Alabama was ground zero for April’s disastrous twisters, where more than 230 people died. Nearly half a million residents were left without power, making the state’s 3,000 IBEW utility members a key component in its recovery.

“We had pretty much every single person we’ve got at Alabama Power out there working 24/7,” says Casey Shelton, business manager of the U-19 coordinating council, which represents nine utility locals at Alabama Power. They were joined in the recovery effort by 10,000 utility and outside line construction workers from 17 states, including Michigan.

Detroit Local 17 Business Manager Kevin Shaffer told WWJ-TV that DTE Energy let employees borrow some of the utility’s trucks to help transport IBEW members to Birmingham. “They’ve decided to donate their semis,” Shaffer says. “As many semis as we need, we will fill as many as we can … and send them down.”

The sheer magnitude of the damage made the job daunting. “We’re talking 200 transmission towers down,” Shelton says. “There were poles and lines that were literally blown away.”

There were some towns he says where “there was nothing left to restore power to.” “Cities started to look identical, the damage was so bad,” he said.

Alabama Power estimates that more than thousands of IBEW members from 17 states helped restore power to Alabama.

Photo credit: Phil Free

Thousands of IBEW members from 17 states helped restore power to Alabama.
Despite the massive scope of the damage, the IBEW and Alabama Power were able to restore power to most customers in only five days.

Photo credit: Marvin Gilmore

We’ll Be Back in a Flash!

With the 38th International Convention in our sights, our annual photo contest is on hold.

Don’t pack away your cameras... we’ll return in 2012.

Until then, keep shooting!
Northrop Grumman Shipyard Spinoff Builds IBEW Hopes

Corporate spinoffs often pump new uncertainty into already trying times for workers. Sometimes, however, their insecurity is softened by the hope that new owners will be an improvement over the ones packing their bags. Such is the case for 1,800 IBEW members who build U.S. Navy ships in Pascagoula and Gulfport, Miss., and New Orleans, La.

In March, Northrop Grumman announced that its shipyards in those states, another massive facility in Newport News, Va., and a smaller one in San Diego would be spun off to a new entity, Huntington Ingalls Industries. The new company, now up and running, expects to bring in $6.7 billion in annual revenues with a backlog of more than $78 billion of work.

Founded by Ingalls Iron Works, the Mississippi and New Orleans yards opened on the east bank of the Mississippi River in 1938. Charles Huntington was the original owner of the Newport News yard, built in the late 1800s. The Newport News yard is organized by the United Steelworkers. “We’re going back to our roots, with long-serving managers having setup an unprecedented meeting to discuss safety issues between union representatives and a company vice president. The Newport News yard has hundreds of mid-level managers around mostly as a contingency,” says Harriday, who says his dealings with Petters have always been “open and upfront.”

In a May 5 meeting, Petters told representatives of the metal trades and the IBEW that Adm. Kevin McCoy, the commander of Navy sea systems, had visited Pascagoula twice to look at quality issues. Petters said McCoy was satisfied with the quality of construction and said he had no plans to return.  

California Local Prods Regulators to Confront Utility Worker Shortage

Unemployment is running in the double digits in Nevada, but staffing levels at Sierra Pacific Power Co. are creeping dangerously low as more and more utility workers hit retirement age.

In 2008, more than half of the hourly work force at Sierra Pacific—a subsidiary of NV Energy that services the northern half of the state—was over 50, with more than 20 percent eligible for immediate retirement, reports the Utility Reporter, Vacaville, Calif., Local 1245’s newspaper. The local represents workers at NV Energy.

“It’s a bad situation,” says Local 1245 Business Representative Randy Osborn. “The company has closed almost all of its walk-in customer service centers, and outside of the major cities, there are virtually no line crews available.”

Local 1245 filed a petition with the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada to investigate staffing levels at the utility last winter. Despite resistance from the company, an investigation got underway in April.

The problem, says Osborn, is that for years NV Energy boosted its profit margins by cutting corners on training and recruitment.

“It posted record profits last year and CEO Michael Yackir even treated himself to a $1 million bonus—on top of his $4.5 million salary—all while not putting any efforts toward recruiting new workers to the industry,” he says. The shrinking work force is beginning to be felt by NV Energy’s customers, as long wait times for customer service personnel drive down the utility’s approval ratings.

The Utility Reporter says that JD Power and Associates, which surveys utility customers, rated NV Energy as dead last among all mountain state utilities in terms of customer satisfaction.

Only 773 workers are assigned to cover a 60,000 square-mile service area, down from 813 in 2009. It is a work force that, Osborn says, is nowhere near sufficient to adequately service and maintain the system.

Sierra Pacific isn’t unique. The utility industry as a whole is facing a skilled worker shortage, while an aging work force and years of underinvestment in recruitment and training are leaving utilities unprepared.

Nearly a third of the country’s utility workers will be eligible for retirement by 2013. (See “Will Utilities be Prepared to Face Uncertain Future?” The Electrical Worker, November 2009.)

Increasingly, utility worker unions are pushing state officials to get serious about confronting the skilled worker shortage.

“We have to use the regulatory process to bring all parties to the table to address the planning needs,” says Utility Department Director Jim Hunter. “The safety and reputation of union members are at stake, as well as the quality of service.”
California Recovery Agreement Wins Skechers Distribution Center Project

A s North American-based manufacturing has declined and imported products have flooded our shores, the construction of large-scale distribution centers to receive those products and dispatch them to the marketplace has created jobs for construction workers. For IBEW members, the question is: Who will get the work?

Leaders of Riverside, Calif., Local 440 and signatory contractor Dynalectric heard that Skechers, the top-selling U.S. footwear company, was building a half-mile-long distribution center in Moreno Valley to handle imports coming through the port of Long Beach. Working in a highly competitive market, the parties knew the job would go nonunion unless they could structure a winning bid.

Dynalectric, a subsidiary of EMCOR, had built a solid relation over the years with Wynright Intralogistics for installation of the company’s automated conveyor and sorting systems which were destined for the Skechers facility.

Bernie Balland, Local 440 business and membership development representative, praises the close ties between the two companies. But, he says, “A relationship will not always guarantee the award of a contract.”

Three months ago, as Dynalectric’s window of opportunity was closing on the Skechers project, the signatories sat down and decided to put the union’s recovery agreement to work to fashion a competitive composite rate. Their efforts were successful.

Today, Dynalectric’s crew on the distribution center project consists of two general foremen, four foremen, 12 journeyman wiremen, seven apprentices, three construction wiremen, eight construction electricians and one material handler trainer. All trainees are registered with the state. All construction electricians are state-certified.

Everyone on the composite crew is contributing to meeting completion milestones on the job. And the company is making contributions on behalf of all workers to the local’s training, health and welfare funds and the National Electrical Benefit Fund, as well as pension and annuity contributions for those workers eligible.

The distribution center is the first on the mostly-rural side of Moreno Valley. At city council hearings considering the project, some residents showed up in opposition, contending that horse trails would be disrupted and the 200 truck-a-day traffic expected for the facility will add to smog.

With high unemployment and a still painfully high mortgage foreclosure rate for most residents of Moreno Valley, “the real issue was jobs,” says Local 440 President Roger Roper, who is also assistant business manager. He and Local 440 Business Manager Robert Frost called on local members to speak up at the hearings in favor of the project.

“We had up to 50 members come out,” says Roper. Some stayed until 1 a.m. to be heard. The city council first voted not to support the development of the distribution facility. After new council elections were held, however, the incoming council majority backed the project, with overwhelming support from Moreno Valley residents who live in the more thickly-settled areas outside of the rural section.

Jim Brooks, a journeyman wireman general foreman with 28 years in the Brotherhood, says, “We’re the only union contractor on the project,” the first segment of the planned 200-acre Highland Fairview Corporate Park. “Just the fact that we are here is a sign of success,” says Brooks, who works for Dynalectric’s KDC Systems division.

Brooks remembers the days when market recovery consisted of the IBEW offering contractors cuts in journeyman and apprentice rates to secure new work. Employing the CWE/Job descriptions was a new challenge, says Brooks. But, after three months, using the new classifications, “we have met and exceeded our expectations,” he says.

Paul Aguilar, a 22-year member and former Local 440 organizer, is working on the Skechers project alongside workers assigned to the new classifications. “They are good guys. Most of them have a lot of experience,” says Aguilar, who previously worked with Santa Ana Local 441 Business Development Representative C.J. Johnson as that local expanded its market share using recovery agreements. (See “California Local Builds Consensus on New Classifications,” The Electrical Worker, December 2010).

Local 440 staff have tried to convince contractors to employ a small retail works agreement, but many consider the program too unstructured for their needs. The recovery agreement offers the potential for upgrading workers’ skills over time, enhancing contractors’ competitiveness. “And the new guys are realizing that the IBEW is not just another job, but a career,” says Aguilar.

Vince Ingalls, a third generation journeyman wireman with 31 years in the trade, hasn’t seen a whole lot of work over the last three years. Ingalls, whose daughter Vanessa Ingalls-Llamado is a Local 440 apprentice, says the bid on the distribution center project wouldn’t have been won without lower composite rates. He is concerned that use of newer classifications be properly policed by the local to see that ratios between classifications are appropriate.

