Labor, Lawmakers Take on Payroll Fraud

It’s still before dawn in Austin, Texas. The sun won’t be seen for hours, but parking lots and street corners throughout the city are alive with chatter as laborers, carpenters and even some electricians arrive early to queue up for jobs. Construction is booming in the metro area, and subcontractors are on the lookout for employees willing to work on the cheap. Spanish is the first language here. Most are immigrants from Mexico and Central America. Many are undocumented.

Dependent on the goodwill of the foreman for work, their average hourly wage often amounts to less than $10. They don’t have an office or business cards, and often the only work items they own are a pair of steel-toed boots. The last thing they would call themselves are small business owners. But according to tax forms filed by their employer (at least for those who don’t just pay under the table), that is exactly what they are. And that means they are ineligible for unemployment benefits, minimum wage, overtime pay or Social Security. And they are not covered by the National Labor Relations Act and other workplace protections.

The practice is called “1099ing,” after the IRS Form 1099 issued to contractors, and it’s one of the biggest problems facing workers across the country. It’s against the law, but in Texas, payroll fraud is becoming more and more the norm in the construction industry. “I can’t emphasize how big a problem it is,” says Austin Local 520 Business Manager Chris Wagner. “And it ends up hurting those businesses that follow the law.”

Deliberate misclassification can save dishonest contractors upwards of 30 percent in payroll and other taxes, but for workers, taxpayers and honest employers, the practice amounts to millions in lost wages and revenue.

A recent analysis of the state construction industry by the Workers Defense Project—an Austin-based workers’ rights group—found that more than 40 percent of Lone Star construction workers were misclassified as independent contractors. The group says that rampant misclassification amounts to a hidden tax on employers who follow the law. As its report states: “Payroll fraud in the construction industry results in at least $34.5 million in lost unemployment insurance taxes each year … As the tax rate goes up, and law-abiding employers pay more for each of their employees, the contractors who avoid taxes get an even greater advantage.”

The federal government also loses out to the tune of $4.7 million in lost tax revenues, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office. The end result is continued pressure on employers to drive working standards, along with wages and benefits, downward. As one subcontractor told WDP researchers: “Payroll fraud pushes the market lower, lower and lower. If it doesn’t change, we’ll have to do things like eliminate medical benefits, maybe cut wages, maybe stop their 401(k). If it doesn’t stop in two or three years, we may have to join them.”

And with no workplace protections or overtime rules in effect, misclassified workers are ripe for abuse. “There are people getting paid $8 to $12 an hour for 12 to 14 hours a day, seven days a week, straight-time, no overtime, no benefits,” says Wagner. The practice also lets employers off the hook about having to inquire about their workers’ legal status, making it an easy way to exploit undocumented workers. Telling the difference between an independent contractor and a regular employee is relatively easy, says Kim Bobo, executive director of Interfaith Workers Justice. She is the author of “Wage Theft in
EXPOSING THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY
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worker misclassification—payroll fraud—happens when an employer falsely labels his employees as independent contractors. Found in every part of the economy—construction, broadcasting, telecommunications, the service sector and entertainment—it lets employers get out of paying state and federal payroll taxes.

- Federal, state and coffers: The federal government loses out on billions of dollars in Social Security, Medicare and unemployment insurance payments. Misclassification also costs the states millions of dollars in unemployment Insurance taxes.
- Workers: Independent contractors do not pay into Social Security and Medicare or receive unemployment, overtime pay or workers’ compensation. They also don’t qualify for the minimum wage and are not protected by labor law and many safety regulations.
- Honest Employers: Dishonest contractors can undercut those that follow the law during the bidding process, making it hard for law abiding employers to compete.

It is also a problem in the telecommunications industry. Over the last decade, hundreds of cell towers, used by major telecommunications carriers to broadcast cell phone signals, went up across the country. As the PBS news program Frontline and investigative Web site ProPublica revealed last summer, installing and maintaining these structures, which can exceed hundreds, even thousands, of feet is among the most dangerous jobs in America, with a death rate 10 times that of the construction industry.

Many of those injured workers and their families did not qualify for workers’ compensation, because they were officially classified as independent contractors. AT&T sought to have a lawsuit filed against the company by the families of two cell tower workers who died—due in large part to unsafe working conditions—dismissed because the carrier claimed both men were contractors, not full-time employees.

AT&T would later enter into a confidential settlement with the family of one of the workers. A judge dismissed the case against the carrier regarding the other worker.

Cracking Down
One of the most effective forces against payroll fraud is the building trades unions, says Ruckelshaus. “They are in a good position to fight this problem because they often have access to those who are the victims.”

Wagner says Local 520 is active in targeting payroll fraud in the Texas construction industry, running their own investigations into companies that misclassify workers. They report violators to the Department of Labor and the Texas Workforce Commission. But the problem, says Wagner, is that investigations often take so long that the projects are complete by the time authorities are ready to take action. In addition, the punishment is usually not strong enough to deter wrong-doers from doing it again. “You might get a fine, but a lot of contractors just consider it the cost of doing business,” he says.

Elected officials and government regulators are starting to get more aggressive about cracking down on misclassification—in part by the recession, which has forced cash-strapped state governments to go after needed back taxes.

Since 2003, more than 30 states have passed anti-payroll fraud legislation. In some locations, new laws, along with beefed-up enforcement of existing laws, have helped expose some of the worst offenders and recovered millions in dollars in back wages and taxes. In Massachusetts, a special joint task force on employee misclassification set up by Gov. Deval Patrick in 2008 has netted the state more than $3 million in back wages and fines, while bringing 24,000 workers under workers’ compensation insurance.

In New York State, regulatory officials identified more than 18,000 instances of payroll fraud, assessing $32 million in back wages and $455 million in back taxes.

In some states, legislation has been passed that targets misclassification in the construction industry. Baltimore Building and Construction Trades Council President Rod Easter, who is also a Local 24 member, says the verdict is still out on how effective the 2007 legislation is, but said he is hopeful it will act as a tougher deterrent for irresponsible contractors.

“The economic downturn made it difficult to measure the law’s impact, but with work picking up, I think it will prevent misclassification from spreading,” he says.

In January, Texas state Rep. Joe Deshotel introduced legislation that would subject employers who deliberately misclassify their workers to fines of up to $5,000 per employee not properly classified.

“One person is interested in this because it’s socially wrong,” Deshotel told the Texas Tribune. “Other people are supportive because it gives unfair advantages to their business competitors.”

Deshotel is a leading Democrat and a union ally, but his bill has received wide bipartisan support. Both Republicans and leading business leaders, including Stan Marek, head of one of Texas’ largest nonunion construction contractors associations, supports it. So does the Texas Association of Business.

“I’m sympathetic to conservative arguments against increased regulation of almost any business,” writes journalist Scott Braddock in the Dallas Morning News. “But this is a rule-of-law issue, and legitimate businesses can’t compete with those who cheat ... that’s why more and more conservative Republicans in state leadership are saying Texas must crack down on this growing problem.”

On the federal level, the Department of Labor under former Secretary Hilda Solis ramped up its enforcement efforts, making fighting payroll fraud a priority.

The department entered into memo-rands of understanding with 14 states to go after law-breaking employers. Since 2011, the Wage and Hour Division has collected $95 million in back wages resulting from payroll fraud, which the department reports is a 50 percent increase in the number of workers receiving back pay since the agreements were signed.

Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) have introduced legislation that would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act to require employers to provide employees their formal work status in writing, in addition to establishing a presumption of regular employment for most workers.

The local 520’s Wagner agrees, saying that penalties in Texas are much too lenient. “Too often, by the time the state comes down on guilty employers, they’ve already finished that project and left town.”

One of the more important things union members can do to fight misclassification is to raise public awareness of payroll fraud. According to the National Consumers League, two in three Americans have not heard of misclassification. “We have to let politicians and the community know that it’s a problem, and something has to be done,” says Wagner.

What You Can Do to Fight Payroll Fraud

Union members can be the most effective advocates against payroll fraud. The following resources can help you take action.

- The Department of Labor’s worker misclassification Web site contains comprehensive information about workers’ rights, including wage and hour laws on its Web site: www.workplacefairness.org

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- Want to find out if you are a contractor or a regular employee? The IRS has 20 Questions that every employer and employee needs to ask: http://ohioline.osu.edu/cdf-fact/1179.html
The unemployment rate for workers under the age of 25 has improved to 16 percent since its peak just short of 20 percent in 2010. But the last time unemployment for young workers was this high was nearly 30 years ago, reports the Economic Policy Institute. Families are losing out.

The Pew Research Center reports that between 1984 and 2009, the median net worth of households headed by adults under the age of 35 fell by 68 percent. The inflation-adjusted median income of Americans over age 35 rose by 8 percent between 2005 and 2010, but the income of younger Americans declined by 4 percent. The statistics underline the generational differences in the IBEW.

“The 50-year-olds went on the road for a couple of years and bought a house. I couldn’t do that now. Times were better 20 to 30 years ago. Wages were in line with the cost of living,” says Clay McNeely, 29, a third-generation member of Orlando, Fla., Local 606 and vice chair of the Florida Young Workers Committee.

The alarming barrage of economic and employment statistics knocks the notion that decent, rewarding jobs or stronger economic anchors will become easier to find anytime soon for hundreds of thousands of young workers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics says that at the current rate, by 2020, nearly three-fourths of all job openings in the U.S. will pay a median wage of less than $55,000 a year, with nearly 30 percent paying a median of about $20,000 a year. What will the consequences of this economic slide be for young workers, for their families, for organized labor, for society-at-large?

Will the IBEW and our local unions encourage and nurture a new generation of leaders and assist them in organizing their peers to build hope amid despair and security amid uncertainty? The average age of IBEW local business managers is between 49 and 54. We need younger workers to carry on the union for future generations.

In this and future issues of the Electrical Worker, we will be discussing these questions. We won’t just be writing about young workers, we will be hearing their voices.

Young IBEW members will report on how they are networking with their peers and their more senior mentors across North America to find new ways to encourage the next generation to organize their workplaces, join the IB EW or become more engaged in their local unions.

Others will describe efforts they have launched to spread information on unions and the benefits of organizing among young men and women for whom, as Marlena Fontes, a student at Cornell University’s Institute of Labor Relations says, “The question is not ‘Union Yes,’ but ‘Union What?’”

We encourage our members and readers to participate in the discussion. Send a letter or post a message on Facebook. Rejuvenating the IB EW and the labor movement means a lot of talking and even more listening.

Young Members Step Up Activism, Build Hope

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The unem ploym ent rate for workers 18-24 in America today has never been higher since the government began keeping track in 1948. But, with a little luck, hopes and prospects for the future were alive. For the generation that comprises the majority of local union leaders in the IBEW, union cards were often the tickets to success.

By contrast, more than five decades later, the aspirations of millions of young workers are fading or in jeopardy. Even for those young workers fortunate enough to enter apprenticeship programs, long stretches of unemployment and financial distress are all too common.

