

Reach for the sky!



Photos by Russ Rylee

Linemen Joel Carrillo and James Hill use the 196-foot Bronto Skylift to prepare the fiber for installation.

IBEW crews use Skylift to install fiber optic cable for Western Area Power Administration

IBEW Local 1245 crews from Redding and Elverta recently worked together to pull in a new COPT # 2 fiber optics line for the Western Area Power Administration. The new fiber line was needed for the Captain Jack-Olinda 500kv line.

Led by Foreman Brian Adams, two crews teamed up for the job. They used the existing static wire to pull in the new fiber optics line. Total distance for the pull was eight miles. Local 1245 member Russ Rylee took photos of their work over a two-day period. The job lasted three weeks.



Lineman Joel Carrillo, James Hill and Apprentice Lineman James Clark remove rigging from existing static which was used to pull in the new fiber.



Linemen Darren New, Ryan Yeager and Apprentice Ryan Wheeler working at the puller.

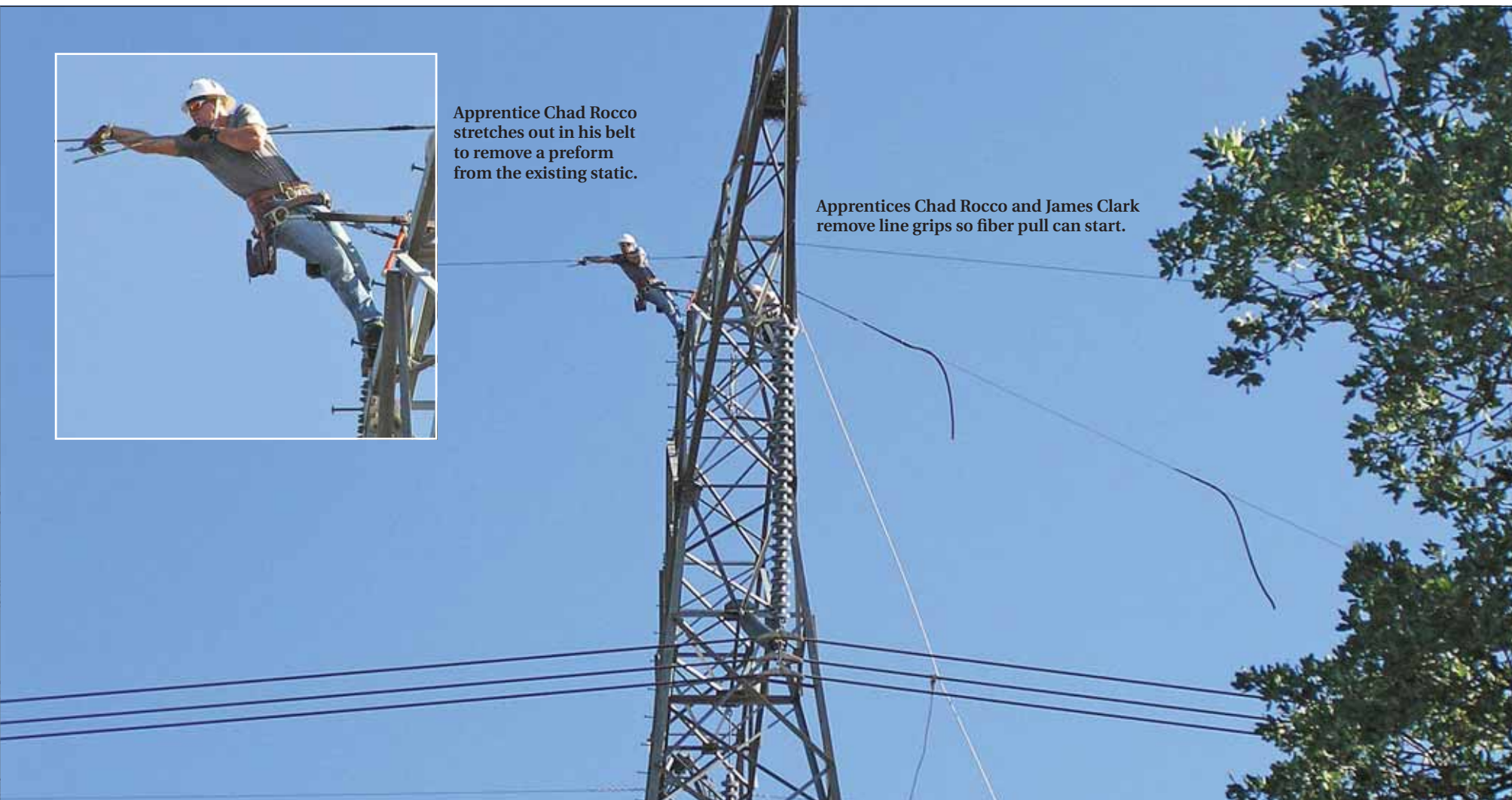


Apprentice Lineman James Clark climbs 50



Apprentice Chad Rocco stretches out in his belt to remove a preform from the existing static.

Apprentices Chad Rocco and James Clark remove line grips so fiber pull can start.



Lineman Dana Trimble and Chad Rocco ground the center phase of the Captain Jack / Olinda 500 KV line prior to fiber installation.



Apprentices Chad Rocco and James Clark get the anti-rotation device ready for the fiber.



500KV tower to get into working position.



Lineman Brian Adams preparing to start fiber pull.



The National Archives

President John F. Kennedy at the dedication of Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, Colorado, August 17, 1962. Kennedy's presence indicated the importance the government attached to harnessing water for irrigation, flood control, electric power and public use.

Union strength in the federal sector

Federal energy workers in the West have been united under the IBEW Local 1245 banner since 1963, when President John F. Kennedy signed an Executive Order granting exclusive recognition to Local 1245 to represent employees at the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), the federal agency noted for its large irrigation and flood control projects.

An important component of Federal water projects is their contribution to the nation's capacity to generate electric power. In the wake of the national energy crisis in the late 1970s, federal electric power services were carved out of the USBR and transferred, in

1980, to the newly-established federal Department of Energy (DOE). Local 1245 and four other union locals were recognized as the bargaining representatives for these members, who were now employees of the DOE's Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), serving a 15-state region.

WAPA's transmission system carries electricity from 56 power plants, including those operated by USBR. The transmission system is operated and maintained from four WAPA regional offices in Billings, Mt., Phoenix, Az., Loveland, Co., and Folsom, Ca.

Local 1245, under the direction of Business Rep. Sam Glero, coordinates its WAPA contract bargaining with four other IBEW locals through the unions' Government Coordinating Council No. 1. The other locals are IBEW 2159, 1759, 1959 and 640.

Together, these IBEW members enabled WAPA to sell 36 billion kilowatt-hours of power during its last fiscal year, while operating and maintaining 17,000 miles of transmission lines, 296 substations and other related facilities.

IBEW recently negotiated an ad hoc 3% wage increase for all represented employees, effective April 1 of this year. There's an opportunity to seek more improvements coming up: the current IBEW agreement with WAPA expires Sept. 30 of this year. Negotiations are slated for July 29 through Aug. 10. Serving on the committee from Local 1245, in addition to Glero, is Jamie Freeze.