

# OPEN CHANNELS



THE NEWSLETTER OF IBEW LOCAL 45

WWW.IBEW45.ORG

WINTER 2014

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# Enough!

Tired of worsening conditions, KSNV photographers turn to Local 45

**M**elvin Jones and DuShuan Headd were fed up. The two employees of KSNV, an NBC affiliate in Las Vegas, were fed up with the deteriorating working conditions, the increasing workload, the lack of raises, and the shortening of lunches.

So they did something about it.

"We figured we needed to take a stand," Jones said. "No one was going to take a stand for us."

Jones ended up calling the IBEW national office, who connected him with Local 45 leadership. Jones and Headd expressed their issues with Local 45 rep Victor Marrero. After some

discussions, the photographers at KSNV voted at the end of December to organize, with Local 45 as their representative. Jones and Headd will act as stewards of the 13-person shop, and have started the bargaining process.

"For me, I felt that a lot of issues that I was dealing with here at the station and on the job were not just affecting me but the rest of the guys as well," Headd said. "Some of the things that I and the rest of the crew were encountering just weren't right. I knew that from working at previous places and coming from unions in my background."

Problems started to arise at KSNV



Celebrating a recent organizing victory at KSNV in Las Vegas. Front row, from left: Jorge Montes, Thuan Nguyen, DuShuan Headd, Justin Michel, Victor Marrero. Back row, from left: Adrian Crooks, George Romero.

back in August when the station began to expand its daily news coverage. The station now offers live local news each hour from 3 to 7 p.m. While the news broadcasts expanded, the manpower to produce those newscasts didn't. Photojournalists such as Headd and Jones were re-

quired to spend longer hours doing extra live shots out in the field, with even tighter deadlines. Pay did not increase, and the lunch hours became little more than grabbing a burger while working.

Jones and Headd also learned out  
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## Avionics Techs Provide Support for Increasingly Complex Fleet

On the job: Los Angeles Sheriff's Department heliport

**I**n the 30 years that avionics technician Richard Webster has been on the job, he's witnessed the growing complexity of the radio and navigation equipment that give the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department aerial fleet the advantage it needs in combating crime and serv-

ing the public.

And it's folks like Webster who keep that specialized equipment humming.

"It's just been increasing levels of complexity as time has gone on," Webster said. "The job has really

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(From Left): Local 45 Public Sector Representative Victor Marrero, Shop Steward David Hess, Richard Webster and Warren Martin pose in front of one of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's helicopters.

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# Message from IBEW Local 45's Business Manager

By Elaine Ocasio

Greetings Local 45 members. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season.

**A new year is a good time to reflect upon our accomplishments in the past year and to set goals for the year ahead. First, a look back:**

- The Local really took a step forward in 2013. We now have better communication with our members via our new website and our new newsletter *Open Channels*, and a bigger social media presence with our new Facebook page (make sure to "Like" it!).
- Your Representatives, Hugh McGuigan, Victor Marrero and I have had many shop meetings so we can hear your concerns firsthand. I have made it a priority to reach out to the Public Sector, our LA County and City of LA members, who felt they were underrepresented in the past.
- I have appointed many new Shop Stewards throughout Local 45.
- Your Reps and I have attended many Labor/Management meetings to build better working relationships with your companies, but we have not hesitated to file charges when necessary. We filed 5 Unfair Labor Practice charges this past year. We strongly represented several members in disciplinary matters where jobs were saved.
- I am proud of our two successful organizing drives. We are already negotiating a first contract at KTXL-TV in Sacramento and will start very soon at KSNV-TV in Las Vegas.
- On the financial front we were grappling with deficit spending. I take my responsibility as your Financial Secretary very seriously. To

that end I have reduced the deficit 90% by cutting expenses and improving our dues collection.

- President Ed Hill granted us an open charter for our Public Sector members and I am pleased that many fee payers chose to convert to full membership.

**I am excited about 2014. Here's a look ahead:**

- We will continue to improve our finances. My goal is to end the year with no deficit.
- Thank you to all the new Stewards who have stepped up to participate. We are gearing up for Shop Steward training in both Northern and Southern California.
- In the coming months we will roll out The Code of Excellence Program. This has been very successful in other areas of the IBEW and you will hear more about it soon.
- More on-line training has just become available. We will continue to expand in this area in 2014.
- We have a committee to develop a New Member Orientation Program that we will roll out this year.