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Young Workers’ Uphill Climb to Decent Jobs

- The unemployment rate for workers 18-24 in America today has never been higher since the government began keeping track in 1948.
- Pew Research Center (2012)
- Young adults are only 35.9 percent of the work force, but are 26.4 percent of unemployed workers.
- Long-term unemployment has typically returned to pre-recession levels by this point in an economic recovery. But 44 months into the current recovery, unemployment amongst 20-24-year-old jobseekers is 237 percent of historic rates.
- 648,000 young workers have been out of work for six months or more.
- Brookings Institution (2013)
- The prospects for young workers of color are even worse. Peak unemployment rates from 2007 to 2010 were 15 percent for white workers, 29 percent for Hispanic workers and 20 percent for black workers.
- Economic Policy Institute
- Unionization raises young workers’ wages 12.4 percent—or about $2.25 per hour—relative to young workers who are not in unions.
- Earnings losses from graduating during a recession last for up to 15 years. New workers suffer greater losses than those already on the job, who might see smaller raises but started their careers when salaries were higher.
- University of Toronto economics professor Philip Oreopoulos, Columbia University professor Till von Wachter and economist Andrew Heisz of Statistics Canada.
North of 49° | Au nord du 49° parallèle

New Growth in Ontario: Tree Trimmers Join IBEW

Tree trimmers perform one of the most dangerous jobs in the utility industry, clearing broken branches from downed power lines, and sawing off overgrown limbs growing dangerously near live wires. It’s tough work, but in Ontario, tree trimmers have also suffered from low pay and skimpy benefits, lacking any kind of voice on the job.

But now Tamarak Tree Care workers in Ottawa are in the midst of negotiating their first contract with the New York State-based company—making them the only group of union tree trimmers in the province. “This is an emerging industry for us, one we need to aggressively go after,” says Toronto Local 666 Education Officer Paddy Vanich.

The Ontario Labour Relations Board certified the 27 workers as members of Toronto Local 666 last fall, after a majority voted to join the IBEW in October. Tree trimming was traditionally done by the utility companies, but in recent years, the work has been subcontracted to specialists like Tamarack, Asplundh and others—the majority of which are nonunion.

“In any other job, once we lose the work, it’s hard to get it back,” says Local 666 Business Manager Barry Brown. “That’s why this victory is so important for us.”

The campaign started after two Ottawa Local 656 organizers, John Harrison and John Bourke, informed Local 666 that Tamarack workers were talking about how to get a voice on the job. Among the tree-trimmers’ top concerns were respect in the workplace and wages and benefits. Lead Organizer Brett Youngberg met with employees and helped put together a voluntary organizing committee.

The company was not happy to hear the news. “Tamarack made it clear they didn’t want to be the first tree-trimming company to have a union,” Brown says. Tamarack attempted to claim that it was an agricultural business, and therefore not covered by provincial labour law.

The labour board disagreed, allowing the election to go forward. Now Local 666 is looking to organize other Tamarack locations, as well as additional tree-trimming contractors operating in Ontario.

Brown says the results of the first contract negotiations will have a major impact on the future of the industry—potentially setting off a race to the top in a sector that for too long has been marked by low wages and a lack of on-the-job respect. “We want to create a level playing field so we can raise the standards for all tree trimmers in the province,” he says.

In March, Local 656 scored another organizing victory, winning union representation for 98 Toronto-area NCR technicians. The workers maintain service check-out and ATM machines. Employees, distressed by unfair treatment, contacted organizers Bill Martindale and Youngberg late last year. An Internet search showed that Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213 already represented NCR technicians in Western Canada.

Within a month, the unit was certified and is getting ready to begin negotiations for its first contract. “It’s a big victory for us and the labour movement,” Brown said.

Nouvelle augmentation d’effectifs en Ontario : des élagueurs joignent les rangs de la FIOE

Le travail effectué par les élagueurs est l’un des plus dangereux dans le secteur des services publics; leurs tâches consistent entre autres à enlever les branches brisées sur des lignes électriques sectionnées ou à scié des branches qui poussent dangereusement à proximité des câbles électriques. Les élagueurs de l’Ontario touchaient des salaires relativement bas et peu d’avantages sociaux, malgré le travail difficile qu’ils doivent accomplir.

Les travailleurs à l’emploi de l’entreprise arboricole Tamarak Tree Care à Ottawa, sont en train de négocier leur première convention collective avec l’entreprise dont le siège social est situé dans l’État de New York, ce fait fait de eux que le premier groupe d’élagueurs syndiqués dans la province. « Il s’agit d’un secteur émergent pour nous et nous devons travailler avec détermination pour recruter ces travailleurs » dit Paddy Vanich, responsable de l’éducation syndicale à la section locale 656 de Toronto. 

Lors d’un vote tenu au mois d’octobre, le groupe de travailleurs avaient voté en majorité en faveur d’une adhésion à la FIOE; la section locale 656 de Toronto a donc été accréditée l’automne dernier par la Commission des relations de travail de l’Ontario afin de représenter les 27 employés de l’entreprise.

Les éléments d’élagueurs sur les arbres avaient toujours été effectués par les entreprises de services publics mais ces dernières années, les travaux ont été donnés en sous-traitance à des entreprises spécialisées, notamment Tamarak, Asplundh et d’autres, dont la majorité est non syndiquée. « Comme c’est le cas pour tout emploi, une fois que nous le perdons, il est difficile de le reprendre. C’est pourquoi cette victoire est si importante pour nous » poursuit Barry Brown, gérant d’affaires de la S.L. 656.

La campagne a débuté après que les deux agents de syndicalisation de la S.L. 566 d’Ottawa, John Harrison et John Bourke, aient informé les dirigeants de la S.L. 656 que les travailleurs de Tamarack souhaitaient une voix au travail. Le respect au travail, les salaires et les avantages sociaux figuraient parmi les principales préoccupations des élagueurs. Le confreitre Brett Youngberg, responsable de la syndicalisation, a rencontré les employés et a contribué à mettre sur pied un comité de syndicalisation formé de volontaires. Ces nouvelles ont plutôt déplu à la compagnie. « Les dirigeants ont clairement indiqué qu’ils n’avaient pas l’intention que Tamarak devienne la première entreprise d’élageage à avoir des employés syndiqués » ajoute le confreitre Brown. Ils ont tenté de faire valoir que Tamarak était une entreprise agricole et que par conséquent, elle ne relevait pas du droit du travail provincial.

La commission des relations de travail était d’avis contraire et a accepté que le vote ait lieu. La section locale 656 examine maintenant d’autres sites de Tamarack en vue de syndiquer les employés; elle vise également d’autres entreprises d’élageage qui opèrent en Ontario. Selon le confreitre Brown, le résultat de la négociation de la première convention collective aura un impact majeur sur l’avenir de ce secteur - et pourrait lancer une course pour la première place dans un secteur marqué depuis trop longtemps, par des salaires et des avantages peu élevés et un manque de respect au travail. « Nous voulons créer des conditions équitables afin de pouvoir rehausser les normes pour tous les élagueurs de la province » ajoute-t-il. 

En mars dernier, la section locale 656 a remporté une autre victoire en syndiquant 98 techniciens NCR de la région de Toronto, qui entretiennent et font le service sur les guichets automatiques. Les employés en avaient assez de l’absence de traitement équitable de la part de la compagnie et ont communiqué avec les responsables de la syndicalisation Bill Martindale et Brett Youngberg, vers la fin de l’année dernière. Une recherche effectuée sur Internet nous a permis de constater que la section locale 213 de Vancouver, en Colombie-Britannique, représente également des techniciens NCR dans l’Ouest du Canada. La section locale 656 a été accréditée dans le mois qui a suivi la demande et se prépare à débuter les négociations de la première convention collective. « C’est une grande victoire pour nous et pour le mouvement ouvrier » conclut le confreitre Brown.
Retired

James R. McAvoy

DECEASED

The officers and staff of the IBEW are saddened to report that retired Eighth District Executive Council member James R. McAvoy died on Feb. 21. A native of Blind River, Ontario, Brother McAvoy joined Victoria, British Columbia, Local 230 in 1957 after serving as an electrician in the Royal Canadian Navy in Korea. McAvoy, who retired in 1996, served for 20 years as business manager and financial secretary of Local 230 and as president of the Joint Shipyard Bargaining Council. Active in many facets of the IBEW and the labor movement in Canada, McAvoy served as president of the IBEW Provincial Council of British Columbia and was appointed to the Labour Relations Board of British Columbia. He also served as chairman of the Joint Electrical Industry’s Welfare and Pension Plans.

appointed to the IEC in 1984, McAvoy was re-elected in 1986 and 1991. After retiring, McAvoy lived in Nanaimo, British Columbia.

In an obituary he wrote for the Vancouver Sun, First District International Representative Laird Cronk said, “Jim led an extraordinary life, including circumnavigating the world on HMCS Haida and transiting the Northwest Passage on icebreaker HMCS Labrador, all before the age of 21! Jim then spent 30 outstanding years working in the labour movement.”

The officers and members send our deep condolences to Brother McAvoy’s companion, Paulette Senger, his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Carl Cantrell

RETIRED

Tenth District International Representative Carl Cantrell retired effective May 1.

Initiated into Nashville Local 229 in 1978, Cantrell moved his membership to Tullahoma, Tenn., Local 253 in 1984, after obtaining a job at Arnold Air Force Base.

“I wish to thank the members of the IBEW as well as international President Hill for the opportunity to serve the greatest union in history,” says Cantrell. “We have some of the brightest people in labor and outside labor. If we utilize them to their fullest potential, there is no reason this union will not endure and prosper.”

Brother Cantrell, who was elected as recording secretary and financial secretary of Local 2113 in the early ’90s, gained recognition for his diligence in financial matters. He was appointed a trustee of the Southern Electrical Health and Welfare Fund and, from 1997 to 2000, served as benefits chairman of the Air Engineering Metal Trades Council. In 1995, Cantrell, who had previously earned an associate degree in business administration, became the first student to fulfill all requirements for graduation, receiving a bachelor’s degree from the newly-accredited National Labor College.

Cantrell combined his early interest in the Internet with his labor movement activism, developing Web sites for his local union, IBEW’s Tenth District and the Air Engineering Metal Trades Council.

In 2000, after serving as legislative chairman of the metal trades council, Cantrell was assigned to the International Office as Webmaster in the Journal/Media Department. In 2006, Brother Cantrell was assigned to the CRBY/Blaways and Appeals Department. His retirement comes after he was reassigned to the Tenth District in September 2012.

Married, with five sons and four grandchildren, Cantrell, who plays the guitar and has written country and western songs, hopes to have more time for instructing.”

“Steve is a very good journeyman in the field and brings that into the classroom,” said Local 573 Training Director Eric Davis.

“Steve is always on the edge of the technology, ready to instruct our members for the jobs of the future.”

— Kevin Miller, Local 573 President

Circuit

Ohio Member Named Instructor of the Year

Steve Fife wanted to be a teacher when he started college. In 1992, after a few years in school, he took a closer look at how much rookie high school teachers made—and decided to become an electrician.

Fife joined the apprenticeship program of Warren, Ohio, Local 273 and got his journeyman license in 1997. Three years later, he got another shot at teaching when he was asked to become an instructor. This year, Brother Fife was named the IBEW’s Instructor of the Year by HousePower, an online video magazine for construction members.

“Steve is a very good journeyman in the field and brings that into the classroom,” said Local 573 Training Director Eric Davis.

“Steve is pretty aggressive in his studies,” Miller said. “He is always on the edge of the technology, ready to instruct our members for the jobs of the future.”