“We have to do something to get more work,” he says. “But it’s all of our jobs to see that things are done right.”

Balland knows that the recovery agreements mark a cultural shift for many members, but he sees benefits from the program extending far beyond the present.

As Local 440 members participated in one of thousands of rallies on April 4 to commemorate the death of Dr. Martin Luther King and defend collective bargaining rights, they were joined by two construction wiremen, Alfonso Barajas and Ricky Jensen. Jensen had interviewed for the Local 440 apprenticeship program twice, but was unsuccessful because of the slow work forecast. He left his nonunion job immediately when offered an opportunity to work as a CW. Jensen finally became an indentured apprentice in June and will enter classes next year.

Says Balland, “Alfonso and Ricky are showing that they are not just in the IBEW for a paycheck, but want to belong to something greater and help make a difference.”
Branching Out: IBEW Tree Trimmers Go for Growth

T's one of the most dangerous jobs in the Brotherhood. Clearing tree branches and other obstacles encroaching on power lines may seem easy, but professional tree trimmers and line clearance workers have one of the most hazardous occupations in the country according to the National Institute of Safety and Health.

When called in after major storms, tree trimmers cut away broken branches and felled trees entangled in live transmission lines. Falls and electrocutions are all too common.

“It's very dangerous, working around downed or damaged equipment," says Pittsburgh Local 199 Business Manager Don Kaczka, a 35-year veteran of the industry.

But despite being a vital part of any utility or outside construction crew, too often tree trimmers don't get the respect they deserve, he says.

“There is a stigma attached to us that we are uneducated and unskilled,” says Medford, Ore., Local 659 Assistant Business Manager Lennie Ellis, who has worked as a tree trimmer for more than 30 years.

And while they work side by side with IBEW members, they often don't get to share in the benefits of union membership, Kaczka told attendees at the 2011 Construction and Maintenance Conference. He was invited back by popular demand to give his presentation on tree trimmers, following an appearance last year.

“We're talking thousands of potential members, and a lot of business managers are beginning to figure out that we need to go after them,” he says.

Organizing Challenges

More than 50 locals count line clearance tree trimmers among their membership, but the industry still remains unorganized in many parts of the country, making low pay, nonexistent benefits and shaky job security the norm for many of them.

Most utilities and outside construction contractors rely on subcontractors for line clearance and in states like Pennsylvania that have low union market share, it is hard for IBEW tree trimmer contractors to compete for work. Many of the union contractors engage in double breasting, by running nonunion sections of their shop.

“We are able to stay union largely because the management of Duquesne Power and Light has had a longstanding relationship with the IBEW, but the same can't be said for all utilities," Kaczka says.

But despite the many obstacles, Local 199—the only local consisting exclusively of tree trimmers—is making impressive organizing gains.

Last fall it successfully organized more than 100 tree trimmers at Asplundh Tree in eastern Pennsylvania, who signed their first contract in March.

“It wasn't easy. Asplundh increasingly relies on Spanish-speaking, largely immigrant workers—as do many nonunion line clearance contractors—driving a cultural and language wedge into the work force," Ellis says.

“Owners are trying to use culture to divide us, but at Asplundh it back-fired," Kaczka says. “The company assumed the Latinos would be the most anti-union, but it turned out to be the exact opposite."

Management tried to confine the IBEW with some of the corrupt unions workers faced in their home countries and told them that the union did not care about Latino workers. But diligence on the part of Local 199 allowed Kaczka to build the trust needed to win their support.

“By making sure the tree trimming industry is regulated and providing training opportunities, the IBEW has been able to provide tree trimmers with wages and benefits other utility workers enjoy.”

— Lennie Ellis, Local 659 Assistant Business Manager, Medford, Ore.

High union density also translates into higher wages and better benefits, creating a more stable and professional work force.

“By making sure the tree trimming industry is regulated and providing training opportunities, the IBEW has been able to provide tree trimmers with wages and benefits other utility workers enjoy,” Ellis says.

A commitment to training has allowed Detroit Local 17 to represent most tree trimmers in its jurisdiction. The utility local runs a U.S. Department of Labor-certified tree trimmer and line clearance apprenticeship program, which is mandatory for any tree trimmer working at one of DTE Energy’s line clearance contractors.

“We not only guarantee a professional and skilled work force, but we get the chance to educate new tree trimmers on the benefits of union membership,” says Local 17 Business Manager Kevin Shafer.

Whatever their local situation may be, Kaczka says, it’s up to each local to develop a plan to organize tree trimmers. “Members work by them all the time and they want the same things all workers want: a shot at the American dream. But we need to step up our efforts because only the IBEW can provide them with that shot.”

Pacific Northwest

In contrast to Pennsylvania, the Pacific Northwest boasts one of the highest line clearance market shares in the country, with more than 80 percent of tree trimmers unionized, says Medford, Ore., Local 659 Assistant Business Manager Lennie Ellis. He credits this in part to state regulations requiring utilities to do routine tree maintenance near power lines, which provides year-round work for most tree trimmers.

“It's a lot easier to organize workers when they don't have to travel every few months," Ellis says.

Stringent training requirements have also helped improve the image of the industry in states like Oregon and Washington. The majority of tree trimmers must go through a Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee-sponsored program, which has increased productivity and dramatically lowered accident rates.

“Just took one Spanish-speaking worker to publically come out for us for the rest of them to feel comfortable enough to join up,” Kaczka says. “You can’t let boundaries get in your way. If you build bonds with Spanish-speaking workers and gain their trust, you will open up new opportunities at other work sites because you have recruited organizers who can spread the word in their own language,” he says.
The sign business is rapidly changing, with more elaborate lighting displays being erected, like the massive light canopy show on Fremont Street in Las Vegas. Local 357 members Kenyon Crouch, left, Craig Rodeny, Nick Jorges, Brian Leming and Joe Groom install signs at Las Vegas International Airport.

Bill Whitehead, owner of signatory Accel Sign Group in Pittsburgh, says the technology of signage has changed drastically over the years. But Whitehead, who founded his company in 2002, says the obstacles in bringing jobs to completion are ever present. Many municipalities have outsourced their permitting, dragging out approval for new signs. "I have to get the customer to understand that the sign can be completed in five weeks, but it may take five more weeks to get approval," he says. Whitehead, who employs members of Pittsburgh Local 385, takes jobs as small as a vinyl sign saying "open for business" to 80-to-90-foot-high signs on an interstate highway. Getting work is like playing baseball, he says: "You swing at every pitch."

"I can usually tell within the first few weeks if a new hire has the talent for the job," says Whitehead. "They have to gain competency in working with cement, welding, setting steel and operating cranes and they can't be afraid of heights." Rising costs to fill the gas tanks of 55,000-pound bucket and crane trucks take a bigger bite out of profits, says Whitehead, who often wins subcontracts from large, out-of-state companies, which tap his knowledge of local permitting processes.

While they are a diminishing trade, sign erectors cherish their identity. A few years back, Crouch met another worker who introduced himself as a "union carpenter." After that encounter, Crouch changed his answer when asked about his career. "I tell folks I'm a union sign erector," says Crouch, who was part of a successful effort 15 years ago to get sign erectors and other smaller units represented on Local 357's executive board.

Confronted by members of other trades who feel his crew is encroaching on their jurisdictions, Brian Stobart pulls out his union card and says, "Anything that can be done with a sign we do. It's our work."
New Software Programs Designed to Build Union Power

If modern technology can trace the paths of satellites and space stations millions of miles away, when will tools be available to track new construction projects in the planning stages to get members back to work? And when will IBEW leaders and activists have real-time information on our organizing efforts across the union’s branches?

The answer: **Now.**

Two exciting new software programs, the **Project Tracker**, designed for the Construction and Maintenance Department, and the **Organizer Accountability and Reporting System**, developed for the Membership Development Department, will soon be available to all construction local unions and, later, to all professional and industrial organizers.

Business development and organizing are two sides of the same coin, says International President Edwin D. Hill. Encouraging delegates to attend the workshops on the systems at the Construction and Maintenance Conference in Washington, D.C., Hill told delegates: “Take my advice—go to the workshops—because there will be a test. It’s called your daily life. There is no good reason to fail to utilize these tools we are putting in your hands.”

**Project Tracker**

The most critical time for electrical construction locals and contractors to aggressively pursue new work is when projects are still on the drawing board—in the design and planning phase.

Project Tracker’s data on upcoming projects is drawn from reporting systems at McGraw-Hill and Industrial Info Resources. McGraw-Hill reports on all projects with a minimum dollar value of $100,000, IIR on projects at a minimum of $1,000,000. The program lists contact information for general contractors and owners.

While some locals have subscribed to those services in the past, the International will now provide them free of charge to all locals. Project Tracker empowers construction organizers to gain an edge by providing them with the information they need to visit customers and sell themselves. “It lets us put a face on the local union and ask customers what we can do for them and build new relationships,” says Construction and Maintenance Department International Representative Jim Ayrer.

Collecting data on which projects were pursued by locals and signatory contractors and what strategies went right and wrong, says Ayrer, will go a long way to improving the union’s market share and job prospects for unemployed electricians. “Putting members back to work will be the payoff for our financial and time investment in the system.”