I look forward to the challenges ahead with enthusiasm, and with the goal to make Local 45 stronger and more responsive to you, our members.

In solidarity,

Elaine Ocasio  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary



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**Northern California**  
Hugh McGuigan

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Members of IBEW Local 45 enjoyed this past holiday season with friends and family. We wish everyone the best in 2014!



# Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Meets in Missouri

Several Local 45 members attend conference of long-standing group.

Five members of IBEW Local 45 spent a few days in Kansas City, Missouri, attending the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus.

The Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC), now in its 40th year, has held an annual leadership conference for the past 24 years. The Caucus's theme for its 40th year was "Forging Onward with Resilience Throughout the Years." Members from IBEW locals from all over the country attended the event at the Sheraton Kansas City hotel to participate in the uplifting and educating conference.

The Mission of the EWMC is to:

- Promote equal opportunity and employment for minorities at all levels of the IBEW structure
- Foster leadership development and empower minorities to become active participants and leaders in the IBEW
- Provide assistance to and address discrimination complaints of minorities in the IBEW
- Promote, support and assist the organizing of minority workers in the IBEW
- Encourage minority workers to be greater activists in community and political affairs, and
- Be actively involved in human, civil and women's rights organizations both within and outside of organized labor.

The EWMC has a long history. In 1974, African American and Hispanic delegates met during the 30th IBEW International Convention in Kansas City and formed the EWMC to address the lack of minority representation and other inequalities within the IBEW. Since that time the EWMC has prospered and grown under the direction of President Emeritus Robbie Sparks, an IBEW Business Manager from Atlanta, Georgia. The success of the EWMC is essentially due to its strong vision and belief in the abilities of people of color.

According to the EWMC website, "The EWMC is a strong advocate for the equal rights, opportunities, and greater minority representation in the IBEW. The EWMC is well respected by the IBEW and the labor movement because of its strong commitment and vigorous pursuit of social and economic justice for minority workers."

One of the items scheduled at the annual conference was a community service volunteers event. Local 45 members volunteered at St. Marks Inner City Service and BW Sheperd State School. Local 45 volunteer work varied from spending time with infants (2 months – 18 months) and reading and playing games with 2 year olds to cleaning up school grounds and raking leaves.

The Local 45 members who attended the EWMC conference were: Business Manager Elaine Ocasio; Basharat Syed, who provides technical support for the public safety section (LAPD/LAFD), and



is the Local's Executive Board Treasurer; KCBS-KCAL edit supervisor, Executive Board Member and Shop Steward Rodney Cummings; Edward Jones, an electrical communications technician for the L.A. County Sheriff's Department and a Shop Steward; and James Pearson, an audio, video and security systems technician for the L.A. County Sheriff's Department.

The current EWMC president is Victor Uno, the Business Manager at Local 595. For more information, visit <http://www.ibew-ewmc.com>.

*Special thanks to Rodney Cummings for contributing to this report.*





# Spotlight on Stewards

## Four Local 45 members who get the job done



### Andrew Beata, GE

When Andrew Beata was 21, the Long Island native and a buddy took a road trip across the country. See, Beata was on the waiting list to join the New York Fire Department. Before getting the call and settling down for a life in the city putting out fires, Beata wanted one last adventure, thus the drive to California. He expected to be on the West Coast for six months, maybe a year tops.

That was 1989.

Shortly after arriving in the Bay Area, Beata started with General Electric. It was good money, and California worked its charm.

Beata, 46, has worked as a technician for General Electric for the past 25 years. He has represented IBEW Local 45 as a shop steward since 2000.

As a technician for General Electric, Beata is the guy who comes to your home should your G.E. appliance need attention. In fact, while most companies contract and subcontract with who-knows-who to repair busted ovens and washers, General Electric employs union workers to get the job done.

"It makes it nice. We don't have to worry about all brands and we're experts in the G.E. brand," Beata said.

In working for G.E., Beata said he likes the autonomy and freedom of being out on the road. He also likes the idea of fixing someone's problems.

"The thing that keeps me going is actually helping people. It's a rewarding feeling being able to go into someone's home and take care of an issue for them and have a successful

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### Jennifer Mistrot, KPIX

Back in June of 2007, a need arose for a shop steward for the photographers at KPIX, a CBS owned and operated station based in San Francisco. The photographers gathered and selected Jennifer Mistrot as their steward. She accepted without hesitation.