Fife says continuing education is key. Since receiving his instructor training at the IBEW’s National Training Institute in Ann Arbor, Mich., he has returned more than eight times to learn about new technologies. With shale oil gas processing booming, for example, Fife has taken classes about the instrumentation the industry uses. When the installation of wind and solar power generation became popular, Fife says he not only made sure he could teach how to install the latest equipment, he sent dozens of e-mails to manufacturers asking them to donate materials to the program.

Davis says he brings the same tenacity to his students.

“He will teach until everybody in the room gets it,” Davis said. “They won’t walk out until they know what they need to know.”

Fife said that he teaches the way he likes to learn.

“Some people, they have to touch it. Other people learn from the book,” Fife said. “I’m more of a do-it-out-in-the-field guy.”

Davis says that Fife’s award has attracted attention in local media and has the membership, retirees and contractors “fired up.”

Fife will be recognized formally at April’s Construction and Maintenance Conference in Washington, D.C.
The best way to tell if your photograph is of a high enough quality to print is by looking at the pixel width and resolution. Generally, photos should not be less than 2,200 pixels wide at 300 dpi. Most computer programs have a “Properties” tab you can use to check pixel width and file size. Another good indication of image quality is file size. Typically the file size should be listed in megabytes (MB). A file size listed in kilobytes (KB) is generally too small.

Just because a photo looks good on screen doesn’t necessarily mean it will be large enough for print publication.

If the image is too big, we can reduce the size. If it’s too small, we can’t enlarge it without pixelation, which compromises clarity. Err on the side of sending a larger photo.

Cameras also have adjustable settings for photo resolution. For print quality, camera settings should be set to an image size of 5 M (megapixels) or higher. If you’re unsure about the settings, a good rule of thumb is to set the camera to the highest quality setting it allows.

Cellphone photos may be acceptable, depending on the phone model. Smartphones (iPhone, Android and Windows) usually produce files that are high enough in quality as long as the original file is sent. Blackberry and other non-smartphone photographic devices are too low in quality to be printed.

We still accept print photos. If you send in a print, please note on the back of the photo if you’d like us to return it and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We don’t want you to be disappointed if your image appears blurry or if your photo is not usable. If you have any specific questions about your images, please call (202) 728-6291 or email Communications.

Wanted: High Quality Photos

We want to print the photos you submit. Sometimes we can’t—usually because they do not have a high enough resolution or pixel size. Due to deadline pressures and the volume of articles and photos processed each month, we may be unable to alert you in time for you to resubmit another photo. To ensure your photographs are publishable, please remember the following:

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Credit Union’s 60th Anniversary

L.U. 11 (I,rt,skp), LOS ANGELES, CA—The Los Angeles Electrical Workers Credit Union recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. The LAEWCU administers the Christmas, Vacation and Holiday Fund for IBEW Local 11 members and participants working in our jurisdiction. The credit union recently purchased a new facility located at 3820 East Colorado Blvd. in Pasadena, CA. If you have considered joining the LAEWCU, now is the time—you can open an account with only $20. The credit union will install an ATM at the Electrical Training Institute for member convenience. The estimated installation date is September 2013. Go to www.laewcu.com for more information about the credit union and benefits and services available.

Los Angeles held its primary elections on March 5. The two top candidates running for mayor of the city will face each other in a May 21 runoff. IBEW Local 11 supports Wendy Greuel for mayor. There will also be runoffs for three City Council seats. (The term of office for city council seats is four years; council members may serve a maximum of three terms, for a potential 12 years on the council.) Elected officials in these positions affect our ability to continue to secure jobs and benefits for our members. Members are asked to vote in the city council elections. Help get endorsed candidates elected, talk to friends and family about our candidates, and most importantly…vote.

Diana Limon, PS.

Utility Local Update

L.U. 15 (s), DOWNERS GROVE, IL—Local 15’s Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC) was officially chartered as the IBEW Local 15 EWMC Chapter. The chapter is named after Local 15 Bus. Rep. Charlotte White, who was severely injured in a car accident and unable to return to work. Charlotte was very active in both the EWMC and Local 15, and she is missed.

ComEd held the ribbon cutting for a new training center in Rockford, IL. The center will be used for training overhead, underground, substa-
Thom as, president and CEO.
Generation; D uff B oyd, director, H ealth &  Safety; and Gaëtan
to right, from  N B  Pow er are: Keith Cronkhite, vice president,
IB EW  Local 37 B us. M gr. Ross Galbraith (standing, far right) speaks
to the news media about multiple job posting at the same time.

Delegates at this meeting said it was not enough to
clarify their concerns.

Local 41 is pleased to w elcome
Don While for volunteering their tim e and their
work at the Heart Run & Walk fundraiser. From  left: Tom  Slocum , Labor Council;


delays. We have a long, tough road ahead, but
work remains strong for our O utside
work and the necessary safety gear, encourage co-workers to work safe in their choices,
speak up if you see something that is not safe, and
if necessary, exercise your right to refuse a task.

’53 Recognizing Its Members’
L.U. 5 3 (lctt,m0,o,18u), KANSAS CI TY, MO—Local 5 3 con-
gratulates several recent retirees! Judy Johnson, ware-
housem an at the N ew  M adrid P ow er P lant, retired
Feb. 28 after 3 1 years of service. G ary White,
yard equipm ent operator at the Thom as H ill Energy
Center, retired Jan. 22 after 3 0 years of service.

Joint A pprenticeship Training Com m ittee. H e w as
selected as training director in 2002.

N uclear G enerating Station. We ratified tw o new  agree-
ments for our m em bers w orking at City of Banning.

Riverside by providing tem porary pow er and equip-
m ent. More than 1,000 low -incom e people received
medical, dental and optometric care.

We are sad to report the passing of Eric
Cam ron, Frank Lopez, Eugene “Joe” M endez and
Manny Rivera. Our thoughts and prayers are with
their families and friends.

Live well, work safe, work union!

Stan Stosel, P.S.

Don While for volunteering their tim e and their
work at the Heart Run & Walk fundraiser. From  left: Tom  Slocum , Labor Council;

Community Service
L.U. 4 7 (lctt,mo,o,u,k8we), DIAMOND BAR, CA—Wishing all IB EW members a
happy Memorial Day. Remember, this day commemorates those who
lost their lives protecting us. It’s time for us to reevaluate ourselves to the
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‘A Strong Voice for Safety’
L.U. 3 7 (em,ok,u), FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK,
CANADA—Local 37 is a strong voice for safety in the workplace. From participating in safety days to host-
ing monthly corporate safety meetings, Local 37
views safety as everyone’s responsibility. Work
methods and meaningful taskboards must be car-
rried out with safety in mind.

Local 37 Pres. Steve Hayes recently co-chaired the first IB EW Canadian Utilities Safety meeting. This national group made up of IB EW locals across the country has vowed to continue meeting twice per year, the next meeting being in May 2013.

Delegates at this meeting said it was not enough for the IB EW to support Safety in the Workplace, but
crucial to visibly communicate that support.

Local 37 calls all IB EW members to action—it’s important to be safe. Use the right tools and proce-
dures for the job, wear the necessary safety gear, encourage co-workers to work safe in their choices,
speak up if you see something that is not safe, and
if necessary, exercise your right to refuse a task.

Ross Golbraith, B.M.

‘Work is Picking Up’
L.U. 4 3 (em,bt), SYRACUSE, NY—Work is starting
to pick up again. This spring’s refuel outage at Nine
Mile Point Unit 1 took more than 70 journeym en,
with 20 getting significant pre-outage work.

In recent months, Upstate and St. Joseph’s
hospitals began erecting steel for a new wing on each
building. As of press time those projects have started
hiring and both these jobs are expected to last about a year.

Local 43 again put a team together for America’s Greatest
Heart Run & Walk, held in Utica at Utica College. This was the
sixth year we participated in the event and at the end of the day
a total of $1,100,333 had been
raised, with over 8,500 people attending.
Shown in the photo (at bottom, right) is our team
taking a “refresher” break at the home of retired IB EW Local 97
member Jim Cook, along with two members of the Labor
Council and others. Thank you
to all who participated.

Jim Cobett, P.S.

Local 47 member Manny Rivera died in
February. A 33-year IB EW member, he was a
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Local 43 assembled a team for the Heart Run & Walk Fundraiser. From left: Tom Slosum, Labor Council; Kerry Costello; Jim Cook, Local 97; Kris Greene, Local 43, and daughter Lena; Jeff Cassano, Local 43; Pat Castello, Local 43 president; Enega Sabamagic, Labor Council; Mike Furmanski, Local 43, and daughter Makenzie; and Pat Harrington, Local 43.

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Work Outlook Improves

L.U. 111 (em, gov, lctt, mt, to, rtb, spa & u), DEN VER, CO—As of this writing the stock market continues to outperform itself and we’re finally starting to recover from the 2008 economic collapse.

Just recently, Boston was cited as one of the strongest commercial real estate markets in the country, reaching pre-recession pricing levels. Real estate prices are approaching peak rates the market has not experienced since December 2007.

The work outlook continues to improve. The Boston Redevelopment Authority board recently approved several new projects estimated to create 1,400 new jobs and invest more than $325 million into the city. The projects include six acres of land to be developed into a 277-room hotel, accompanied by more than 10,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space in East Boston, at the corner of William F. McMillan Highway and Boardman Street. The 32-story Nashua Street Residences will include 507 residential units and a two-story public arcade, in the North Station area. Suffolk University’s plans to construct a new building for educational use at 20 Somerset Street, a $62 million project, will replace a vacant government office building with a 112,000 square-foot, 10-story building. These projects are just a few of the many upcoming projects within Local 103’s jurisdiction.

On April 9, Local 103 and the American Red Cross teamed up again to host a blood drive. The drive was held in conjunction with a Health Wellness Clinic for all members and their families.

Kevin C. Molinieux, P.S.

‘Let’s Give it a Try’

L.U. 105 (catv, i&o), HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA—Greetings to all. I hope everybody had an enjoyable Easter holiday.

I would like for each of our members to talk to a nonunion electrician of sound, deserving character who they think would benefit from our union; this outreach will equally enhance organizing efforts. Encourage such electricians to meet your organizer and attend functions to meet other brethren with the possibility of joining our great union. Let’s give it a try.

It is important to take advantage of our training centers. They offer courses important to our members to further their training. This in turn makes us stronger and more competitive in our marketplace. Knowledge is power (to defeat nonunion).

Congratulations to all members who retired in 2012—for too many to name, my friends and yours. Thank you all for building our union and our city, making both something we can hold our heads up for.

Thank you to all other locals who employ our brothers and sisters; we will return the favor.

We extend a tribute in memoriam to our brothers who recently passed away: all will be missed but never forgotten, including our local Bro. Joe Tabone (a 66-year member) and Frank Tillmanns (a 60-year member). Our deepest sympathies go out to their families.

Phil Brown, P.S.

Lineman’s Rodeo in Hawaii

L.U. 125 (ltt, to, tkt), PORTLAND, OR—Aloha! Our local hosts a lineman’s rodeo every year, a generating support for the first Hawaii Lineman’s Rodeo was an easy task. Whatever the location, our members’ competitive spirit holds true. Four teams from Local 125, including one sponsored by Portland General Electric, committed to participating in this inaugural event. Pictured in the photo (below) are the all journeyman winners—the PGE team of Ryan Hagel, Josh Welle and Jason Hiatl—joined by fellow competitor Steve Coutts. Coutts is a staunch supporter of rodeos and has been credited with PGE’s rodeo program. Whether organizing, judging or participating, his efforts continue to garner respect and appreciation from his peers.

