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State of Our Union Webcast Draws Crowds, Stirs Dialogue

Union members and leaders gathered at halls, stadiums, TV studios and home computers across North America on March 27 to hear International President Edwin D. Hill's State of Our Union Message for the utility industry—a first-ever IBEW webcast. But they weren't just spectators to the multi-media presentation introducing the initiative.

The webcast, reaching 70 venues, included two question-and-answer segments, kicking off a dialogue on how to achieve excellence on the job while building stronger relationships with the utility companies. The questions came live from the studio audience in Hollywood and by e-mail from as far away as Fredericton, New Brunswick. The Utility Department also set up a special State of Our Union blog, which allowed members to post their comments and questions to the State of Our Union Web site.

"In these times of uncertainty it's nice to feel like there is more beyond the boundaries of our local," said one member on the blog.

"I promised utility company CEOs that the IBEW would be putting down an internal challenge to our members to be their best and to embrace cooperation over confrontation," said Hill, introducing the webcast. "But I reminded them in no uncertain terms that the door swings both ways. I told them to meet us halfway and to clean up problems in their own backyards."

Ron Delgado, president of Diamond Bar, Calif., Local 47, took the microphone in



The March 27 live virtual event was described by one member blogger as an electronic union meeting.

Hollywood to ask what is being done to address the skilled labor shortage caused by a flood of baby boomer retirements. President Hill outlined the union's ambitious plans to establish five regional training centers. He encouraged experienced members to volunteer as instructors and asked newer members to return to their high schools to recruit young people who are willing to work hard for good-paying union jobs.

From Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, Rochester, N.Y., Local 36 Business Manager Richard Irish asked how the local can establish a working relationship with Rochester Gas and Electric while the company employs a union-busting firm to thwart an internal organizing campaign. "Don't give up," President Hill said. Hill encouraged Irish to take the union's case to the community and "let them know you are alive" if the employer doesn't respect the union's efforts to cooperate in pursuit of excellence on the job and improved customer service.

Response to the webcast has been over-

whelmingly positive, said Utility Department Director Jim Hunter.

"It looked like an electronic union meeting," said one member who e-mailed the department. "I'm happy to see us take a leap forward into a new era of communications."

Several utility CEOs and leaders of utility locals were featured in the State of Our Union DVD, which is being distributed to all local unions. The message, says Hill, will be followed by the implementation of a Code of Excellence for the industry. The Code, adapted from the one already in effect in construction, is an agreement between utility managers and the IBEW to increase labor-management cooperation and professionalism in the industry.

"This was step one," Hunter said. "The next step is to get every utility local talking with management about making the Code of Excellence a reality."

A link to the webcast and the State of the Union blog can be accessed through www.ibew.org.

IBEW Launches Aggressive New Push to Organize Comcast

When you are overworked and underpaid, toiling in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, somehow it's hard to get excited about the free cable service you receive as an installation technician for the biggest cable company in the country.

In the first concerted push in the past two and a half years, the IBEW is hoping to turn things around for these workers, despite the difficulties of going up against one of the most unabashedly anti-union companies out there.

Hundreds of job sites coast to coast were targeted by IBEW organizers and member volunteers on March 12. Caught off-guard by the nationwide scope of the IBEW's efforts, some managers nevertheless managed to intervene, confiscating leaflets distributed by the IBEW.

"If we are working for a company that won't even let us take a look at a leaflet, then maybe we should be looking at a union," said International Lead Organizer Steve Smith, quoting a Comcast worker in Massachusetts, who added he hadn't been interested in the union's urgings before that March blitz.

With 90,000 employees in 39 states and the District of Columbia, Comcast prides itself as a mostly union-free company. At the hint of worker rumblings, the union busters are called in, captive audience meetings are called and the usual charges are made.

But this time, there is a sense that this is a movement too large for the company to squash. "The workers asked us to help them and they are the foundation of this campaign," said Telecommunications Department Director Martha Pultar. "Despite their best efforts, Comcast cannot intimidate 75,000 of its workers speaking in one voice."

Aside from promoting the benefits of union membership, the IBEW's handouts have been directing workers to a new Web site, www.comcastworkersunited.com. The Web site has received more than 80,000 hits; that and other spin-off sites constitute forums for workers to exchange information and encouragement.

An anonymous entry from Vancouver, Wash., contrasts the company's big profits with its treatment of rank and file workers. "Wow, Comcast made \$33 billion in pure profit and all we get are bad raises, write-ups, a ton of overtime, forced to work on the weekend, micro-managed 'til we're blue in the face, fired. If we speak up, a big smile from the boss as he puts the knife in your back, sigh ... I am ready for a change and that change is the union."

The IBEW represents approximately 900 members at Comcast in Pennsylvania, Illinois, New Jersey and Alabama, a fraction of the company's total work force. That means the company is ripe with targets for organizers who have spent more than six months putting this campaign together.

Philadelphia-based Comcast is the country's largest provider of cable services, broadband phone service and Internet.

Organizers have been making contact with Comcast employees every day since March 12, handing out leaflets, newsletters, T-shirts. "It's been nonstop, but the thought of thousands of cable workers united together keeps everyone pushing on," said Telecommunications Department International Representative Gina Cooper.

The workers have a host of grievances with their employer, including low wages, poor benefits, unreasonable productivity standards and lack of job security and respect on the job.

"They are exceptionally underpaid for the work they're doing," Pultar said. "They deserve to be fairly compensated for their experience and skill." ■



IBEW members from Washington, California and Oregon leafleted workers outside a Comcast office in Portland on March 12.

Carolinas Initiative Turning Lives Around

Every story out of the year-old Carolinas Initiative contains the hope and opportunity that the IBEW is bringing to electricians who have had little of either.

Electricians in the Carolinas are among the lowest paid in North America. "It has to be a lot like it was when the IBEW got started," said Construction Membership Development Director Kirk Brungard, tying low wages to lack of union density.

So in city after city, when the union pulls into town offering the opportunity for nonunion electricians to meet with signatory employers in an industry night, there's a great deal of interest, despite some initial skepticism.

"When you see people showing up in their jeans and work boots, walking in with the hope they are going to improve their lives, you can sense that something big is happening," said Brungard, who attended an event in Charlotte, N.C., on March 13. "In some ways, it's a glimpse into the IBEW's early days. If you allow yourself, you can't help but feel the spirit of the dance hall."

Boston Local 103 Organizer Bill Corley volunteered for blitzes preceding industry nights in Raleigh-Durham and Charlotte. The difference, he said, between the wages and working conditions in union-dense Massachusetts and right-to-work North Carolina, was like night and day.

"This area needs organizers to talk with workers to help make their lives better," Corley said. "I believe that people who work for a living deserve a decent pay scale."

The Carolinas Initiative, headed by veteran organizers who honed their techniques in Florida, the birthplace of the IBEW's mod-

ern construction organizing program, is changing the nature of the industry in North and South Carolina.

As of January 1, membership in North and South Carolina is up 27 percent, a significant improvement in IBEW employment share, which stood below 2 percent before the effort launched in April 2007. Back then, there were few signatory contractors. But in the past year, the Carolinas Initiative staff has been successful at convincing contractors from other states to take a chance in the South.

"Before, the market share was so low, contractors didn't think they could come in and be competitive," said Carolinas Initiative International Organizer Duane Moore.

Recruiting contractors is key, of course, because there is very little point in organizing someone to sit on the bench. "Without the contractors, we don't have work," Moore said. "The thing is to give the contractors the confidence to come in and bid the work."

Dan Zwahlen's Chicago-area contracting business opened a new office with a few workers in High Point, N.C. just in time for the arrival of the initiative. "Now we have 40 employees, and most of them have been recruited from the nonunion," he said, praising the new construction wiremen and construction electrician intermediate classifications. "We are the most aggressive contractor using the Carolina Initiative. It's a success story."

Zwahlen said his company has been taking advantage of the small works agreement, which gives contractors more flexibility with staffing and jurisdiction rules on smaller jobs.

"I've been in the union for 24 years and have never seen a relationship work so well

between the owners and the IBEW," he said.

Signatory contractor Duckworth Electric principal Gene Duckworth, a 55-year Charlotte Local 379 member, said he is encouraged by the positive changes he is seeing. "North and South Carolina are as bad a place as any in the world to be a union contractor," said Duckworth, 76, who attended the industry night in Charlotte. "President Hill has done more to try to get things squared away to make sure we are competitive than anybody I have seen in 55 years."

The nonunion Associated Builders and Contractors is even taking notice of the IBEW's efforts with a warning that inadvertently comes close to promoting them. "The IBEW has been increasing its activity with electrical industry nights (job fair)," the Carolinas chapter of the ABC tells its employers on the "Union Watch" portion of its Web site. "Their initiative is entice your employees to an event with the promises of higher pay, more favorable work hours and environment, health insurance and retirement benefits. The event is a union organizing event."

Zwahlen described the stark difference his new employees are experiencing now in a union shop. "I have heard terrible stories about guys who couldn't get tools, their jobs were undermanned and they had no benefits or company trucks," he said. "It was almost the same story everywhere I went. Now that same guy has an insurance card that covers his whole family, and he is a happy, productive employee because he is being furnished with good tools and a clean truck and a good work environment. And he is making me more competitive." ■

IBEW Professional and Industrial Organizing Victories Span Brotherhood

Hard work is paying off for the IBEW's professional and industrial organizers, who closed out 2008's first quarter with an 86-percent winning record.

Wins are coming hard and fast, from rural Alaska to Palm Beach, Fla.

Following is a round-up of the victories.

Gretna, Va., Region 2

Ten workers employed by FairPoint Communications voted unanimously in favor of representation by the IBEW on March 21. The telecommunications workers in southwestern Virginia, a close-knit group, had been falling behind in pay while kicking in higher contributions for health insurance coverage. Pre-election talks with management were cordial, said International Representative Larry McGlamary. Workers were looking for the security of a contract. "They felt that having terms and conditions of employment would make life easier," McGlamary said. "They liked the idea of having a voice on the job and in helping make decisions that affect their livelihoods."

Kingman, Ariz., Region 4

A close NLRB election in late March among power plant workers employed by Dynegy ended in favor of the 16 workers, who will now be represented by Phoenix Local 769. The operators, mechanics and technicians organized themselves; IBEW representatives merely met with them to answer questions, said Local 769 Organizer Jeff Carpenter. "The company brought in their human resources guy from corporate, who said unions had their place in the past, but no longer, but the guys saw through it," Carpenter said.

West Palm Beach, Fla., Region 2

In a NLRB election, workers at MasTec voted 29-20 for IBEW representation on March 7. Fifty people, mostly DirectTV installation technicians and two warehouse workers, will be members of the IBEW. Following an unsuccessful election in 2006, Lead Organizer Kathy Smith said the workers found out the company didn't keep the promises it made. So they reached out again to IBEW organizers.

"The company promised them higher pay and shorter hours and promised to listen to their complaints," Smith said. "They didn't follow through and things kept getting worse. They definitely needed a voice. They needed a contract. They are ecstatic."

Elk Grove, Calif., Region 5

Employees of Aerotek, a staffing and recruiting company, won a voice on the job following an NLRB election on February 29.

The unit includes 46 technicians who refurbish Apple laptops for Flextron. Lead Organizer Larrick McDowell said the technicians whose office is 15 miles south of Sacramento have been making \$10 an hour for nearly 10 years, working mandatory overtime and covered by an inadequate health insurance plan. In that part of the world, the wage was "unlivable," McDowell said.

He characterized the campaign as a tough contest. "Power never cedes without a struggle," McDowell said.

Alaska, Region 5

In the month of February, Lead Organizer Chris Tuck and Anchorage Local 1547 Membership Development Coordinator Dennis Knebel organized four units of service contract workers on the remote Shemya Island at Eareckson Air Station. The nearly 25 new members come to the IBEW following an election two years ago of powerhouse workers, who have been talking up the benefits of union membership to others at the base.

The workers, employed by contractors Chugach-McKinley and Del-Gen, organized for higher pay, Tuck said. "They recognized to get any wage increases, a collective bargaining agreement is the only way they're going to do it," Tuck said.

Cut Bank, Mont., Region 5

Twenty five employees of an electric cooperative in Cut Bank, Mont., are now members of Kalispell Local 768 following an overwhelming vote in favor of affiliation by their in-house union.

Glacier Electric's non-management workers agreed 18-1 to the affiliation, a decision that did not require a National Labor Relations Board election. Management agreed to recognize the IBEW following a high-road campaign that involved managers at other state cooperatives with IBEW-represented employees calling those at Glacier about their good labor-management relations, said Lead Organizer Bob Brock.

Following the Feb. 6 vote, Glacier management called a company-wide meeting and told workers they were supportive of their decision. "Seeing that the employees feel



The IBEW's Professional and Industrial organizing regions.

that union representation is in their best interest, I respect this decision and will help to support their effort," said General Manager Jason Bronec in a press statement released jointly by the company and the IBEW.