Mistrot felt that working as a steward was a great way to give back to IBEW Local 45.

"I'm a big believer in IBEW Local 45," Mistrot said. "Being in the union has given me so many wonderful work opportunities. I just wanted to give back to the union, so I was very honored."

Mistrot has been a member of Local 45 since 1998 when she freelanced for KPIX. She joined the station as a full-time staffer in 2000, worked as a camera person and now works as a multimedia journalist.

"I love the fellowship that I have with other union members, the fellowship I have with other union members that I meet at union events or people I see when I come down to Los Angeles," Mistrot said in explaining why she loves Local 45. "I think in general at KPIX we're a great station, we're a group of really, really hard working people. Just being a member of the union, it has the added benefit of having a feeling of unity."

In seeking direction in how to go about being a steward, Mistrot didn't have far to look. She cites both Local 45's Northern California rep Hugh McGuigan and Business Manager Elaine Ocasio as major influences and mentors as she's learned the ins and outs of the union.

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### David Hess, LASD

David Hess likens union representation to having a good doctor. You don't always need someone on hand, but when you do, you're happy to have the resource.

"We don't think about the doctor and going to get our regular check up until we find that we've got some kind of illness," Hess said. "It's that way with unions too. Until someone gets themselves into a crisis situation, all of a sudden they decide to get real regular and get involved."

Hess works as an avionics technician for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, working on the communication components and other technical aspects of the department's aerial fleet. It's a small shop, only four people, and until three years ago didn't have a Shop Steward on board.

When he felt that management had been stepping over the line, Hess stepped up.

"I thought we needed more representation down here locally," Hess said.

Being a Shop Steward is nothing new to Hess. Before landing his current gig, he worked for now-defunct Republic Airlines out of Burbank, where he was also a Shop Steward.

"I've always liked the work in that I like aviation," Hess said. "I like the challenge. It's different every day. I like that it's inside and outside. I don't know whether I'd like a job purely inside. I wouldn't like a job purely outside."

Hess stresses the importance of getting it right the first time when it comes to sending helicopters and air-

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### Gilbert Martinez, LAUSD

Gilbert Martinez remembers a simpler time. A time of overhead projectors and reel-to-reel film systems.

Now it's all high speed internet and wireless connections.

Martinez works as a technician for the Los Angeles Unified School District.

"I've seen it all, from old tape recorders to stuff like picture tubes to the new technology," said Martinez, reflecting on how sophisticated technology has become since he started with the district in 1981.

Martinez got into electronics as a young child. He would tinker with stuff, then got kits to build circuits or amplifiers. Over time he got a feel for it, and it turned into a career.

"I took a liking to electronics and slowly I got my way into it,"

The number one reason why Martinez enjoys his job with the school district comes down to one word that most workers can relate to: Security.

"It's a good job," Martinez said. "It's the benefits. More of a secure job as far as layoffs and stuff like that."

Martinez has been a member of the union since he started working. While his job was once part of the maintenance department, his area of expertise broke off into its own department. That meant there was a need for a Shop Steward, and in 2005, Martinez became it.

"We didn't have anybody," Martinez said. "They kind of asked me if I wanted to do it. I saw the need for it, to have more unity in our department."

Martinez said that the main reason he wanted to be a Shop Steward is to

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# GET IN THE GAME!

## Senior mixer Fred Aldous sounds off on doing audio for Fox Sports, covering a Super Bowl

Fred Aldous, who works as an audio consultant and senior mixer for Fox Sports, has worked some of the biggest events in American sports, from the Super Bowl to the Daytona 500.

So it's kind of funny that Fred isn't much of a sports fan.

"It's actually a good thing that I'm not a big sports fan," Fred said, speaking from his home in Phoenix. "It allows me to stay concentrating on the production that I'm involved with versus getting caught up with the excitement of the game and potentially missing cues from a director or a producer. There are two things that go on during a game. There's the game itself, and then there's the show. Not being a sports fan allows me to concentrate on the show."

The show that Fred speaks of wouldn't be what it is without first-class sound. From the big hits on the gridiron to cars roaring by at 200 miles per hour, it's folks like Fred who bring the action to life.