Mike Kostelecky, P.S.

Local 111 Sister Gabriela Kuhni for her heroic efforts in rescuing a complete stranger. Sister Kuhni was on the job as a utility worker for Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCo) when she witnessed a car accident. She saw a disoriented man exit his wrecked vehicle and begin to walk into highway traffic. Sister Kuhni was able to subdue the man and hold on to him until paramedics arrived on the scene. The man had no idea where he was. Thank you, Gabriela, for putting yourself at risk to save another person.

On another front, the EWMC (Electrical Workers Minority Caucus) continues to ramp up their efforts to expand membership by hosting several events to bring the membership and youth together in solidarity. In February the EWMC hosted a successful Super Bowl party with more than 100 in attendance. In March they hosted their second Casino Bus Trip to Black Hawk, and a Spring Car Show is planned for May.

Mike Kostelecky, P.S.

‘Outage Work’ Update

L.U. 153 (em, lt, lb, rts, os, spak), SOUTH BEND, IN—By the time you read this article, our outage work at DC Cook Nuclear will be winding down. We thank all the IBEW members who traveled to our area to help us man our outage work. Our next scheduled outage at Cook will be around October.

Our local union elections will be held this year, with nominations at the May 23 union meeting and elections on June 27. If you are interested in holding an office, make sure you either attend the May meeting or submit a letter of acceptance to the recording secretary before the May meeting.

The local thanks our outgoing Apprentice Coordinator Ron Michaelis for his more than 20 years of service, and we wish him well for his future endeavors. We also congratulate Steve Elyed on his selection as the new coordinator.

The work outlook shows signs of improvement, slowly but surely.

We wish Brad Nichols, a Local 153 VDV journeyman, a safe race car driving season. He has a sharp looking Spirit Car Series car with our IBEW logo for everyone to see.

Stan Miles, Pres./P.S.

IDC Certificate Awarded

L.U. 177 (b, es, m, os, ope), JACKSONVILLE, FL—Approximately one year ago, Bro. Timothy Cobb set out to create a school for industrial diving, exclusively for IBEW inside journeyman welders, known as Industrial Diving Institute (IDI). Bro. Cobb has recognized a need for qualified industrial divers performing electrical work and insists on using IBEW inside welders to fulfill that need. Recently, Bro. Matt Stawers was the first graduate of IDI. Several more members are preparing to start the course now to become the next graduates. Local 177 wishes the students and IDI great success in their endeavors.

The short term work seems to have picked up some, but it still doesn’t look as if there is anything substantial for our area in the near future. We have recently enjoyed an unexpected temporary rise of employment in our area. Although it is just temporary and we have quite a few members working across the county, we actually were able to put about 40 Book 2 brothers to work for a short period. Thank you all to the traveling brothers that helped us out for those few weeks.

Solidarity & Organizing

L.U. 191 (lt, to, tkt, spak), EARETT, WA—Save the dates for fun and solidarity at the 2013 IBEW 191 Family Picnics. The Eastside picnic will be Saturday, July 27, at Hydro Park in East Wenatchee, and the Westside picnic will be Sunday, Aug. 4, at Hillcrest Park in Mount Vernon.

The Volunteer Organizing Committee invites the brothers and sisters of Local 191 to come enjoy some food and share their ideas on organizing. The VOC meets the fourth Wednesday of every month, starting at 5:30 p.m., in the Mount Vernon trailer.

“to organize all workers in the entire electrical industry in the United States and Canada…” The phrase “all workers” mentioned in the preamble to our Constitution includes our own members as well as unrepresented workers. After we become union members, it’s easy to lose sight of what it means to belong to a union. Local 191 is asking its brothers and sisters to share with us your thoughts on what it means to be a union member. Your comments may be featured in future EW articles, while one participant will receive three months’ dues and a jacket. Your thoughts of 200 words or less can be emailed to ibew191ps@outlook.com.

Tim Stisbee, P.S.

Projects Gearing Up

L.U. 193 (lt,ltt, os, tkt, spak), SPRINGFIELD, IL—Memorial Hospital and St. Johns Hospital are finally gearing up the multimillion dollar projects for the continued health care quality of the Springfield and Sangamon county area. The new $100 million union-built County Market Store returns a grocery store to downtown Springfield.

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Local 125 congratulates rodeo overall winners and participants. From left: Josh Welle, Jason Hiatl, Steve Coutts and Ryan Hagel.

Local 177 Bro. Matt Stawers (center) displays certificate, presented by Bus. Mgr. Russell Harper (left) and Bro. Timothy Cobb (right), owner of Industrial Diving Institute.
We encourage all Local 193 members to use County Market. The new Menards at Prairie Crossing was successfully completed by Local 193 members.

The Future-gen project in Monee is being backed solidly by Sen. Dick Durbin. This rebuild of an aging coal plant looks promising and would be a welcome addition in the Local 193 jurisdiction. Expressing your thoughts regarding this project at “Dash” would be welcomed by the senior senator from Illinois.

The Illinois State Conference was held in the state capital on March 12-13. There was no shortage of IBEW labor activities and solidarity displayed at the conference. “The powers that be” do indeed pay close attention.

The NATC held an informative class at the union hall on Arc Flash Safety and Technology. Locals from all across the country participated in this training session.

IBEW Local 269 linenman Real “Frenchie” Couto passed away in February. Condolences go out to his family and his many friends at Local 193.

Don Hudson, P.S.

A Career of Service

L.U. 197 (emdl), BLOOMINGTON, IL—As of this writing, work has been slow in our jurisdiction. Thankfully, those members willing to travel have been able to get out in other locals without sitting too long. There are some projects on the horizon; however, we encourage everyone on Book I to get out and sign some books. If you have questions about where to travel, come to the hall and we will assist you.

We congratulate Lance Reece on his retirement. (See photo, below.) Lance served as our business manager for the past eight years; he is a 40-year member of the IBEW. We thank him for his commitment and dedication to Local 197 and wish him success in his retirement. Lance is not walking away from leading in the community. At this writing, he was a candidate in the pending April election for a post as Heartland Community College board member.

The Local 197 Executive Board voted Rich Veitengruber to fill the vacancy as business manager. Congratulations to Rich. We look forward for him to continue to move Local 197 forward.

During the holidays the apprentices cooked food for a local food pantry. We thank the apprentices and everyone who contributed. Recently we participated in the Easter Seals telethon. Thanks to those who participated for another great cause.

Mike Raikes, P.S.

Solar Installation Projects

L.U. 223 (em,govt&i), BROCKTON, MA—As spring finally approached, some of the planned solar proj-

ектs were delayed by a late winter round of snow for the Northeast.

We hope all projects projected to begin this spring finally start moving forward. (This biggest solar project, a 50 MW installation, will be on Cape Cod and performed by Broadway Electric. This will be built on more than 40 different sites on Cape Cod. It is notable how far we have come as a nation in renewable energy. In 2005, the country reportedly installed 29 MW of solar.

We are also in the middle of an outage at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant.

With the Massachusetts Gaming Commission working toward selecting locations for resort casinos and one slot parlor, it is hoped that those decisions are made in 2015 to get our members back to work.

We ask all members to help out in the special election for the U.S. Senate race in Massachusetts.

We do not need a repeat of 2010. Let’s elect someone who will work alongside Sen. Elizabeth Warren fighting for the middle class.

If you have been following her as she fights for working people, you know that Massachusetts made the right choice last year.

Doug Nelson, B.A.

Community Outreach

L.U. 305 (i&spa), FORT WAYNE, IN—We recently settled our contract with ESCO Communications. Negotiations went well, and the members will receive a very good two-year package. Thanks to the committee for a job well done.

Our local is scheduled to hold its election of officers for a three-year term. It is an honor to serve IBEW members. Remember to vote in June. Ted Flaugher attended the Sixth District training to be our election judge this year.

On the Community Outreach side, Local 305 has continued our partnership with the Ronald McDonald House and the Associated Churches Food Bank. The first Ronald McDonald House donations from Local 305 members were matched by Shambaugh & Son Electric. At the grand opening, our members added an additional donation, which put IBEW Local 305 on the donors’ etched-glass wall, where the families enter the House. The food bank donation of $5,000 was generously supported by our Local Quality Connection and the UMCC.

These programs and many others are another example of how the IBEW stands at the forefront as leaders in our community.

Congratulations to recent apprentice graduates: Matthew Adamowicz, Jeremy Ambricie, Greg Clark, Luke Feindel, Bryce Funk, Nicholas Jaberg, Cody Johnson, Carlos Larranaga, Kamal Macion, Kyle Mills, Travis Ort, Jeremy Perea, Allen Reidlchen, Mike Besick, Garrett Robinson, Jeff Shannon and Brian Tun. We are proud of these new journeymen.

Joe Langmeyer, B.M.

New Director Takes JATC into the Future

L.U. 269 (i&io), TRENTON, NJ—Local 269 welcomes James Stover as JATC director.

James brings extensive experience in training, both in the field and the classroom, where for the past 15 years he served as an apprenticeship instructor. He was appointed director last September.

After graduating from Lehigh University with a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering, Jim started his apprenticeship with Local 269 in 1998. For the past 24 years he has worked with a commitment to excellence in every aspect of our industry.

As an instructor, Jim knows what it takes to produce well-trained journeymen electricians. Upon his arrival, classroom improvements were made. High-definition projectors were installed in the ceilings so that instructors armed with new laptops can present multimedia lessons. A new computer lab was set up for future training as well as implementing the NATC’s new online selection test to replace the old paper test.

A new Fire Alarm Training Lab is being installed for apprentice and journeymen courses.

Jim also expanded journeyman courses with Crane and Lull training, as well as Rigging, OSHA 30-Hour and Built-Rite safety courses.

As director, Jim will guarantee that our members receive the best training to gain the skills and knowledge that will prepare them for the future in an industry that never stands still. We wish him great success.

D. Brian Pecto, P.S.

Safety Kickoff & Negotiations

L.U. 305 (i&spa), COLLINSVILLE, IL—Work on the Inside Branch remains slow. Local 305 has suffered unemployment on the Inside since October 2009. As slow as the Inside is, the Outside Line Construction Branch keeps picking up work.

The majority of the work is substation and transmission.

On our utility property Ameren has its annual safety kickoff in February. Part of the meeting was dedicated to crane certification. The utility hopes to get an exemption for linemen on digger derricks with OSHA. At this writing, the utility hopes to have an answer within 90 days.

At press time negotiations will have begun with Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. SIUE plans a replacement of its distribution system at a cost of $121 million. The number of members working under this agreement continues to grow.

Spring is approaching and with the change of weather hopefully the work picture will improve.

Work safe so you can go home as you came in to work.

Scott Tweedy, A.B.M.

Better Days Ahead?

L.U. 343 (i&spa), LE SUEUR, MN—In southern Minnesota, particularly Rochester, there’s been much talk of the DMC.