Laurel, Miss., Region 2

Laurel, Miss., Local 1317 represents 2,300 workers who build residential transformers for Howard Industries. But eight miles down the road in Ellisville, 80 more Howard Industries employees who make substation transformers have been struggling along without the benefit of union membership, being paid \$3 per hour less, paying more for health insurance coverage and working overtime without being compensated for overtime. On Feb. 1, a majority of those workers voted for representation by Local 1317.

Lead Organizers Kenny Lett and Maria Gonzales and Local 1317 Chief Steward James Chancellor followed workers home and on errands, talking to them on their doorsteps and at their banks and grocery stores. "That's how we got our cards signed," Lett said, adding that most of the Spanish-

speaking workers were scared. "They didn't understand they have rights."

The organizers also have a big internal drive ongoing at the Laurel plant, where they have signed up nearly 500 more members, Lett said.

Mason City, Iowa, Region 3

A few months after the IBEW lost a representation election for the operators of Emery generating station last year, employer Alliant Energy called on the union to help lobby the state legislature for another power plant. Fine, said the IBEW, but only if the company agrees to card check recognition. Now the 11 employees of the natural gas-fired power plant are members of Cedar Rapids Local 204, said Lead Organizer Brian Heins.

"Alliant got our help, and it worked out for the workers," said Heins, who added the employees were anxious for representation to confront favoritism and arbitrary work rules enforcement. The cards were counted and certified on Jan. 21. ■

California Local Signs Six Solar Contractors

Santa Rosa, Calif., Local 551 is in the process of signing six new solar power contractors after the non-signatory employers were invited to attend a three-day solar installation training session sponsored by the IBEW and NECA.

"The contractors saw firsthand what we had to offer and that we could fill their need for skilled electrical workers," said Local 551 Business Manager Jack Buckhorn.

Concerns over climate change and big state incentives have made California the biggest producer of solar energy in the nation, with hundreds of small contractors—mostly nonunion—springing up throughout the state.

"Most of the companies are small start-ups who see the industry's growth potential but don't always have the skilled manpower to make it happen," Buckhorn said.

A signatory contractor out of Oakland had called up Local 551 Membership Development Coordinator John Lloyd before the January training and mentioned that some local solar non-signatory contractors were interested in attending the local's training.

Normally the training sessions—which are put on by members of Los Angeles Local 11 and the National Electrical Contractors Association of Southern California—are reserved for IBEW members and NECA contractors only, but the local "decided we had nothing to lose and a lot to gain by opening the doors to everyone," Lloyd said. More than 150 people attended the session.

The local also invited members of Solar Sebastopol, a coalition of green energy activists who advocate for more government funding of solar energy. "IBEW needs to be a leader in this market, and you do that by reaching out and working with all like-minded people on the issue," Lloyd said.

Ninth District International Representative Greg Boyd said when the local announced that nonunion companies could attend, "they got some flak, but they ended up signing everyone that came."

"They stepped out of their comfort zone to grow the IBEW," Boyd said. ■

More than 150 IBEW members and contractors attended Santa Rosa, Calif., Local 551-sponsored solar training session in January.



GE To Shut Down Indiana Refrigerator Plant

The General Electric Co. added to Indiana's manufacturing woes in March when the company announced that it would close the doors on its side-by-side refrigerator plant in Bloomington by the end of 2009.

For more than 40 years, the massive plant—one of the last in the city—was the mainstay of manufacturing in Bloomington. "It's the end of an era," said IBEW Manufacturing Department Director Bob Roberts, who is a former business manager of Bloomington Local 2249. The plant employed approximately 900 workers, the majority of whom are members of Local 2249.

GE made its intentions known in January, saying that it had lost more than \$45 million last year due to declining sales. They had moved production of their higher priced models to Mexico years ago, leaving the plant to produce low-end units which weren't profitable anymore, Roberts said.

"It's symptomatic of the devastation of the manufacturing industry in Indiana," said Sixth District Vice President Joseph Lohman. The state has lost more than 100,000 production jobs in the last 20 years.

The company rejected a cost-cutting proposal by the local, which finalized GE's closure plans.

When the million-square-foot factory was opened in 1967, it was the largest assembly line in the world, specializing in side-by-side refrigerator-freezer models that were known as the "Cadillac of refrigerators."

Employment at the plant peaked at more than 3,200 in the early 1990s. "It was a good place to work then," said Local 2249 Business Manager Bill Mitchell. In 1999 however, the company began downsizing, moving work to its facilities in Mexico.

"The problems started with NAFTA," Mitchell said. "We began competing with workers who make far below the minimum wage."

GE laid off more than 1,600 workers that year, cutting another 500 four years later. Both times the company rejected the local's suggestions for money-saving changes that might have kept the work in Bloomington.

"We gave the company a lot of options so they could be more competitive, but it came down to the fact that we can't compete with someone who makes less than \$4 an hour," Mitchell said.

More than 60 percent of the work force will be eligible for retirement, with the remaining 40 percent eligible for severance pay based on years of service. Bloomington workers have the right of preferential placement at another GE plant.

Laid-off workers are also eligible for up to \$12,500 in tuition reimbursement for job training from GE.

Other federal, state and local programs will be available, including Trade Adjustment Assistance. "We are exploring every option to help everyone make the transition," Mitchell said.

An economic development commission sponsored by Monroe County—whose seat is Bloomington—is looking at the possibility of running the plant through an employee stock ownership plan, but Mitchell is not enthusiastic about the idea. "If I knew the plant was making money, it would be an option, but it's not and I would feel uncomfortable putting members' savings at risk." ■

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North of 49°

Web Site Brings New Business to Ontario Signatory Contractors

Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804 Business Manager Mark Kuehl knew that his local's signatory contractors needed some help with their advertising. His neighbor was looking for an electrician to do a small job in her home and she didn't know how to find one. "She had no idea," Kuehl said. "She had to ask me for a list of good union electricians, and that's pretty bad when people don't know where to go."

That conversation led to the launch of a trade organization that represents 40 electrical contractors employing more than 1,200 IBEW members in the greater Kitchener region. Its Web site, www.yourlocalelectricians.ca, is a one-stop shop for customers looking for qualified electricians for everything from small residential repairs to big commercial and industrial jobs.

When a job request is submitted to the site, it's sent out to the member contractors

based on a rotation list and skill specialization. The customer is guaranteed a call back within 24 hours.

The local has promoted the site through direct mail and through ads on the radio, TV and at sporting events. "We want to make sure that if anyone thinks about electricians, they think www.yourlocalelectricians.ca," Kuehl said.

"We knew that we needed a central location for everyone who wanted an electrician," said Sean Strickland, executive director of the association. "The Web site is our gateway."

The site, now in its second year of operation, has been a success, with an average of two job requests a day. One contractor now gets 30 percent of his work from the site, Kuehl said.

One of challenges the local faced in starting the program was convincing contractors to focus more on residential work. "We knew it

would be, at least in the beginning, predominantly residentially focused," Strickland said.

The site has ended up helping the local increase its market share in the sector, Kuehl said.

The trade association, jointly funded by the local and its signatory contractors, has also conducted market research, mining data about future commercial and industrial projects.

"Before a job is awarded we find out what is being planned to keep ahead of the curve," Strickland said.

The success of the association has sparked interest among nearby locals and contractors who are interested in expanding the program to cities throughout southern Ontario.

"Every time you do something to keep the work flowing to union contractors, especially on the small end of the market, you are making the IBEW stronger," Kuehl said. ■

Spotlight on Safety

Utility Industry Partnership Studies Transmission Practices

Located on the picturesque coast of northern Oregon, Camp Rilea could be a nice place to enjoy the scenery and do some fishing. But Collinsville, Ill., Local 309 Business Manager James Berger wasn't there for a vacation, he was there to do some safety research on outside line construction procedures.

Berger visited the camp—home to the Northwest Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee's training center—last November to watch linemen from Seattle Local 77 perform outside line construction procedures and take notes.

Two teams of linemen demonstrated to Berger how they do their jobs, with one working off a pole and the other working out of an aerial basket. Berger was particularly focused on how the linemen used rubber insulated protective gear when working with live equipment.

"I studied everything from how they carried out pre-job planning to the proper use of equipment," said Berger, who is a member of an Occupational Safety and Health Administration-sponsored task team established to research the best safety practices for outside linemen working on electrified equipment and to make recommendations for new working standards regarding rubber insulated safety tools.

The team is part of a joint partnership formed four years ago among utility companies, the IBEW, OSHA and the National Electrical Contractors Association to help identify and develop the best practices to reduce injuries and deaths in the electrical transmission and distribution industry.

Many of the partnership's recommendations come from studying industry fatality and injury data to discover the most common causes of accidents. So far the partnership has agreed to implement six best practices covering everything from the pre-inspection of equipment to the importance of job briefings.

While the practices are not official OSHA regulations, all the signatory companies in the agreement have agreed to implement the partnership's findings.

The latest best practice recommendations that Berger is helping to develop could be adopted by partnership by the end of April, said IBEW Safety Department Director Jim Tomaseski.

"There were too many accidents and fatalities when the partnership started," Berger said. "We've come a long way since then and we are hoping our team can continue to set new standards for the industry to make it even safer." ■

Au nord du 49° parallèle

Les entrepreneurs signataires font de nouvelles affaires grâce à un site web!

Lorsque sa voisine qui cherchait un bon électricien pour effectuer un petit travail lui a confié qu'elle ne savait pas où s'adresser et lui a demandé de lui fournir une liste d'électriciens qualifiés, le confrère Mark Kuehl, gérant d'affaires de la section locale 804 de Kitchener en Ontario a compris qu'elle ne devait pas être la seule à ignorer la façon de procéder pour obtenir des services adéquats et qu'il fallait remédier à cette situation. Une des solutions envisagées pour y arriver : accroître la visibilité des entrepreneurs signataires.

Cette idée a mené au lancement d'une organisation professionnelle qui regroupe 40 entrepreneurs électriciens comptant plus de 1,200 membres de la FIOE à leur emploi dans la grande région de Kitchener. Le site de l'organisation (www.yourlocalelectricians.ca) offre aux clients la possibilité de trouver, regroupés en un seul endroit, des électriciens qualifiés capables d'effectuer des travaux de tout genre, que ce soit des réparations mineures dans le secteur résidentiel aux travaux de plus grande envergure dans le secteur commercial et industriel.

Toute demande de service formulée sur le site est dirigée à un entrepreneur de l'or-

ganisation, par rotation et selon la spécialisation et la compétence. Un retour d'appel est garanti au client dans les vingt-quatre heures.

La section locale a fait la promotion de ce site en utilisant le publipostage et par des annonces à la radio, à la télévision et lors d'événements sportifs. "Nous voulons nous assurer que la première chose qui vous vienne à l'esprit lorsque vous aurez besoin d'un électricien, soit le site www.yourlocalelectricians.ca" déclare M. Kuehl.

"Je me suis inspiré de mon expérience personnelle en tant que consommateur et je sais combien il est difficile de trouver un ouvrier qualifié. Nous avons besoin d'un emplacement central pour les personnes qui désirent obtenir les services d'un électricien et le site web est notre porte d'entrée" précise M. Sean Strickland, directeur exécutif de l'association.

Le site en est à sa deuxième année d'existence et on estime qu'avec une moyenne de deux demandes de services par jour, c'est une réussite. Selon le confrère Kuehl, 30% du travail d'un entrepreneur provient des demandes de ce site.

La section locale a dû relever certains défis au début dont celui de convaincre les entrepreneurs de s'orienter davantage vers le travail résidentiel. "Nous savions que le travail serait principalement concentré dans le secteur résidentiel, du moins au début", ajoute Strickland.

Selon le confrère Kuehl, le site a contribué à faire augmenter la part de marché de la section locale dans le secteur.

"L'association commerciale, financée conjointement par la section locale et les entrepreneurs, a effectué une étude de marché pour connaître les données sur les futurs projets commerciaux et industriels.

"Nous nous renseignons sur les projets qui sont prévus, afin d'avoir une longueur d'avance au moment de l'octroi d'un contrat" poursuit-il.

Le succès de cette association a suscité l'intérêt des sections locales et des entrepreneurs avoisinants lesquels ont manifesté le désir d'étendre le programme aux villes situées dans le sud de l'Ontario.

"Chaque fois que vous aidez à maintenir le flot continu de travail aux entrepreneurs qui emploient nos membres, plus particulièrement chez les plus petits, vous renforcez la FIOE", conclut le confrère Kuehl. ■

Transitions

Deceased Philip Robinson



We regret to report that former Third District International Representative Philip Robinson died on March 20. He was 76. Initiated into Local 1049, then located in Hicksville,

N.Y., in 1951, Brother Robinson served as a chief steward, executive board member and assistant business manager of the local that later moved to nearby Hauppauge.

A cable splicer at Long Island Lighting Co., Robinson was appointed as a temporary International Representative in 1975 to assist in organizing the Pennsylvania Power and Light Co. His appointment became permanent the following year.

"Phil was a man who I liked, loved and respected," says retired Third District International Representative Jon Henrich, who was a member of an independent union at PP&L when Robinson arrived as a lead

organizer. After winning the organizing campaign, Robinson helped the new members of Bethlehem, Pa., Local 1600 to elect officers and negotiate a first agreement.