Fred has freelanced for Fox Sports since its inception in 1994, when the still-young network first purchased rights to broadcast NFL games. When Fox picked up NASCAR in 2001, it was Fred who the network asked to design the audio approach for the lucrative racing franchise. His approach was to bring viewers a point-of-view perspective of the track and the car. The result has been a boatload of Emmy Awards over the past decade.

"They pretty much gave me a blank piece of paper and said create what you need to create," Fred said. "We decided to change how NASCAR was covered from an audio perspective, so we decided to do a type of mixing that actually takes you to the track. We put you where the action is on the track."

Fred is quick to credit the team in place for producing a stellar audio experience.

"That's what I think made us as successful as we are is we've delegated some of the work to different areas so we can each concentrate on our area and not miss anything by being distracted by other parts of the production," Fred said.

Covering NASCAR races and NFL games all around the country keeps Fred on the road for more than 200 days a year, mostly domestic. Fred works on Fox's NFL A team, the crew that joins announcers Joe Buck and Troy Aikman to the network's premiere game of the week. In January, he worked playoff games in Green Bay and Seattle. The Green Bay game against San Francisco featured historic low temperatures.

"The nice thing is during the winter I'm in a nice warm production truck and the camera guys are out there freezing their butts off," Fred joked. "The bad thing about that is when the camera guys are out in the fall in this beautiful weather, I'm stuck inside a box in a production truck. It's kind of a give and take thing."



Fred Aldous, a senior mixer and consultant for Fox Sports, has worked big events from Super Bowl to the Daytona 500.

Seattle's home stadium is one of the loudest stadiums in the country.

"It was rather entertaining, if you will," Fred said. "There becomes a point where it's almost too loud. I don't mind loud stadiums. It actually gives me an opportunity to bring the viewer more into the stadium when we have something like that going on. I'd much rather mix in a loud stadium where I can gather more sound than a stadium that's empty and you're digging to try to find things to fill in the sound."

This year, Fred was the lead mixer for the Super Bowl XLVIII between Seattle and Denver, held at MetLife stadium in New Jersey. This wasn't Fred's first Super Bowl, and he's blown away by the magnitude of the event, with well over 100 million people viewing each year.

"It's not often many people that get to say, 'You know what? I mixed the show that had the most viewers in history,'" Fred said.

A career in television wasn't Fred's goal start-

ing out. He wanted to play music and be a rock 'n' roll star, but that didn't work out. One day, Fred was doing some music studio work when CBS sports needed a fill-in. He knew nothing about television, but got hooked.

"I loved the rush of live television," Fred said. "Hearing the countdown, getting ready to go on air knowing it had to be right the first time, you can't go back and do any retakes, was just a rush for me."

Fred has been a long-time union member, and though not very active in Local 45, said "I think the union has done a great job in supporting us and what we do." He added that he appreciated when IBEW leadership visited Talladega, Alabama, when he was working a NASCAR race there last spring.

"It was nice to have the executive staff of the international come out and show some support and try to figure out what it is what we do," Fred said. "It was nice to have that happen."

## Free Media & IT Training With Class on Demand



Here's an exciting opportunity for IBEW Local 45 members. Local 45 has partnered with Class on Demand, a leading producer of online educational and training programs whose content includes video capture, editing, computer animation, IT and vocational training. Local 45 members will be able to access Class on Demand's huge catalog of training material to sharpen their skills,

develop new ones and compete more effectively in the ever-changing technology-rich job market.

Members who are interested should visit [www.classondemand.com](http://www.classondemand.com) to see the full list of training materials offered, and then send an email to [info@ibew45.org](mailto:info@ibew45.org) to begin enhancing your professional development.



# Notes From Around the Union: Northern California Report

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

## **KTXL**

Bargaining towards a first agreement with KTXL resumed on January 14 and 15. For a first agreement, things are going reasonably well and additional dates have been set.

## **KFSN**

The local won a grievance settlement for two members laid off last fall. Each will receive an additional six weeks of pay in addition to normal severance.

## **COMINGS AND GOINS AT GENERAL ELECTRIC**

We have a new Service Manager at General Electric in the name of Deborah Ivy. Deborah has a lot of experience in other areas with GE and our initial meetings have gone well. I believe she will be good to work with. I regret to inform everyone that Chief Steward Andrew

Beata has transferred to another division within GE (a non-represented unit). We certainly wish him well and will be experiencing a big loss upon his departure. Andrew has been a great advocate for his brothers at GE and will be missed. I personally wish to thank Andrew for his many years of work as a steward.

