue to meet with the company to ensure our union contractors the opportunity to bid this work. We hope many of them will be successful and able to provide needed employment for our members. We'll keep you posted.

Wheeler Machinery's contract expires at the end of October. We will soon be holding pre-negotiation meetings with the employees. This is a massive contract and important to our members working at Wheeler, ICM and Eureka Slides. We're asking for a good turnout at these pre-negotiation meetings so we can put together a comprehensive proposal for management. There are important issues that need to be resolved for our members' benefit. Our success in these negotiations relies heavily on our members' participation and input.

Despite the work increased in Utah this year, we must continue to organize new companies for everyone's economic survival. Whenever you, as a member, work non-union, you have an opportunity to help us organize contractors that will increase opportunities for you and your union brothers.

George Stavros, Business Rep.

Salt Palace holds topping-off ceremony

SALT LAKE CITY — The ritual topping-off celebration for the raising of the last piece of steel was held on the Salt Palace remodeling. The contractors had a luncheon for those who worked on the project and for special guests such as Salt Lake City Mayor Dee Dee Corradini and various Salt Lake County officials.

This has been a good project for our members, as operators worked all winter, and several will stay on throughout the summer. Shurtleff & Andrews has had a couple of big cranes on this project for SME Steel Company, while Hughes-Hunt Inc., the general contractor, had two operators on this job.

Gibbons & Reed in Ogden and Salt Lake City have picked up some good jobs and are getting busy. Pile Rock, Ogden and Brigham City are also picking up now that the wet weather is easing up. Concrete Products Company and Monroe didn't slow down this winter, as it looked to be a good year for both these rock, sand and gravel companies.

Leonard Construction finished its project on the smelter at Kennecott. Local 3 hates to see this good project finish up with such a good company leaving the state. We hope Leonard is back soon.

W. W. Clyde & Company started jobs at Brown's Park near Flaming Gorge and at Wolf Creek. There are about 15 members working at Brown's Park.

Valley Asphalt is busy at Cisco repairing soft spots in the runway and getting ready to do an overlay on I-70.

Kaibab's sawmill still doesn't have the planer up, but its people are hoping the weather will let it happen soon. Kaibab is experiencing a shortage of logs right now and needs the snow to melt so workers can get the logs out.

The cover story in the April Engineers News was about the collapse of the I-5 bridge in Fresno County, Calif., and the efforts to get a temporary bridge in place so traffic could flow again along the state's primary north-south artery. Our members at Western Pipe Coaters here in Utah were called out on the weekend to load and send out the pipe to be used in driving the pilings for this temporary bridge. It's gratifying to see Local 3 members from one area helping their union brothers and sisters in another area.

Verlyn K. Shumway and Virgil A. Blair, Business Reps.

A note of gratitude from the McDevitt family

Editor's note: Local 3 members Jack McDevitt and Robert Findlay are believed to be two of three men who were aboard a Cessna 182 that disappeared off the Marin Headlands north of the Golden Gate on February 12 while on a sightseeing tour. Both McDevitt, Findlay and the pilot, Frank Flores, are presumed dead. The plane's disappearance gained notoriety when two credit cards belonging to Flores were turned into a Mill Valley bank by two women who found the cards on the beach.

We wish to thank you for your support at John's (Jack's) memorial service and your expressions of sympathy. John was so proud to be a part of Local 3.

With warmest regards,
Jack and Noreen McDevitt,
Larry McDevitt, Mary and Kevin Kobett

April 11, 1995
To officers and Local 3 members:

We wish to thank you for your support at John's (Jack's) memorial service and your expressions of sympathy. John was so proud to be a part of Local 3.

With warmest regards,
Jack and Noreen McDevitt,
Larry McDevitt, Mary and Kevin Kobett
RETIREE
ASSOCIATION
MEETINGS

IGNACIO - Chi Beta Chapter
Wed., May 3, 7 pm
San Pedro Hall

S.F. SAN MATER - Kappa Nu Chi
Thr., May 4, 10 pm
IAM Air Transport

SALT LAKE CITY - Pi Chapter
Wed., May 3, 2 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.

FAIRFIELD - Chi Gamma Chapter
Tues., May 15, 6 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.

RENO - Xi Chapter
Thurs., May 17, 2 pm
Laborers Hall

FOCSO
Fr., May 19, 8 pm
Carpenters Hall

FRESNO - Theta Chapter
Thurs., May 25, 7 pm
Seafarers International

DISTRICT MEETING
LOCATION CHANGE
From Carpenters hall To Airport Plaza Hotel
May 11, 1995, has been changed as follows.

CONCORD
Wed., May 3, 7 pm
Concord Elks Lodge

STOCKTON
Tues., May 23, 7 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.

SACRAMENTO
Wed., May 24, 7 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.