**OARS**

At the IBEW’s International Convention in Cleveland five years ago, delegates voted to support enhanced organizing efforts. With the Organizer Accountability Reporting System, all levels of the union can assess progress daily on all aspects of organizing and learn from each other’s successes and failures.

That’s a big boost, especially to regional campaigns, or even national ones, like the IBEW’s push to organize Sears repair technicians. “We can see when representa-

New information tools Project Tracker and OARS will boost local unions’ efforts to organize and build market share.
Philips’ Playbook for U.S. Plants: First Acquire, Then Close

The doors were shuttered at the Stonco Lighting factory in Union, N.J., May 6 as the plant’s parent corporation, Netherlands-based Philips Electronics, moved ahead with plans to outsource the work to its operations in Mexico, eliminating more than 60 manufacturing jobs.

“Philips wasn’t interested in doing anything to help keep the work here,” says New York Local 3 Business Representative Anthony Esponda, who represented workers at Stonco. “It was clear that they weren’t going to negotiate with us on keeping the plant open.”

Stonco was part of the Genlyte Group lighting chain, which was purchased by Philips in 2007. Genlyte and its predecessor, Thomas, were leading American producers of lighting fixtures for decades.

The Economist reported at the time of the sale that Philips’ goal was to “use Genlyte’s relations with distributors and retailers to increase sales of LED lighting in America.”

But while boosting sales in the United States, the company has been downsizing its American work force by taking advantage of existing free trade agreements to shift production to foreign Philips’ facilities, shutting down or dramatically downsizing four formerly American-owned plants in less than three years.

- Last December, Stonco’s Union, N.J., neighbor, Lightoiler, was shuttered, with the majority of work moving to Mexico.
- More than 70 lighting glass employees lost their jobs when Philips shut down its Danville, Ky., plant—purchased from Optiva, a company acquired in 2006.
- Philips took over the plant in 2000 as part of its acquisition of the Washington-based Optiva Corp.

More than 270 workers at the Philips Lighting plant in Sparta, Tenn., are now fighting to keep their workplace open. The company announced it was moving the award-winning lighting fixture facility to Mexico by 2012.

“Philips’ behavior is a perfect example of what’s wrong with our current trading system.”

- International President Edwin D. Hill

“Philips’ behavior is a perfect example of what’s wrong with our current trading system,” says International President Edwin D. Hill. "Philips uses our free trade agreements to get easy access to American markets, while outsourcing good jobs in their quest for the lowest wages possible, devastating communities—and all without consulting with their own employees or the affected communities."

Go to www.tellphilips.com for more on the campaign to keep the Sparta plant open.

2010 Summary Annual Report for Int’l Brotherhood of Electrical Workers’ Pension Benefit Fund

This is a summary of the annual report for the INT’L BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS’ PENSION BENEFIT FUND, (Employer Identification No. 53-0083380, Plan No. 001) for the period July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

Basic Financial Statement

Benefits under the plan are provided by a trust (benefits are provided in whole from trust funds). Plan expenses were $129,612,476. These expenses included $10,999,966 in administrative expenses and $118,612,510 in benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries. A total of 445,041 persons were participants in or beneficiaries of the plan at the end of the plan year, although not all of these persons had yet earned the right to receive benefits.

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was $1,508,775,682 as of June 30, 2010 compared to $1,390,780,853 as of July 1, 2009. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of $117,994,829. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference between the value of the plan’s assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year, or the cost of assets acquired during the year.

The plan had total income of $247,607,305, including employee contributions of $54,746,005, gains of $82,273,658 from the sale of assets and earnings from investments of $101,185,918, gains from foreign currency translations of $9,353,774 and other income of $47,950.

Your Rights to Additional Information

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed below are included in that report:

1. An accountant’s report;
2. Assets held for investment;
3. Transactions in excess of 5 percent of the plan assets; and
4. Information regarding any common or collective trust, pooled separate accounts, master trusts or 103-12 investment entities in which the plan participates.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of the Plan Administrator

Salvatore J. Chilia, International Secretary-Treasurer
900 7th Street, NW Washington, DC 20001
26-4085261 (Employer Identification Number)
(202) 728-6200

You also have the right to receive from the plan administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. These portions of the report are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan:

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 900 7th Street, NW Washington, DC 20001 and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., or to obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Public Disclosure Room, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite N-1513, Washington, D.C. 20210.
Ontario Working Families Expose Tories’ Real Agenda

The first Ontario general election in four years is scheduled for October and the stakes could not be higher for working people. Jobs, workers’ rights, health care and education funding are all on the line as Tim Hudak’s Progressive Conservatives look to unseat the province’s premier Dalton McGuinty’s government.

Hudak says his priority is providing relief for hardworking families, but Working Families, a broad coalition of Ontario unions representing more than 500,000 working people, is advising voters not to buy it. “Hudak talks about standing up for the average taxpayer, but in reality his agenda is pure Bay Street,” says First District Vice President Phil Flemming.

The Working Families Coalition—which is supported by the building trades, including the IBEW, and approximately 10 industrial and service unions—was formed in 2009 to educate voters about policies that threaten workers and expose the true motives of anti-worker politicians.

Alex Lolua, director of government relations for the IBEW’s Construction Council of Ontario, says many union members were blind-sided by the last Tory premier of Ontario, Mike Harris, who wooed voters with promises to cut taxes and reduce bureaucratic red tape, saying he would be a fighter for ordinary Ontarians.

But to the dismay of working families, Harris’ “Common Sense Revolution” government of the mid-90s ended up being one of the most anti-worker in the province’s history. Harris repealed anti-scar legislation, froze the minimum wage, slashed workers’ compensation and allowed some of the biggest contractors in Ontario to rip up their contracts with the building trades.

“It took a lot of us by surprise,” Lolua says, “We didn’t educate voters on what Harris and the Tories really stood for. And now Hudak wants to follow in his footsteps.”

The big business-backed Tories have promised major cuts to health care, education and public services, which would lead to tens of thousands of layoffs. Workers’ rights in the construction industry would also suffer under a Progressive Conservative government. Tory MPP Jim Wilson told a meeting of Merit Ontario in April that should his party win power, it would abolish the Ontario College of Trades, give open shop contractors a leg up in the bidding process and reduce the journeymen to apprentice ratio from 3-to-1 to 1-to-1.

“Hudak wants to do to Ontario what anti-worker governors like Scott Walker and John Kasich are doing in the United States,” says Pat Dillon, business manager for the Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council.

The Tories are also threatening thousands of jobs in the renewable energy sector. Hudak has attacked McGuinty’s green energy plan, which has encouraged new jobs in the solar industry and investments in smart grid technology.

“We are focused on the issues that affect every working family in Ontario: jobs, health care, schools,” says Lolua.

Strictly nonpartisan, Lolua says Working Families makes no candidate or party endorsements, focusing exclusively on educating voters on the issues.

“We are talking about jobs, wages, working conditions, education and health care,” he says. “And educating Ontarians about which politicians will stand against working families on those issues.”

Go to www.workingfamilies.ca for more information.
Representative Don Mahoney, who was assigned to the Telephone Department, now the Telecommunications and Broadcasting Department, involved in was a 2,000-person GTE factory in Albuquerque, N.M. Assisting team that successfully organized the telecom plant in 1973.

DECEASED

Joseph A. Maziasz

The IBEW regrets to announce that retired International Representative Joseph A. Maziasz died March 14 at the age of 89. Brother Maziasz, a native of Phillips, Wis., was initiated into Milwaukee Local 663 in 1952. The local is responsible for servicing and maintaining industrial facilities throughout Milwaukee. Maziasz would work at nearly every plant in the area during the height of the city’s manufacturing boom in the ’50s.

He was appointed International Representative in the Organizing Department now Membership Development—with a focus on organizing electrical manufacturing plants. One of the biggest campaigns he was involved in was at a 2,000-person GTE factory in Albuquerque, N.M. Assisting a 100-person volunteer organizing committee, Maziasz served as part of a team that successfully organized the telecom plant in 1973.

Maziasz also helped in the campaign that brought IBEW representation to thousands of workers at Washington, D.C.’s public utility, Pepco, in 1979. "He was great guy and a real hard worker," says retired International Representative Don Mahoney, who was assigned to the Telephone Department, now the Telecommunications and Broadcasting Department. "Hundreds of workers in the manufacturing branch became members because of him," he says.

Maziasz retired in 1982. He is survived by his son and daughter.

The IBEW extends its deepest sympathy to his friends and family.

Organizing Wire

New Hampshire Utility Workers Sign First Contract

After nearly nine months of contentious negotiations, warehouse workers at the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative ratified their first contract in March.

The four warehouse employees had first contacted Manchester, Maine, Local 187—which represents more than 80 linemen and other employees at the member-owned utility—last year. Management had implemented cutbacks, but only IBEW members had the power to sit down at the table with the company to negotiate the terms.

"Union members ended up with a much better deal, which made the union advantage crystal clear," says Local 187 organizer Matt Beck.

The workers quickly signed up, but management balked at negotiating a first contract.

"They didn’t want them to be under the master agreement with the rest of the employees," says Local 187 Assistant Business Manager Tom Ryan.

Both parties finally reached agreement on a separate contract, which included a 3 percent wage increase and formal pay scales.

