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Photo By Robert Clark

In preparation for the game, Nestor Ruiz transports a camera lens.

## Taking the Field

Local 45 Workers Get a Kick Out of the First Rams Game

BY MICHAEL MESSINA

The crowd was humming at the first Los Angeles Rams home game of the season at Memorial Coliseum in September. Electric, perhaps? It had been 22 years since Angelenos had a chance to watch a live NFL game in their home town, and IBEW Local 45 was on hand to make sure the sights and sounds would be coming through loud and clear.

With more than 90,000 fans donning the blue and gold in the stadium and millions more watching at home, the crew from Local 45 had a somewhat historic task in making this experience a memorable one. Utility man Barry Wright was one of the pros lending his expertise through the operation of the "parab" (parabolic microphone), also known as a sound dish. Anybody who

has ever paid attention to the crew on the sidelines of a football game has seen the person holding the large, clear half sphere, occasionally trying to avoid the player barreling out of bounds on an aggressive play. That's Wright, and his job is picking up every crack, crunch and grunt at field level. There were six sound dish operators for the game; one in each end zone, and four others along the sidelines. All IBEW Local 45 members.

Wright has 20 years of experience and said this one felt a little different. "I've worked a lot of [San Diego] Charger games and it seemed like there was so much more going on," Wright said about his first outing at the Coliseum. "I have to have a direct line

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## Security Technicians Keep Things Tight for the Sheriff's Dept.

BY MICHAEL MESSINA

The audio video security systems technicians at the Twin Towers Correctional Facility come across as a fairly tight knit group of guys. Donning their dark blue uniforms and shooting a few playful digs at one another, they've gathered at the facility to get an update from IBEW 45 Business Rep Victor Marrero; then they're off to points

far and wide throughout Los Angeles County to repair and maintain security systems for the Sheriff's Department.

At facilities across the county, these are the technicians that keep our most vital systems of security working properly. Fire alarm systems, entry and exit gates, cameras, intercoms, door

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)



Photo By Michael Messina

The technicians working at the Twin Towers Correctional Facility keep crucial security systems working properly.



# Leading the Charge

By Elaine Ocasio  
Business Manager, IBEW Local 45

When you head to the polls this Nov. 8 to cast your ballot, give some consideration as to which presidential candidate holds your best interests. With two candidates who are at opposite ends of the political and behavioral spectrum, the answer seems clear to me.

Hillary Clinton has a long record of supporting working families, saying, "I've always believed that when unions are strong, families are strong and America is strong. That is not a slogan for me. That is a statement of fact."

Meanwhile Donald Trump is openly anti-union and anti-worker, supporting the idea of national right-to-work laws and making comments like, "I think having a low minimum wage is not a bad thing for this country."

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka summed it up nicely when he said, "Donald Trump has spent his life getting rich by hurting working people."

That's not the way to build a stronger, economically sound workforce in this country. From his boorish behavior to his geo-political inexperience, Trump is far from a viable choice as commander in chief. This is why the IBEW has endorsed Hillary Clinton to be the next president of the United States. Remember, every vote counts. Your vote represents your voice. You can stay home and remain silent, or cast your ballot and be heard.

Remember to vote this Nov. 8!

## IBEW INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Almost two thousand Delegates strong attended the IBEW International Convention in St. Louis in September where Lonnie Stephenson was unanimously elected president. St. Louis was the birthplace of the IBEW 125 years ago, making this year's convention as poignant as ever.

I felt honored to be appointed to serve on the Grievance and Appeals Committee. My participation helped me understand more about the workings of our International. Local 45 was well represented by our Delegates: Rodney Cummings, Nagi Akl, Maria Martinez, Jennifer Mistrot and myself. Hugh McGuigan attended as our Alternate Delegate.

## WE'RE MOVING!

Local 45 offices have been located on Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood for over 30 years. In recent years, Hollywood has become the "it" place and the rents have risen along with its status. Our lease in our building is up at the end of January 2017 and we are currently in negotiations to lease new office space in North Hollywood. We will keep you posted as the moving date comes closer.

Elaine Ocasio  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary



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**HILLARY CLINTON SUPPORTS ALL WORKING PEOPLE**

Clinton's record proves she cares about good jobs and wages that can sustain our families. She:

- Opposes TPP.
- Supports increasing the minimum wage.
- Advocates for paid family leave.
- Has walked union picket lines.