DEPARTED MEMBERS
Abbot, Kenneth
Aguayo, John
Ballenger, David Sr.
Baez, William
Bakos, Don
Bridges, John
Carter, John
Cera, Marshall
Chambers, Lester
Chini, Richard
Cook, Gerald
Crandall, Fred
Cref, Dan
Edwards, Earl
Edwards, Earnest
Ehret, F.
Evans, Fred
Gallavan, Glen
Garrett, Alfred
Giles, Frank Jr.
Gibson, Clarence
Holback, Dennis
Hoag, Arthur
Kelley, Robert
Kinghorn, Renton
Mackenzie, Tom
Miller, Wilbur
Miller, Robert
Miller, Willard
Miller, Wayne
Perry, H.
Roush, Roy
Robins, Tony
Staff, Alfred

SPEICLALLY CALLED
MEETINGS
The following meetings, for active Operating Engineers and their
spouses, will provide important information regarding all
aspects of the fringe benefits and pension plans:

CONCORD
Wed., May 3, 7 pm
Concord Elks Lodge

S.F. SAN MATEO - Kappa Nu Chi
Thurs., May 4, 10 pm
IAM Air Transport

SALT LAKE CITY - Pi Chapter
Wed., May 3, 2 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.

FAIRFIELD - Chi Gamma Chapter
Tues., May 15, 6 pm
Operating Engineers Bldg.

FRESNO - Theta Chapter
Thurs., May 25, 7 pm
Seafarers International

SEMIM-ANNUAL
MEETING
Recording/Corresponding Secretary Robert L. Wise has announced
that the next Semi-Annual meeting of the membership will be
held on Saturday, July 15, 1995, 1:00 pm at the:

Seafarers International
Union Auditorium
350 Fremont Street
San Francisco, CA

HONORARY
MEMBERS
The following retirees have thirty-five (35) or more years of member-
ship in the Local Union as of March 1995, and have been determined
to be eligible for Honorary Membership effective July 1, 1995. They
were presented at the April 9, 1995 Executive Board Meeting.

Charles H. Berger
Harold O. Bender
Raymond Costa
Adolf Cruz
Fred Danhauer, Jr.
Samuel Hodges, Jr.
Richard A. John
Mike Krulic
Rudy Minjarez
Guy L. Murphy
Deboral Powers
Edward L. Soares
Chester Southard
Jonathan N. Southwick
George Stitches
Vincent Tarantino
James T. Taylor
Lewis F. Willard
Robert L. Wynn

*Effective April 1, 1995

DISTRICT MEETINGS

MAY 1995

3rd......District 8: Sacramento, CA
Engineers Building
4044 N. Freeway Blvd.

4th......District 17: San Mateo, CA
Electrician's Hall
302 8th Ave.

10th......District 12: Provo, UT
Steelworkers Hall
1847 S. California Ln., Provo

11th ......District 11: Reno, NV
Airport Plaza Hotel
1981 Terminal Way

16th......District 04: Fairfield, CA
Engineer's Building
3540 N. Wages Way

18th......District 50: Fresno, CA
Laborers' Hall
5621 East Hedges

JUNE 1995

5th......District 17: Kona, HI
Kona Inn Community Center
76-5877 Mamalahoa, Kona

6th......District 17: Hilo, HI
Hilo ILWU Hall
100 W. Laka Drive, Hilo

7th......District 17: Kauai, HI
Wailuku Community Center
22 Waiku Place, Wailuku

8th......District 17: Honolulu, HI
Harlington High School Library
1564 King St., Honolulu

9th......District 17: Kauai, HI
Kauai High School Cafeteria
Lahaina

15th......District 20: Concord, CA
Elks Lodge No. 994
3994 Willow Pass Rd.

20th......District 80: Freedom, CA
Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall
1800 Freedom Blvd.

29th......District 10: Ukiah, CA
Orange Hall
740 State Street

JULY 1995

11th......District 30: Stockton, CA
Engineers Building
1916 North Broadway

18th......District 40: Eureka, CA
Engineers Building
2830 Broadway

19th......District 70: Redding, CA
Engineers Building
20308 Engineers Lane

20th......District 60: Yuba City, CA
Sutter-Yuba Board of Realtors Bldg.
1558 Starr Dr.

27th......District 80: Sacramento, CA
Engineers Building
4044 N. Freeway Blvd.
Come See Us This Summer!
WE'RE WAITING FOR YOU AT MARINE WORLD/AFRICA-USA!
Operating Engineers is once again offering discounts on tickets for 1995! They're valid for the whole year and are good for all shows and exhibits including the new "Walkabout Adventure" and opening Memorial Day Weekend, the "Walrus Experience." Tickets are $17.00 for adults (regularly $25.95) and $13.00 for kids (regularly $17.95). Just fill out the form below and mail it along with your check payable to: Operating Engineers Local 3.

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<th>Address</th>
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<th>Adults</th>
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<td>Tracy</td>
<td>123 Main St, Anytown, CA 98765</td>
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<td>98765</td>
<td>(415) 123-4567</td>
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I would like tickets to Marine World/Africa USA.

- Adult tickets @ $17.00 each
- Child tickets (ages 4-12) @ $13.00 each

Total:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

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