"Pay was pretty much arbitrary before the contract," Beck says. "Seniority didn’t count."

At the same time New Hampshire Electric Cooperative employees finalized their first contract, Local 1837 members at the Granite Ridge power plant near Londonderry successfully negotiated their second, giving them a more than 9 percent wage increase over the life of the three-year contract, an extra paid holiday, and streamlined grievance procedures.

The more than 20 employees first approached Local 1837 in 2006 because of poor working conditions and abusive managers.

"Working conditions were horrendous," says Business Manager Cynthia Philmey. "Management kept changing the rules by the day, so an employee who was told to do something a certain way one day would get in trouble for doing the same thing the next."

While it took a year to get their first contract, negotiations on its renewal took only weeks. "Things went a lot smoother this time around," Ryan says. "Both sides were a lot more comfortable with the collective bargaining process."

Sears Technicians Join IBEW in Alaska

When service technicians for Sears in Alaska decided they needed a voice on the job, they “Googled” to find the union right for them.

One of the first items to come up on the internet search was a 2006 story on the IBEW’s Web site about Sears technicians in Colorado and Wyoming who joined Denver Local 68. (See “Big Win in West... Sears Service Workers Vote IBEW,” www.ibew.org, August 18, 2006).

“They read about employees getting a 3 percent wage increase, strong job security and, most importantly, some say in their workplace,” says Anchorage Local 1547 Lead Organizer Dennis Knebel. “That was all they needed to check out the IBEW for themselves.

Organizing the technicians—who install and maintain Sears home appliances—was a challenge. The 15 employees mostly worked from home, getting their service assignments from the company via computer each morning. Spread out from Anchorage to Fairbanks—a 350-mile distance—they rarely interacted with each other, Knebel says.

Organizers relied on e-communications to bring the unit together, creating an e-mail list and using video conferencing to connect workers across the miles.

“Local 1547 Business Representative John Ferrone would get the guys together in Fairbanks, set up a camera and hook them up with the Anchorage group online,” Knebel says.

After a few weeks, the workers voted 9-6 in an NLRA-administered election. Negotiations on the first contract began in May.

Recovery Program Helps Michigan Local Through Tough Times

No state in the nation has been slammed harder by the recession than Michigan, which is still struggling with double-digit unemployment and a declining manufacturing sector.

Members of Bay City Local 692 are not only dealing with the economic downturn but intense competition from the nonunion Associated Builders and Contractors. Nearby Midland is a state center for ABC, and nonunion shops periodically outbid signatory contractors, keeping the local’s market share under 50 percent.

“We lost our ability to compete in almost every sector—industrial, commercial and residential,” says Local 692 Business Manager Mark Bauer.

But, Bauer says, things are beginning to turn around, thanks to the adoption of the IBEW’s recovery program. The use of alternative classifications has brought new work to the local, putting dozens of out-of-work journeymen and apprentices back on the job.

One of the biggest projects was last year’s $30 million expansion of the Midland Country Club, a job that put 20 Local 692 members to work.

“We absolutely would not have gotten that job without the use of construction electricians and construction wiremen,” Bauer says.

CEs and CWs are alternative job classifications assigned to electricians who do not possess the skills normally held by journeymen wiremen and inside apprentices whose multi-year course of study is set by National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee curriculum.

The project would have gone completely nonunion without the use of alternative classifications, he says.

“It made us competitive and put us in the game for the work,” Bauer said.

New classifications were also key in the local’s successful bid this winter to build a new $32 million business services center in Midland.

“We’re talking 30 jobs right there,” Bauer says.

The use of alternative classifications isn’t new to the local, which had an intermediate journeymen category for years, formally adopting CEs and CWs four years ago as part of an aggressive effort to win back market share.

Responding to those who say CEs/CWs take jobs that should be going to journeymen Bauer says, “For us, the recovery program has created jobs for IBEW journeymen—by making us more competitive, it has won us projects we wouldn’t have gotten without it.”

“We would have had more than 30 members entering their second year of unemployment without using CEs and CWs," he says.

The recovery program has also given the local the opportunity to win over nonunion electricians who are doing the work the union should be doing. In Michigan, novice electricians who are not in an apprenticeship program can be licensed by the state as residential electricians, but the traditional two-tier journeyman/apprentice
job classification made it difficult to recruit these workers to the IBEW. 

CEs/CWs are given the opportunity to boost their skills at Local 692’s training center and advance through its apprenticeship program. And with new CEs/CWs bringing along with them the names of friends and family still working nonunion, the local is developing an extensive list of potential members at nonunion contractors throughout its jurisdiction.

“The lousy economy limits how many people we can take in right now, but as soon as the work starts to pick up, we have a network of nonunion electricians our organizers can start targeting right away,” Bauer says.

“If we just sit back and wait for the next big job to come along, that’s what we’ll be doing, waiting,” says Local 692 member Tom Bartosek.

“The world is constantly changing and we have to change with it.”

**Municipal Workers Choose IBEW in New Jersey**

With all of the controversy surrounding public employees and their benefits, are they more likely to seek union representation or get scared and run in the other direction? If municipal workers in Kinnelon, a wealthy northern New Jersey borough, are any indication, more public workers will be seeking the advocacy and protection of unions.

In March, the state’s Public Employees Relations Commission granted Kinnelon non-supervisory white collar workers their request to be represented by Jersey City Local 164. Since their successful petition to the commission, more co-workers have expressed interest in organizing. The vote in favor of union representation came in response to an ordinance passed by the Kinnelon Borough Council that discontinued health care coverage for two part-time workers who had been previously promised such coverage.

White collar workers were also upset that their wages were frozen in 2010, while unionized workers in the police and public works department were entitled to negotiated raises.

Local 164 Business Manager Buzzy Dressel told Northjersey.com that he understood the financial pressures on municipalities but said that it isn’t fair or equitable for towns to “go after the employees who don’t have a collective bargaining unit.”

Dressel added, “The union isn’t looking to hurt the town. We just want to have a level playing field.”

Negotiations haven’t started yet, but Dressel says he is confident that conflicts will be resolved once the parties sit down at the table.

**Circuits**

**IBEW TV Photographers Win San Francisco Awards**

As Jacob Jimenez, a photographer for Fox Television affiliate KTVU in Oakland, Calif., was filming a surf competition in Half Moon Bay last year, he noticed a number of spectators moving closer to the water to get a better vantage point on the participants. As they ignored the pleas to move back, an unexpectedly large wave rolled in, toppling a podium and injuring some of the spectators.

Jimenez, a member of Hollywood Local 45 who trained in his craft at the Art Institute of Seattle, captured the news-in-the-making.

In April, “Maverick’s Wave” won an award for excellence in video spot news photography from the San Francisco Broadcast and Press Photographers Association. Jimenez, who also won first- and second-place honors in other categories, was joined by several other Local 45 photographers at the award dinner.

William Erickson, KTVU, won first- and third-place awards.

Thomas O’Hair from KCRA in Sacramento won first- and third-place honors. KCRA’s Steve Gonzalez won a third-place award and an award of excellence. Michael Domaing won a first-place honor, and Alan Fillipi, KTVU, won a second-place award.

“Maybe it looks to those outside our industry like we just show up with our cameras on our shoulders and shoot, but TV news is a rapidly-changing world of live trucks and computer technology,” says Jimenez, who has been nominated as videographer of the year in the Associated Press Television-Radio Association’s 2011 Mark Twain Awards.

It’s challenging to shoot and then quickly edit segments to fit into the news frame. “You’re rushing, but wish you had more time to do an even better video,” says Jimenez, who also was honored in the piece entitled “Graffiti Artists” about a high school student who turned his art and his life around, going from illegal spray painting to etching murals on the school walls. “I’m excited any time I can put together a story with a good message that viewers will enjoy watching,” he says.

**Safety Corner**

**Electrical Training Boosts Safety for Calif. Firefighters**

In the midst of an emergency, electrical problems can spell disaster for firefighters already performing risky work. When power lines tumble—leaving live wires strewn across city streets—or when electricity needs to be cut off at a burning house, split-second decisions can save lives.

Or, they can put a first responder in a hospital. Each year, hundreds of firefighters are treated at burn centers nationwide due to occupational hazards like electrical accidents.

“The worst part is that most of these injuries could be avoided,” said Riverside/San Bernardino JATC Instructor Tom Ayers. As part of a new initiative in the Inland Empire area of Southern California, Ayers is helping members of the Redlands Fire Department beef up their knowledge of electrical safety.

“They show up on scenes where you’ve got down lines, sometimes with water thrown into the mix,” Ayers said. “You’ve got to be extremely careful about what to watch out for.”

Last month, Ayers and fellow JATC Instructor Laura Vergeront began offering specialized trainings for the department. They augment their instruction of OSHA electrical safety requirements—including how to handle arc flash—with tailor-made lessons on how to face newer challenges.

“In our presentations, we ask the firefighters what their concerns are with specific electrical hazards they might have encountered,” said Vergeront, a Riverside Local 440 member. “One of the main concerns right now is about solar panel systems on roofs,” which can be tricky to bring offline in rainstorms or at nighttime.