**HILLARY CLINTON FOR PRESIDENT**

#luVote

**LABOR 16**  
AFL-CIO

**LOCAL 45 SUPPORTS A CULTURE OF LEARNING**

Local 45 is empowering its membership through free training. Visit the lynda.com video-based content library at [www.lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com) to make an investment in yourself.

Now is the time to improve, enhance and build your skills and knowledge.

The D.I.Y. Learning Check List:

- Identify the gaps in your current knowledge and experience.
- Research what is new or unfamiliar in your field.
- Develop a list of skills you want to pick up.
- Identify and adapt to changes in the workplace.
- Pursue areas for development and training that will enhance your job performance.

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Email the Local 45 office at [info@ibew45.org](mailto:info@ibew45.org) to get started with Lynda.com



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# G.E.: With Sale Comes New Bargaining

BY MICHAEL MESSINA

The General Electric appliance division has been going through a number of changes and transitions recently, and with its recent sale to the Chinese electronics and appliances company Haier Group it means a contract shift will soon be taking place. With discussions still in their infancy, what it means for members of IBEW Local 45 is yet to be seen.

All of the bargaining from here on will be done as coordinated bargaining, with the first sessions having begun in earnest on Sept. 26. IBEW is one of seven unions covering 26 locals across the country

affected by the sale to Haier. Local 45 represents 35 members out of a total of 237 nationwide for IBEW under the G.E. appliance division. Sharing a common expiration date on a contract means bargaining will no longer be scattered and will be a more cohesive effort.

Haier made its purchase in June for \$5.6 billion. A previous attempted sale to Electrolux fell through after the U.S. government stepped in on possible grounds of unfair competition. Haier, as a lesser-known company with a smaller presence in the U.S., had no such complications with their purchase. The new merger is now

known as G.E. Appliances, a Haier Company.

Upon the purchase, Haier immediately informed the union that it was not going to honor the existing agreements. Management did, however, sign a memorandum of agreement with IBEW to maintain the status quo for a year to allow time to bargain a new deal.

Local 45 Northern California Rep. Hugh McGuigan said each local within IBEW that has a contract with G.E. has submitted proposals. He said his members gave informative and insightful responses to requests for input, which he noted are vital in such

situations.

Two sessions have already taken place in Louisville, Ky. and as Open Channels went to press, a third session was about to begin. Other, Local-specific bargaining for IBEW 45 is continuing as well.

“Hopefully we can get a new deal in quickly,” McGuigan said.

Haier has voiced that it wants to wrap things up in about mid-December. McGuigan said that would be great, but noted that these types of negotiations often go beyond expected timelines. However, McGuigan said the initial bargaining sessions have been a positive start to the process.

## CAL LABOR FED BIENNIAL CONVENTION



IBEW Local 45 Business Manager Elaine Ocasio with labor legend Dolores Huerta at the California Labor Federation Biennial Convention in Oakland in July.

## PHAN HONORED



IBEW 45 Business Rep. Victor Marrero (right) presented L.A. County Sheriffs Department technician Nang T. Phan the Electronic Communications Technician of the year award. Photo by Jack Haas

## 39TH ANNUAL IBEW CONVENTION



IBEW Local 45 Business Manager Elaine Ocasio, Maria Martinez and Executive Board President Rodney Cummings at Sweetie Pies in St. Louis.



Members of the IBEW Local 45 contingent at the national convention in September.



Members of IBEW Local 45 helped to clean alleys as part of a public service project.



# Spotlight on Stewards

Two Local 45 members who get the job done **BY JACOB BOURNE**



## Lonnie Wong KTXL/Fox 40 Sacramento

A multimedia journalist and former television news reporter, Lonnie Wong began his trade working as a freelancer doing on-air story telling and live shooting as well as editing. It was in the 1970s that he first became a union member during a period when separate unions represented film cameramen and electronics operators.

"I was a member of the two unions in the capacity of a freelancer," Wong recalled. "It was my first exposure to unions. I worked on a crew with another member who was really familiar with union contracts and the rights of workers."

Today Wong focuses his efforts on writing stories for the web and social media. At Fox 40 Sacramento, he was part of a contingent to unionize the station from the initial discussions about seeking representation. When the union contract was finalized in 2015, Wong decided to continue his leadership role.

