

*When we fight as one,
The fight will be won!*



Unit 12 Member Update

* Special Funded Departments

Assemblyman Hector De La Torre is writing an Assembly bill that will support our Special Funded Departments in their fight against furloughs. The International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) State Unit 12 is supporting his proposal to eliminate the possibility of future furloughs for Special Funded Departments. We are currently lobbying legislators to secure enough votes to support this important legislation.

* Assembly Bill (AB) 399

AB 399 ensures that furloughs do not negatively affect retirement. IUOE State Unit 12 is supporting this legislation so salary reductions from furloughs forced upon state workers will not affect their pensions. Although the Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) has told IUOE that the furloughs will not reduce pension benefits, our representatives believe that having legislature support will reinforce DPA's statements.

* Alternative Work Schedules

The IUOE has requested a meet and confer to bargain over the effect of changing employee Alternative Work Schedules (4-10s, 9-8-80s) back to 5-8-40s. Many employees have adjusted their personal lives to the alternative work schedules. Issues regarding child care, car/van pools, etc. are major concerns to many members.

* Unfair Labor Practice

De La Torre is sending a letter to the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) demanding hearings on our pending Unfair Labor Practice (ULP). PERB has been dragging its feet for far too long, and our members deserve answers.

* Rural Health Care Equity Program

The current signed budget eliminates funding of the Rural Health Care Equity Program that went into effect Aug. 1, 2009. The IUOE is fighting to have this reinstated, as its members were covered

Operating Engineers represented statewide

The California state budget has finally been "balanced," but Unit 12 members don't feel any sense of ease over this long-awaited event. According to the *Sacramento Bee*: "The budget calls for borrowing \$2 billion from cities and counties and takes another \$1.7 billion from local redevelopment agencies." Since February, state workers have taken a 14 percent reduction in hours and pay resulting in difficulty fulfilling their duties, since all are operating with less, more of the time.



Above, from left: Members Mike Placencia, Ken Capehart and George Swift, and below, Vice President Carl Goff and Operating Engineers Lobbyist Tim Cremins rally in Sacramento.

Days before the budget was passed, Operating Engineers let its voice be heard opposing these furloughs and budget cuts at statewide rallies held at the Capitol building in Sacramento and in San Francisco near the Civic Center. Members and staff stood among hundreds with signs that read: "Don't balance the budget on the backs of our children," and "Don't let California go up in smoke." These were colorful events but not to be taken lightly. Operating Engineers continues to lobby on members' behalf bringing to light the critical functions Unit 12 employees perform for the betterment, protection and maintenance of the state that currently seems unaware of their importance.

The balanced budget doesn't mean our fight is over. Contact your district office to find out what you can do to wage the war against budget cuts.

under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Members recover from Oroville Dam accident

Five Unit 12 Department of Water Resources (DWR) members were injured July 22 at Oroville Dam's Edward Hyatt Power Plant while testing two 72-inch river valves.

The accident occurred shortly after the valves were opened in the hydroelectric structure, as the steel wall collapsed and shot debris down the diversion tunnel and onto the workers.

Four members suffered minor injuries, while the fifth was hospitalized with a broken leg.

The incident shut the plant down for about two hours, as the 6-foot tall, 10-foot wide steel wall was repaired. The cause of the collapse is still undetermined, but members recently returned to work.

Local 3 commends them for their bravery.

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Fast facts on the Oroville Dam

- * Oroville Dam is 70 miles north of Sacramento in Butte County.
- * It's the highest earthen dam in the United States at 770 feet high.
- * The reservoir holds 3.5 million acre-feet of water.
- * It's the keystone facility of the state water project.
- * It aides salmon and steelhead returning to spawn into the Feather River Fish Hatchery.

Hundreds gather in Modesto for Unit 12 member's funeral



This collage of Donald Lichliter's life was displayed at his funeral July 30.

Lichliter hoped his death would help promote safety for his fellow Caltrans workers

Safety is always a concern for our members who work alongside busy roads and freeways on a daily basis, but when 17-year Unit 12 member Donald Lichliter was killed on the job July 23, the reality of these risks became personal.

A Unit 12 member since the division was integrated into Local 3 in 1992, Lichliter worked throughout the local's jurisdiction and had many friends within the union. A tree maintenance worker at the Lodi Maintenance Yard, Lichliter worked for Caltrans for 27 years and was working alongside Hwy. 99 in Lodi when a truck hit and killed him.

Hundreds attended his funeral held in Modesto on July 30, including Local 3 President Fred Herschbach, Unit 12 Craft Maintenance Director Tim Neep and International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) State Unit 12 Director George Swift.

Lichliter's story – and more importantly, the safety of construction workers – was featured in newspapers and on TV stations nationwide. Lichliter's family said this is what he hoped for, telling the *Modesto Bee* that if he ever died on the job, he told his family he hoped his death would help promote construction safety.

With that said, Local 3 is carrying out his wishes. We ask drivers to slow down while driving through construction zones and remind workers to practice safety on the job.

Our condolences go out to Lichliter's family: Wife of 21 years, Mandy, children, Nicole, Jollene, John and Ally, and granddaughters, Gianna and Lera.

You will be missed.