The firefighters are enthusiastic, too. “Doing that job means that you’re constantly getting new information and you’re trained all the time,” Ayers said. “For them to like us, we knew we’d have to be pretty good—and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.”

The safety presentations were coordinated by Jan Hudson, business development director at the Inland Empire Labor Management Cooperation Committee—the group funding the trainings. Hudson began researching accidents involving first responders after conversations with a contact at the Inland Empire Burn Institute. She connected officials at the fire department with the JATC instructors to roll out the initial sessions.

“Shortly after our office established this program and delivered our first training, my phone started ringing off the hook with calls from a variety of first responders,” Hudson said. “I’ve been in talks with police and sheriff’s departments, other fire departments throughout the Inland Empire—many organizations want this type of training. It gives me additional opportunities to advocate for the IBEW/NECA partnership.

Local 440 Business Manager Bob Frost speaks highly of the trainers’ expertise. “We’ve had such a great response, and our trainers have unique skills to pass along,” he said. “For first responders, the information is vital for their safety and for the people they’re trying to assist.”

For more information, visit the LMCC’s Web site at www.ielmcc.com.
Volunteers Aid Haiti

L.U. 6 (C, i, st&u), SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Last year’s earthquake in Haiti created such great destruction that the people of Haiti are still struggling to overcome the devastation, and members of Local 6 reached out to help. Volunteers ranging from retirees to apprentices traveled to Milot in Haiti to replace the electrical infrastructure at Sacre Coeur Hospital. Jeff Rodriguez, who organized the volunteers, and Justin Connolly, Clare Heikamp, Brett Scheinbair, Phil C. Farrelly, Bill Donohoe and Ian Rodriguez are all commended for taking action to improve the lives of those ravaged by the disaster. Our SPECA (San Francisco Electrical Contractors Association) Industry partners at Rosendin Electric are also commended for coordinating a very generous donation of supplies and equipment necessary to perform the work.

Local 6 members marched in the 166th annual St. Patrick’s Day parade. Our local’s volunteers built a float depicting San Francisco’s iconic Mt. Sutro tower. The float’s lights and music were solar powered. Many of our retirees rode in a motorized cable car. The weather was fantastic and the event was a great day of camaraderie and pride for our membership. Parade committee co-chairs Barrett Stapleton and Lou Sullivan, as well as the volunteers, are congratulated for winning 171 place float honors.

Phil A. Farrelly, Pres.

Repeal Ohio Senate Bill 5

L.U. 8 (i, em, mar, m, r, t, u, s & o), TOLEDO, OH—The work outlook has seen some improvement with three big projects in our area: the Hollywood Casino in Rossford, the steel mill in Leipsic, and the GM Foundry.

The political arena in Ohio has been very intense over the past few months, with working families under attack. Many Local 8 members attended rallies in Columbus to protest Senate Bill 5, which essentially abolishes collective bargaining rights for public employees. SB 5 passed in March but a petition drive is underway to get a referendum challenge on the November general election ballot. Gov. John Kasich also proposed the virtual elimination of prevailing wage, including raising the threshold for prevailing wage applicability from projects valued over $18,000 to $5 million and above. He also proposed prohibiting prevailing wage on all K-12, college and university construction, and he intends to render any state enforcement of prevailing wage meaningless.

Local 8 members are enjoying various summer activities. Local golf and softball leagues are in full force and upcoming IBEW bowling, softball and golf tournaments are scheduled for this summer. These activities offer a great way to spend time outdoors with your union brothers and sisters in a fun, relaxing setting. As always, work safe, play safe.

Jerry “Shorty” Short, P.S.

Photovoltaic Training

L.U. 14 (i), EAU CLAIRE, WI—Local 14 recently added an additional photovoltaic array at our union hall to train our members during the extended economic downturn.

Local 16 is indebted to the IBEW locals that have employed its members during the extended economic downturn. Local 16’s new web site is now up and running. To access restricted information, you must enter your last name and card number. For the latest information regarding book status, work outlook, pictures, political news, upcoming events and related links, visit www.ibewlocal16.org.

Chris Bixlin, P.S.

Green Energy Training Lab

L.U. 22 (i, t, s, o, p, a), OMAHA, NE—We send a big thank-you to our members who travelled to Wisconsin in March for the rallies. We were there the weekend that the 14 Wisconsin legislators came back, and the solidarity was impressive. It is extremely important to stand together against the anti-union, anti-middle class policies that are sweeping this nation. Solidarity will prevail, but the fight is not over.

Since 2009 we have trained more than 300 members (both local hands and from other jurisdictions) in our Utility-Wind Training Program. We are waiting for that work to pick up again in the Midwest. Local 22 is also moving forward with plans to install a Green Energy Training Lab. This will include a solar pavilion, wind generator testing, building automation lab, and electric car charging stations. This new lab will be open to the public and industry to showcase the technologies and teach about the benefits of green power.

We were able to host some travelling brothers and sisters this spring at a nuclear plant shutdown north of Omaha. It is short term, but every bit helps as the economy recovers. Visit our new web site at www.ibew22.org.

Terry “Shorty” Short, P.S.

Fighting for Workers

L.U. 16 (i), EVANSVILLE, IN—Dedicated members of IBEW Local 16 have been actively fighting back against the torrent of anti-labor legislation pushed on working people by right-wing extremists. Attacks have come on unemployment insurance, “right-to-work” (for less), project labor agreements and common construction wage laws. Union members have made phone calls, e-mailed, written letters and held personal visits with their representatives—and rallied repeatedly both locally and at the Indianapolis statehouse. It is imperative that everyone who benefits from a collective bargaining agreement do their part in these attempts to protect the hard-won standards enjoyed today.

Thank you to those who have agreed to serve the IBEW in an elected position. Congratulations to Judge Rick Koszel, and Telers Rick Rush Jr. and Jeff Turpin.

Local 16 is indebted to the IBEW locals that have employed its members during the extended economic downturn.

Local 16’s new web site is now up and running. To access restricted information, you must enter your last name and card number. For the latest information regarding book status, work outlook, pictures, political news, upcoming events and related links, visit www.ibewlocal16.org.

Don Buxton, P.S.

Solar Project at GMC Plant

L.U. 24 (i, t, s, o, p, a), BALTIMORE, MD—Our work picture is still slow at this time.

One of our bright spots is a solar panel installation on the roof of the General Motors Allison Transmission Plant in White Marsh, MD. Union Electric Company was the successful contractor on the project. The job includes the installation of more than 5,300 solar panels generating 1.7 megawatts of

Energy and Other Emerging Technologies.

Two large solar arrays have been installed at the bottom of the transmission building. These arrays will provide supplemental power to the building.

Solar power is clean and sustainable. The installation of solar panels on top of the transmission building will help reduce the amount of electricity used by the company.

The solar arrays will generate enough electricity to power several hundred homes annually, reducing the company’s carbon footprint.

The project was successful and the company is planning to install more solar panels in the future. The company is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and promoting sustainability.

The installation of solar panels on top of the transmission building is a step towards a cleaner and more sustainable future. The company is proud to be taking action to reduce its carbon footprint and promote sustainability.

Chris Bixlin, P.S.

Trade Classifications

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<td>Warehouse and Supply</td>
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Efforts are made to make this list as inclusive as possible, but the various job categories of IBEW members are too numerous to comprehensively list all.
power. The job started in March and is scheduled to be completed in mid-June 2013. The $1 million job peaked at 25 men, and Union Electric owner Glen Hasting said he was pleased the job was on schedule and on budget. He stated that he was bidding on other solar projects in the area and had landed a job at the Brandon Shores Power Plant.

At this time we are experiencing sustained record unemployment and our contractors are bidding on several large jobs projected for our area.

Roger M. Lash Jr., B.M.

Dollars Against Diabetes

L.U. 26 (ee,em,es,gov,U/I/mf), WASHINGTON, D.C.—We have finalized plans for the Manassas picnic on June 18, and we hope you have your tickets and are planning to attend. The annual picnic in Edgewater, MD, will be Aug. 6. Be sure to order your tickets so you don’t miss out on this day of brotherhood, health awareness and fun!

Thanks to all those who are participating in our Dollars Against Diabetes Golf Outing on June 6. This event is always a huge success and we are able to make a generous donation toward the fight against diabetes.

The Scholarship Committee should be announcing the winners of this year’s scholarship awards soon. Congratulations to all the applicants on your outstanding academic achievements!

The following members passed away since our last article: Thomas A. Miller, Steven D. Pilisky, Kevin R. Nowakowski, Gary M. Hayne, George C. Starkey, Charles F. Mauer III and Raymond C. Mansfield.


Charles E. Graham, B.M.

Drive to Repeal SB 5

L.U. 36 (i), CLEVELAND, OH—Thanks to all the IBEW members who have attended the Anti-Senate Bill 5 Rally being held at the state Capitol in Columbus and across the state of Ohio. (Photo, below.)

This proposed anti-union legislation was recently passed by the Republican dominated Ohio House and Senate and signed by Gov. John Kasich.

Our next move has been to launch a referendum effort seeking repeal of Senate Bill 5—by crafting a petition and working to collect the signatures of approximately 231,000 Ohio voters to place the measure on the November general election ballot.