"Phil was no-nonsense, but was as fair as he could be," says Henrich, who served as Local 1600's president from 1983 to 1989. "He never steered me wrong, and I don't know anyone else he steered wrong."

"I always marveled at the meticulous quality of Brother Robinson's records," says Third District International Representative Rich Redmond, who first took on some of Robinson's duties as a Local 1049 business representative before succeeding him on the district staff. Redmond credits Robinson's hard work with achieving wage parity between linemen, journeymen, cable splicers and welders. During his tenure, Robinson negotiated contracts in all four states of the Third District, which includes New Jersey and Delaware as well as New York and Pennsylvania. He retired in 1997.

"If my dad could have torn himself into five pieces, he would have," says Tom Robinson, a Local 1049 member with almost 30 years of IBEW service who says that his

father was immersed in community affairs in addition to his children's activities. He helped found the Oyster Bay Little League, the Oyster Bay Knights of Columbus and was actively involved in his church and the Boy Scouts.

"Dad would drop what he was doing to help a neighbor," says Tom Robinson. "No job was too small." The elder Robinson still found the energy to build his own house.

Philip Robinson attended Fordham University for two years and served six years

in the Reserve Officers Training Corps. He attended classes at Cornell University and was a director of the Nassau Health and Welfare Council. Robinson represented the Long Island Federation of Labor at the Community Services Institute.

The officers, staff and membership of the IBEW convey our deep condolences to Brother Robinson's widow, Norma, and to his children, James, Bonnie Lee and Tom. ■

Circuits

Arkansas Linemen Rescue Mother, Baby From Blaze

It started as just another day in the field last September for Southwestern Electric Power Co. senior lineman Troy Merle and his four-man crew. The Texarkana, Ark., Local 386 members were pulling in underground cables at a junction box near the new high school they were building for the city of Rogers, when Merle saw billows of smoke coming out of the roof vent of a nearby house.

Merle, linemen Richard King, Brandon Guyll, Rex Kell and Rob Gary dropped everything and ran to the house. A young woman answered the door. "She had no idea there was a problem," Merle said. It was a chilly day and she had just started a fire in the living room fireplace after putting her three-month-old son to bed.

"She thought we just saw some smoke from the chimney, that's all, but I knew it was more serious than that," Merle said.

King rushed to their truck for a fire extinguisher after convincing the woman and her child to leave, while the rest of the crew investigated the source of the smoke. Opening a vent to the attic, they found it ablaze. The flames were growing rapidly.

"We then heard a boom like a bomb was going off, and the fire engulfed the whole roof," Merle said. They rushed out of the house and called 911.

No one was hurt and the firefighters' quick response saved the house. Later examination by investigators indicated that embers from the fireplace penetrated the decaying chimney, igniting the attic's insulation.

"We just did what we think anyone would have done in that situation," Merle said. "We didn't think about the dangers."

In recognition of their action, American Electric Power Chairman Mike Morris awarded the five employees with the AEP Chairman's Life Saving Award in January. AEP owns SWEPCO.

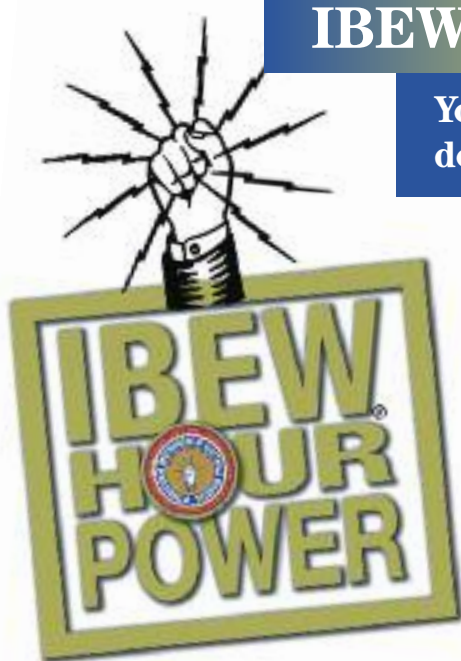
"It says a lot about our union that our members are willing to put their lives on the line like that for the community," said Local 386 Business Manager Jeff Hale. ■



AEP Chairman Mike Morris, center, presents an award to Texarkana Local 386 members. From left are Rob Gary, Troy Merle, Brandon Guyll, Richard King and Rex Kell. Photo credit: SWEPCO Corporate Communications.

IBEWHourPower.com

Your "IBEW TV Network" delivered online



This month on IBEWHourPower.com:

See how IBEW training is delivered right to the doorstep of our members working the massive oil sands project in Alberta.

Also, if you weren't a winner of an exotic hunting or fishing trip courtesy of the TRCP, at least we'll take you along and show you!

This month on ElectricTV.net:

He was a founder of Greenpeace; now he's a leading advocate of building nuclear power plants. ETV sits down with Dr. Patrick Moore.



Local Lines

Appointments Announced

L.U. 1 (as,c,ees,ei,em,es,et,fm,i,mt,rts,s,se,spa, st&ws), ST. LOUIS, MO—In early February, Local 1 Bus. Mgr. Steve Schoemehl made several new appointments. Bro. Steve Licari was appointed as a new business agent. Bros. Frank Jacobs, Bob Taylor and Bill Woodfinn were appointed as organizers.

Bro. Tony Buffa was appointed to the Executive Board. Bros. Dan Nilica and Mike Kinloch were appointed to the Examining Board; and Bro. John Kahrhoff was appointed as recording secretary. Congratulations and good luck to all.

2008 is a big year for working people.

November elections are right around the corner, and now is the time to get involved in the fight to support candidates who work for the men and women of labor and their families.

On the first Saturday of June, the Local 1 election of officers will be held. Remember to exercise your right to vote.

Please be advised of the following members' deaths: William Radcliff, Paul Spindler, Neil Helle and Albert Doerhoff.

Matt Gober, P.S.

Defending Our Work

L.U. 11 (i,rts&spa), LOS ANGELES, CA—Over 75 IBEW members of various locals, International Representatives, business managers and staff crowded the tiny meeting room to defend the state's electrician certification language. They were there to defend our trade and our work against ridiculous claims that certified electricians are only required to make up final connections of wires and cables, not run conduits, raceways, set panels, etc. IBEW members came out in force with very little advance notice to attend. Thanks to all who attended for your passionate support.

The Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency project labor agreement passed with support from labor, community, clergy and low-income developers. Next stop will be the Los Angeles City Council. This PLA, if adopted by the city council, will result in \$15 billion of construction work. Thanks to all who attended the meeting to support the measure.

Members are encouraged to participate on Local 11's organizing committee, which meets the first Tuesday of each month at District 4 San Fernando at 4:30 p.m.

We regret to report that longtime, active member and former business rep Gene Corsini passed away. Gene served on the Pension and Health Trust for over a decade. He will be greatly missed.

Bob Oedy, P.S.



IBEW members, officers and International Representatives attend meeting at the California Dept. of Industrial Relations to support California electrician certification language.

Success Stories

L.U. 15 (u), DOWNERS GROVE, IL—On April 1, Treas. Rick Balthazor retired. We thank Bro. Balthazor for his longtime service and wish him a happy retirement. Appointed treasurer was Bro. Sam Studer, a crew leader and steward.

Illinois passed Utility Worker Protection legislation that makes it a potential felony to threaten or harm a utility worker.

The IBEW and the Illinois AFL-CIO helped elect Democratic candidate Bill Foster to fill the 14th Congressional District seat vacated by former GOP House Speaker Dennis Hastert. Foster won the March 8 special election.

The union plans to have copies of the new collective bargaining agreements with Dominion Energy Co. and Exelon Nuclear Co. distributed to the membership in May.

The collective bargaining agreement with Exelon's ComEd Energy Delivery Co. and its Business Services Co. expires Sept. 30, 2008. Also set to expire at the same time are the health benefit plans and the pension agreement for bargaining unit employees at all Exelon companies in northern Illinois.

We've had several success stories at Midwest Generation in discussions with its senior-level managers. The parties are working toward shift selection preference based on seniority; have established a joint committee to address a more uniform training process for Operating Department employees; are working to improve the safety program and more.

Get out the vote! Elect our friends of labor!

Ronald V. Wette, P.S.

New Appointees Sworn In

L.U. 25 (catv,i,o&rts), LONG ISLAND, NY—Pres. James Plant resigned Feb. 29. Vice Pres. William Starke was appointed to fill the position.

Bro. Plant served as president for nine years, business representative for six years and on numerous committees. His dedication will be missed.

Newly appointed Pres. Starke has been an officer for 27 years. Bill brings a bachelor's degree

in labor studies and an advanced degree from Cornell University School of Labor Relations. With Bill's impeccable work ethic, innovative ideas and experience on committees and as funds trustee, he will serve our local well as president.

Filling the office of vice president is Executive Board member James Malley. Jim has an advanced degree in labor studies from Cornell University. With his education and experience, Jim will serve with dedication as vice president.

Sean Plant, son of former president James Plant, was appointed to the Executive Board. A third-generation IBEW member, Sean chairs the Voluntary Unemployment Fund Committee and serves with dedication on several committees.

Executive Board member Jack Majkut will take the helm as press secretary. Jack chairs our Travel Committee and is a dedicated, third-generation trade unionist.

Congratulations to all the new appointees!

Rich Kammarada, P.S.

Jack Majkut, P.S.

'Working Together'

L.U. 31 (govt&u), DULUTH, MN—2007 was a busy year for our local, with the election of officers (see photo, next page) and many new contract negotiations on the agenda for the business manager, assistant business manager and respective negotiating committees. Once again, our 2007 summer picnic was a great time with good weather, great food and solidarity.

The outlook for 2008 is even more challenging with more contracts to be negotiated and upcoming political races heating up. It is a do-or-die situation to stand up and elect pro-union candidates to public office, and that's where the focus will be in upcoming months. We are also actively searching for targets for future organizing efforts. The union staff, officers, Executive Board, stewards and members look forward to working together to make 2008 a safe, prosperous year.

Tim J. Ryan, Pres.

Trade Classifications

(as) Alarm and Signal	(mar) Marine
(ars) Atomic Research Service	(mps) Motion Picture Studios
(bo) Bridge Operators	(nst) Nuclear Service Technicians
(cs) Cable Splicers	(o) Outside
(catv) Cable Television	(p) Powerhouse
(c) Communications	(pet) Professional, Engineers and Technicians
(cr) Cranemen	(ptc) Professional, Technical and Clerical
(ees) Electrical Equipment Service	(rr) Railroad
(ei) Electrical Inspection	(rtb) Radio-Television Broadcasting
(em) Electrical Manufacturing	(rtm) Radio-Television Manufacturing
(es) Electric Signs	(rts) Radio-Television Service
(et) Electronic Technicians	(so) Service Occupations
(fm) Fixture Manufacturing	(s) Shopmen
(govt) Government	(se) Sign Erector
(i) Inside	(spa) Sound and Public Address
(it) Instrument Technicians	(st) Sound Technicians
(lctt) Line Clearance Tree Trimming	(t) Telephone
(lpt) Lightning Protection Technicians	(u) Utility
(mt) Maintenance	(uow) Utility Office Workers
(mo) Maintenance and Operation	(ws) Warehouse and Supply
(mow) Manufacturing Office Workers	



Local 25 outgoing president James Plant (left) administers oath of office to newly appointed Pres. William Starke, Executive Board member Sean Plant and Vice Pres. James Malley.



Local 31 officers and E-Board members, from left: Vice Pres. Paul Makowski, Bus. Mgr. Mark Glazier, E-Board member Dale Torma, Pres. Tim Ryan, Asst. Bus. Mgr. Dick Sackett, Treas. Dan Leslie; E-Board members Brian Campbell, Karen Bergren, Rick McDonald and Mike Stingle; and Rec. Sec. Bob Fonger.

Project Labor Agreements

L.U. 35 (i), HARTFORD, CT—Work in the area is still good. The MGM Grand Hotel and Casino at Foxwoods is nearly completed and the Mohegan Sun Casino expansion has started.

As vice president of the Hartford Building Trades, Local 35 Bus. Mgr. John Sardo is involved in negotiating project labor agreements on three new schools in the Hartford area along with St. Francis Hospital and a powerhouse in Middletown. The work picture looks promising for the summer.

I wish to thank all our members and the various building trades, along with Helmets to Hardhats, who donated their time and skills to renovate Sgt. Barry "Pappy" Albert's house after he was injured in Iraq. Special thanks to our Apprenticeship Dir. Brian Canny for coordinating the work and getting area supply houses to donate materials.

Reminder to our members: Our 3rd Annual Family Outing will be held Sat., Aug. 16. Everyone had a great time last year. There was plenty of food as well as raffle gifts and entertainment. It was a great chance to see old friends. Hope to see everyone there in August.

Bruce Silva, Pres./P.S.

Tehachapi Transmission Project

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uw), DIAMOND BAR, CA—A ground-breaking ceremony was held in Mojave, CA, on March 7 for the new Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project. Bus. Mgr. Pat Lavin and several officers and reps attended on behalf of IBEW Local 47. The project will consist of 250 miles of new and upgraded transmission lines.

