



# QUARTERLY

Business Manager Lloyd Webster

Fall 2007

## A High-Tech New Home for KCBS/KCAL



## Northern California Update

## Local 45 Members Install State-of-the-Art Technology at Fire Stations



## Technicians with a Life-Saving Touch

# Business Manager's Message

By Lloyd Webster

## Addressing the Health Care Crisis

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

As you may have learned from the news media, there is a health care crisis in our country. No one is arguing that the medical care reform issue is exceeded only by concern about the Iraq war.

Therefore, we must let our elected leaders know that we need affordable health care for all. The need for comprehensive health care is affecting emergency rooms, quality of care, and even medical professionals who deliver that care. Skyrocketing costs and double-digit health care inflation, coupled with 47 million uninsured Americans, are resulting in increased costs to our members.

The health care issue has even impacted the bargaining process in the shops we represent. The companies are passing on increases by the insurance companies to our members in order to cut their share of these costs, shifting them to both active and retired members. You have the peace of mind of knowing you have health care coverage for yourself and eligible dependents; preserving that coveted benefit gets harder every day.

Your union has been active on the political front to protect the coverage we have, and we also look for ways to be cost effective. One immediate step all members are urged to take is to use their benefits wisely. If we can control costs today, we can help preserve benefits in the future. Also, this is a most opportune time for everyone to improve their own health by exercising, eating healthier and making positive lifestyle changes like quitting smoking.

People in the labor movement support a national solution to this crisis, so that every American can have affordable health coverage. You all know the only way to get our elected officials to make health care reform a top priority is to speak out. All of us need to make our voices heard on this issue. You must get politically active and write or email your Congressional representatives.

At this writing, the UAW and General Motors just reached a tentative four-year agreement ending a two-day nationwide strike. Once again, the hot-button issue highly debated at the bargaining table was health care. These battles are getting tougher as the months go by. Large and small companies alike are no longer shouldering the health care burden alone. They are passing the costs on to you.

Although you are among the fortunate who still enjoy job-based health care through a contractual agreement, tens of millions of Americans aren't so lucky. We must stand united to protect the benefits we have, and to work toward the goal of all Americans gaining access to quality, affordable health care.



# Northern California Update

## KTVU

In March, Local 45 ratified a new agreement with Fox affiliate KTVU Channel 2 in Oakland. While the three-year agreement brought reasonable wage increases and no takeaways for the approximately 93 members at the station, there was considerable debate over staffing the new automation system, Ignite.

"The company wanted it run by non-union management personnel," Local 45 Business Representative Hugh McGuigan noted. "Although it was a contentious debate, what's most important is that we ended up maintaining rights to these jobs."

## KCRA

Spring was a busy time in Northern California as the Local also entered into a new three-year agreement with KCRA Channel 3 in Sacramento. The contract, ratified by a large majority of the bargaining unit, was highlighted by a competitive wage increase.

"The talks went very well," McGuigan emphasized, adding that although there is an agreement, the company and the union continue to work out details regarding meal periods for the 77 members at the NBC affiliate.

## KPIX

Members working at CBS-owned KPIX Channel 5 in San Francisco have ushered in the final year of their agreement with a contractual wage increase. McGuigan pointed out that labor/management relations remain positive, and beginning in mid 2008 the union will begin new contract talks for an agreement that will cover roughly 75 members at the station.

Additionally, KPIX shop Steward Mark Jaqua was recently elected to the Local 45 Executive Board. "Mark has been a long-standing, active steward, and he's been a great asset to the board," McGuigan proudly added.

## KRON

The Local is in the final negotiating stages with independent station KRON Channel 4 in San Francisco. McGuigan reports that the bargaining sessions have been positive and a contract should be forthcoming for the 56 members at the station.

## GE Negotiations

The Local will soon be in negotiations with GE for a new contract that will cover 42 Bay-area home appliance repair service technicians. "Relationships

are quite good with the company largely because we have been working with a new manager," he pointed out. The current contract expires November 30.

## KSEE

Talks have not gone as smoothly with NBC affiliate KSEE in Fresno. "We've been in negotiations since late May and it has been extremely difficult," McGuigan explained. "The company was in bankruptcy this past spring and is now seeking to remove everything of importance to the members from the agreement, coupled with completely unreasonable wage and benefit proposals."

McGuigan added that the 51 members understand the difficulties the Local is facing. "They're standing united and supporting their union representatives. The members know that as the company assaults everything we hold near and dear, we are working very hard to protect every benefit they have."