"It evolved to me becoming a shop steward," he explained. "I was part of the negotiating team and I knew most about the contract. I was encouraged to continue my role as a representative. In terms of the position, it's a touchstone for different things happening at the station."

Serving as a shop steward for the past year has been both a rewarding and eye-opening experience for Wong. He sees the great importance of mediating discussions to create a peaceful atmosphere and facilitate effective communication, given the wide array of concerns and viewpoints.

"If something is a problem for one employee it could be a problem for others," Wong offered. "I try to explore solutions and be a conduit for employees to management."



## Vern Yonemura, LACCD

About four years ago, Vern Yonemura was having a major disagreement with a department head at Los Angeles City College, where he works as a performing arts technician. It was only when the situation escalated to him feeling disheartened and wanting to leave that he and others at the college discovered that they were members of the Local. He was put in touch with field representative Vic Marrero, and things immediately began to improve.

"I was part of a union for a decade but didn't know I was part of IBEW until I found out when filing the grievance," Yonemura said. "Basically contact had been lost between the membership and representatives. Vic said he would change things and he certainly did."

The reestablishment of the connection with the Local also resulted in Yonemura's stepping up as a shop steward as the position had been vacant for many years. Prior to his decade with the school district, he spent 25 years as a union member at a television station. The experience gave him a solid background in negotiating contracts and working with management, which now helps him as a steward assisting members when they encounter difficulties.

"I've handled two to three issues in the past few years," he remarked. "In the past when there were problems they were just swept under the rug. Now just knowing that you're not going to have to deal with management on your own — psychologically, it's been a real boost for members."

Yonemura emphasized the importance of members staying involved with union activities such as contract talks and that keeping the lines of communication open and being aware of what's going on benefits everyone.



**Taking the Field**  
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

of sight with the sound dish. It felt like I had to keep on moving and moving and moving to try and get that sound.”

Wright said he remembers when the team was playing out of Anaheim all those years ago and notes it’s nice to have another option for assignments now, too. It’s been too long.

“Without football for 20 years, it’s nice to have a team here again. Especially since they’re going to build a new stadium, it’s kind of exciting. It’s really great for the city of L.A. They never should have left for 20 years,” Wright said. “It was a good first outing. No touchdowns, so I wish it was a little more exciting, but it was a big win for them. I just can’t wait for the new stadium. That will be fun to work at.”

Camera Cart Driver and 20-year IBEW member Robert Clark was also in attendance and helping bring in those beautiful visuals for the fans who weren’t lucky enough to make it into the packed venue. It’s his job to keep up with the football as it moves up and down the field, letting his cameraman get the perfect shot from his hydraulically raised camera. The camera is high for a reason.

“If you’ve ever been on the field, you know that the players are all six feet and you can’t see a thing,” Clark said. “So the camera operator just does his regular job, but he’s up about ten feet high on a cart that goes up and down that field so they can be right on the line of scrimmage wherever they are on the field.”

Clark has been doing broadcast camerawork in various capacities for 25 years, starting in the newsroom and now as an assistant utility. He said one of the biggest differences in the technical aspect of this game was the wiring setup.

“They rewired the whole stadium. We used to have to run tons of fiber and camera cables from the truck into the stadium,” he said. “We just plug into the stadium now and it goes straight to the truck. It’s a lot easier.”

He thinks it’s great for the city to have this team back.

“I’ve always thought it was important because when I go to other cities, there’s always banners all over the place – Chargers or San Francisco 49ers – and for having a city this big and having a football team – it makes the city a city,” he said. “It is very fun and exciting working the games, especially when the home team is winning – the excitement, you can feel it. It’s a fun environment to work in.”



Nestor Ruiz and Christopher Lobe moving equipment into position



Robert Clark, Andrew Rector, Mark Martinez, Terry Neff, Barry Wright (utilities).



Andrew Rector working with a camera operator on the sideline.



Audio meeting before game.



# Notes From Around the Union: Northern California Report

Here's a round up of recent activity from Northern California Rep. Hugh McGuigan:



## KTVU

After months of waiting for a final copy of the agreement that was ratified in April the Local was forced to file charges against the employer in an attempt to get some movement from the employer. Multiple requests in both face to face meetings and electronic requests have gone unanswered. Even without a final agreement the parties were able to reach a final agreement on the separation of Cam Techs going forward. The station along with others is still struggling with crime against news crews. While we were at the IBEW Convention the employer did send us a final document.