Designation Medical Center is not only a vision of the future of Rochester and surrounding towns, but also formal legislation to provide financing for public infrastructure improvements to promote private investments within these communities and specifically the Mayo Clinic. Increased staffing by the thousands and substantially increased patient loads bring the need for more medical training facilities, more hospitals, restaurants, retail stores, permanent housing and schools. One report describes DMC as a cosmopolitan urban center. Before you load up your camper to sign your Book II to help build this utopia, note that this is a 20-year plan.

A job that is a current reality is the Mayo Clinic Proton Beam Cancer Treatment project. A local contractor had the building and electrical risers, which put a few Book I members to work. The equipment installation, however, was awarded to an out-of-state union shop. This project, along with the Prairie Island Nuclear Plant shutdown, will hopefully employ many of our Book I members who have otherwise been forced to travel.

Remember to attend the June union meeting for the allocation of wage increase vote. Take ownership of your vote. Don’t let a few decide for the whole of your Union ...Buy Union.

Tom Small, P.S.

Projects Scheduled

L.U. 347 (em,ltmt,rbts,spa&k), DES MOINES, IA—Some work that is being staged to start includes $238 million of updates on existing structures at Principal Financial Group in Des Moines and a 239,000-square-foot building with a parking ramp for Wells Fargo in west Des Moines. Fort Dodge construction projects include Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. and Koch Industries Inc.

Local events for 2013 are a pin party and a spring picnic. 2014 will mark the 100th anniversary of Local 347.

Be involved—this is your union.

Mike Schweiger, P.S.

2012 Retirees Honored

L.U. 351 (i&spa), FIESCHER, FOLSOM, NJ—At our March general union meeting, we honored 52 members who retired during 2012. Watches were given out and food and refreshments were served.

We congratulate all of the new retirees and thank them for their many years of service to our union.

We wish them the very best in retirement. Please remember to continue to attend union meetings and our many events throughout the year.

On Dec. 1 last year, we held our annual Children’s Christmas party at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Williamstown, N.J. Once again we passed our attendance record from the previous year. More than 900 attended. We thank everyone


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on the committee who helped make it such a special day for the children. Without our members, events like this would not be possible.

Dan Cosner, P.S.

Great Volunteers & Participants

L.U. 369 (em,es,i,lt,ct,lo,rt,rs,spa&u), LOUISVILLE, KY—Thanks to all the families who supported our 2nd Annual Bowling for Brotherhood Tournament. It was very successful, thanks especially to our Bros. Richard Work, Chris Wise, Marty Gates and Bryan Alexander. Great Job, guys!

A big shout out to all the volunteers who contributed to the children’s Easter Party, always a highlight of the year, and the EWMC thanks you for your dedication every Easter. The Poker Run was a great way for us to raise money for the Brotherhood Welfare and Candlelighters, and we appreciate everyone who came out to support the cause. These are just a few highlights of our year so far. Let’s do our best to make the rest of the year just as special.

Jennifer Taboe, P.S.

New Members Sworn In

L.U. 363 (c,em,p,sp,lu,uk), NEW OTAY, NY—At a recent monthly meeting, 22 new brothers and sisters were sworn into IBEW Local 363. It is good to see the continuing high caliber of people entering the electrical trade and becoming part of the Brotherhood. Our training center is the best in the industry, and more contractors are using it and growing from it. Our goal is to expand employment opportunities for our IBEW brothers and sisters. We plan on growing our membership and working with more and more of the contractors in our area.

We are the largest organized group of electricians and contractors around and we are entering into the electrical trade and becoming part of the Brotherhood. Our training center is the best in the industry, and more contractors are using it and growing from it. Our goal is to expand employment opportunities for our IBEW brothers and sisters. We plan on growing our membership and working with more and more of the contractors in our area.

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Local 595 Pres. Dave Taylor (back row, fourth from right), Asst. Bus. Mgr. Tom Kunde (far right), Organizer Andrew Mckercher (back row, third from right) and Local 595 members gather at the jobsite of a University Town Center remodel project. Visiting the jobsite is Dr. John Lee Evans (ninth from left), San Diego Unified School District board member.

**Work Picture Improved**

L.U. 569 (lmacmt,rtss&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA—Our work picture is finally starting to turn around.

We have several large-scale solar projects in the Imperial Valley currently under project labor agreements. We recently signed a PLA for our planned Convention Center expansion and two nearby hotel projects. These were all possible because of the hard work of our Bus. Mgr. Johnny Simpson and his dedicated staff. We were also able to help pass Prop Z, a $2.8 billion school bond under a STA, thanks to the work of our members with phone banking and precinct walking.

David Taylor, Pres./P.S.

**Kudos to Graduates**

L.U. 589 (rr), JAMAICA, NY—Local 589 congratulates the recent graduating class of electricians.

In other news, Local 589 has been extremely busy with successful arbitrations, working on contract negotiations, and coordinating some large projects and modifications. We thank all of our representatives and members for their continued hard work.

Augie Maccarone, R.S.

**ZNE Center Plans Grand Opening**

L.U. 595 (c,es,go1,ls&st), DUBLIN, CA—Excitement is in the air about our new Zero Net Energy Center, which will house our apprentice and journeymen training.

We will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony and grand opening on May 30, where all the stakeholders will be acknowledged. Training Dir. Byron Benton has worked tirelessly coordinating every detail, and we will see it all come to life soon.

See photo (bottom, left) of another recent Local 595 project.

Local 595 is making some leadership changes. Bus. Mgr. Victor Uno brought a talented, young electrician onto the staff to fill a new position titled Community Liaison/Compliance and Governmental Relations. Rachel Bryan is already doing great things in the community to help Local 595 more effectively recruit and retain young people for our apprenticeship and CE/CW programs. Additionally, she is getting to know our political leaders in the East Bay and making them aware of the great career opportunities in construction trade unions.

Recently Bob Tieman stepped down as president; he will be on staff as a new rep to replace me as I embark on my 40 year career in the IBEW. Bob appointed Tanya Pfitz to replace him on the Apprenticeship Committee. The E-Board appointed Greg Bonato as president; he was officially sworn in at the recent general membership meeting. Bro. Bonato has served as a longtime E-Board member and COPE chair.

We are excited to bring new young people into positions of leadership as we prepare to open our state-of-the-art Zero Net Energy Training Center.

Tom Mularkey, B.R.

**Service Pins Awarded**

L.U. 617 (c,i,m o&st), SA N MA TEO , CA—Congratulations to Bus. Rep. Fred Corona on his recent retirement after serving the local’s Sound and Communications and STA Air Train members since 2005. Heartfelt thanks from all of us for his tireless and steadfast service.

Fred’s wisdom, expertise and humor will be greatly missed. We wish him the best in a long and restful, yet productive and adventurous retirement.

Well done, brother!

Over the last two years, several Local 617 members have participated in “missions” operated by the Warriors’ Watch Riders and Patriot Guard Riders. These two groups, mostly motorcyclists and Vietnam veterans, were founded to ensure an honored and dignified welcome home for those returning from service in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the words of the Warriors’ Watch Riders: “Never again will an American warrior be scorned or ignored.”

Through the local’s motorcycle club, Local 617 journymen and apprentices have silently stood flag lines to honor those returning home after completing service, for a holiday leave with family, or in a flag-draped coffin. We have been honored to stand with the families of young service men and women in their time of great joy or unbearable grief. We are eternally grateful for the sacrifices they make. May God continue to watch over them and bless them.

Dan Pasini, VP.

**Tribute to Service**

L.U. 617 (c,i,m o&st), SA N M A T E O , CA—Congratulations to Bus. Rep. Fred Corona on his recent retirement after serving the local’s Sound and Communications and STA Air Train members since 2005. Heartfelt thanks from all of us for his tireless and steadfast service.

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Dan Pasini, VP.

**Local 601 Service Pins Awarded**

L.U. 601 (i&rtb), CH AM P A I G N -U R B A N A , IL—Our local’s service pins were presented. In total, awards presented represented nearly 400 years of service.

Pin recipients were as follows: for 45 years of service—Bruce Senior and Jerry Gentry; for 35 years—Sammy Martinez, Jim Baca, Steve Horcasitas, John Ortiz and Leland Martinez; 30 years—Sam Calderon and Paul Martinez; 25 years—Maury Varela, Tom Sargent, Alex Trujillo; and for 10 years—Jim Baca Jr. and Mark Salazar. Congratulations to all.

**Tribute to Service**

L.U. 617 (c,i,mp,sk), SA N M A T E O , CA—Congratulations to Bus. Rep. Fred Corona on his recent retirement after serving the local’s Sound and Communications and STA Air Train members since 2005. Heartfelt thanks from all of us for his tireless and steadfast service.

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Dan Pasini, VP.

Local 595 day crew at the Russell City Energy Center project in Hayward, CA, working for Bechtel.

Local 601 members Ben Kinder (left) and Mike Siems work on a University of Illinois project.

Local 589 graduating class of electricians

Local 595 graduating class of electricians


Local 601 service pin recipients, from left: Maury Varela, Leland Martinez, Bruce Senior, Jim Baca, Sammy Martinez, Sam Calderon, Jim Baca Jr., Jerry Gentry and Paul Martinez.

Local 595 day crew at the Russell City Energy Center project in Hayward, CA, working for Bechtel.

Local 601 service pin recipients, from left: Maury Varela, Leland Martinez, Bruce Senior, Jim Baca, Sammy Martinez, Sam Calderon, Jim Baca Jr., Jerry Gentry and Paul Martinez.
Two-Year Contract Ratified

L.U. 627 (u), FORT PIERCE, FL—Local 627 is proud to recognize the graduating class of recent apprentices into our Brotherhood. This group will continue the evolution of safe and efficient labor as they expand their knowledge and experience within the nuclear plant.

Union brothers Wes Chang, Tim Hutchinson, Anthony Oakes and Frank Smith received notification from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that their reactor control operator licenses have been issued. Congratulations to everyone for their hard work and successful efforts.

The picnic committee invites all members, retirees and their families to join us on June 8 in Fort Pierce, FL. We will have a variety of amusement activities for all ages to enjoy, plenty of barbequed food and refreshments.

Ray Vos, P.S.

February saw the ratification of a two-year contract between NUCLEAR ELECTRIC ASSOCIATES OF OHIO and Locals 659, 125 and 77. The contract includes wage increases of 2 percent the first year and 2.5 percent the second year. An increase in the NEAP contribution dictated by classification was also negotiated along with a substation certification. Now an electrical journeyman lineman or journeyman wireman can achieve a certification for building and maintaining substations. This has historically been a three-year contract, but with the rates for NEUCO uncertain beyond 2014, a two-year contract was agreed to.

As of this writing negotiations are ongoing with Lane Electric Co-op and Consumers Power. The organizing campaign at Eugene Water and Electric Board is continuing. The goal is to organize an additional 200-plus members there and introduce them to the wages, benefits and job security that we all enjoy as union members.

Congratulations to Bro. Shawn Haggin, who has gone to work for the state of Oregon in the Electrical Inspectors Office.

Local 659 is sad to report the passing of Bro. Ray Marin. Ray was a longtime business rep and staunch supporter of the labor movement. He served the membership well and will be missed.

Two-Year Contract Ratified

L.U. 633 (c,catv,em &i), MADISON, MS—Congratulations to Bro. Jack Champlin, who completed 60 years of service with Lane Electric Co-op in February. Having been a member of Local 633 for 37 years and having served as business manager for the past eight years, he now looks forward to some serious fishing and hunting! Former Asst. Bus. Mgr. J.P. Mergenschroer, was appointed as the new business manager to fill the unexpired term.