Local 47 co-hosted the 18th Annual Leadership Conference of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus at Universal City. Pat Lavin was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by EWMC Pres. Robbie Sparks, business manager of Atlanta Local 2127.

After years of effort, the local was successful in getting a union line clearance contractor at the city of Riverside. Asplundh Tree Expert Co. is the new contractor.

The City of Banning general unit ratified a new three-year agreement that will increase health care benefits by 98 percent. Employees who reside in the city will also receive a utility allowance that will be \$150/month by the end of the agreement.

We are gearing up for the November presidential election. We encourage all of our members to make sure they are registered to vote and suggest that they register as "permanent absentee" voters, so they can vote by mail.

We mourn the passing of Bros. Bruce Buckner and Felipe Chavez.

Stan Stosel, P.S.



Local 47 Bus. Mgr. Pat Lavin (left) receives Lifetime Achievement Award presented by EWMC Pres. Robbie Sparks, business manager of IBEW Local 2127.

Agreements Reached

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,rtb,t&u), SPRINGFIELD, IL—Local 51 recently reached agreements with American Line Builders (NECA), Henkels & McCoy, Nelson Tree, Wright Tree and Verizon Plus. All are renegotiated contracts with the exception of Verizon Plus, which is a first-time collective bargaining agreement. Local 51 thanks all the members who participated in the negotiations process involving all above mentioned agreements. The local also welcomes our new members from Verizon Plus. Negotiations continue for our members at Aqua Illinois, WEEK-TV, City of Princeton, Corix Utilities, Menard Electric, MJM Electric and the University of Illinois.

On the organizing front, campaigns are ongoing at the City of Geneseo and the City of Peru. Bus. Reps. Tom Peterson and Rod Brandt are heading up both efforts and are acknowledged for their hard work as we continue to increase our membership through organizing.

Local 51 thanks recently retired Int. Sec.-Treas. Emeritus Jon F. Walters for his many years of dedication to the Brotherhood. We wish him a long and healthy retirement.

The work scene for our outside membership continues strong. For information on our manpower needs, you can go to the jobs board at www.ibew.org. Remember to work safe and attend your union meetings, for this is where it all begins.

Dan Pridemore, B.R.



IBEW Local 51 Verizon Plus members meet with Local 51 Bus. Rep. Rod Brandt (second from left). Shown, clockwise from left, are: Chad Lommatsch, Bus. Rep. Brandt, Eddie Bonilla, Jennifer Moore, Palmer Blevins and Beverly Baker-Muhammad.



Members of IBEW Salt Lake City Local 57 at the Shelley, Idaho, Unit donate items for community food bank.

Food Drive Volunteers

L.U. 57 (lctt,mo,o,t&u), SALT LAKE CITY, UT—Jason Erickson, Local 57 union steward for the Shelley, Idaho, Unit, organized a food drive in support of their local food bank this past Christmas. The union members in the Shelley office of Rocky Mountain Power came through with turkeys, hams and cases of nonperishable goods for the project. The community food bank was able to feed over 1,500 families this past Christmas season. We thank all the members for their hard work and support. And thank you, Jason, for your generous efforts.

Deanna Gill, P.S.

Largest PV System in State

L.U. 99 (govt&i), PROVIDENCE, RI—Local 99 is moving to the forefront with promotion of renewable energy in southern New England. With completion at Local 99 headquarters of the largest solar energy array in Rhode Island, we can not only demonstrate a working photovoltaic system, but also offer the training to install and maintain such a system. Our apprentice curriculum will reflect this capability.

This PV system includes three separate arrays with a total capacity of 50 kilowatts. The first array, completed last year, has 42 panels and will be used for training purposes. The second array is on the roof and contains 100 panels. The third is a free-standing array with 100 panels. To date, this entire system has generated 59 megawatt hours of electricity and cost savings are considerable. Bus. Mgr. Allen Durand is lobbying the utilities to pay the full retail rate on its buyback program.

The efficiency of the system can be monitored in real time, on our Web site at www.ibew99.org. We are encouraging area schools to become involved using our system as part of their studies. We also held an open house on Earth Day, April 22. Area politicians and business people were invited to attend, creating increased publicity for the IBEW and Local 99.

Stephen P. Callaghan, P.S.



IBEW Local 99 hosts Rhode Island's largest photovoltaic system at its local union headquarters.

2007 Cushing-Gavin Award

L.U. 103 (cs&i), BOSTON, MA—The 41st Annual Cushing-Gavin Awards ceremony, hosted by the Labor Guild, was held Nov. 30, 2007. The Labor Guild presented its 2007 labor award for excellence in labor-management relations to our own

Bus. Mgr. Michael P. Monahan. Previous honorees from Local 103 have included Don Berry, honored in 1967; Joe Nigro in 1992; and Fin. Sec. Chuck Monahan in 2000.

Bus. Mgr. Monahan also received an award from Julie's Family Learning Program, a service organization that helps Boston families break the cycle of poverty.

Sadly, the Rev. Ed Boyle, S.J., director of the Labor Guild of the Boston Archdiocese, passed away last November. Father Ed, as many 103 members called him, sought economic justice for workers in the Boston area. The Labor Guild, or school, is open to all faiths and provides trade unions with courses, technology and training in labor relations to combat assaults on unions. Father Boyle is greatly missed by the labor community.

At the Liberty Cup hockey game held Nov. 12, 2007, Local 103 Boston again defeated New York Local 3, by 7-5. The MVP award went to Jim "Soupy" Campbell. After the game, everyone returned to the hall for dinner and brotherhood building.

Bill Molineaux, P.S.

100th Anniversary Celebration

L.U. 111 (em,govt,lctt,mt,o,rtb,spa&u), DENVER, CO—On Dec. 8, 2007, over 600 people gathered at the Colorado Convention Center to celebrate the 100th anniversary of IBEW Local 111. Festivities included a cocktail party, dinner, door prizes, and a dance with the band Home Slice. Members and guests renewed old friendships, greeted former co-workers and retirees, and shared good times with friends.

Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Michael Byrd and Pres. Duane Lawlor presided over the evening's stirring program. AFL-CIO Organizing Dir. Stewart Acuff, a fiery orator, presented the keynote speech to rousing cheers. Then-IBEW Int. Sec.-Treas. Jon F. Walters, now retired, and Eighth District Int. Vice Pres. Ted C. Jensen addressed the anniversary audience. The Local 111 "Ambassador of the Year" award was presented to Bro. Jerry King, a 47-year member and former president, senior assistant business manager, Executive Board member and recording secretary. Byrd expressed gratitude to leaders and members who have been a part of the history of Local 111. He urged those present to



Local 111 Bus. Mgr. Mike Byrd (left), Pres. Duane Lawlor and then-Int. Sec.-Treas. Jon F. Walters display 100th anniversary plaque at the local's centennial celebration.

continue as active union participants to help build a strong legacy for the next 100 years.

Thanks to Mary Gibson, Local 111 newsletter editor, for information provided for this article.

Dennis Z. LeTurgez, P.S.

Purple Heart Award

L.U. 125 (lctt,o,&u), PORTLAND, OR—Officer Scott Hays, Local 125 member and employee of the City of Milton-Freewater, Oregon, police department received the Purple Heart Award on Feb. 11, 2008.

Police Chief Doug Boedigheimer presented the award to Hays in recognition of his efforts to apprehend a suspect in a stolen vehicle. As Hays approached the vehicle, the suspect hit him with the stolen pickup truck as Hays fired off 10 rounds as the driver fled.

"I certainly did not expect an award but am glad that I was alive to accept it," Hays said. Maintaining his positive outlook, Hays believes that the situation will make him a better officer. Hays has returned to duty and plans on sharing his experience with others in efforts of peer-to-peer education between officers.

*Marcy Putman
Membership Development Coordinator*

Labor Hall of Fame Inductee

L.U. 145 (em,i,o,rts,spa&u), ROCK ISLAND, IL—Local 145 retiree Ron Jordan recently was honored at a local Labor Hall of Fame dinner as an inductee into the Hall of Fame. Ron served as an instructor for apprentice and journeyman classes and was an Executive Board members for 26 years. He retired in 2002 and received his 40-year service pin in 2005. Ron and his wife, Judy, recently revitalized the Retirees Club, which now has over 70 members. Thank you, Ron!

We encourage younger members to become actively involved in Local 145 activities.

2007 was a good year for Local 145, with full employment and some travelers working in our jurisdiction. 2008 has started out strong with 190 journeymen needed for an outage at the Quad City Nuclear Plant in Cordova, IL. The work outlook for this year appears positive with the \$200 million plastic plant being built in Clinton, IA, and a \$150 million gambling casino in Rock Island. We are optimistic about the proposed \$175 million East Moline, IL, hog processing plant scheduled for 2008.

We pray for families of recently deceased members.

Local 145 wishes to boost union meeting attendance. Everyone is invited to attend! Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m.

Alan Anderson, P.S.



Local 145 retiree Ron Jordan (center) is honored at a Labor Hall of Fame dinner. Extending congratulations are U.S. Rep. Bruce Braley (left) of Iowa and U.S. Rep. Phil Hare (right) of Illinois.

Work Outlook

L.U. 159 (i), MADISON, WI—Work in our area is slow. We expect work to pick back up this summer and be fairly steady. At this writing, our Inside Book I has 72 members, and 105 are on Book II. Our Residential sector has been slow and will hopefully rebound by summer. The VDV sector is holding its own. Record snowfall slowed the construction industry. We look forward to spring.

Our Inside working agreement expires this May and we are working hard on negotiations. We will do our best to reach a settlement that will help our members increase their standard of living and provide for their families.

We are sad to announce that our local's president, Michael Mueller, is relocating to St. Paul, MN, where his wife has a new job opportunity. Our loss is Local 110's gain. Good luck, Mike!

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle signed the Electrical Licensing requirement into law on March 5. Although it will be a while before it takes effect, it will enable us to compete for jobs on a level playing field with the nonunion sector.

Joel Kapusta, B.A.

Gov. Gregoire Plans Visit

L.U. 191 (c,i,mo,rtb&st), EVERETT, WA—Local 191 is pleased to report that Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire, who recently launched her bid for reelection in November, is scheduled to attend our May 12 monthly union meeting.

This is exactly this type of cooperation between our local/state government and union labor that creates the type of working environment that makes Washington a great state for business, and a great state for working families. Local 191 wishes every local the same type of support that we have from our elected officials.

Never forget that your vote is what makes the working environment in your state good for yourself, your family and every other working family.

Marcus Abarcus, P.S.

Springfield 193 Update

L.U. 193 (i,lctt,o,rts,spa&u), SPRINGFIELD, IL—The Illinois State Conference was held in Springfield on March 19-20. Focus was on the Capital Spending Bill, all important to trades and labor.

City Water Light & Power's Dallman 4 power plant addition has 50 wiremen on site, with 30-40 more expected this spring. CWLP's new water plant project, for high and low service pump replacement, is proposed at \$80 million. Due to an explosion, Dallman 31 is still down, with contractor Egizii Electric doing several repairs. Local 193 members are performing electrical repair work at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, which is closed down because extensive faults on primary circuits must be replaced.

The Springfield Home Builders Show was Feb. 1-3. We thank all who attended and displayed products. Thanks to Neil Hervey for his work on a fund-raiser for Computer Bank; \$3,000 was donated to a great cause.

Reminder: Our Retirees Club meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Parkway Café.

Condolences to retired Sixth District Int. Rep. Bill Norvell, a former Local 193 business agent, on the death of his wife, Laura. Condolences also to the families of Local 193 members Donald Werries and Jim "Buzz" Smith, who passed away.

Don Hudson, P.S.



Local 223 members volunteer to wire a home for a disabled Iraq war veteran.



IBEW service pins were awarded at a Local 193 retirees breakfast. From left are 60-year pin recipients Harry Paul Jr. and Ray Lemme, and 50-year pin recipient Patrick Kodrich.

Scholarship Recipients

L.U. 197 (em&i), BLOOMINGTON, IL—Work started out slow in our jurisdiction this year. We look forward to spring for some projects to start and get our membership back to full employment. We are pleased that we have had good turnouts for continuing education classes. Our members have shown their professionalism and dedication by attending a stewards class and a code update class. Local 197 Bro. Don Shields taught the code update and did an outstanding job. Don helped write the 2005 NEC and is currently working for Underwriters Laboratories (UL). We thank Don for giving back to the local.

Congratulations to apprentices Trace Brim, Anthony Williams and Ben Walker on winning the 2007 John Moss Scholarship. The winners were selected based on their written essays and judged by the Bloomington-Normal NECA Chapter. A cash scholarship was awarded to each apprentice. The John Moss Scholarship is named in honor of an apprentice who was killed in a job-related accident.

We are saddened by the loss of Bros. Elmond Purkey and Larry Dale Gray. Let's keep their families in our thoughts and prayers.

Remember to work safely. We want everyone to leave the job site with everything they came with. Take pride in your local union and be involved!