Senate Bill 5 is a right-wing initiative that strips public union workers of their collective bargaining rights. The governor has only just begun his anti-union campaign with SB 5. He is also writing into his budget the decimation of Ohio’s prevailing wage law.

The IBEW is working to stop the right-wing agenda by gathering petition signatures. We are also speaking with and educating our state lawmakers about the detrimental effects of repealing prevailing wage—but we will also need the help of every IBEW member in the state of Ohio.

All members and their families need to sign the petitions being circulated. We also need all members to individually call, write or e-mail their state representatives and senators about these issues.

More information will be forthcoming on how you can help.

Dennis Meany, A.B.M.

Family Picnic Celebration

L.U. 48 (i,em,tcb,rs,ts,kxst), PORTLAND, OR—On Sunday, July 10, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Local 48 will host a special annual picnic at Oaks Park. Oaks Park is located on the banks of the Willamette River in Milwaukie, OR. With six exciting thrill rides and acres of fun, the park is a great setting for working families to meet in union brotherhood. Each IBEW family will receive four free amusement park tickets per child under 16. The food and drinks provided are prepared by an all-volunteer picnic staff. Please contact Nancy Cary at the local union office to volunteer. Plan to stay for the 2 p.m. gift drawing.

This will be a special picnic, as it begins the countdown to IBEW Local 48’s centennial event in 2013. Bus Mgr. Cliff Davis looks forward to all members joining us to begin the Local 48 celebration.

Robert Blais, P.S.

Organizing New Members

L.U. 50 (i), RICHMOND, VA—A number of events have had an impact on the size of our bargaining units among the five employers where we represent working men and women. The voluntary separation package at Dominion, retirements, and promotions outside the bargaining unit reduced our membership numbers significantly in the latter part of 2010.

Thanks to the hard work of our business representatives and shop stewards, we have added well over 80 new members since those milestone events. By building relationships and educating new employees, we are restoring those numbers.

Reminder to members: As you see new employees reporting to your location, please introduce yourself, welcome them and let them know they are covered by a collective bargaining agreement. They can join our Brotherhood on day one!

In addition, if you encounter unorganized groups in and around our areas, spread our message. If there is interest on their part for additional information, contact the local union office.

Mike Barclay, R.S.

‘Stepping up to the Plate’

L.U. 68 (i), DENVER, CO—In the accompanying photo, Cliff Sterling greets fellow IBEW Local 68 member Tom Rutherford prior to canvassing Denver’s District 8. When Tom first decided to join the race for City Council, he was one of only three or four candidates. Within a week however, there were 39 write-in candidates!

Tom had the endorsement of Local 68, along with Local 111 and the rest of Colorado’s State Conference of Electrical Workers. Additionally, Tom had the endorsement of Amalgamated Transit Union’s Local 100; United Transportation Union; Pipefitters’ Local 216; Sheet Metal Workers Local 9; Denver Area Labor Federation; Rev. Daniel Klawitter and Colorado State Representative John Soper, a Local 68 retiree. Tom’s enthusiastic devotion to his Denver District far outweighs not making it into the run-off in the election, and he’ll continue to be our Local 68 registrar and political director. When you see him, please thank him for stepping up to the plate, and ask how you can assist next time in assuring his success.

Local 68 Summer Picnic reminder: Aug. 20—noon to 3 p.m.

Ed Knox, Pres.

Standing in Solidarity

L.U. 80 (i,sk), NORFOLK, VA—At the March meeting, Pres. Kenny Bunting announced his resignation as president effective March 31, 2011, due to medical reasons. He has served as president since July 2002. Local 80 extends sincere gratitude to Bro. Bunting for his hard work and sacrifice for the good of the local. We extend best wishes for a smooth transition into his retirement.

Work in the jurisdiction remained steady through late winter and early spring, with nearly all members employed as of this writing. The Princess Anne Hospital project in Virginia Beach is almost complete. This project employed many members and showed that Local 80 provides the most skilled electricians, who give their best day in and day out.

With recent attacks on working class families and unions in Wisconsin, Ohio and other states, we must stand together as union members and let our voices be heard. We don’t have the deep pockets like the businesses that are pillaging workers’ rights for corporate bottom lines, but we do have the solidarity of our membership and that of all the unions in this great country. We must let our state and federal representatives know that as union members will be heard and respected for our hard work—and that we will not let a politician strip our collective bargaining rights and hard earned benefits under the lie of needing to do this to balance the budget.

W. Dennis Boyd, A.B.M.

Day at the Races in June

L.U. 94 (kt,nt,sk&u), CRANBURY, NJ—Despite challenging times, Local 94 members have continued to work with no layoffs. Last year our membership united together and passed a contract extension that kept everyone working. Some jobs were moved around, and not everyone was happy, but we preserved jobs and decent wages.

We’ve also had some exciting social events. In February we had our annual ski trip to Lake Placid. Thanks, Ernie and Big Joe, for getting it all together and for another successful trip. The annual golf outing at Ramblewood Country Club was May 7. The usual suspects were there and as always everyone had a good time.

Family Day at the Races is June 18 at Monmouth Park. Please come out and join your union brothers and sisters for this family fun event. Who knows, we may even be playing a little softball in the Local 102 tournament again this year.

Wishing all our IBEW brothers and sisters a great summer.

Carlo Wolfe, P.S.

New Second District Apprentice Coordinator

L.U. 104 (kt,jto), BOSTON, MA—IBEW Local 104 wishes to congratulate Bro. Patrick Casey on being appointed as the new Second District apprentice coordinator for the Northeast Apprenticeship and Training (N.E.A.T.). He will be in charge of the training of apprentices for...
**Solildarity Rallies**

L.U. 146 (es, ei, rts, spa), KANSAS CITY MO—Our nation is beautiful—the U.S. sets the standard for freedom and justice worldwide. Our unions are beautiful—we set the standard for the working class across our nation. Just as our nation is fighting foes abroad, we too are fighting attacks by those who wish to see unions crushed and defeated. The union cause is the working-class cause, for both union and nonunion. The anti-worker Republican ideology is attacking working-class rights won by union members. Struggle to take a stand. Your union and your nation need you.

We remember deceased members: Leonard Baggett, Jackie Baldwin, Gregory Barber, Gustav Barnes, Joseph Bedaul, David Briggs, William Famuliner, Raymond Ford, Larry Gladman, Nigel Johansen, William Joyce, Thomas Lacy Jr., Eugene Stockton, Jason Thornton, Kenneth Troutwine, Jay Charles Cole, Peter Cooper, Kenneth Cook, Gary State Conference, the joint meeting of the statewide Building and Construction Trades and Illinois prevailing wage meeting, and the IBEW Convention takes place at the June 2011 union meeting. Please be sure to attend and vote for the delegate of your choice. Mark your calendar: the Annual Picnic will take place Aug. 20 at Lakewood Forest Preserve in Wauconda.

Recently one of our members was in the Tuesday Morning Store. Tuesday Morning is a store that sells home accessories and decorations—most of which are NOT made in America. One of the store employees told our member to leave the store and that Tuesday Morning does not need any Local 150 members’ business. I, for one, will never step foot in another one of their stores.

Please do not take any call for an employer unless you know you can fulfill the requirements to be hired by that company. Especially since you are not just wasting your time and the company’s time, but you are also affecting every member who is on the out-of-work book. If you take a call knowing that you cannot fulfill the requirements you are not displaying brotherhood.

Wendy J. Contr, P. S.

**Local Celebrates 110 Years**

L.U. 280 (c, jkt), VALLEJO, CA—On May 6, the local celebrated its 110-year anniversary. At our Old Timer’s Award Night, we awarded 120 service pins for service ranging from 20 to 60 years. We also had a moment in memory for eight deceased brothers, who had from 40 to 75 years of service.

This is also a time to reflect and think not of what we want today, but rather how do we repay the debt to the members who came before us. Thinking only of today and of one’s self interest harms the next generation. It is a disservice to those who gave us what we have today.

That is why we keep fighting for our fellow working families and sharing our 110 years of institutional knowledge, joining with others for the “We Are One” union march and working with our elected officials to support working families are all part of the effort. Working on project development and working with the end users. Working on the skills needed to stay one step ahead in the clean and green market.

When future generations review the great work we did, what will they think? Are we doing our part? Are we “dream makers” or “dream killers”? We need positive change and it is up to each of us to make it happen.

Work safe.

Eric Patrick, B.M.

**Utility Projects Projected**

L.U. 222 (c), ORLANDO, FL—Our free trimming group recently approved a two-year extension to its current agreement. While the gains were modest, we all feel good about the final results. This was our fifth collective bargaining agreement since the unit was organized in June 2002 and we are all pleased with the accomplishments of the last nine years.

We look forward to a busy and hopefully productive 2012; the two largest utilities in the state are projecting some good sized projects starting in late spring to mid-summer. We started negotiations on our Outside Line Agreement in May, our local elections are in June and the International Convention is in September.

We are just weeks away from the Fourth of July, our Independence Day. That is a day we celebrate for getting out from under a government of Royals and elitists who believed workers (the term back then was peasants) should be seen but not heard, and couldn’t come and go without their permission. I hope as you celebrate with family and friends this July Fourth, you all agree that type of government is still not for us in the U.S.

William “Bill” Hirt, A.B.M.