## KPIX

Both labor agreements with the employer expire next year. The Writers and P/A agreement will come first with expiration being right after the New Year. Plans are in place to hold meetings with the members of both the Tech and Writers units in order to get bargaining input.

## KRON

I am happy to report that the Union was victorious with the grievance on holiday pay for our part time members. Several members received lost holiday pay for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Retroactive pay treatment was an important part of this case, but more importantly part time employee will now receive holiday pay going forward as a result of this case.

The Union is currently processing a grievance on jurisdictional work being done by others. Work that was previously done by our recently laid off Master Control operators is being assigned to nonunion personnel.

We are still waiting for the announced ownership change to take place.

## KCRA

Recently a labor management meeting was held to address concerns over safety and proper consideration for seniority in shifts and schedules. There is still work to be done on safety but the employer has instructed guards to accompany employees

# Notes From Around the Union: Public Sector & Southern Cal Report

Here's a round up of recent activity from Public Sector and Southern California Rep. Victor Marrero:



## LA CITY

I participated in a third level grievance with an ITA member after not having a satisfactory result.

Elaine and I attended a Labor/Management meeting to discuss the implementation of a time clock at ITA-Piper Tech's base and RFS sections. The time clocks are to keep track of overtime.

I made a site visit at the LAPD Metro Dispatch 911 Center to talk to our members after five weeks of LAPD control. The members were concerned about lunch breaks, days off and vacation time. I informed them that I will speak with management to try to resolve their issues.

I visited the LAFD Dispatch Center. The members are happy because management has not made any drastic changes after being transferred from ITA.

After meeting with supervisors from LAPD and LAFD Dispatch Centers, they asked me to continue with the Senior Communication Electrician Supervisor elimination arbitration for their respective areas.

Elaine has requested to meet with the new CIO at LAWA (Ms. Aura Moore).

## LA COUNTY

I participated in County negotiations with the Building Trades. Tentative agreements for MOU's 411 and 412 were mailed to the members for their vote. The agreements were ratified.

I am in the process of filing an arbitration at the County with ISD HR. The ERCOM has given us the okay. This case involves a member being suspended without justification.

to their cars after hours when requested. There has been reported improvement in the seniority issue.

Members at KCRA are in the final year of their agreement and negotiations for a new agreement will begin in second quarter of next year.

## GE

The acquisition by Haier was completed on June 6. Negotiations towards a new agreement began on Sept. 26. All IBEW contracts will have a common expiration date going forward and coordinated bargaining with other Unions having agreements with GE is the format being used going forward. The appliance service and manufacture sides of the business will have different agreements. Negotiations are scheduled to continue into December. There are a many important issues under discussion.

## KFSN

The union raised a concern recently about the extent of work being performed by the chief photog which in this shop is a non-represented position. Management has agreed to change the chief's schedule so as to allow him to do more of his management duties and less

hands on work. Concern was also raised about pressure on members to answer calls on their off time. Management was informed that their off time is their time and they are under no obligation to respond since there is no standby treatment in the agreement. Steward Tom Amico reports improvement in this area

## KSEE/KGPE

Things have been relatively peaceful since the new agreement was put into place. We are monitoring some jurisdiction issues and will continue to do so. A shop visit was made in September to meet with members and observe station operations.

## DAY WIRELESS

A new agreement was put into place in early June. Unfortunately there were no immediate wage increases. The owner of the company continues to report losses at the shop and offered raises after the New Year if the shop turns a profit. On the positive side two new employees were added to the unit. There was a bit of argument on the new hires being under the agreement but that was resolved.

## KTXL

As reported in the last issue we recently won an arbitration case against the employer for failure to allow meals or pay penalties to reporters. Part of this victory contained some retroactive treatment. This required a lot of time and effort to figure out. I am happy to report that over 300 hours of lost pay will be paid to members that submitted lost time information. Special thanks to Steward Tom Long and Lonnie Wong for their assistance on this matter.