## **KTVU**

Bargaining will resume with KTVU on March 12 - 13, 2014.

## **DAY WIRELESS**

Steward Fred Roberts at Day Wireless has left the employer and we are seeking a replacement. Local management sees an improved work outlook for this year.

## **KPIX**

Bargaining for a new agreement for the Writers and PA's at KPIX convened on Dec. 20. Another session was scheduled for Feb. 11.



**Hugh McGuigan**

# Notes From Around the Union: Public Sector Report

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

## **LA CITY**

I had a meeting with CAO at CHE (12th Floor) to discuss two issues:

- LAPD is asking us to allow police officers to shoot video. We denied their request and asked them to hire more Audio-Video Technician's. The CAO Office stated they will look into this matter and see if LAPD has any Audio-Video Technician openings.
- LAPD is not paying the Police Specialist I Technician stand-by pay during the weekday. They are only paying stand-by on weekends. Per MOU 2, only the CE's classification in LAPD is paid the stand-by rate on the weekend only. It does not include PS-1. They should be getting paid the regular stand-by rate during the week. After all these years LAPD now claims that their original intent was for us to include PS-1.

## **ADDITIONAL LAPD DEVELOPMENTS:**

- I filed a grievance with LAPD Training Facility where they are using Manage-

ment Analyst to do our Audio-Video Technician jobs. We are moving to the third level of the grievance process.

- I represented a Police Specialist I member who received a 10-day suspension. We now have to wait for the arbitrator's decision.
- I had a meeting with the CAO to make sure that the hiring hall Communication Electricians received their increase from July 1, 2013. Our members had not received their increase due to the restructuring of management personnel. The hiring hall Communication Electrician's will get their increase within two to three weeks.
- I participated in a second level grievance where a Senior Communication Electrician Supervisor was not receiving proper pay.

## **LA COUNTY**

- I had a meeting to discuss "on call" sign-up from the crew with the Electronic Communication Technicians at Eastern Avenue Sheriff's Department.
- I am checking with the LA/OC Building Trades Council and the County of Los Angeles to see when our members are going to start receiving the increase that was



**Victor Marrero**

voted on.

- I visited the County of Los Angeles Helicopter Aero shop in Long Beach to meet with our members.

## **LAUSD**

I attended a Labor/Management meeting to discuss various issues.

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# Retiree's Corner



**Jim McDowell, 63, KPIX**

**JIM MCDOWELL** likes to tell a funny story about how he got into the television business.

McDowell was stationed in the Air Force in Tucson, Arizona. He got to talking with his father about how hard it was to meet girls.

"He told me there's two ways to meet girls: go to church or go to school," McDowell said. "I didn't really want to go to church, so I started going to school and ended liking it and decided to stay."

Forty years later, the last 35 with KPIX in San Francisco, McDowell retired.

Having decided to go to school once he got out of the service, McDowell started to flip through the course catalog for the University of Arizona. One of the majors listed was "Radio and Television Production."

"I thought, well, I could do that," said McDowell, who made his way through school thanks to the G.I. Bill. "That's basically how I got into it."

Getting into radio and television was also a practical course for McDowell, who initially aspired to be an actor.

"After going through four years of the service I realized that having an actual career that I could put meat on the table and pay the mortgage made more sense than being a struggling actor," McDowell said. "This one had a lot more potential to actually getting a job."

And get a job McDowell did, first for a couple of years in Portland before settling in the Bay Area with KPIX, a CBS owned and operated station. During his career, he did a little bit of everything, culminating as the broadcast operation supervisor in the master control booth. Before that, he ran the studio camera, did instant replay for Oakland A's games, sideline audio grabs for the 49ers, ran a camera from atop the Golden Gate Bridge, and ran a camera when Pope John Paul II visited Candlestick Park in 1987.

In 2007, McDowell manned master control during the Super Bowl when the Queen Mary 2 entered San Francisco Bay. The massive ship interfered with the station's microwave signal, knocking the station off the air during the biggest televised event of the year. Luckily, the station had a back-up receiver in place.

For the Loma Prieta Earthquake of 1989, McDowell was in the newsroom doing a live 30 second cut to preview the 5:30 p.m. news. After the earthquake hit, he ran a camera until 7:30 the following morning.