**KRON Stewards, from left to right: Alan Eng, Mike Johnson and Stanley Roberts**

**IBEW Local 45**  
6255 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 721  
Hollywood, CA 90028  
(323) 851-5515

Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary  
Lloyd Webster

Executive Assistant  
Laurie Averseng

Bookkeeper  
Gayle Jordan

Dues Administrator  
Tasha Curtis

Assistant Dues Administrator  
Marceil Wright

Business Representatives  
Southern California  
Richard "Rick" Rogers

Northern California  
Hugh McGuigan

# Local 45 Members Bring State-of-the-Art Technology to Fire Stations

Several years ago, Los Angeles voters supported a proposition that would add 20 new fire stations throughout the greater LA region. Today, construction is well underway and the new stations are undoubtedly showcasing just how vital Local 45 members are to the city's emergency responders.

"We began working on them roughly two years ago," noted Local 45 President Victor Marrero, a 25-year Senior Communication Electrician for the City of Los Angeles Information Technology Agency (ITA). "The new fire stations are beautiful and very state-of-the-art. While several have been completed, right now we have seven stations under construction at the same time."

Operating in conjunction with four members in Data Transport, Marrero and his crew of seven at the ITA are responsible for all 911 dispatch equipment, the data network, T1 line, radio communications, telephones, alarms, cable TV, PA systems and speaker networks throughout the stations.

"We are working closely with the Bureau of Engineering to provide the fire department with the best working station with the most sophisticated design," he

pointed out.

"Because of the sheer size of the city and changing technology, they are also improving the system. We are in the process of doing a computerized upgrade for all the fire stations. Any change or upgrade at one station affects all the stations."

The newly constructed firehouses feature highly sophisticated cable racks and hubs, along with installation of one of the tops in the industry—Cat 6—for the data communications.

"The technology has certainly changed. In all the stations the telephone system used to be four-wire. Now, we're converting it to a whole computerized system that not only changes the install and repair, but the troubleshooting as well, which is all done on laptops now," Marrero noted.

Throughout the process, Marrero said the new construction and upgrades have allowed Local 45 members to do some unique things that make the stations highly modern while enhancing members' skills and knowledge.

The talented ITA crew is responsible for installing, troubleshooting, repairing and maintaining equipment at 112

stations throughout the city, and five fire stations in the City of Santa Monica. Additionally, their department is responsible for all the communication equipment on each of the rigs, all the hand-held devices used by firefighters, and communications equipment at L.A.'s Emergency Response Center, which supports both the police and fire departments.

With the new stations under construction, along with their regular duties, the group is quick to point out they couldn't do it all alone.

"Since there are so many different cables for each specific communication tool, we've gotten a variety of help from Local 45 members during the construction process," Marrero noted. "We would like to thank all the members who have helped from the wide variety of sections within the city. They have greatly assisted with a successful install at each of these locations."

Together with the crew in Data Transport, Local 45 members affiliated with the ITA are on duty 365 days of the year to ensure that the city's life-saving communications equipment is always functioning for the area's emergency responders.



**Daryl Cornejo, Eduardo Munez, Tony Tripp, President Victor Marrero, John De Oca, Eddie Millager, Lawrence Montoya**

# Olive View-UCLA Medical Center: Technicians with a Life-Saving Touch

From ensuring that a life-saving message is successfully broadcast to maintaining life-saving communications equipment, Local 45 members are certainly a diverse, vital group who make a profound difference in the lives of countless Californians.

One such group is the six members at the Olive View-UCLA Medical Center in Sylmar. Although small in numbers, this bargaining unit has an enormous responsibility: they install, repair and do preventive maintenance on all the electronic equipment used with patients at the facility. In many instances, they also train hospital personnel on how to use the equipment.

From life-saving heart defibrillators and balloon pumps to blood pressure machines and baby monitors, the Medical Electronics Technicians are responsible for over 5,000 pieces of equipment at the 377-bed facility, and equipment at five surrounding clinics affiliated with the Los Angeles Department of Health Services.

“Medical Electronics Technicians are a group that is unique to the Local,” Business Agent Rick Rogers pointed out. In addition to the Sylmar facility, the Local represents medical technicians at a number of Los Angeles County medical centers and facilities.

The six members in Sylmar all chose to be members of the Local in early 2006. They are currently working under a labor agreement with the county that expires Dec. 31, 2009.

“We are very proud that these individuals chose to join Local 45, thereby making a difference in their work lives. We’re honored to represent them and encourage their participation to achieve specific, job-related goals,” Rogers added.

The Sylmar bargaining unit includes Tom Murphy, Zadoor Shahjanian, Ravinder Arora, Quang Nguyen, Gevork Mutafyan, and working supervisor Thanh Tran.

