

2011 7th District Progress Meeting Held in San Antonio

Delegates and guests met on the Riverwalk in San Antonio March 28-30 for the annual 7th District Progress Meeting. A forty degree drop in temperature wasn't enough to dampen the enthusiasm or a brisk round of golf. Later in the day delegates assembled for the various workshops followed by a reception hosted by the State Associations. During the reception 7 contestants presented their music through a video put together for IBEW Has Talent. Steven Gibson from Local 1141, Oklahoma City was the clear winner.

Tuesday morning IVP Jonathan Gardner called the Progress Meeting to order and welcomed all delegates and guests.



Following the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance, Linda Crawford, wife of International Representative George Crawford, sang the national anthem. Local 60 Business Manager Michael Devine, Local 500 Don Carmichael and Local 1911 President Bill Kazak welcomed everyone to historic San Antonio.

International President Hill offered his remarks to the delegation regarding the tsunami of anti-worker legislation being put forth in state capitals across the country. President Hill encouraged

delegates to get out and get engaged with their elected representatives as well as their rank and file members in an effort to stem the tide. President Hill then surprised everyone by presenting IVP Gardner with his 50 year pin.



President Hill presents 7th District International Vice President Jonathan Gardner with his 50 year pin.

International Secretary Treasurer Lindell Lee echoed President Hill's comments and then gave a presentation on the health of the Pension Benefit Fund and National Electrical Benefit Fund.



IST Lee delivering his remarks. This is the only picturing of him without a large smile on his face. At the end of the week in Washington, DC IST Lee announced his retirement from the Brotherhood.

IVP Gardner presented the Inside and Outside Outstanding Apprenticeship awards to Ryan Plessila, 7th District Inside Apprentice Contest Winner and Mark McCubbin, the Outstanding Line Apprentice Winner. IVP Gardner noted that Daniel Trujillo would be announced as the Apprentice of the Year at the Construction and Maintenance Conference at the end of the week. Trujillo, from Local 611 in Albuquerque was the 2010 Outstanding Line Apprentice from the 7th District.



IVP Gardner presents the 2011 7th District Inside Apprentice Contest Winner Local 479 member, Ryan Plessila with an engraved IBEW watch and the John Jenner Award.



IVP Gardner presents an engraved IBEW watch and the Jack Grimm Award to the Outstanding Outside Line Apprentice Mark McCubbin from Local 304, Topeka, Kansas.

The 7th District held a contest this year looking for a new pin design for the International Convention. Local 1141 member Marty Crain was announced as the winner and was on hand as IVP Gardner's guest. Crain's design is being used on a blue bamboo polo shirt for delegates to purchase for the Convention.



The always entertaining Dr. Larry Helms was back to provide his insight on “Tough Times Don’t Last – Tough People Do”.



Dr. Larry Helms offers his insight into people with a humorous perspective.

Political and Legislative Department Director Brian Baker held a workshop Tuesday afternoon providing a 2010 Overview and 2012 Election Strategy. Labor is in the fight for its life and the Republican Party has become emboldened in their attempts to curtail union involvement in the political process.

During Wednesday’s session IVP Gardner presented Local Union 1141, Oklahoma City with a placque for the highest Per Capita contributions in 2010. OKC contributed &73.30 per member to top the district. Local Union 611, Albuquerque, New Mexico won the award for the highest dollar amount contributed with \$161,000. IVP Gardner noted that in 2010 the 7th District topped \$500,000 in political contributions.



IVP Gardner presents the highest per capita award to Bill Servati, Local Union President, Joe Smith Local Union Business Manager Joe Smith and Assistant Business Manager Jim Griffey.



IVP Gardner pictured with Hollis Riley, Assistant Business Manager, Local 611, Lead Organizer Alan Shepherd and Joe Padilla, Outside Line Instructor. Local 611 contributed \$161,000 in 2010.

Pictures from the 2010 Linemen's Rodeo were shown. 7th District Local Unions cleaned with a team from Local 387 capturing the overall 1st place award. IVP Gardner congratulated all of the winners from different locals throughout the district.

IVP Gardner finished his remarks by stating that the 7th District remains in pretty good shape despite the economic slowdown. He commented that many of the construction local unions have put programs in place that is helping their signatory employers capture work in a tight market. He also noted that the construction economy is stronger in the 7th District than in many other parts of the country. IVP Gardner thanked the delegates and wished them safe travels back home.