## SAFETY

Local 45 continues to work with other unions in the bay area on the issue of safety. The stations have cooperated by putting into place many of the Union safety committee's suggestions. A follow up safety summit is scheduled for Oct. 19.

## CONVENTION

The IBEW International Convention convened in St. Louis Sept. 19, 2016. A full contingent of Local 45 Delegates attended.

I helped a member file a grievance after he objected to his supervisor's yearly evaluation. We will wait for a meeting date with the supervisor.

We are having trouble with a new supervisor at the L.A. County Sheriff's Department who supervises the audio, video, and security system technicians. I am in the process of meeting with the director to discuss the issues.

## LAUSD

LAUSD members received their July 1 increase of 2.5 percent. After speaking with the Building Trades representative, our members might be entitled to a higher percentage per the contracts prevailing wage calculations. Chris Hannan is verifying this with the District.

## LACCD

We are waiting for the District to meet with us on the new state rate so that we can calculate our rate increases.

## CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS

Nagi Akl and I represented a member on a third level grievance at the Irwindale office. After arguing our point, Charter removed the corrective action from the members record and file.

We had a ratification meeting on the new three-year contract and it was approved. On August 18, 2016, I was informed by management that the new raise should be applied within a week.

## KTNV (LAS VEGAS)

We had a ratification meeting regarding a three-year contract with 6% and a \$300.00-dollar bonus. The contract was approved.

## CBS INTERACTIVE

Negotiations continue with the CBS Interactive group. Our next step is to address wages. We hope to finish by November.

Elaine and I met with the CBS Interactive group at night during their lunch time. We gave them the latest update on the contract negotiations.

## CBS TV CITY (ACFE)

We started negotiations on the ACFE contract. We made some small steps. We returned to negotiations on Sept. 8 and hoped to finish by then. Update: The members ratified the ACFE contract on Sept. 14, 2016.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

I attended the CSAEW Lobby Day in Sacramento on Aug. 22 -24. It was sponsored by IBEW. I also attended the Registrars meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 23.



## Security Techs

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

control, closed circuit television – you name it, these guys fix it, install it and keep it functioning at all times.

Trey Stroud is part of the AVSST team, one of 24 who are members of IBEW 45, and has been at it for 23 years. As he says, he's been assigned "from Long Beach to Lancaster and from Malibu to Walnut," but is currently assigned to the men's central jail where he mostly takes care of the CCTVs and has built a good relationship with the other staff as well.

"We have an outstanding rapport with the sworn staff. They usually accommodate us and we accommodate them in any way we can also," Stroud said. "It's the job of the sworn personnel to go out and bring in criminals or those suspected of being criminals. It's basically our job to make sure they stay here until they're properly released. When you're working with access control, door control, CCTV to make sure that both the inmates and sworn personnel are doing what they're saying they're doing, these things are not just critical, but vital to the protection of the sworn personnel as well as the county."

Other technicians seem to recognize the critical nature of their job as well. Carl Johnson has been here for a little more than a year and was previously with the company ADT for 18 years. He knows just what's at stake regarding the functionality of these systems.

"We're responsible for all of the fire alarm systems.

So if there's an incident at a station and there's no alarm, lives can be lost," Johnson said. "And that's the most important thing, people's safety."

He likes his job, too, and as a fairly new member of Local 45 is thankful for Marrero's update.

"I like that I can get around and it's not just one place all the time, and different people at different stations and different systems. It's not stagnant. It's not the mundane, cookie-cutter type of a job," he said. "The meeting keeps us informed. It was helpful. It's good to hear straight from the top what's going on."

*"It's the job of the sworn personnel to go out and bring in criminals or those suspected of being criminals. It's basically our job to make sure they stay here until they're properly released."*

– Trey Stroud

Marrero gave the team an encouraging bit of news. They've been without a contract since October 2015 and now the County has a counter-offer, so they were heading back to the negotiating table on Aug. 10. Since their meeting, Local 45 has negotiated a tentative agreement with the County. *Editor's note: The County agreement was ratified on October 5, 2016 as Open Channels went to press.*

"My job is to make sure they're treated fair and to make sure there's no violation of the contract," Marrero said. "[Shop steward] James [Pearson] is doing an excellent job and he keeps me apprised of what's going on. And I also keep in touch with Louis Dieters, who is the supervisor. He's been a good union member for many years."