Mike Raikes, P.S.



Local 197 John Moss Scholarship recipients for 2007 are, from left, Anthony Williams, first-year apprentice; Trace Brim, first-year apprentice; and Ben Walker, fifth-year apprentice. Extending congratulations is Dan Wilcox (right) of NECA.

Volunteers Wire Home

L.U. 223 (em,govt&i), BROCKTON, MA—Volunteers from Local 223, along with Kinsman Electric, donated their time and wired a home in Plymouth, MA, for a disabled Iraq war veteran. This project was completed in conjunction with Homes for our Troops. The house was roughed in during December 2007 and the finish was completed in March. We thank the volunteers and wish Sgt. Brian Fontaine the best in this new home.

This election year we have an opportunity to elect a president to the White House who will look out for the best interests of organized labor. We need a president who will sign the Employee Free Choice Act and allow workers the freedom to join a union. We need to support the Democratic nominee and do all we can to make sure we have a president in the White House who is labor-friendly.

David Fenton, A.B.M.

Ethanol Plant Projects

L.U. 231 (i,rtb,spa&u), SIOUX CITY, IA—We've been fortunate since this past winter to have three new ethanol plants going up to help employ most of our members and many travelers. According to the contractors, we should be looking forward to a busy spring and summer as well.

With sadness we report the deaths of Bro. Douglas Blakely and retired Bro. Robert Balentine. Both were inside journeyman wiremen. Bro. Blakely became a Local 231 member in 1992. He worked at various locations around the country, including at a large windmill project in Iowa. Bro. Blakely passed away Jan. 13, 2008, at age 53.

Bro. Balentine became a member of our local in 1970. He worked for Casler Electric, Bauer Electric and Thompson Electric before retiring in 1991. Bro. Balentine passed away Feb. 27, 2008. He was 84. Our deepest sympathy to the families of these fine men. They are greatly missed.

Debby Spencer, P.S.

Annual Venison Dinner

L.U. 237 (i), NIAGARA FALLS, NY—Thanks to our members who volunteered for the annual United Way Holiday Lights Of Niagara display in Niagara Falls. They braved the elements, tackling everything from assembling displays to cabling large generators.

In January representatives from the Cooper Connector Company visited our local to give a seminar on high voltage load-break terminations. This course was instructional first, then hands-on as we built our own 90 degree cable kits. In the end, the entire class received certifications for a job well-done. (The roast beef wasn't bad either.) Coming soon: a steward's training course and an AWS welding certification course.

February brought our annual venison dinner at LaBrushetta Restaurant. This event is a member favorite, as it raises money for our Sick Committee. When a member or their family needs assistance, this money is available for them. The dinner featured venison and pheasant dishes. After dinner there was a tool drawing and a 50/50 lottery won by Albert Allen. We were also joined by Ben Marohn from the Union Sportsmen's Alliance. Our Pres. Kurt Bingham coordinated the participation of the Alliance. Marohn raffled off a Remington rifle, won by Local 237 member Tim Smeal.

Jeff Plache, P.S.



Local 237 Bros. Dan Snickles (left) and Jerry Mojeski prepare their cable for termination at January seminar.

Hats Off to Members

L.U. 245 (govt,lett,o,rtb&u), TOLEDO, OH—Utility members at Davis Besse completed the 15th refueling outage successfully. Members passed 8 million man-hours without a lost time accident. The Bayshore plant has been quiet. Hats off to Energy Delivery members and all members who work on the outside; they have battled all kinds of weather.

Outside Construction branch work is now slow; we hope it will pick up with warmer weather. On the TV scene everything is quiet; only Channel 30 will be negotiating this year.

This is an important election year. Democrats have two serious presidential candidates. Both seem to have a good handle on labor problems and plans to fix them. Then there's the Republican side, which offers John McCain, who promises more of the same—making permanent the tax cuts for the rich and continuing the war in Iraq while basically ignoring NAFTA and health care issues.

It's about time for Republicans to roll out their "propaganda machine" flooding the airways with issues like abortion, gun rights and gay marriage so they can avoid talking about issues that affect working people. Don't be fooled by this rhetoric. You know the old saying: "Fool me once shame on you—fool me twice, shame on me." When considering whom you will support, ask yourself: Are you and your family are better off today than you were eight years ago?

Ray Zychowicz, P.S.

Helmets to Hardhats

L.U. 269 (i&o), TRENTON, NJ—Serving our country in Operation Enduring Freedom is Sister Kristina Davenport, a fifth-year apprentice in our inside program. She is also part of the national Helmets to Hardhats program, which helps service men and women transition and attain careers in the construction industry. As air transportation specialist with the U.S. Air Force 514th Air Mobility Wing, 35th Aerial Port Squadron, Kristina makes sure that troops receive equipment and supplies. She is also a mother of three children, ages 16 to 11. As we recognize Sister

Davenport's sacrifice, dedication and service let us not forget all the servicemen and women away from their families. Letters and e-mails, or snip-pets of local news, are greatly appreciated by our men and women serving in Iraq.

Local 269's Good of the Union Committee serves our community through its many projects. Two Adopt-a-Highway groups met in March—one in Pennsylvania led by Bros. Sean Cullen and Sean McSherry, and one in New Jersey led by Bros. Mark McTamney and Rick Donovan. Members volunteer to clean up our town's highways. A blood drive was held March 6 at the union hall with The Community Blood Council blood bank, which supports 24 area hospitals in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

D. Brian Proctor, P.S.



Local 269 Sister Kristina Davenport (pictured at right of IBEW emblem and in inset) serves in the 514th Air Mobility Wing, U.S. Air Force. Sister Davenport is a fifth-year Local 269 apprentice.

Local Hosts Candidates

L.U. 305 (i&spa), FORT WAYNE, IN—On Jan. 17, we had the pleasure of hosting Indiana gubernatorial candidate Jill Long Thompson for a town hall style Q-and-A meeting in Auburn.

On Feb. 13, we conducted a similar meeting in New Haven, IN, with Michael Montagano, a candidate in the 2008 U.S. congressional elections for the 3rd Congressional District of Indiana. Roger Clayton, a Local 305 member who serves on the New Haven City Council, also attended. These meetings are outstanding opportunities to speak with legislators in a person-to-person environment.

Our union hall received an alternative power grant from the state of Indiana, and will install a photovoltaic system on the roof. Installation was begun this spring by the fifth-year apprentices, after extensive book work. This is an open market in northern Indiana and an excellent opportunity for our local and contractors. Special thanks to our JATC.

Brian H. Carroll, R.S./P.S.

Persistence Pays

L.U. 357 (c,i,mt&se), LAS VEGAS, NV—The Imperial Palace Hotel/Casino had operated nonunion since 1979. Thanks to the hard work of our organizing department, along with the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT)-District Council 15, the maintenance workers at the hotel/casino now have representation.

In May 2007 our organizing department filed a RC petition with the NLRB for certification as representative of the maintenance electricians. The company argued it was not an appropriate bargaining unit. The petition was dismissed and the employer thought the organiz-

ing campaign was over.

IBEW Local 357 and IUPAT filed a joint petition in August. The operating engineers and the carpenters filed a motion to intervene with the NLRB and the company argued joint representation was not appropriate. The NLRB ordered an election for Sept. 7 in which the employees would vote to be represented by: (1) the IBEW/IUPAT jointly, (2) Operating Engineers or (3) No Union. The carpenters provided no basis for their motion to intervene.

Election results: 25 for IBEW/IUPAT, 14 for O.E., and 26 for no union. IBEW/IUPAT filed for a runoff election. The company initially filed an objection, but later withdrew its objections. The NLRB ordered an election for 79 maintenance employees for Dec. 14, 2007. IBEW/IUPAT won the election and have begun the process to bargain the first contract! Don't give up the fight.

Timothy W. Bolton, P.S.

Coca-Cola Park Project

L.U. 375 (cat,ees&i), ALLENTOWN, PA—We hope all will enjoy a day at the "old ball game" at the recently completed Coca-Cola Park, home of the Triple "A" affiliate of the Philadelphia Phillies, the Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs! All electrical, CATV, teledata, sound, security and lighting were done by IBEW members. Remember, it is always beneficial to support those who support and employ our members.

As reported at recent union meetings, there has been much positive feedback from our community regarding our participation in community service. Community service is a vital tool by which we can not only give back to the community but also present our organization in a positive way. So, when called upon to participate please step-up and volunteer. Our livelihoods will benefit from this essential but often overlooked aspect of our local union's many involvements!

Upcoming events for the summer include: the family picnic at Dorney Park, clambake and golf tournaments, continued safety training, and community service events such as Mayfair. Please contact the local union office for times, dates, etc., or check our Web site:

www.ibew375allentown.org.

Roger D. Gaydos, P.S.

NASCAR & PGA Work

L.U. 379 (i,o&rtb), CHARLOTTE, NC—The local has been fortunate to secure work with television networks to assist with NASCAR races and also to assist with the Wachovia Championship Golf Tournament. These events provide our members with work opportunities and the opportunity to promote the IBEW image. We recently had members trained and certified at our union hall by then-Int. Rep. Robert "Ro" Wratscko, who is now interim director, IBEW



IBEW members of Allentown, PA, Local 375 and Reading, PA, Local 743 working for Pagoda Electric shown at Coca-Cola Park, home of the Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs baseball team.

Broadcasting and Recording Dept. The local thanks Ro for his expertise.

The work situation continues to look good. The Carolina Initiative is still working to assist locals throughout the Carolinas to increase market share. We are gaining in market share, but we can do much more. A lot of construction work is going on in the Carolinas and we need to be doing more of it. There are contractors and manpower here that need to be organized, but we also need manpower and contractors from outside the Carolinas to really make an impact. I encourage IBEW journeymen who are looking for a change and want to relocate, to join us in this growth. Contractors are always looking for someone to put in a leadership role, and you could be the one. The Carolinas are a great place to live and work.

Bob Krebs, B.M.

New Two-Year Agreement

L.U. 415 (c,govt&i), CHEYENNE, WY—Hats off to our negotiating committee on a new two-year collective bargaining agreement with our NECA signatory contractors. Our members received a fair wage increase along with other items that will strengthen the agreement.

In January the Wyoming JATC, instructed by T.J. Woods, put on an NFPA 70, Arc Flash class with 95 attendees from the membership and contractors alike. It's very important for our members to have the correct information and education to work safe.

Our work picture remains very strong. Modern Electric was awarded the sub-structure at the new Dry Fork Power Plant, and Colstrip Electric was awarded a small wind turbine project.

We look forward to hosting the Eighth District Progress Meeting in June.

Mike "Bear" Stange, P.S.

EWMC Conference

L.U. 441 (as,i&rts), SANTA ANA, CA—Local 441 Organizers Abe Meda and Claude Johnson attended the 18th Annual Leadership Conference of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus hosted in Los Angeles this year by IBEW Locals 11 and 47. [See "Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Charts Advances," The Electrical Worker, April 2008.] The caucus advocates increased minority participation in the IBEW and provides training and networking opportunities.

To begin the conference, IBEW caucus members volunteered for a day of community service at various locations in the Los Angeles area. EWMC volunteers painted walls, repaired electrical installations, and renovated a church pantry that serves the needy.

Participants attended educational workshops on immigration, mentoring programs, coalition building and political action. IBEW Int. Pres. Edwin D. Hill addressed the conference and

spoke about challenges we face in the labor movement. He reaffirmed the IBEW's commitment to meet those challenges and its continued commitment to increased minority participation at every level of the union.

Bros. Claude "C.J." Johnson and Abe Meda agreed that, "Attending the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus was very worthwhile, both personally and as IBEW leaders. We greatly appreciate the members of our local and Bus. Mgr. Doug Chappell for giving us this opportunity to represent Local 441."

Steve Igoe, P.S.



Local 441 Organizers Claude Johnson (left, foreground) and Abe Meda (right) with Int. Pres. Edwin D. Hill at the 2008 Annual Leadership Conference of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus.

Promising Work Picture

L.U. 449 (catv,em,i,o,rtb,rts,spa&u), POCATELLO, ID—There was so much snow last winter, it's "snow" wonder that many 449 members had thoughts of strapping a snow shovel to the front of the truck and going south until someone asked, "What's that?" With a promising work picture, many stayed to do what needs to be done.

Local 449 hosted the first-quarter 2008 Eighth District Organizers Meeting in January at our new hall. Thanks to all for their attendance and input. We are pleased to have Aaron Witherspoon as our new organizer. Aaron brings a welcomed enthusiasm to the position.

In February, the LMCC hosted an indoor winter activity of cosmic bowling, which many members and their families attended. Plans for the 3rd Annual Fishing Derby are in the works, so get ready.

With Idaho's largest presidential caucus attendance in recent history, a greater hope for a more progressive and worker friendly leadership is taking place. Please make sure that you are registered and get busy with politics!

Congratulations to retiring Local 449 members Int. Sec.-Treas. Emeritus Jon F. Walters and Bro. Morgan P. Hall. Live long and prosper, brothers.

With sadness we report the passing of members Robert Allen and Howard Bevins.