In appreciation for Bro. Chuck’s many years of service, the local presented him with a plaque and a rifle. An Open House was held at the union hall and many well-wishers came by to reminisce and extend congratulatations.

Although we have numerous contracts with the Navy, these projects are not ready for electricians as of this writing: in fact, we have almost 100 on layoff. The end of the summer looks very promising though.

‘March into the Future’

L.U. 627 (u), FORT PIERCE, FL—Local 627 is proud to recognize the graduating class of recent apprentice graduates. This group will continue their education and training.

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Ray Vos, P.S.

Power Plant Project

L.U. 673 (catv,em &i), PAINESVILLE, OH—The Perry Nuclear Power Plant began scheduled refuel outage No. 14 on March 18. As of press time, the outage was scheduled for 45 days.

At this early spring writing, members and many of our Book 2 brothers were out there early going through all the processing needed to gain access to the power plant site. Background checks, psychological testing, drug testing, craft testing and interviews by psychologists are all part of it. Some electricians received further training such as motor operated values.

On March 2, the Electricians Golf League sponsored a reverse raffle benefit at Pine Ridge Country Club. Members had a chance to catch up with old friends and enjoy the food, drink and music. Bro. Harold Beidel was a big winner. He went all the way on two side boards and won them both.

Congratulations, Harold!

Tom Legg, Pres.
hild on Long Island. Under the current LIP structure these are numerous benefits for all. We need to ensure that any and all of the issues are heard and discussed at a local level.

Concurrently we are going forward with PSEG’s transition into the new Operating Service Agreement (OSA). This agreement will take effect in January 2014. At that time the current utility membership will begin working for two employers. In order to keep abreast of the issues, I encourage the membership to attend the general meetings.

Thomas J. Dowling, R.S.

Increasing Union Participation

L.U. 1245 (catlcttv,lyt,pt,ibew), Vacaville, CA—Our local is continuing its program to increase member involvement, leadership development and community engagement. During the first half of 2013 our local is sponsoring a leadership development conference, hosting two soccer tournaments for our line clearance tree trimmers, and co-sponsoring a sporting clays shoot with other union locals. In addition, our local is organizing its first ever “Howard Stierer Motorcycle Rally,” named in honor of the local’s late president.

We are also increasing our participation in linemen rodeos, most recently sponsoring several teams to attend the first Hawaii Lineman’s Rodeo. We will also be engaged in a Light Rail Rodeo featuring our members at Sacramento Regional Transit, and plan to sponsor teams in this year’s American Public Power Association rodeo. In addition, we are looking for opportunities to feature gas workers and line clearance tree trimmers in rodeo competitions.

Our local continues to focus on safety. We have three peer-to-peer safety initiatives in three distinct areas: electric, gas, and line clearance tree trimming. We continue to receive requests from fire fighters and other organizations for our “First Responder” training program.

Recently we completed work on a “graphic novel”—a fancy word for comic book—that portrays the history of our local. We hope it will provide an additional way to communicate our union’s story to the new members flooding into our union as baby boomers retire.

Eric Wolfe, P.S.

Tribute to a Union Sister

L.U. 1249 (catlcttv,lyt,pt,ibew), Syracuse, NY—In February we lost a dear sister and friend, Fin. Sec. Tina Prosic was a member of Local 1249 for 30 years. She started as an apprentice in 1983, then became a journeyman lineman, and finally served as office manager and financial secretary for the local. Tina also served in the Army National Guard Reserves. After 20 years of service, she retired with the rank of captain. Tina was an avid participant in breast cancer fundraising, and she even hosted a monthly cancer support group at the hall. She loved to show off her beautiful dogs and spend weekends at her camp in upstate New York. She was also passionate about the outdoors and photography. She was a true trade unionist and she lived life to the fullest.

Tina will be forever missed by her friends and family at Local 1249.

Jennifer Schneider, P.S.

Kudos to Three Recent Retirees

L.U. 1307 (uf, Salisbury, MD—Local 1307 extends congratulations and best wishes to three new retirees and former officers.


Bro. Eddie Sparks started his career in 1971 with Delmarva Power as a meter reader. He also worked as an engineer’s helper and then in the line crew before becoming a trouble/service man in 1988. Bro. Sparks was elected to the Local 1307 Executive Board in 1993 and served as either board member or financial secretary up until his retirement.

Bro. Lindley Hudson started his career as a laborer for what was then Delmarva Power & Light Power Plant, which later became NRG. He also held the positions of fuel handler, fuel equipment operator, machinist and power plant control specialist. Bro. Hudson is a shop steward since 1979 and served as vice president of the local from 1994-1997 and again from 2007-2012.

Congratulations to all for a job well done.

Save jobs, limit imports.

Charles T. Harris Jr., P.S.

New Contract Agreements—Construction Work Picture Good

L.U. 1393 (catv,lytv,pt,ibew), Indianapolis, IN—The local negotiated new contract agreements with several companies: Johnson County REMC, Southeastern Indiana REMC, Rush/Shelby Energy, Carroll County REMC and WIN Energy. The Construction “A” Agreement also was negotiated. These agreements, ratified by our members, provide for general wage increases and job security protections.

The construction side of the local work picture is very good with a lot of work for the membership and we are in need of journeyman linemen to fill all job referrals.

The local had a large group of lineman apprentices graduates in 2012 from the ALBAT program, REAPS program and Heats program. One such 2012 graduate, Tommy Nance, from Central Indiana

Local 1393’s GEN-UP Committee event was a great success.

power, is pictured in the photo above demonstrating his new journeyman lineman skills.

Robert C. Fox, P.S.

Gen-Up in St. Louis—Developing Future Leaders

L.U. 1419 (uf, St. Louis, MO—The age 35 and under members hosted an event of education, fun and solidarity (photo, below). The event was devised to educate new and younger members about the history of the IBEW and the chance to network with fellow brothers and sisters. Int. Rep. Linda Matthews, IBEW Education Department, provided a great educational video on IBEW history. Table games brought great competition for prizes of rounds of golf, St. Louis Blues Hockey tickets and IBEW merchandise. The Gen-Up Committee members who put the event together are: Phil Barnowski, Keith Kohlberg, Tim Hall, David White, Brad Barton, Sean Saunders, Bob Neise and Reed Newton. The group was so enthusiastic about the turnout that another event is being planned.

Contract negotiations are beginning on the Ameren property. The company proposes an assault on our defined pension plan.

Mike Walters, B.M./F.S.

‘Union Strong’

L.U. 1523 (uf, Wichita, KS—It’s almost time for local union elections. Get together with your work group to hear their ideas and find out what issues are important to them. It might surprise you to know that others share some of the same ideas and suggestions that you may have been tossing around. Times are changing and we are in the middle of things. We are often ready to jump at a chance to comment about issues, but here’s a chance to make your voice heard. When was the last time you were at the hall for a meeting? When was the last time you asked your steward if he or she needed your help. I think we should all have a lot of respect for someone who volunteers his or her time to represent us.

We are a good strong union; we have good leadership and we are committed to the good of the union. Watch out for more information on the elections. As you can see from the picture below—yes, we work in the cold. Union strong!

Candy C. Cruz-Daddi, P.S.

Local 1523 members on the jobsite: Billy Bardon (left), Mike Linder and Luke Justice.

Possible Budget Cuts—A Project & Jobs Are Threatened

L.U. 1579 (uf, Augusta, GA—As the weather is getting warmer, we have all Local 1579 members working who want to work as well as several traveling brothers and sisters from around the country.

A project in our jurisdiction is being threatened by federal budget cuts. This is the Mixed Oxide Project and this job has 550 electricals on it, many from other locals. If the funding is cut on this project, many will lose their jobs—not only IBEW members but also workers from other building trades locals as well.

We need your help. Call or write your senators and representatives or even the president and let them know that this job is very important to your family. Let your elected officials know that for every job lost on this project, that affects two additional jobs somewhere else, perhaps at the local McDonald’s or the hotel where many traveling brothers and sisters are staying. If you need additional information in order to write these politicians, contact your union hall and they will be happy to help.

Remember to keep the staff informed of hospitalizations and new baby arrivals. Until next time, God bless.

Will Saiters, A.B.M.

Local 1245 members from the Sacramento Municipal Utility District compete in the first Hawaii Lineman’s Rodeo in February.
Retirees & Political Action

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 1, ST. LOUIS, MO—Retirees of IBEW Local 1 had their first meeting of 2013 on Wednesday, March 20. There was a good attendance and all enjoyed the activities. Two guest speakers provided important, interesting information. Excellent refreshments were served.

The retirees discussed important events taking place locally and nationally that affect both working and retired members. Of particular concern at this writing is a campaign by Missouri Republican state legislators to pass into law measures that would cripple the rights of organized labor, and all working citizens in the state. We were all urged to contact those anti-worker politicians and voice our protest.

Notwithstanding the current political setbacks, Local 1 retirees have hopes of a good year for our unemployed members, with some small signs of an improving economy. As spring begins we hope new construction will blossom and create more jobs.

As retired seniors we know that “trickle down” and “grew is good” are expressions that mean middle-class workers will continue to suffer at the hands of the corporate bosses—and that more jobs go overseas and more Americans sink into poverty to improve corporate profits. We must keep the faith and use our votes to help each other.

Our 2013 meetings are: May 15, July 17, Sept. 18 (lunch), and Nov. 20.

Don Appelbaum, P.S.

Annual SWFL Retirees Picnic

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, SOUTH-WEST FLORIDA GULF CHAPTER—The 2nd Annual SWFL Retirees Picnic was Wednesday, March 20, at the beautiful Lakes Regional Park on a picture-perfect day in Fort Myers and was a resounding success. (Photo at bottom) Co-Chair Jerry Amisano did a masterful job organizing the many details required for a “potluck” picnic, and Co-Chair Chet “The jet” Olson lived up to his BBQ maven reputation with perfectly prepared (cooked-to-order) cuisine. With plenty of good food, camaraderie and a host of activities such as Scrabble, cards and bingo, the afternoon went very quickly.

More Chapter News: Plans are underway for the 5th Annual Christmas Party. Chairman Hank Schweitering has promised that this year’s party will be the best yet. The chapter is a member of the Florida Alliance for Retired Americans and plans to stay informed about and be active in upcoming demonstrations for workers’ rights and economic justice here in Florida.

We meet in Fort Myers, FL, 12 months a year on the second Monday of the month. If you are planning a visit to Florida and would like to attend a meeting, just e-mail Secretary Nick Faello at: faello18@embarqmail.com or Chairman George Dondoro at: gedonoro@aol.com for times and dates.

Hope to see you soon.

George Dondoro, P.S.

Local 3 Retirees Club members attend March meeting.

Storm Recovery Continues

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, NASSAU CHAPTER—We are slowly coming out of winter here on Long Island as of this writing, but the effects of “Sandy” are still in evidence in towns like Long Beach, Island Park, and many other towns on the south shore of Long Island. One of our Nassau Chapter members lost his home when the hurricane struck and he is now living in Maryland. Local 3 has a Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief program to help members in need. For more information visit Local 3’s Web site www.local3.com.