Upon retiring, McDowell laments how many of the jobs he's done have now turned digital.

"I was kind of sad that I wasn't able to mentor some younger people, at least in the engineering department," McDowell said. "It was a great job, and everybody made money and everybody did a good job. It seems like corporate American decided they don't want people to make the money for them anymore, they just want machines and computers to."

McDowell added how appreciative he is of having union representation throughout his career. He and his second wife were able to raise four kids together, put them and her through college, and lead a happy life.

"I've had a stable life and everything was wonderful," McDowell, 63, said. "It wouldn't have been nearly that good if I had not been in the union."

McDowell, who was born and raised in the Bay Area, also has six grandchildren. In retirement he plans to travel around the country with an airstream trailer. Goals include seeing the sun set in Key West and eating lobster in Maine.

"I loved my job, but I was just ready to step away and let somebody else do it and go out and do some things that are just fun," McDowell said.

Well deserved for a job well done.

"I had a great time, I really did," McDowell said. "I met so many interesting people and did so many different things. It was an astonishing career. I did a lot of really fun stuff."

## Public Sector Report

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I represented a technician at a pre-disciplinary meeting to avoid suspension for a policy violation.

### LACCD

We have three new members at LACCD from Los Angeles City College.

## More Reports:

### CHARTER COMMUNICATION

I had a grievance meeting at the Charter Irwindale office to discuss the hiring of non-union technicians.

The Charter Communications contract negotiation meeting continued on February 4 and 5, 2014.

### KSNV

KSNV is a newly organized TV station in Las Vegas. We had a meeting with our members to discuss the appointment of the new steward assigned by BM Elaine Ocasio. Future negotiation proposals for the upcoming meeting with the company were discussed.

## Fed Up

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

in the field that their contemporaries at rival stations, stations with union representation, made better money with more manageable hours. So Jones and Headd got to talking in an editing bay back in October.

"It got to the point where us as a group, we couldn't take any more of what we were being dealt with," Jones said. "We want to be able to be compensated for the work and be appreciated for the work that we go out and do on a daily basis, something that the company has yet to really show us that they appreciate the things that we do."

Headd, who has worked at union shops before and has a history of union representation in his family, wanted to give management an opportunity to change their ways on their own, but said that meetings felt like being hit in the face.

"I felt it was just something that, you try to give a company a shot, you try to give them an opportunity to get things right, and it just never really seemed like it was going that direction," Headd said. "I just felt it was time to make a move and seek out other options. Any time you get a group of people who get to the point where they're just fed up, I think that's what it is. I think that finally enough people are fed up to the point where they are looking for other options aside listening to what the company has to say."

"A lot of the guys on staff don't really know the ins and outs of dealing with the union, and in my opinion I think that's why it's been easier

for the station, the company, or just one person in particular to get away with some of the things that's been going on," Headd added.

Headd said that he was working more than eight hours a day but not earning overtime, and was being docked for a lunch hour he had to work through to meet new deadlines.

"If you're going to take an hour lunch from me out of my pay, then I expect to get an hour lunch," he said.

Marrero gives Jones, Headd and the other photographers at KSNV a lot of credit for taking matters into their own hands. They reached out to Local 45, not the other way around.

"The reason why they called me is because I think they were pretty desperate that they needed something to change," Marrero said. "They were just not happy."

Marrero said that the next step is to enter negotiations, and isn't sure what to expect.

"The company definitely did not want to have a union there," Marrero said. "Most of the companies act the same way, so that's nothing new."

Jones pointed out that they just want to have the rights and security of a union shop, much like comparable stations in other big markets.

"I think the major thing I want to happen is for us to be treated as though we're working in a major market," he said.

Jones added that the worsening working conditions took the passion out of working as a photojournalist.

"At a point it just got to us where we said we have to make a stand," Jones said. "We got into this business for a career in broadcasting. We love what we do. The problem is working at KSNV for a while turned more into a job than a career."



## Spotlight on Stewards

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### Andrew Beata, GE

outcome.

Even more rewarding for Beata is his work as a union steward for Local 45, a duty he took over in 2000 after the steward at the time retired. Beata relayed the story of Hugh McGuigan, Local 45's Northern California rep, asking him if he'd be interested in the position. Beata answered "maybe."

"That was good enough," Beata laughed.