As in other industries, technology is continually changing, thus affecting classification, duties and wage increases.

“Medical technology is changing every year,” Tom Murphy explained. “We have to stay on top of it. Other crafts, such as plumbers, aren’t experiencing the amount of technological changes that we are.”

Olive View is an essential healthcare facility serving patients from the San Fernando Valley, Santa Clarita and parts of the high desert. Since its opening in 1920 as a tuberculosis sanatorium for Los Angeles County, the facility has had a storied past.

After TB was cured, the census dropped dramatically and the hospital transformed itself into an acute care facility. In 1962, the first open heart surgery in the San Fernando Valley, and one of the first in Southern California, was successfully performed at the hospital.

In 1970, the healthcare facility affiliated with the UCLA School of Medicine, and a new 888-bed hospital was dedicated in December. Only two months later, the hospital was destroyed by the 6.5-strong Sylmar earthquake. For 16 years, patients were diverted to Van Nuys until the new state-of-the-art facility – built on the Sylmar site – opened in 1987. Five years later, Olive View incorporated UCLA in its name and became the Olive View-UCLA Medical Center.

While the Sylmar medical technicians partner with the union to win work improvements, the group stays focused on their critical, day-to-day duties.

“Much of what we work on is life-saving equipment. The best part of my job is the gratification I get being able to maintain and fix the equipment because I know it is directly benefiting the patients,” Murphy added.



**Thanh Tran, Quang Nguyen, Ravinder Arora, Zadoor Shahjanian**

# KCBS/KCAL Hit in a High-Tech New Home

It happened flawlessly. In the blink of an eye—with not a viewer the wiser—KCBS Channel 2 and its sister station KCAL Channel 9 ceased broadcasting from CBS’s historic Columbia Square home in Hollywood.

On April 21, the culmination of years in the making, countless hours of planning and untold millions spent came when both stations began airing from their new location, the CBS Studio City Broadcast Center on Radford Avenue.

“The three-story building is brand-new,” Chief Shop Steward and Technical Operations Center (TOC)



**Assignment Editor Karina Gacad-Williams**

Supervisor Bob Arellano noted. He has the perspective that comes from a career spanning 33 years that began in the film era. Arellano proudly pointed out that although they brought along a few pieces of equipment from the old building, the best part is all of the technological advances that came with the move.

“All the equipment in central control and the edit bays are brand-new, computerized and state-of-the-art. It’s fun to work with.” But it did take careful planning. “Tech management and the technicians worked very closely together to make this thing work. In most cases, tech management listened to what we needed, what we wanted, and what we thought would work.”

The new broadcast center is moving toward being fully high-definition. “The entire building is basically tape-less. All the video we handle is on servers and is computer-based.”

Plans are also underway for the stations’ helicopters to be upgraded so they can broadcast in high-def, as well as the 24 remote trucks. “We’re working with the field units. The goal is to go completely high-def throughout.”

Between KCBS and KCAL, the center is broadcasting 11.5 hours of news a day. “And it’s all handled on

servers, with all kinds of generators and back-up systems in place,” he explained. But even computers can fail at times.

“Recently the main play out computer failed, but we were able to play those same stories directly from the edit bay to air. The audience didn’t even know the difference. And our pictures look wonderful because they are digital.”

To help ensure that the move would be seamless, many hours of training, working with the equipment (often with the vendor or manufacturer), troubleshooting and practicing were spent prior to the official move date. Everyone on staff, including the anchors who did mock newscasts from the new site, had an opportunity to get familiar, and comfortable, with their new high-tech surroundings.

“It worked out very well. Some people would be at the new facility training while some were back at the old building broadcasting,” Arellano explained.

A member of the Local 45 Executive Board, Arellano also sits on a union committee dealing with new technology. “It really helped knowing the language and the technical advances. I was able to keep things moving in the right direction



**State-of-the-art news set at KCBS/KCAL**



**Assignment Editor Terry Doyle**

with management and our members.”

Knowing the importance of this move, Arellano emphasized that Local 45 and KCBS/KCAL management worked very well together, and are continuing to do so. “We are kind of like the pilot station. WBBM in Chicago will be going to the same technology we are using here. Our locals are working together with management to keep the members informed and updated on all

of the new equipment,” he added.

It’s almost hard to imagine today that CBS Channel 2 began in 1931 as an experimental station airing content one hour a day, six days a week. Now everything is different. “When you look at the technology, there is no other station equipped like us in the area,” Arellano summed up.