Indeed, Local 45 recently honored Dieters with a plaque for 35 years of service as a member.

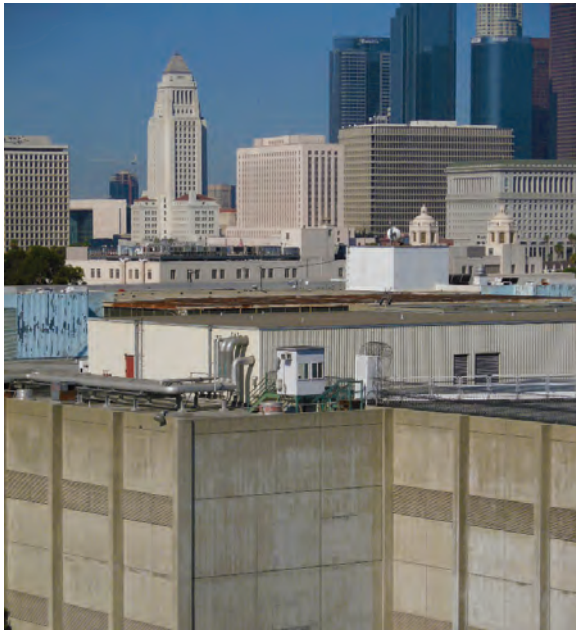
Dieters is just one example of the dedication of these technicians who run a tight ship for a system that is clearly critical to the safety of Angelenos and those who protect them.



Trey Stroud has worked all over Los Angeles County, and now takes care of the closed circuit televisions at the men's central



Carl Johnson has worked as a technician at the Sheriff's Department for a little more than a year after working for ADT.



## Agency Fee Payers Objection Plan 2017

The International Office of the IBEW and the Local Union establishes the procedures for obtaining a fee reduction and is set forth in documents sent annually by mail and available in the November 2016 issue of the Electrical Worker publication available at [www.ibew.org](http://www.ibew.org). By way of summary, fee payers must file their objections during the designated open period (usually the month of November) or within 30 days of becoming agency fee payers. Current fee payers who wish to file objections for calendar year 2017 must do so during the month of November 2016. You must comply with these procedures in order to object to being charged for non-representational activities or to challenge the calculation of chargeable and non-chargeable expenses. Non-members who choose not to pursue an objection or challenge under this procedure will be deemed to have accepted the payment of the full

objector fee or the accuracy and validity of IBEW Local 45's calculation of chargeable and non-chargeable expenses. An individual "fair share" objector who wishes to object to the payment of agency fees for non-representational activities must inform IBEW Local 45 of his or her objection in writing. The written objection must include the objecting agency fee payer's ("objector") name, address, job title and work location. Please also provide an e-mail address if you would like confirmation that your objection was received. If you filed an objection in the previous year, there is no need to file again.

The written objection must be sent to IBEW Local 45 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 721, Hollywood, CA 90028. It must be postmarked no later than thirty (30) days following your receipt of this notice or no later than November 30th.

### IBEW PENSION BENEFIT FUND (PBF) INCREASE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2017 "A" MEMBERS ONLY

In accordance with the action of the 39th Convention held September 9 -23 2016, Delegates approved an amendment to the IBEW PBF Contribution. Accordingly, there will be an increase of two dollars (\$2.00) effective January 1, 2017. "BA" MEMBERS will not be impacted by this increase.

#### BASE DUES (PER CAPITA):

"A" Members

\$19.00 Per Capita

\$18.00 Pension Fund

TOTAL \$37.00

**WORKING DUES:** (No Change) Working Dues are 1.25% of monthly base earnings or required minimum.

### SCHEDULED WAGE INCREASES FOR PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Your monthly Working Dues/Fees will increase as a result of an increase in your salary

- County of Los Angeles – 3% Wage Increase Effective July 1, 2016
- County of Los Angeles – 3% Wage Increase Effective October 1, 2016
- County of Los Angeles Medical Electronic Technicians ( MET's only) – 5.25% Wage Increase Effective January 2016
- LAUSD – 2.5 % Wage Increase Effective July 1, 2016
- LACCD – 2.827% Wage Increase Effective July 1, 2016

**IMPORTANT:** Members must notify the Local 45 office if there is any change in your employment status, i.e. rate increase/decrease, lay-off, leave of absence etc.