Beata played a big role in two victories recently. He, along with Local 45 leadership McGuigan and business manager Elaine Ocasio, helped win the jobs back of two employees terminated over time card issues. The first was an eight-year employee, the second was a probationary employee, who because of his status had no recourse. Beata credits Local

45's strong relationship with General Electric in having the ability to go to bat for an at-will worker, who is now no longer probationary and working on the job.

Beata is happy to belong to a guild, recognizing the advantages of union representation.

"I believe that the union's helped me work, in a work place that's fair, and get paid an honest day's pay for an honest day's work," Beata said.

*Andrew Beata recently announced his transfer to another division within General Electric. IBEW Local 45 Leadership will miss Andrew's role as a steward and wishes him all the best in his future endeavors.*

### Jennifer Mistrot, KPIX

"Hugh has a wealth of knowledge," Mistrot said. When I have a question, he's always there to answer those questions, and Elaine too. There's just

things you can only learn through doing and experiencing, and they have that experience. For me, that's a tremendous benefit, from both of them."

Mistrot not only loves being a steward and a Local 45 member, she loves the impact she has as a multimedia specialist.

"It's really fulfilling," Mistrot said. "I love helping people. We have a great group in the special projects unit. We do really good work. It's very fulfilling work. I really enjoy it."

### David Hess, LASD

planes up off the ground.

"Ninety nine point nine is not good enough in aviation," Hess said. "You've got to be absolutely certain and double check yourself and re-check yourself. That's the thing that's strongest in my mind about this job that's different than some of the oth-

er jobs that are in this classification.

Hess sees a direct correlation when it comes to the relationship between labor, management and safety.

"That's where unions can and should ensure safe operations for management," Hess said. "Management should be encouraging unions and union participation because it enhances safety and training."

### Gilbert Martinez, LAUSD

help people. He sees the benefits of such union staples at collective bargaining as a "positive" and a great tool.

"It's gratifying, especially when you solve a problem. I enjoy helping others. Sometimes it's challenging. Not every little problem is easy to solve. You need a strong labor force. People got to all come together. It helps management and it helps the workers.

## Avionics Techs

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

grown from what it was when we were first hired on. It's the same skills but layers have been added to them."

The bells and whistles on the department's 21 aircrafts that enable sheriff deputies to do their jobs better are quite amazing. There are eight or nine radios on a typical LASD helicopter, with thousands of channels each. There's not just the regular navigational GPS, but specific GPS for four or five different individual pieces of equipment. There are scanners, infrared cameras, satellite communications and 30 different antennae on the bird for all the equipment.

While radio tech is a common name for the folks who maintain all that equipment, avionics technician gets closer to the truth.

"There's a lot of specialized equipment with the Sheriff's Department, and that kind of segues into everything else," said tech David Hess. "There are many diferent flat screen displays that take the place of traditional instrumentation."

Hess said that the complexity of modern technology has really changed the job he's done for more than three decades.

"One of the difficulties that we have is trying to get management to understand how our jobs have changed," said Hess, who is the Shop Steward. "We spend an awful lot of time on computers, programming radios, getting firmware, getting databases updated, and they don't understand how much time we spend on the phone."

The avionics technician shop at the Sheriff's



Avionics Technician Richard Webster has been on the job for 30 years.

Department is small, just four techs in total, and operates out of the heliport adjacent to the Long Beach Airport. They keep busy, performing inspections on the aircraft after 100 hours of flight time. Deputies frequently ask that specific equipment be swapped out onto different aircraft.

"It's so complex," said tech Warren Martin, who has been with the department since 2010 and enjoyed a long career prior. "These aircrafts have three to four times as much equipment as standard helicopters."

Hess added that the Sheriff's department could benefit from more input from his shop when purchasing equipment.

"One of the difficulties we've come across more recently is, with all this new equipment coming in, they really need our advice on some of this stuff

before they purchase it," Hess said.

During January's Colby Fire in Glendora, the Los Angeles County Fire Department had to re-focus resources to combat the blaze. That meant the LASD's search and rescue team had to take over additional tasks.

"They're always flying a pretty ambitious schedule," Hess said. "The nature of the mission is if anything is going down in the county the aero unit is probably there."

IBEW Local 45 has represented the tech guys at the Sheriff's Department for decades, but Webster and Hess only joined the union within the last 10 years when dues collection became mandatory. They both expressed appreciation of having union representation at hand when they need it.