Laurie Watters, R.S.

George Meany Award

L.U. 453 (govt,i,rtb,rts&spa), SPRINGFIELD, MO—Keith Jones, longtime member of Local 453, received the George Meany Award for union leadership in scouting. Presenting the award was Brad Stokes, president of the Greater Springfield Central Labor Council and business manager of Springfield, MO, Local 753. The awards ceremony was attended by Bro. Jones' wife, Jeanine, and two scouting sons, Zachary and Andrew.

Local 453 Bus. Mgr. Jack Bauer and Organizer John McGill held an organizing barbe-

cue at the union hall for employees of Missouri State University on Sat., Feb.2. Everyone had a good time and several new members were signed up. IBEW Int. Rep. James H. "Jim" Pelley was the invited speaker. All those in attendance took membership applications with them with the intention of everyone signing up one new member.

John McGill, Organizer



Local 453 member Keith Jones (right) receives the George Meany Award. Presenting the award is Greater Springfield Central Labor Council Pres. Brad Stokes, business manager of IBEW Local 753.

Community Food Drive

L.U. 459 (ees,em,so,govt&u), JOHNSTOWN, PA—The 2007 Community Service Food Fund Drive had another successful year. Members and some employers contributed over \$7,700 worth of food and monies. All funds raised and food donations were equally distributed back to the communities where our members live. Thanks to all members who contributed and the stewards who collected their generous contributions. Special thanks to our local food drive chairperson, Mary Perdeu.

The Southwest District held its general membership meeting at Aces Lounge on Jan. 25. The food was great and everyone enjoyed themselves. The local received positive feedback from members who attended. Thanks to Joseph Oliver and his committee for making all the arrangements. I regret that no photographs are available, as the batteries in the camera were dead.

Kenneth L. Richards, Pres./A.B.M.

Blue Chip Casino Project

L.U. 531 (i), LAPORTE, IN—The accompanying photo shows an artist's rendering of the new Blue Chip Casino hotel and convention center; the insert shows Local 531 members manning the job site for Martel Electric, electrical contractor on the project.

Construction on the \$130 million, 22-story hotel and convention center began in spring 2007, and the project is scheduled to be completed late this year. The hotel will be one of the tallest buildings in northern Indiana, and it is going up with the help of our union electrical force.

The hotel is designed with shades of blue



IBEW Local 531 Martel Electric crew working on Blue Chip Casino hotel. Pictured in inset are Joe Rehlander, Bob Ziesmer, Jim Hawkins, Bryan Mangan, Greg Engel, David Wright, Tony Kuczanski, Jon Goodrich, Dave Kohler, Alan Amm, Mike Orlicki, Bob Fuller, Brian Firanek, Todd Long, Chris Torres, Chuck Link and Matt Jesko.



Imperial Valley members and families visit the new IBEW Local 569 building in Imperial, CA.

glass to reflect the sky and lake. LED-light banding will be on every other floor of the 286-foot tall building. The 400-square-foot rooms will be equipped with smart controls allowing staff to set the temperature when guests are not in the room. When guests punch their card in and open the door, mood lighting will come on so visitors will not have to enter a dark room.

Thought for the day: "Believe in yourself. Ignore those who try to discourage you. Avoid negative people, places and habits. Don't give up and don't give in."

J.J. Switzer, P.S.

Saginaw Work Picture

L.U. 557 (i,mt,rts&spa), SAGINAW, MI—Our northern tier of states experienced snow over the winter. The winter was tough on retired members. Retired Bros. John J. Hill, Franz Achard, Art Losee, Bob Small and Bill Hooper passed away. Our sympathies are with their families.

Again we have members out of work and, with few calls, unemployment compensation may become exhausted for those who have been off before. Many elected public officials are so comfortable they never have to worry about income and are not willing to extend unemployment benefits. They don't realize this is the fourth year of depression. State leaders took more than a year to figure out how to pay the bills. Workers don't have deep slush funds to make temporary laws to fund the mortgage, pay fuel bills or transportation costs to find work. It's time to elect candidates who respond to our needs. Cutting taxes does not fix bridges that fall into rivers, or build



Local 557 electricians are working on a new Saginaw, MI, Middle School project. From left, back row, Rich Metiva, Chad Rockafellow, Craig Wark, Scott Hall, Mark Krieger, Rob Kotcher and John Booher; front row, Scott Gale, Joe Schmitt and Tom Haven.

dikes to protect cities, or build water treatment plants to protect our health. We need people in public office who will invest in the grass roots, and not across the border.

Let's help elect labor-friendly people into government.

John E. Clemens, P.S.

New Local 569 Building

L.U. 569 (i,mar,mt,rts&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA—At a special called meeting held Nov. 10, 2007, our members ratified the purchase of a new union office and training center in Imperial, CA, located approximately 100 miles east of San Diego. Our local jurisdiction encompasses not only San Diego but also Imperial County. Our members who reside and work in the Imperial Valley have been training in an undersized rented building and in the past have commuted to San Diego to take training and apprenticeship classes. A large percentage of the new IBEW 569 building will be used by the Training Center for the training of apprentices, and for journeymen classes.

We have project labor agreements for two ethanol plants, one gas turbine power plant (almost completed), one repowering gas turbine power plant and three geothermal plants, all located in Imperial County. We hope to have the facility open sometime this summer.

Nicholas J. Segura Jr., P.S.

Three New Contractors Welcomed

L.U. 577 (em&i), APPLETON, WI—The annual spring banquet was held March 8 at Liberty Hall in Kimberly. Members and guests enjoyed excellent food and conversations. The Social Committee procured wonderful raffle prizes and \$150 was raised for IBEW COPE. Recent retirees Wayne Juedes, Jack Kelly, Carl Lambie, Thomas Notz, Arthur Plaster and Edward Steinert were honored with a gift from the membership. Celebrating IBEW anniversaries were 55-year members Thomas Gambsky, Rene Pauloski and Raymond Sanders, along with 50-year members David Krueger and James Swenson. Thank you to Tom Van Heuklon and Social Committee mem-



Local 577 Bus. Mgr. Greg Breaker (second from right) congratulates several recent retirees. From left: Wayne Juedes, Art Plaster, Bus. Mgr. Breaker and Jack Kelly.



Local 617 members attend February 2008 Minority Caucus informational meeting. Asst. Bus. Mgr. Chuck Bearing snapped the photo.

bers Doug Schulz and Jerry Schraufnagel for helping make this event a great success.

So far this year we have signed three new contractors. Two of the contractors started out in business with every intention of being signatory contractors. One of the contractors is a long established non-signatory that made the choice to be an IBEW contractor. Changes to the Inside Agreement and our ability to supply qualified and skilled workers convinced this employer to ink an agreement. We welcome B&B Electric, Morris Electric, and Shea Electric and Communications as partners with Local 577.

Greg Breaker, B.M.

New Contractors Signed

L.U. 595 (c,govt,i&st), DUBLIN, CA—Our books have been slow recently, but the outlook for summer is very promising. We're hopeful for final approvals on the two power plants in Hayward, and Collins Electric is starting to man up on the ethanol plant at the Port of Stockton. Through the Building Trades Council we continue to sign project labor agreements with the school districts and others, and we have large projects upcoming at University of California, Berkeley and the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory.

Our organizing efforts are very successful. The local signed a number of new contractors to the Inside and Sound and Communications agreements. Bus. Mgr. Victor Uno recently hired Samir Kharufeh as a second organizer; he will work in our San Joaquin and Calaveras Counties to increase market. Welcome, Sam!

We look forward to electing a Democrat to the White House in November. We are working hard on many other races also, one being the re-election of U.S. Rep. Gerald McNERNEY (11th District).

We had a great benefits fair at our hall in January. Active and retired members came together to hear about our pension and health and welfare plans and ask questions of the trustees and plan professionals. We are proud of our retirees benefits package and continue to make improvements to keep it strong for future generations.

Tom Mullarkey, B.R.



IBEW Local 595 crew on a New United Motors Manufacturing Inc. (NUMMI) project.

EWMC Conference

L.U. 617 (c,i,mo&st), SAN MATEO, CA—In January Bros. Joe Sweeting and Irving Hemingway attended the annual conference of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus. The EWMC conference is held every year over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. The EWMC serves both as a support and networking system and to provide education and training for its members. The members reflect a diverse coalition of dedicated IBEW women and men who, through the IBEW structure, work to forge changes that will benefit minorities and the entire IBEW membership.

Any IBEW local can develop its own chapter. On Feb. 28, a meeting was held at the Local 617 union hall to generate interest in forming a Local 617 chapter. Flyers were posted at the JATC and at the hall promoting the meeting. Approximately 50 members attended. Another informational meeting was also held at the hall on March 26. Refreshments were provided. All members are always welcome.

Donna J. Siegman, R.S.

'Ask Your Legislators'

L.U. 625 (ees,em,i,mar&mt), HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA—Bros. John Sutton and Fred Ross retired early in 2008. Also, in late 2007, Bros. Robert Greenough, Ron Samson and Donnie Joe MacDonald retired. We wish these experienced tradesmen all the best. In all, 15 members retired from Local 625 in 2007.

We know that the Nova Scotia Community College graduates 220 pre-apprentices annually. We know that exactly 102 and 103 Certificates of Qualification were issued in 2006 and 2007, respectively. We also know that nonunion electricians cannot afford to retire before age 62 or 65. It would be reasonable to say that not more than 50 electricians in total, union and nonunion, retire each year. So with more than 100 new journeyman electricians entering the work force each year, how can the government hand out electrical tickets to temporary foreign workers in Alberta

while hundreds of Nova Scotia electricians go without a job? How can the federal government hand out work visas to temporary foreign workers while Canadian tradesmen are unemployed and without Employment Insurance benefits?

We need to ask these questions and government needs to answer them. Contact your Member of Parliament (MP) at www.gc.ca and ask. Provincially, ask your Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) at www.gov.ns.ca. It is your right as a citizen and your obligation as a union member.

We accomplish nothing when we only complain to one another.

Tom Griffiths, Pres.

Ohio State Conference

L.U. 683 (em&i), COLUMBUS, OH—The Retirees regular meeting was held Jan. 19. They are requesting that new retirees come down and sign up for the Retirees Club. A blood drive was held Jan. 31 at the apprenticeship hall. Thanks to all who donated blood.

The IBEW Ohio State Conference was held Feb. 8 and hosted at the Local 683 union hall. Ohio State Conference Pres. Steve Crum, business manager of Marietta, OH, Local 972, presided over the conference. Local 683 Bus. Mgr. Mario Ciardelli, secretary/treasurer of the Ohio State Conference, addressed the gathering. (See photo.)

Our condolences to families of the following members who recently passed away: Robert L. Shaffer, Raymond Christian and James J. Smith.

We thank the locals that are employing our traveling members.

Remember: Local 683 union meetings are held the second and fourth Thursdays of every month. Plenty of choice seats are available.

Rick Deime, V.P./P.S.



Local 683 hosts February 2008 IBEW Ohio State Conference. Speaking at the podium is Ohio State Conference Sec./Treas. Mario Ciardelli, business manager of Local 683. Seated at table in foreground is Local 683 Pres. Dennis Nicodemus.

Tribute to A Brother

L.U. 697 (c,es,i,mt&se), GARY AND HAMMOND, IN—On Jan. 8, 2008, Local 697 lost one of its promising new journeymen, Angel Alvarez Jr. Angel graduated from the apprenticeship in May 2007 and had already taken extra training in his craft. He was killed as a result of an accident while at work. We as a local offer our prayers and sympathy to his grieving family.

The union "brothers and sisters" we work alongside are like extended family members. In the IBEW we are connected by a common goal for a better life.

The IBEW Constitution says it best. Among the objects of our Brotherhood are "to organize all workers in the entire electrical industry." We

are to "cultivate feelings of friendship among those of our industry." We are asked "to assist each other in sickness or distress" as we would any family member.

We "seek a higher standard of living," and the security that brings to members and their families. The last object is: "... to elevate the moral, intellectual and social conditions of our members, their families. ..." Angel Alvarez Jr. was that kind of man and with God's help we will also be those kinds of men and women.

David A. Soderquist, P.S.

90th Anniversary Gala

L.U. 773 (as,em,i,mo&o), WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA—At press time, Local 773 was making plans to celebrate its 90th anniversary with a huge gala on April 19 in downtown Windsor. Service Pins ranging from 15 to 60 years will be awarded to members and retirees. A special congratulations to Bro. Gene Tighe on receiving his 60-year pin. The banquet committee consists of Bus. Mgr. Sol Furer, Pres. Ed McDowell, John McInnis, Karl Lovett, Jeff McPherson, Sean Bristow, Pam Lawrence, Candice Burk, Sue Bechard, Norm Ball, Barry Ball and John Coulter. This committee has done a great job preparing for the celebration and deserves our thanks.

Recently the collective bargaining process that we use in the Province of Ontario has brought us a significant and unexpected additional raise of \$2.15 per hour, effective May 1, 2008.

Work is still slow in our jurisdiction, especially in the auto sector. We have many members working out of town and we thank those locals for putting our members to work.