**Local Fights for Labor**

L.U. 280 (c, ee, em, ei, jkt, mo, mt, rts, spa), SALEM, OR—With the assault on the working class going on in Wisconsin and other states, Bus. Mgr. Tim Frew and his staff are not taking this sitting down. Rallies at our state Capitol have been well attended, with Local 280 leading the way to fight for workers’ rights. Discussions with Gov. John Kitzhaber and
Spirit of Giving
L.U. 302 (I,ts&spa), MARTINEZ, CA—To quote Sir Winston Churchill, “We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.” “Give” is what IBEW members did by stepping up to the call for volunteers to rewrite the Willows Theatre. Union volunteers included: Ron Bennett, Bob Ulley, Jerry Phillips, Nicholas McDaniell and Rachel Shoemake.

The Willows Theatre had been closed for eight years with only the shell of the building remaining. The seats, lights and wiring had been removed. The electrical was a very challenging job. With IBEW workers on the job, the Willows Theatre received a first-class electrical installation.

Willows Theatre general manager David Faustino was so impressed by the Local 302 workers, he told his staff: “The IBEW people are so well trained they can do anything!”

IBEW Local 302 received wonderful press for a job well done by the union volunteers. The communities of Concord and Martinez, CA, expressed tremendous gratitude to IBEW Local 302. Our members’ efforts along with 150 volunteers and 2,500 man-hours from both communities helped create a world-class theatre to be enjoyed by everyone.

Pete Smith, P.S.

Work Picture Good
L.U. 304 (lctt,spa), TOPEKA, KS—We had a good winter, cold and wet, but most members have been trained and the work picture looks good. We have some major jobs starting and our wind generation is promising if we can keep it fair. Our two largest contracts are open, with Westar Energy and Outside Construction, along with some Rural Electric Cooperatives.

Congratulations to Ginger Smed to her long-time service. Ginger has worked in the Local 304 office since 1996. She started with our sister Local 226 in 1971, for a total of 40 years of service. A surprise reception was held March 15 honoring her and thanking her for her dedicated service to the cause.

We lost a longtime member and good friend, Wallace Bow. May he rest in peace. He mentored many journeymen and apprentice linenmen along with groundmen, teaching many the trade. He will be remembered and his touch will live on.

We have 80 apprentices working on construction, 40 or so in the utilities, and another 40 in our Rural Electric Cooperatives. We’ve had good participation and success in promoting the trade and making the job expectations known to the next generation of workers. Good reception has been shown by the trade schools, community colleges and most utilities.

Paul Lira, B.M.

Workers March on Madison
L.U. 388 (em, tlc,spa), STEVENS POINT, WI—If you have been watching the news, you know what is going on in Wisconsin regarding Gov. Scott Walker and his so-called “Repair Bill.”

IBEW Local 388 along with thousands of union members and their families have protested to put an end to this union busting bill.

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Local Lines

Union Solidarity
L.U. 490 (i&spa), AUSTIN, TX—IBEW Local 490 is proud to announce that we showed solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Wisconsin at a rally on Saturday, Feb. 26, in the fight to keep our collective bargaining rights.

More than 100 members of our local, as well as several hundred more tradesmen, firefighters and police showed up at Market Square in Portsmouth, NH. We had a great turnout, and many who passed by showed their solidarity with us.

The right-wing, partisan war on the working class was dealt a blow in our state thanks to Local 490 members, the community and several Wisconsin union members who joined our cause.

[Editor's Note: For articles on the union fight.

Lynch has pledged to veto the anti-union bill, which our brothers and sisters in Wisconsin at a rally on Saturday, Feb. 26, in the fight to keep our collective bargaining rights.

As we have seen, gains earned on the struggles and sacrifices of generations can be lost in the stroke of a pen held by the wrong government—and no passport is needed for such actions to cross the border. For those who do not believe in political action—we ask you to consider the cost of inaction.

Larocque, longtime IBEW activist.

To protect our members in battles that may lie ahead, the Executive Board is looking into the viability of a strike fund; be sure to let your representative know where you stand.

In other news, we said goodbye to a person we were proud to have in our corner to stand up for workers’ rights and social justice. After serving with honour at Hydro Ottawa and as our local’s recording secretary, the time has come for Linda Larocque to turn the page. We know Linda will remain a friend of labour. We thank her for her many years of dedicated service and support, and we wish her happiness and success wherever her journey leads.

Paddy Wainich, P.S.

A Few Area Projects
L.U. 684 (c,i,rts&st), MODESTO, CA—A couple of projects in our area have allowed us to put some of our members to work who have been unemployed for up to 24 months. The jobs are not big and will not last long periods of time, but it is good to have something.

We will have our fifth-year apprentice graduation dinner June 24. Congratulations to our new journeymen: John Bargis, John Baughman, Chris Bowden, Kyle Esminger, Joshua Grider, Matthew Hay, Peter Jeffery, Benjamin Lopez, Jason Overton, Jeremy Quinnett, Derek Scheit, Justin Terry and Edward Yap.

Our yearly picnic will be July 21 at Lake Yosemite in Merced. It’s always a fun time for the kids. Make plans to attend.

Richard Venema, Rep.

Apprentice Graduating Class
L.U. 570 (i,wo,spa&k), TUCSON, AZ—Congratulations to the graduating fifth-year Apprenticeship Class. Local 570 and the Tucson Electrical JATC are proud to present our 2011 graduating class. [Photo, at bottom.] Top honors of “Apprentice of the Year” go to Kevin Wolstenholme.

Scott W. Tool, Organizer

“Know Your Numbers”
L.U. 654 (i), CHESTER, PA—Changes in our Blue Cross system are aimed at educating members on the importance of getting a free, annual physical.

Knowing your cholesterol levels, triglyceride levels and blood pressure numbers can provide insight into your overall health. Early detection and treatment of a developing condition can often prevent the onset of a serious illness. The new system requires you to record those basic numbers on the confidential Blue Cross Web site in order to maintain your lower copayment. If you do not get a physical and input the information on the site, your copayments increase. Not everyone’s, just yours.

Schedule a physical today.

I can’t stress enough the significance of obtaining a TWICS card. You cannot work in our refineries without it and it can take a few weeks to receive it. Registration can be done online to speed up the process, and photo centers are nearby.

The local economy has seen improvement this year and should provide some opportunities for our members leading into summer.

Jim Russell, Pres.

Summer Projects Anticipated
L.U. 530 (i,osb,ttb), SARNIA, ONTARIO, CANADA—With work in Sarnia very slow at the time of this writing, there is not much to report. We are currently looking forward to working on two new solar farms this summer, another 40 megawatts of green energy, and the several construction jobs that go with it.

With our slow times Local 530 would like to thank Locals 2038 Regina, 804 Kitchener and 303 St. Catharines for continuing to keep our members employed on the road.

Local 530 is saddened to report the loss of Bra. Don Ostnum and Bra. Brent Merrick.

Al Byers, P.S.

Local 530 bids farewell to a friend, Sister Linda Larocque, longtime IBEW activist.

Local 570 congratulates apprentice graduates. Front row, Instructor Jim Redzinak (left), Matthew Eason, Coryn Brunenkant, Craig Thompson, Bryan Pennington, Jose Lopez, Luke Mockness; back row, Kevin Wolstenholme, Taylor Grenfell, William Bettis, Anthony Ambnitus, Daniel Hanson and James Browning Jr.

Contractor Business Course
L.U. 520 (i,spa), AUSTIN, TX—IBEW Local 520 hosted its first Electrical Contractor Business course in January 2011. The three-day course was presented by Matt Kolbinsky, president of Pro Union Consulting (www.prounionconsulting.com).

Matt is also a member of IBEW Local 222. The presentation included an in-depth course on becoming an electrical contractor.

Included in the course were speakers from the banking industry, inspections, insurance and bonding, accounting, as well as personal experiences of a local contractor. The course presented the positive aspects of “growing our own contractors” and regaining market share. Congratulations to the 26 IBEW members attending this course.

Local 520 opened negotiations in February 2010 since the collective bargaining agreement expired May 31, 2010. Out of 42 signatory contractors, eight have signed new CBAs, eight NECA contractors opted not to have NECA represent them, and NECA is representing the remaining. Arbitration continues with the seven independent NECA contractors. At press time, Local 520 has concluded two arbitration cases, one with an independent and one with NECA. At this writing, the local has not received a ruling. For more information on the Local 520 negotiations/ arbitration and the arbitration process, visit our Web site www.ibew520.org and click on the Special Announcement page.

Lane Price, P.S.

United We Bargain, Divided We Beg
L.U. 636 (as,ca,hem,spa&s), TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA—As our sisters and brothers “South of the 49th” continue their struggle for justice, dignity and respect against legislators targeting not only unions but the middle class as well, we encourage our members to do whatever we can to let them know we are standing with them in solidarity.

As we have seen, gains earned on the struggles and sacrifices of generations can be lost in the stroke of a pen held by the wrong government—and no passport is needed for such actions to cross the border. For those who do not believe in political action—we ask you to consider the cost of inaction.

Our yearly picnic will be July 21 at Lake Yosemite in Merced. It’s always a fun time for the kids. Make plans to attend.

Richard Venema, Rep.