**Studio Supervisor  
Greg Logan**



**Assignment Editor Rosa  
Ordaz**



**Maintenance Engineers: David DeGregorio, David Danowski, Isaac Morales, Robert Henke**

# KCBS/KCAL: A New Home Continued





**Captions from left to right:**

**Page 8, top: Chubb Gallie; Kate Larson; Sofia Pop Perez**

**Middle: Dave Wrath; Juan Lara, Ron Jacobs and Anne Brakeman**

**Bottom: Allan Pena, Rodney Hunt and Lloyd Webster; Darla Fletcher and Margie Sullivan**

**Page 9, top: George De Anton and Jon Herz; Karlo Gharbegian; Gabriel Colunga**

**Middle: Lynda Vernon**

**Bottom: Robin Critchell, David Hodge and Timothy Vance; Scott Harris**



# Act in Time: Knowing the Warning Signs of A Heart Attack and Stroke

The statistics are daunting: Coronary heart disease is this nation's #1 killer, while strokes are the third cause of serious disability.

Would you know if you were having a heart attack or stroke?

Health experts agree: Understanding the symptoms and early warning signs of a heart attack or stroke is critical. So is getting immediate medical attention.

The American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute have launched the program "Act in Time" to increase awareness of a heart attack and stroke and the importance of calling 9-1-1 immediately.



## **Heart Attack**

According to the American Heart Association, not all heart attacks come on suddenly. In many cases, the symptoms are less severe and people are not sure what's happening so they don't seek care right away. Some of those symptoms include:

**Chest discomfort:** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

**Discomfort in other areas of the body:** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

**Shortness of breath:** with or without chest discomfort.

**Other signs** may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness. (Women are more likely than men to experience some of these other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.)

## **Stroke**

According to the American Stroke Association, the warning signs of a stroke can include:

**Sudden numbness or weakness** of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body

**Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding**

**Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes**

**Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination**

**Sudden, severe headache with no known cause**



## **Getting Help Immediately is Critical**

The "Act in Time" campaign stresses that heart attacks and strokes are life-and-death emergencies where every second counts.

If you are experiencing **any of these symptoms** or are witnessing someone that is, call **9-1-1 immediately**.

It's important to note that not all of these warning signs occur in every heart attack or stroke. Sometimes symptoms go away and return. The American Heart Association stresses that if some of these **symptoms occur, seek help immediately**.

# Using Your Benefits Wisely Today Can Help Safeguard Them in the Future

The nation is in the middle of health care crisis that is affecting all of us, and there is no end in sight.

While you are among the fortunate working Americans to have job-based health care coverage, negotiating this premium benefit gets more difficult with each contract.

It is vital that Local 45 members use their medical benefits wisely today in order to help preserve health care coverage for the future.

Below are some helpful tips and healthy suggestions that can save you out-of-pocket expenses and preserve medical benefit dollars.

## *Stay Within Your Network*

One of the greatest ways you can save money is to stay within your network. Check with your plan provider and utilize the services of pre-authorized, contracted medical professionals and facilities.

## *Understand Your Coverage*

Understanding what is, and what is not, covered under your health insurance can save you a lot of money and frustration later. Always check with your plan provider and get the necessary pre-authorizations for any procedures, tests, etc.

## *The High Cost of the E.R.*

In a true emergency, your first course of action should be to go to the nearest medical facility. However, for minor problems such as cold or flu symptoms, call your primary care physician first or visit an in-network urgent care center. Emergency Room visits are extremely expensive. Avoiding them when possible can



save you significant out-of-pocket expenses.

## *Review Your Medical Bills*

Millions of dollars are lost each year because of billing errors and overcharges. Plan participants can help protect their benefits by always checking their medical bills. This is particularly important because many policies have a lifetime cap. Any overcharges go against the cap and can reduce your remaining benefits.



## *Join a Wellness Program*

There is no better advocate for leading a healthier lifestyle than you! If you need to lose weight, quit smoking or get more physical activity, take the initiative and make a positive lifestyle change today. Not only will you be setting an example for those around you, but you're laying the groundwork for a healthier tomorrow. Check with your plan provider to see how they can help.



## *Take Charge of a Chronic Problem*

While there is no cure for asthma, diabetes and heart disease, there are programs in place that can help you manage these chronic medical issues. Taking an active role in managing your condition can help save you money and enhance your overall well being. Call your health plan provider or check with the hospital in your area. In many cases, these programs are free or are offered at a discounted rate.

# More from KCBS/KCAL



**Dawn Patillo**



**Joe Ruiz and Joel Fallon**



**Christy Keefer**

Local Union #45 International  
Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
6255 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 721  
Hollywood, CA 90028



PRESORT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
PERMIT NO. 34694