David Spencer, P.S.



Local 773 Bus./ Mgr. Sol Furer (right) congratulates 60-year member Gene Tighe.

Organizing Blitz

L.U. 915 (i&mt), TAMPA, FL—Local 915 along with Florida Initiative organizers recently conducted an organizing blitz. The IBEW team identified open shop electrical contractors in the Hillsborough County area and went to their businesses, presenting them with a brochure stating the advantages of becoming signatory contractors. Letters from some of our current union contractors were also given to these open shop employers with the union contractors' list of reasons why they use Local 915's labor. Our organizers are currently doing follow-up meetings with those employers who showed interest.

Miller Electric secured a project at the Seminole Powerhouse in Hardee County. This is a Code of Excellence project and is in full swing. As of this writing this job has incurred no lost-time hours and is running on schedule. It is employing a good many local hands working overtime. Keep up the good work in showing that IBEW is the best.



Local 915 members at work on the Seminole Powerhouse in Hardee County, Florida.



Local 1253 industry night event in Fairfield, ME, draws 63 participants.

Elections are upon us both nationally and locally. If you are not registered to vote and need assistance on information on how to get registered, go on-line to retrieve a registration sheet or contact your local union hall. This is a very important time politically for our country. Get involved and volunteer where needed.

Theresa King, P.S.

Organizing Advances

L.U. 953 (catv,em,ctt,o,spa&u), EAU CLAIRE, WI—With the start of my term in July 2007, Local 953 has continued to advance the IBEW mission to organize internally and externally.

Internally, we added Natural Gas workers to the existing contract of Jo-Carroll Energy Cooperative and the street workers to the Westby Municipal. Externally, we filed a petition for Mid-West Natural Gas and we are waiting for a vote date from the NLRB.

Currently, cooperative and municipal contracts are averaging 3.5 percent to 4 percent wage increases with a three-year term. Our outside construction is holding its own and looking good for the future.

Our annual fishing derby was held Sat., Feb. 9, with a record turnout! Special thanks to our members for attending, and congratulations to the winners!

2008 looks to be a promising year for Local 953.

Arlin E. Ziemann, B.M./F.S.

Rewards for Organizing

L.U. 965 (em,govt&u), MADISON, WI—If a member of our local provides the local union office with contact information for individuals wishing to be organized into our union, that member may be eligible for a cash reward. If we successfully organize the unrepresented individuals and their coworkers into our union and negotiate a first contract, we will provide the referring member with a cash reward as stipulated in the local union working rules.

In our continuing effort to promote solidarity among all union members, we will be starting a Retirees Club for our local.

Recently we were informed by our attorney that Alliant has filed for summary judgment concerning the lawsuit that was filed in federal court when the company discontinued living up to our agreement that all pre-65 retirees would be treated the same as active employees in terms of medical benefits. We will file a response brief explaining why our lawsuit has merit and should proceed.

We plan to hold the first regional meeting concerning the effects that Automated Meter Reading (AMR) will have on the work force.

Kurt Roberts, P.S.

Uptick in Work Picture

L.U. 1049 (lctt,o&u), LONG ISLAND, NY—The amalgamations of Locals 1049 and 1381 was just the beginning. With the amalgamation process complete, we can continue with the business of improving and maintaining the safety and welfare of the membership. At our February general meeting the membership overwhelmingly approved the recommended bylaw changes. On behalf of Bus. Mgr. Bob Shand, I would like to thank the Bylaw Committee for a job well-done.

As of this writing we are preparing for negotiations with our NECA contractors. In preparation for negotiations, a membership information meeting was held and there was a lot of healthy, positive dialogue between Bus. Mgr. Shand and the members.

The work picture looks brighter for our Outside Division. In the Gas Craft Division we are beginning to see an uptick in the work. All of our members who were on the bench are back working and we may be hiring additional members. In our Electric Craft Division we are hopeful that many of our travelers will soon be home working in our jurisdiction. Our LCTT Division continues to be at 100 percent employment.

Going forward we anticipate changes; but with 3,500 members engaged in the process we will overcome any challenges that may confront us.

Thomas J. Dowling, R.S.

Environmental Specialists Unit

L.U. 1245 (catv,em,govt,lctt,o,pet,t&u), VACAVILLE, CA—Local 1245 has successfully organized its first group of employees under a neutrality agreement with Pacific Gas & Electric. The new Environmental Specialists Unit, with 33 members, was certified in a card check election monitored by Restructuring Associates Inc. on Feb. 1.

The Environmental Specialists, who handle hazardous waste and other environmental impact issues, first approached the local about representation in December 2007, according to Local 1245 Bus. Rep. Landis Marttila. Major concerns included lack of control over their work hours in particular and their work life in general. Compensation was also an issue. "It's one of the best informed units I've ever dealt with. They're very self-motivated,



PG&E electric crew foreman and longtime union activist Willie Bouzek (right) joins in the roundtable discussion between Int. Pres. Edwin D. Hill (left foreground), Local 1245 Bus. Mgr. Tom Dalzell (center, blue shirt), and IBEW stewards, staff and Executive Board members.

assertive and well-informed," said Marttila. The new group will be folded into the union's Physical Agreement with PG&E. Hours, job definition and salary will be negotiated separately.

In other news, Local 1245 was pleased to host a visit from Int. Pres. Edwin D. Hill and then-Int. Sec.-Treas. Jon F. Walters in January. The visit included a meeting with PG&E Chmn. Peter Darbee and other top PG&E officers in which Pres. Hill discussed the IBEW's "Code of Excellence" initiative, among other topics.

Pres. Hill also met with the PG&E Joint Benefits Committee and led a roundtable discussion with a delegation of Local 1245 stewards, Executive Board members and staff members.

Eric Wolfe, P.S.

Code Update/Industry Nights

L.U. 1253 (i), AUGUSTA, ME—The local held two code update/industry night events: one during January in Bangor with 33 members and 33 nonmembers attending, and the other during February in Fairfield with 40 members and 23 nonmembers. It was a good opportunity to share our common trade issues in a neutral environment. Each session was complete with food, vendors and door prizes. Thanks to NECA and to our participating contractors and vendors.

Other JATC training has included a First Aid & CPR course, held in February, with a combination of 28 apprentices and journeyman wiremen attending. A "man lift" training session for apprentices was also held in October.

We've held our own over the past winter with a few ongoing projects. These include the Hollywood Slots Racino in Bangor and the Somerset County Jail in Skowhegan, both successful Code of Excellence projects. As elsewhere in the country, the program has been effective in promoting job site excellence and customer satisfaction.

Retirees Club Pres. Reginald Dumont, currently recuperating from knee surgery, would like to hear from other retirees interested in beginning regular meetings again.

William Gifford, P.S.

Three Members Retire

L.U. 1307 (u), SALISBURY, MD—Congratulations to three members who recently retired from NRG Energy: Eldred Cress, Linwood Banks and Leroy Copes.

In 1968 Bro. Cress was hired by Delmarva Power as a laborer at Indian River Power Plant. He advanced throughout his career, working as assistant control operator, relief operator and laboratorian. He retired Aug. 31, 2007.

Bro. Banks started with Delmarva Power as a laborer at Indian River Power Plant in 1979. Over the years he held positions including fuel handler and power plant machinist. He retired as a qualified machinist on Nov. 11, 2007.

Bro. Copes was hired as a meter reader for Delmarva Power in the Salisbury District in 1984. He transferred to Indian River Power Plant and held positions including power plant maintenance helper, stock keeper and qualified machinist. He retired on April 30, 2007.

We wish these retirees a long and happy retirement.

Edward D. Sparks Jr., F.S.

Contract Negotiations

L.U. 1357 (t), HONOLULU, HI—Local 1357 will enter contract negotiations with Hawaiian Telcom this spring. Formerly Verizon Hawaii, Hawaiian Telcom was purchased by The Carlyle Group in May 2004.

Local 1357 Bus. Mgr. Scot Long, IBEW Ninth District Int. Rep. Harold J. Dias, Local 1357 Pres. Ted Furukado and the 1357 team are positioning for the start of talks, anticipating some difficult discussions. However, Local 1357 members are committed to responsible behavior, excellence in service and partnership in growing the business, and our team will not be shy about reminding the company of this throughout bargaining.

We recently concluded bargaining for a four-year contract with Pacific Telecommunications Inc. on Saipan, where in difficult financial times, our members enjoy some of the best wages and benefits in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. The new contract includes increases in wages, 401(k) matching contributions and fixed holidays.

This will be a busy year for us, with local and national elections and contract negotiations looming. However, with the current White House administration outsourcing jobs to foreign countries, it is prudent that all of IBEW pick up the ball and aggressively organize the unorganized. Local 1357 will continue to make this a priority in 2008.

Karenann Wedge, P.S.

LOCAL LINES continued on page 16



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

The Electrical Worker was the name of the first official publication of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1893 (the NBEW became the IBEW in 1899 with the expansion of the union into Canada). The name and format of the publication have changed over the years. This newspaper, along with the *IBEW Journal* magazine, now published quarterly, now constitute the official publications of the IBEW and seek to capture the courage and spirit that motivated the founders of the Brotherhood and continue to inspire the union's members today. The masthead of this newspaper is an adaptation of that of the first edition in 1893.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Edwin D. Hill
International President

Lindell K. Lee
International Secretary-Treasurer

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Chairman
Robert W. Pierson

First District
Joseph P. Calabro

Second District
Myles J. Calvey

Third District
John R. Clarke

Fourth District
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THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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**HOW TO REACH US**

We welcome letters from our readers. The writer should include his or her name, address and, if applicable, IBEW local union number and card number. Family members should include the local union number of the IBEW member to whom *The Electrical Worker* is mailed. Please keep letters as brief as possible. *The Electrical Worker* reserves the right to select letters for publication and edit all submissions for length.

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FROM THE OFFICERS**Coming Together for Excellence**

Edwin D. Hill
International President

I want to thank the thousands of IBEW members who gathered to watch the State of the Union message for the utility industry last month. If you haven't seen it yet, go to www.ibew.org and watch it. Then let me know what you think on our State of the Union blog.

The live webcast, our first ever, was a stellar example of IBEW professionalism, and I thank everyone who made it happen. It managed for one evening to bring together members of our utility branch from across North America for a real time discussion on how to strengthen our collective future.

I have to agree with one member who described it as an "electronic union meeting." The frank talk and constructive back and forth reminded me of my days running local meetings at the Local 712 hall in Beaver, Pa.

That so many members took the time to tune in and send in their questions and comments shows that you know how important this dialogue is. And we can keep it going on our site. The utility industry faces big challenges and it's up to every one of us to meet them.

From recruiting and training a new generation of workers to ensuring that North America's energy infrastructure remains the most modern and efficient in the world, the IBEW needs to actively demonstrate that we are committed to the survival and growth of this industry. And it starts with a commitment by every member to excellence on the job each working day.

Adoption of the new Utility Code of Excellence is the first step to demonstrating this commitment. By raising the bar, we are opening the door to a new day in labor-management relations and guaranteeing good, union jobs for utility workers now and in the future.

The dialogue we started last month is the beginning of a movement in our union to renew our commitment to excellence and build the kind of future we want for ourselves. I look forward to hearing your ideas on how to best push this movement forward. ■

**Putting Workers—
Not Lobbyists—First**

The General Electric Co. added to the decline of the American manufacturing sector this March when it officially announced its plans to close its massive refrigerator plant in Bloomington, Ind., by the end of next year. The plant's closure will add another 900 American jobs to the nearly 300,000 manufacturing jobs that have been already lost in the previous year.

Our current trade policies act as an open invitation for companies to move anywhere to find the cheapest labor, aided and abetted by many of our own leaders in Washington.

The most recent shameful example of this comes from the presumptive Republican presidential candidate, Sen. John McCain, who personally intervened to help steer a \$35 billion Air Force tanker contract away from Washington-based Boeing and to Airbus, a European aircraft company. The move could end up costing more than 44,000 new and existing American jobs.

Despite receiving billions in no-risk loans from the European Union, Airbus got the contract—one of the largest military contracts ever awarded to a foreign company—thanks largely to McCain's efforts to convince the Department of Defense to waive the Buy American law that guides the awarding of military contracts. Not coincidentally, the Arizona senator happens to employ two former lobbyists for Airbus on his campaign, and had received \$28,000 in contributions from American employees of EADS—Airbus's parent company.

At the same time that our economy faces a recession, and thousands of good paying manufacturing jobs continue to go overseas each month, McCain and President Bush are financing the creation of new jobs—in Europe—with taxpayers' money.

One union member in Wichita, Kan.—a city that would have performed much of the tanker work for Boeing—summed up how many working Americans feel: "I'm so mad I could spit ... I feel truly betrayed by the U.S. government."

The Airbus fiasco is another reminder that the labor movement needs to stick by candidates who support American workers, not foreign lobbyists. ■



Lindell K. Lee
International Secretary-Treasurer

Letters to the Editor

Nice Read!

Thank you so much for sending the Electrical Worker to me. I enjoy reading all the up to date information that's going on around our country.