Local 490 apprentices join solidarity rally, from left: Andrew Kleccek, Keith Fillion, Nate Lavoie, Ben Constantine, Michael Cholue and Drew Richardson.

2011 Graduating Apprentice Class

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Richard Venema, Rep.
Fundraisers Aids Family

Wes Edwards, Adam Brinker and Kerry Howton
FRANKFORT, IL—Local 702 Bros. James Sanchez, o, p, pet, ptc, rtb, rts, spc, st, t, u, uow & ws), WEST New Web Sites & TV Ads
L.U. 756 (es & i), DAYTON BEACH, FL—Floridians are putting job growth on the back burner for “more important” topics that need to be addressed. The Kretz family. This money comes from individual contributions and the sale of 600 sides of ribs cooked and prepared by volunteers. We thank the numerous volunteers and contributors who helped with this endeavor of support for one of our own.

Our local is blessed to have work for our brothers and sisters and a great membership who are there for us when we need them. We need to keep working to support our local union and its members for the betterment of our membership.

Attendance Meeting
L.U. 746 (u), COLUMBUS, OH—On March 18, the local union that make up System Council H-9, including Local 1466, gave final approval to accept American Electric Power’s wage offer of 3 percent, across the board. For our local the new wage rates will take effect June 30 for Units 1 and 2, July 15 for CSP and April 1 for the newly organized Delta Chemical Lab.

In other news, we plan to conduct a steward’s training session at the union hall sometime in June. This will be beneficial to our newly appointed shop stewards. Hopefully the training will also give veteran stewards a chance to share their experiences and maybe gain some new insight as well.

Preliminary discussions with AEP began in May regarding our full contract, which expires in 2012. Be sure to try to attend your local union meetings, to stay updated and have a say in what issues we want to address. Thanks for all you do and as always, be safe out there.

— James Jette, P.S.

Jobs & Purchasing Power
L.U. 936 (u), COCOA, FL—I saw the sign pictured below on the back of a GMC pickup truck in Titusville, FL. The truck was being towed by a motor home heading back to New Jersey and it really hit home and made me think about all the jobs and money that have been lost to countries outside the USA. Buy American products.

Michael D. Holland, F.S.

Web Sites & TV Ads
L.U. 760 (u), WATERTOWN, WI—We are pleased to announce the launch of Local 760’s new Web site www.IBEW760.org.

Also please visit the new Web site for the Electrician Training Academy of Knoxville at www.etaknox.org. The ETAN is jointly sponsored by IBEW Local 760 and the East Tennessee Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). Local 760 also recently sponsored new television commercials that ran on WIBR Channel 10.

George A. Bone, B.M.

Training for Army Brigade
L.U. 776 (i, o, j, rts & spa), CHARLESTON, SC—On March 12 the labor unions of South Carolina supported our state educators at the “Rally for a Moral Budget.”

Approximately 2,500 people marched onto the Statehouse lawn to let our governor and legislators know that the budget is not just about cuts but about people’s lives and how they are affected, in every sector and day to day.

The IBEW as well as all other Building & Trades locals had a good showing. Local 760 thanks Columbus, SC, Local 722 member Jamie Steele and Charlotte, NC, Local 962 member Jerry White for their solidarity by participating with us.

Chuck Moore, B.M.

Division Safety Award
L.U. 1116 (em, lctt & u), TUCSON, AZ—We are constantly talking to the company about manpower throughout the entire company because we feel there is a need for hiring people before we lose the knowledge of our retiring members. The Corporate Safety Committee has a new charter and things seem to be progressing; this local feels a union worker is a safer worker.

The UniSource Division Safety Award was presented to TEP Energy Resources Department for their safety improvement; the Sundt Generating Station has more than 450 days without an accident and the Springerville Generating Station cut their number of accidents in half. Congratulations to our members at those stations for their hard work, which earned them the UniSource Energy Division Safety Award for 2010.

SGC Chmn. Rick Ryan thanks everyone for their great efforts in making SSG a safer place to work.

UNS Gas Chmn. Frank Gillis congratulates the local union and its membership for their tremendous victories in the 2010 and 2011 arbitrations regarding health care and working rules.

Local 1116 wishes to thank Bro. Jeff Martin for his years of service as president, as he recently announced that he will not seek to run for president in this year’s election.

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Attend Union Meetings
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Michael D. Holland, F.S.
The Courage to Rebuild Our Economy

Edwin D. Hill
International President

The Electrical Worker was the name of the first official publication of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1893 (the NB EW 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 is the official publication of the IBEW and seeks 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.

From the Officers

We Need Clean Air and Jobs

No one ever said that developing a framework to reduce pollution while supporting good jobs and affordable energy would be easy. For too long, Capitol Hill has punted the issue, putting off the hard decisions we need to make about our energy future. But time is running out.

Proposed Environmental Protection Agency air standards for coal-burning utilities go into effect by 2014. While we fully support the goal of reducing emissions, the limited three-year time frame for utilities to retrofit plants for coal-scrubbers and close aged facilities would have a disastrous effect on jobs and energy prices, dramatically slowing our economic recovery.

The new rules could potentially eliminate more than 50,000 utility and related jobs, with more than 200,000 in indirect job losses. Many of those lost jobs would be in the industrial belt—including Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia and Pennsylvania—a region that has been particularly hard hit by the recession.

While the IBEW has been active in efforts to help reduce our dependence on coal by developing alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and nuclear, the reality is we are still very far from being able to rely on those sources for most of our energy needs.

The EPA itself was forced to admit in May that its proposed standards were based on faulty math, leading it to underestimate the effect they would have on jobs and the economy.

But at this point the agency has no freedom to alter the timeline. A 2007 Supreme Court ruling ordered the EPA to implement the Clean Energy Act’s emissions guidelines within a three-year period, which means the job of crafting a more realistic implementation schedule now lies with Congress.

Finding the right balance between our energy needs, defending good jobs and cutting carbon emissions is a challenge that all of us—elected officials, industry leaders and union members alike—need to take up.
What Democracy Looks Like

The spark that was lit in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and other states continues here in Missouri, where workers are under attack by politicians who are paying back their CEO friends for their generous campaign contributions.

This unprecedented moment and solidarity is coming from the ground up—not from any one person or organization, but from millions of workers across America. The labor movement realizes that an attack on any group of workers is an attack on all of us.

That’s why working people in our state and across the nation have joined together in actions to keep our solidarity growing. Every concerned citizen is welcome to join us as we rally in support of Missouri workers’ rights and those of workers in every state of this nation.

We extend this invitation to all activists and supporters throughout our community to participate in this struggle for human rights and dignity for all working class citizens.

Let our revival of the labor movement continue by each of us joining in on the concerted activity being displayed across the nation and show America what real democracy looks like.

Take the Money and Run?

I have a question about the article on the Phillips plant closing in Sparta, Tenn.


The story stated that Phillips had received more than $7 million in U.S. federal stimulus funds. Is there any federal law concerning a company that receives federal money, and then jumps ship and moves the plant to another country? If not, I think there should be. That is also our tax money being “stolen” by a company that only sees profit margins over it’s workers and a quality product. And is there any state laws concerning the same issue? I’m sure this company received state and local tax abatements for new equipment and training of employees. Was any of this money recovered and put back into the local treasuries?

I myself was a victim of NAFTA in the late 1990s. The company that I worked for thought it would make more money if it moved operations to the Deep South and Mexico. In the end, quality suffered and the company was sold to another corporation.

If our government was really concerned about our deficit, maybe it should consider going after these companies that take federal money and run.

Tammy Carter
Local 983 member, Huntington, Ind.

Misleading on Nukes?

I found the nuclear safety article in the May 2011 Electrical Worker (“U.S. Nuclear Industry Continues Safety with Eye to the Future”) to be misleading propaganda. This makes me wonder how many of your articles are lacking factual statements.

“With more than 19 years of experience as a reactor operator at the station, Wagner is considered something of a nuclear expert by people in the community.”

This is not relevant to industry safety.

“Every U.S. nuclear power plant has an in-depth seismic analysis and is designed and constructed to withstand the maximum projected earthquake that could occur in its area without any breach of safety systems.” The Japanese plant was reportedly crippled by the tsunami, not the earthquake.

“The successful safety records at U.S. facilities come as no surprise to Dave Mullen.” The U.S. nuclear safety record is quite poor compared to the Japanese.

There are several descriptions of the training and regulations, but other countries would have similar requirements.

I haven’t been this frustrated reading a piece of journalism in some time.

Dave Schepp
Local 254 member, Calgary, Alberta

[Editor’s Note: The writer says that a member’s 19 years of on-the-job experience is “not relevant to industry safety.” We consider a member with nearly two decades in one of the most demanding, high-pressure industry jobs to have safety expertise. He also says that the tsunami—not the earthquake—set in motion the disaster at Fukushima. We agree. We report the tsunami triggering the devastation, and the earthquake after shocks exacerbating the problem—which is in accordance with press reports following the event. To reemphasize our own safety record: No U.S. nuclear plant has faced a tsunami (though we have safeguards), but our plants have withstood tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding and other events. The worst, Three Mile Island, had a profound impact on training and plant operation. Though Fukushima’s disaster was not on our shores, learning from it will strengthen our fleet’s ability to meet future challenges.]
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