We recently had our Joint Industry Board retirees luncheon; it was well attended as usual. We heard from many speakers about our work conditions in NXX, and the many projects that are manned by nonunion workers. Speakers emphasized that we need to work diligently to elect public officials who are interested in furthering workers’ rights. We were notified that our retirement funds are doing well, and at press time there are 6,000 retirees.

The Nassau Chapter has a full itinerary for this year with many exciting trips planned. These include: a trip to see a performance of “Wicked” in Pennsylvania, and a trip to Yankee Stadium, with a lunch at City Island.

I will report on these events in our next article planned for September. Have a great and safe summer.

Bob Cooper, P.S.

Retirees’ Donation to Fisher House Foundation

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, WESTCHESTER/PUTNAM CHAPTER—On Jan. 17, our Retirees Club officers had the privilege of presenting a check for $8,000 to Kenneth Fisher, chairman of the Fisher House Foundation Inc. Mr. Fisher welcomed our representatives at the corporate offices of Fisher Brothers Inc., on Park Avenue in Manhattan.

Our fundraiser exceeded our greatest expectations, made possible by donations from 150 of our members and the generosity of our sister chapters from Nassau and Queens counties. We owe continued support to our service men and women.

The Fisher Houses are located in close proximity to military and VA hospitals, to accommodate the families of wounded service men and women, while their loved ones are recuperating. No family member pays to stay at a Fisher House. The foundation has built more than 60 residences and expects to have 70 operational by the end of 2014.

Among his many philanthropic accomplishments, Mr. Fisher also serves as co-chairman of the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. The World War II aircraft carrier USS Intrepid was rescued from the scrap yard by Zachary Fisher, Kenneth’s uncle, some 30 years ago.

John Rich, P.S.

Bob Cuneo, P.S.

Local 3, Southwest Florida Gulf Chapter, retirees with family and friends enjoy the 2nd Annual SWFL Retirees Picnic at Lakes Regional Park in Ft. Myers, FL.

Tribute to Service

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 11, LOS ANGELES, CA—The Local 11 Retirees Club proudly introduces our new “President Emeritus” Marty Cohen. Marty has done an outstanding job serving our members for over a decade. Marty says he’s going to take a break and do a little traveling. He’ll still be around for some meetings and will continue getting articles together for the newsletter. We should all be proud of all our active and retired members for their union service and for volunteering to serve others.

Club officers elected in November 2012 are: Pres. Harvey “Butch” Bachand, Vice Pres. Dave Smith, Sec. Sandra Smith, Treas. Richard Du Lac, Sgt. at Arms Albert Ortiz and Executive Board members Marty Cohen, Nancy Cohen, Joe Farfano, Delores Guzman, Larry Henderson, Bert Herlinger, Jim “Doc” Holliday, Tad Hofgutsch, etc.

At recent meetings, we have had excellent speakers update us on relevant events within their respective fields. Speakers included representatives from: AARP, Kaiser Permanente, the Social Security Administration and United Health Care.

The December Holiday dinner at TAY’S Restaurant was enjoyed by all. Good food, drinks and a gift exchange were highlights. We look forward to our club’s Holiday dinner on June 12.

New members are enthusiastically encouraged to join the club. Meetings are at the ETL in Commerce, on the second Wednesday of every month, at 10 a.m. Lunch is also served.

Harvey “Butch” Bachand, Pres.

Upcoming 2013 Events

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 42, HARTFORD, CT—The Retirees Club wishes to invite anyone who’s a retired member of Local 42 to come and join them. The club meets several times a year at Local 42’s hall. The retirees talk about old times, share funny stories, enjoy each other’s company and have coffee and donuts. The retirees wish to thank all the ladies in the office for their hard work to plan all the events that we have and for their help and warm smiles. If you like to get out of the house for a couple of hours, come and join the retirees; the club would love to have you. If interested call us at 860-646-2797.

Events for 2013 have thus far included the Apprentice Graduation Dinner Dance held April 13, Upcoming events for this year include: the 9th Annual Motorcycle Run on May 18; the Dinner Cruise on June 25, a Chartered Fishing Trip on July 13; the Family Picnic on Aug. 24; and the Annual Christmas Smoker on Dec. 12.

Jacquelyn Moffitt, P.S.

Retirees ‘Pay it Forward’

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 60, SAN ANTONIO, TX—At this writing, final preparations were in full swing for the club’s first golf tournament, which was scheduled for April 20, 2013. The club plans to hold the event annually. We’re hoping for a huge success, since the club is totally self-supporting.

Sharing a meal together and playing games of bingo are only part of the club’s agenda. Local 60 retirees have helped make their local strong through their working years, and brotherhood does not stop.
**Local 99 Retirees Club Members Thank Retirees for Years of Service**

The Local 99 Retirees Club members thank retirees for years of service. Bus. Mgr. Bruemmer answered questions about the so-called “right-to-work” bill in Missouri and told everyone to keep up to date on where it stands and to help defeat it. Rick Stokes talked to the volunteers who are helping again this year to judge and grade at the Skills USA Competition held at Linn State Technical College.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of member Bill Loyd, who passed away March 27. After our cold winter and three snowfalls that accumulated up to 20 inches, and after having to cancel our February luncheon, we think we are all ready for spring to begin.

**Debra Melloway, P.S.**

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**“Snowbirds’ Welcome Home”**

The Retirees Club of L.U. 295, BOISE, ID—The March luncheon was held in Meridian at The Jade Horse Restaurant. Forty people attended, including guests. Everyone enjoyed a great meal, especially the steamed clams. We had a big room that accommodated all of us. (See photo at bottom, right.)

Hooray! Winter is almost over and the “snowbirds” will be coming home to join us. We are finally heading into spring with temperatures in the 60s. The club welcomed Jim Bastel and Mic Fulkerson, who joined us at our February luncheon. Congratulations to Mic and Leslie on the birth of their grandson.

We are saddened to report that Russ Barr passed away in March. He was a longtime member and will be missed. A few members are sick and need our prayers. The majority of our members are enjoying good health.

**Joe Sirani, Pres.**

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**Upcoming Events**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Help Defeat Anti-Worker Bill</strong></td>
<td>RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 532, SAN JOSE, CA—We have had another great year. Our club meetings, held on the second Wednesday of each month, are always very entertaining. Jerry Patigniani, with the help of other members, schedules interesting speakers from around the Bay Area.</td>
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<td><strong>Retirees Club of Boise, Idaho, Local 291</strong></td>
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**The Local 120 Retirees Club congratulates service pin recipients.**


Bus. Mgr. Jamie Mctamara addressed the group and thanked the retirees for their years of service.

The Local 100 Retirees Club had a very active group with monthly meetings. Pres. John Heuer presides at meetings and keeps the proceedings going along well. The retirees help out at our annual picnic, the Christmas party for the kids and anything they are asked to do.

Thank you to Local 110 for supporting us. Also, thank you to April Jones for the great job she did in planning the annual luncheon, the service pins awards and all the help given when asked.

**Jon “Jack” Buchal, P.S.**

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**2012 Holiday Celebration**

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 99, PROVIDENCE, RI—We held our annual Christmas luncheon last year at the West Valley Inn; the local union graciously sponsored the event. It was very well attended. Retired Bro. Swan Johnson surprised everyone by presenting each lady with a red rose to celebrate the holiday season.


We were also joined by Rhode Island Secretary of State Ralph Molitioli and a representative from the office of U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse. They extended holiday greetings to all.

In closing the meeting, Pres. Pierce announced that the Sunshine Committee would visit our brothers who are housebound.

**Raymond J. Gershmishausen, P.S.**

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**Local 99 Bus. Mgr. Michael K. Daley (left) presents service award to retired member William Stromberg.**

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**Service Pins Awarded**

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 110, ST. PAUL, MN—Local 110 hosted the annual luncheon for the retirees at the Prom Center on Oct. 4, last year in Oakdale, MN, with 432 retirees, widows and guests attending.

Many members received years-of-service pins.

Fifty-year pins were awarded to: Jim Chadaline, Ben Cottone, John Diedrich, Paul Donatell, Lloyd Eken, Laurence Finn, Rich Kavolski, Arnold Kustitz, Ray Lee, Robert Makie and Gene Marquardt. Awarded 55-year pins were: Frank Butina,...
Our club strives to make a positive impact through community involvement. At our November 2012 meeting, attendees put together $150 to buy turkeys to contribute to Sacred Heart, a local outreach for the less fortunate. We were able to provide us with 14 12-pound turkeys delivered to Sacred Heart. We had a great “Old-Timers” Dinner in November, at which eligible members were honored with pins for IBEW service ranging from 35 to 60 years. Our yearly Christmas luncheon, catered by a local restaurant, brought several brothers and their wives and friends together for an afternoon of reminiscing and good food.

We offer coffee and doughnuts at our monthly meetings, followed by a guest speaker who discusses various topics of interest. At the quarterly meetings we offer drinks and refreshments.

Gary McDowell, Pres.

Service Award Recipients

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 393, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA—Our Retirees Club is enjoying its 28th year of planned programs organized by our retirees executive. We meet the first Tuesday of each month at our hall and a meal follows.

Our next major event will be our 39th Annual Service Pin Presentation Breakfast for members with 50 years of service or more. This year’s presentation will be another historic benchmark with 35 recipients as follows: one 70-year member (Michael Stanley), five 65-year members; 22 60-year members; 55 55-year members; and 48 50-year members including merger members from Locals 894 and 1739. This brings our Years-of-Service Honor Roll to more than 445 living members.

We are grateful for the legacy of the “Sports, Entertainment & Retirees Trust Fund,” which the past executive and officers had the vision and foresight to establish to provide service for present working members and their families, and retired members and their spouses into the future.

Also, our club appreciates the continued support from Bus. Mgr. Steve Martin, his office staff, the Local 337 executive board and officers who assist us and help make our efforts easier and more meaningful. “Continue to Raise The Bar.”

Robert Rybnik, P.S.

Newly Formed Retirees Club

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 443, MONTGOMERY, AL—On Feb. 12, the retirees at Local 443 held a club organizational meeting. Officers were elected and a communications committee was formed to notify members about accidents, sickness and deaths of our retirees and club members. We also drafted and approved bylaws for our newly founded club, and by our next meeting we hope to proudly exhibit our new charter.

To those who couldn’t make it, we missed you and look forward to seeing you at our next meeting scheduled for May at the union hall at 12 a.m. For the meal, meat will be provided and we ask everyone to bring a covered dish. At the May meeting, we will entertain ideas for future events such as trips or outings.

All retirees and their spouses (regardless of their pension status)—as well as any members over age 50—are eligible for membership.

We especially thank the local union staff for their support in helping us get this club off the ground. Everyone had a great time at the meeting and many old acquaintances were renewed. We look forward to many years and good times in this endeavor.

BARRY HARRISON, R.S.

Great Turnout for Club Events

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 756, DAYTONA BEACH, FL—At the Dec. 13, 2012, monthly meeting of the Retirees Club, we had a great crowd and the meal as usual was delicious. The ham was cooked by Lisa Carter, and the side dishes everyone brought made for a great meal.

January brought our annual Chili Cook-off. Choosing a winner was a tough decision for the judges. Our champion this year was Bonnie Pettingill. At the February meeting we had a great crowd for our much anticipated Low Country Boil; Greg Stone and his crew did an awesome job as usual. Our March meeting was a barbecue, and once again we enjoyed another great meal cooked by Greg and the guys.