I am so thankful and proud that I was able to enjoy a secure living by being a part of a great organization as the IBEW Local 25.

*Joe Pagliaro
Local 25 retiree, Long Island, N.Y.*

Show Your Colors

After completing a lighting installation at two home center locations, the contractor we were working for was denied the same work at a third store near my home. This might be the local store manager's decision to use non-organized workers.

The employees there, who are referred to as associates, had their helpful, friendly game face on, only the managers needed to work on people skills. (At least towards union people.) At every service desk you'll find a comment card that can be forwarded to the powers that be. But we can't stop there.

Just as the knights of old wore their armor, riders wear leather, or sports fans wear their teams' logo, we need to show ours. Whether shopping for groceries, or 2x4s, show off your local's pin, wear IBEW jackets, hats and shirts. We need to show the retailers who their customers are, who we are. Our jobs and livelihood depend on them using us, in turn becoming our customers.

Show your pride, wear our colors.

*Terry Smolik
Local 176 member, Joliet, Ill.*

Cancelled Contest

I recently entered a video contest sponsored by the Building Trades [and Construction Department, AFL-CIO] for their 100th anniversary. The grand prize was \$1,500 for a 3-minute video telling the importance of the Building Trades in my family's life. I spent a whole weekend working on the project and followed their directions to upload the video to YouTube. I was then contacted by other IBEW members saying they were angry to find that the contest had been cancelled. I contacted the office in Washington, D.C., to discover the contest had indeed been cancelled, supposedly because of lack of interest.

*Daniel L. Herrmann
Local 16 member, Evansville, Ind.*

(Editor's Note—The BCTD did cancel the contest after receiving very few submissions. All members are invited to participate in the first IBEW video contest. See notice below or visit www.ibew.org.)

Who We Are

If you have a story to tell about your IBEW experience, please send it to publications@ibew.org.

IBEW Volunteer Helps Restore a Village's Memories

John Klosinski, a Wisconsin journeyman wireman, couldn't have dreamed that his local's help in restoring an old pavilion would bring tears to the eyes of elders in the village of Rothschild, let alone an award from the state's AFL-CIO.

But the Rothschild Pavilion, built in 1911, is no run-of-the-mill structure. Erected at the end of an old electric trolley line, the one-and-a-half story venue served as a celebration of the development of the incandescent light bulb. In later generations, the pavilion hosted such musical luminaries as Guy Lombardo and Buddy Holly, welcomed roller skaters, and lasted in the memories of local residents as the setting of a first kiss, a family wedding or a golden anniversary celebration.

Despite the history, Klosinski was reluctant when David Northrup, business manager of Stevens Point, Wis., Local 388, told him that he had offered the local's assistance to Neal Torney, Rothschild's board president who helped form a volunteer restoration committee.

"Memories connected to a particular place are what bind a community together," says Torney, explaining that the pavilion predated Rothschild's incorporation and once served a population of 80,000 in neighboring greater Wausau before being shut down in 1997. In 2002, the structure was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

As one of a handful of local union members who reside in the tiny village beside a paper mill, Klosinski volunteered for work at the pavilion on a frigid Saturday morning in February 2007. He had planned to stay half a day. Warmed only by a fireplace, he joined a crew ripping out drywall and suspended ceilings. Struck by the beauty of the structure that was laid bare behind the gypsum and fiberglass, Klosinski stayed all day and many Saturdays and Tuesday nights beyond.

The renovation exposed rough-cut stone walls and steel trusses that were representative of the Modern Movement in architecture. Klosinski marveled at the dance floor covering nearly 7,000 square feet, constructed of 1½-inch strips of maple, suspended on 24 large railroad springs.

Klosinski kept coming back, sometimes with eight or nine electricians, installing new service panels in the basement and in the kitchen. "The electricians had so much spirit," says Torney, who was amazed when Klosinski looked at old pictures of the pavilion and decided to replicate the original lighting. The crew installed 36 lights on all six trusses. "It was the right thing to do, given the pavilion's status as marking a turning point in



Stevens Point, Wis., Local 388 members John Klosinski, right, and Larry Wendorf, center, accept the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO's Community Service Project of the Year Award from David Newby, state federation president, for their work on the Rothschild Pavilion, a local landmark.

the history of electricity," says Klosinski. Signatory contractors K&M Electric and Var Ert Electric donated electrical materials.

With the restoration nearly complete, the Rothschild Pavilion is once again hosting rock and roll revival concerts, Oktoberfest, antique shows and other special events. Torney is encouraged that groups such as the Jaycees and local hospitals are already re-booking for next year. Without the work of the volunteers, the facility would still be closed, he says.

In late February, Klosinski and journeyman Larry Wendorf received the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Community Service Project of the Year award from the federation's president, David Newby. "The bigger picture," says Northrup, "is that we were able to give something back to the same community where local businesses hire our affiliated contractors and employ our members."

"It feels so good," says Klosinski, "when I see 800 to 1,000 people dancing and having a good time and I know that 16 members of Local 388 volunteered their time to make it possible." ■

Get Connected

If you would like to receive your Electrical Worker via e-mail instead of in your mailbox, contact us at publications@ibew.org. Give us your name, IBEW local union number, card number and e-mail address and we will send you the link to access *The Electrical Worker* electronically.

IBEW PHOTO & VIDEO CONTEST

Attention Photo & Video Buffs!

Photographs have the power to inspire and motivate. With improved technology and the rise of video on the Web, the ability to make moving pictures is accessible to many. We have expanded our photo contest this year to include video productions.

Also new with this year's contest is that the IBEW membership will pick the winners on www.ibew.org.

Keep an eye on future issues of the Electrical Worker and the Web site for the announcement of when the judging will begin.

See www.ibew.org for complete contest rules and entry forms.

DEADLINE
Oct. 24, 2008

Local Lines

continued from page 13

New 1501 Web Site

L.U. 1501 (ees,em,mo,pet,rts&t), BALTIMORE, MD—The local has changed our Web page again since we last reported. We are no longer on MySpace, but Local 1501 has its own Web site at www.ibew1501.com. Our page is still being developed but it's looking great. The new site is much more professional than what we could offer on our previous Web page. The possibilities now are endless, with links, information, seniority lists, benefit links, etc. You can now go to the IBEW Web site www.ibew.org directly from our Local 1501 Web page and get much more information, and even link to other local union Web sites. We thank Bro. Robert Harmon for his help. We feel that we will be able to keep up with our membership better and also get their feedback.

We congratulate Bus. Mgr./Pres. Dion F. Guthrie on his recent victory in being chosen as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention to be held in Denver, CO, in August.

Thomas Rostkowski, R.S.



Local 1501 Bus. Mgr./Pres. Dion F. Guthrie (right) receives congratulations from Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and Ann Heton on his victory in the primary election as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention; he is pledged to support Sen. Hillary Clinton.

Welcome to New Members

L.U. 1523 (u), WICHITA, KS—Congratulations and welcome to all our local's new brothers and sisters. I know that some of you are previous members and some of you are new to the union. Joining a union is an exciting move and a great step toward better working conditions.

The proposal meeting held at the union hall Feb. 23 had a pretty good turnout. It was good to see the attendance. As the Negotiating Committee reviewed the proposals, there was a lot of thought and time spent putting together the best package to present. As we stick together our solidarity grows stronger. Meeting attendance is at the heart of every union, and those who attend are the voices that get heard. Attend your meeting so your voice can be heard. Let's not forget where we are today as a union and the work it took to get here.

In this important presidential election year, be sure to check out candidates for public office before you vote because they're the ones who enact the laws that will make the difference for our unions.

Candy C. Cruz-Dodd, P.S.

Report From Anchorage

L.U. 1547 (c,em,i,o,t&u), ANCHORAGE, AK—Local 1547 and Alaska Communications Systems (ACS) have been working to wrap up an agreement for the growth and expansion of ACS's fiber footprint. The placement of an undersea fiber-optic cable from Alaska to Oregon will create this footprint. This project also includes an aggressive in-state fiber build out that will connect this new submarine cable from south central Alaska (Anchorage) to the interior (Fairbanks).

Helene M. Antel joined our legal staff as executive counsel. Antel's duties include strategic planning, contract negotiations and training.

Bro. Dennis Olsen of Unit 104 received the George Meaney Award for his service to the Boy Scouts of America. Bro. Olsen has been in scouting since age 12, and a member of IBEW Local 1547 for 28 years. Congratulations, Bro. Olsen.

Patti Sherfick is retiring from the Dues Office after working in Unit 101 offices for 27 years. Enjoy your retirement, Sister Sherfick. We will miss you.

Melinda Taylor, P.S.

Local Celebrates Anniversary

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA—IBEW Local 1579 celebrated its 60th anniversary on March 1. It is a great pleasure to report the celebration was a huge success.

Members should be proud when they look back on the many projects Local 1579 has completed with the highest quality workmanship and under budget. Over the years, these projects have ranged from the gas station on the corner to one of the largest projects taken on by any IBEW local at that time, the Savannah River Project.

Congratulations to all our members for their contributions to 60 years of dedicated service to the Augusta area. Happy birthday, Local 1579.

Will Salters, A.B.M.



Local 1579 recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. Pictured is the anniversary program cover design.

Local 1739 members, joined by IBEW travelers, are working on a new Honda engine plant in Alliston, Ontario, Canada.



A Busy Year for JATC

L.U. 1701 (catv,ees,i,o&u), OWENSBORO, KY—Our JATC is busy this year. Continuing education classes at the hall are crowded. We offer a class once a month. Welcome aboard to two additional instructors, Bros. Rick Thurman and Bob. Lee. We also thank instructor Jim Bishop, who has done an excellent job.

Make sure you are registered to vote. Not only do we have a presidential race in 2008, we also have a U.S. Senate seat held by Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R) up for grabs, plus several U.S. House seats as well, especially here in the 2nd Congressional District. U.S. Rep. Ron Lewis (R) announced that he will not run for reelection. We are excited that our own Kentucky state Sen. David Boswell (D) and Daviess County Judge Executive Reid Haire (D) are running in the May primary for the Democratic nomination for that 2nd Congressional District seat. Both Boswell and Haire are very labor friendly; neither Local 1701 nor the building trades have made an endorsement for either candidate.

The Inside and Western Kentucky Energy agreements expire this year. Best of luck to our negotiating committees.

Bus. Mgr. Gary Osborne reports that the building trades are working to secure a PLA for the new Owensboro Mercy Health Systems Hospital.

We mourn the passing of retired member Tom Hartz.

Tim Blandford, P.S.



Exec. Dir. Tom Millay (center), Southern Indiana Chapter of NECA, presents Local 1701 JATC Sec. Mike Roby (left) and Local 1701 Bus. Mgr. Gary Osborne (right) a \$10,000 check from NECA contractors for the local's JATC training center building fund. The presentation was made at Local 1701's December 2007 union meeting.

Honda Plant Project

L.U. 1739 (i&o), BARRIE, ONTARIO, CANADA—The union spirit is strong in Barrie. IBEW members proudly take part in the construction of the new Honda engine plant in Alliston, Ontario. The new facility will begin building engines this fall. Electrical work began last year and is being overseen by Sutherland & Shultz. Special thanks to Superintendent Ken Ball for a good job. Local 1739 would like to thank our fellow IBEW members from Locals 353 Toronto, 105 Hamilton, 586

Ottawa, 402 Thunder Bay, and 804 Kitchener for their valued contributions.

Frank Kastle, P.S.

Tribute to a Brother

L.U. 2321 (t), MIDDLETON, MA—With great sadness Local 2321 announces the passing of retired Bro. Thomas "Hap" Conway. Bro. Conway passed away Oct. 18, 2007.

Tom was assistant business manager for 17 years, serving with five business managers. He was a veteran of the Korean War and was very active in his hometown of Billerica, MA, where he served on several committees and for many years was the chairman of the board of selectmen. Tom leaves his wife, Connie, their six children and six grandchildren. Our deepest sympathies go to Tom's family and friends.

John DeRosa, P.S.

Organizing & Mobilizing

L.U. 2325 (t), WORCESTER, MA—The IBEW campaign to organize our brothers and sisters at Comcast has begun. Local 2325 is actively participating in this campaign and we encourage all our members to get involved. Tasks as simple as approaching a Comcast worker doing an installation at the same location as you and talking to that worker about the benefits of union membership can be extremely helpful. Organizing other workers in the telecommunications industry helps to level the playing field and takes the pressure off of us to give concessions to the company. Check out our Local 2325 Web site at www.ibew2325.org and the IBEW Web site www.ibew.org for more information and please get involved.

Mobilization efforts have begun for contract negotiations with Verizon. The current contract expires in August 2008. The telephone locals of System Council T-6 are coordinating our efforts in conjunction with our brothers and sisters in the Mid-Atlantic region. Wear your red shirts on Thursdays and check with the local for updates on bargaining and mobilization activities. Bus. Mgr. Dave Keating reminds all members to stay informed, be prepared, be united—and remember that we are ready and we are undefeated!

Paul Mark, P.S.



Local 2325 Executive Board member Doug Concannon places an IBEW handbill on a Comcast van.