We invite any retired and unemployed brothers and sisters and their spouses who are in the area to join us. Our meetings are the second Thursday of each month, 11:30 a.m., at the Local 756 union hall in Port Orange, FL.

DIANE GIBBS, P.S.

New Members Welcomed

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 995, BATON ROUGE, LA—We had a nice 2012 Christmas Social that included a dinner and dance. This was a joint celebration with the local union and was enjoyed by the retirees and the younger members of our local. The music for the dance was furnished by Clifford Ziks’ band. Bro. Ziks is one of the Local 995 assistant business agents.

Last year, 12 of the retired members received 50-year pins. Thirteen received 45-year pins; seven received 40-year pins; and three received 65-year pins. Two members received 70-year pins: George J. Bourg and Eugene S. Mayaux.

The sad news is that we lost 26 members who passed away last year.

We had a good meeting in February this year; we gained several new members. During that meeting we planned our luncheon, which took place the first Monday in March. The meeting was at a nearby restaurant, where we enjoyed a seafood luncheon. You know we had a good turnout for the meeting.

W. ROLAND GROOTSMAN Sr., R.S.

Union ‘Resolve & Support’ During Three-Year Campaign

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 1245, VACAVILLE, CA—Nevada retirees recently presented Local 1245 with a handcrafted plaque expressing gratitude for the local’s support during a three-year campaign to defend retirement medical benefits at NV Energy.

“We dedicate this plaque to the Executive Board, leadership and staff of IBEW Local 1245 in our appreciation from the Nevada IBEW retirees,” said retiree Tom “T-Bird” Bird, in a ceremony at Wensley Hall in Vacaville that attracted 500-700 audience.

The walnut plaque was carved into the shape of Nevada by Bird, president of the Reno-Sparks Chapter of the Local 1245 Retirees Club.

“When we first got into this, we said we got to get the retirees behind us. We can’t do it without the retirees, and we can’t do it without our local’s resolve and financial support,” T-Bird said.

Also present at the ceremony were Local 1245 Bus. Mgr. Tom Dazell, Pres. Mike Davis, Vice Pres. Art Freitas, Rec. Sec. Chris Habecker, Treas. Cecelia De La Torre, and Executive Board members Tom Cornell, Anna Bayless-Martinez, Mike Cottrell and Mike Jacobson.

ERIC WOLFE, P.S.
## Members for whom PBF death claims were approved in March 2013

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**In Memoriam**

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FROM THE OFFICERS

Giving Good News Its Due

When times are tough, it’s easy to start thinking that bad news is all there is. Sadly, for working people in America, bad news has so outweighed the good that sometimes it starts to feel like there isn’t any good news.

It isn’t true. As hard as things have been, every day the IBEW is making an enormous difference for hundreds of thousands of members and their families. Not in some far-off golden age, but right now.

If you have any doubt about the difference this union is still making in the lives of our members, I want you to read the three letters on the opposite page. One letter is from a third-generation member. A second is from a recently retired member and a third was sent in by a member just starting out.

Each letter tells the story of lives and families transformed by the IBEW. Yes, for too many people the old ideal of working hard and getting ahead is a fiction, but for many others, the IBEW is still delivering on that promise for its members. There are real and important victories to celebrate too.

Three generations of the Hering family, and so many who came before us, laid the groundwork for Brother Leo Meade’s career and the life Apprentice Matthew Chastain and his family are just beginning. It’s all possible because of this great union.

Highlighting these stories doesn’t make the challenges go away. But when we remember the difference this Brotherhood actually makes, the challenges shrink. Our opponents may have won a few rounds, but what do they have to offer that compares with the Hering family’s dedication to getting workers home safe? What words can proponents of right-to-work say that are more convincing than the reality of Leo’s long career and stable retirement? People like Matt have seen too many promises broken by the economic fairy-dust salesmen to believe them anymore.

Fortify yourself with some good news; a world where working families thrive will feel a lot closer.

The Wrong Conversation

There is much to recommend in President Obama’s first budget of his second term, including expanding access to education and $300 billion in jobs and infrastructure spending. But there is one item the president put on the table that is unacceptable for working families: slashing Social Security benefits.

Congressional Republican leaders have demanded cuts to Social Security and Medicare as a precondition for budget talks, and sadly too many Democrats, including the president, are going along with it.

Currently, the federal government ties the growth of Social Security benefits to the inflation rate—higher inflation means bigger boosts in benefits to retirees and the disabled.

Obama’s proposal would change the way the government measures cost of living adjustments—a change that would result in cuts for current and future retirees—to the tune of more than $130 billion over 10 years. For millions of retirees, that amount is the cost of living adjustm ents— a change that w ould result in cuts for current and future retirees—to the tune of m ore than $13 0 billion over 10 years. For m illions of retirees, that am ount is losing a full-m onth’s check.

Corporates and downsizing have devastated private pensions, which are increasingly a thing of the past for most workers. And stagnant wages and tough economic times have left 75 percent of Americans nearing retirement age with less than $30,000 in private accounts like 401(k)s.

For millions of Americans, retirement isn’t an option any more. So why is Congress debating how to slash many retirees’ last lifeline? Corporate America, Congress and President Obama should say no to policies that make things worse for current and future retirees and should start talking about how we can make real retirement security accessible to all.

UNDERWRITTEN BY

THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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John Sellman
Eris Sutherland
Aisha Haniff
Ben Temchir
**Letters to the Editor**

**Membership Privileges**

Coming from a life with some hardships, I had neither the grades nor the money to attend college. I served more than three years in the Navy, including one on a riverboat in Vietnam. After that, an old friend who had recently joined the IBEW suggested I apply for an apprenticeship. I am happy to say that I did.

To this day, I feel that this was the best decision of my life. Not only was I able to provide the best possible life for my family, but I worked under fair and safe conditions. I was able to purchase a home, my wife was able to stay home and raise our children. I was able to take care of any medical problems I encountered due to an excellent benefit package. I now receive an excellent pension while I watch others who were not union members continue to work past their retirement age as their 401(k)s shrink due to the market's fluctuation. I am truly indebted to the IBEW and our forefathers who fought long and hard to make the IBEW what it is today.

Leo Meade, Local 351 retiree
Folsum, N.J.

**Living the Dream**

I am a 29-year-old recent college graduate. I am a husband, a father and a highly motivated first-year inside wireman apprentice. In August 2011, I graduated from Oakland City University with a bachelor’s degree in business management, summa cum laude. For over a year, I searched for a position in which I could apply my hard-earned skills and education. Nearly 30 months and over 150 resumes and applications later, I was offered a position selling life insurance to senior citizens for $9.50 an hour, ALMOST 2 HOURS AWAY!

The very next day, I contacted my local JATC’s training director to learn more about the application and selection process. From that conversation on, I was impressed with the professionalism and respect I received from everyone associated with the IBEW, NECA and my local JATC. I knew from that very moment I wanted to provide my wife and kids with the quality of life that they deserve. So I studied and passed the entrance exam with flying colors and was selected as a top candidate out of a pool of over 200 applicants.

Today, I’m employed at the GM plant in Bedford, Ind. And it’s less than two blocks from my house!

What I truly received that day was a once in a lifetime opportunity. A clearly defined career path with steadily progressing benefit and wage increases as outlined in our collective bargaining agreement—not just another empty promise never to see fruition.

Matthew A. Chastain, Local 16 first-year apprentice
Evanson, Ind.

**Giving Back to the Trade**

When I was inducted in 1966 as a first-year apprentice into Essex County, N.J., Local 52 (now Jersey City Local 164), my dad and my grandfather, both lifetime members, told me to respect our Brotherhood, work hard and learn. And this: “Always give back to our electrical trade.”

I have always been involved in politics through the local,” he says. The Fairpoint technician served as both registrar and political coordinator for Local 2320 for many years. “We always have been involved in the legislative process.”

Political action isn’t something organized labor in New Hampshire can afford to ignore. The 2010 tea party-inspired wave election that brought anti-worker governors like Wisconsin’s Scott Walker and Florida’s Rick Scott to office also brought a super-majority of ultra-right-wing state legislators to power in the Granite State.

Their top priority: right-to-work jobs by investing in education and infrastructure. At the same time, he needed to promote a message that appealed to all New Hampshire voters, union and nonunion alike.

“I want to fix our schools and roads and work to bring good jobs home,” he says. Most of all, O’Neill says he focused on staying positive. “I’m proud that all my mailers were about the issues, not personalities,” he says. “I didn’t go for attack ads.”

Pro-Jobs Agenda

O’Neill is critical of the austerity approach to governing exhibited by many tea party freshmen who dominated the last legislative session. “It’s easy to cut, cut, cut and then tell voters you didn’t raise their taxes,” he says. “But then schools are falling apart, the roads are crumbling. In some classrooms, class sizes have gone from 20 to 40—that’s a big problem.”

O’Neill says the best way to boost state revenue is to help attract good jobs by investing in education and infrastructure. He says that he encourages other IBEW members to follow in his footsteps. “We have an advantage when running,” he says. “We know the issues facing working people and we have a grassroots network of supporters to turn to.”

William E. Hening, Local 164 member
Paramus, N.J.

**New Hampshire Member Keeps It Positive in Election Win**

Residents of Manchester, N.H., woke up the morning of March 19 to a steady snowfall. Before the day was over, a foot of the white stuff was on the ground—enough to give the kids the day off from school. But that didn’t stop Local 2320 President Bill O’Neill from hitting the road before dawn. He had an election to win.

The 26-year telecommunications worker was running in a special election to fill a vacancy in the state House, which opened up after the incumbent resigned. Despite the weather, O’Neill’s supporters were out in full force at polling places throughout northeast Manchester: firefighters, police officers, teachers, Teamsters and electricians.

“Working people and union members were my base,” he says. “That is why I ran, to support working families.”

O’Neill went on to win, beating his opponent 257 to 260. His victory helped maintain the pro-worker majority in Concord that has kept right-to-work and anti-labor bills on the back burner.

“At the same time, he needed to promote a message that appealed to all New Hampshire voters, union and nonunion alike. “I want to fix our schools and roads and work to bring good jobs home,” he says. Most of all, O’Neill says he focused on staying positive. “I’m proud that all my mailers were about the issues, not personalities,” he says. “I didn’t go for attack ads.”

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William E. Hening, Local 164 member
Paramus, N.J.

**Who We Are**

If you have a story to tell about your IBEW experience, please send it to media@ibew.org.
Chris Houtz never thought he would join his father and grandfather as a member of the IBEW. They had both been members of Albany, NY, Local 236, but Houtz went his own way. An environmental science major at the State University of New York in Plattsburgh, after graduation he moved south to Charlotte, S.C., to pursue a career in the electrical trades. 

As a kid, Houtz said, he’d gone to job sites with his dad, William Houtz, and he’d found it “pretty boring.” Immediately before moving to Charlotte, he’d worked some for his brother, a nonunion electrician, and he hadn’t minded the work. Houtz decided to apply for the job while he continued his job search. He was hired on as a construction worker, “I saw everyone apply for the job while he continued his job search. He was hired on as a construction worker, “I really just love the work,” Houtz said. “It’s the sense of accomplishment when you complete tasks on a construction job and new things are always popping up so I’m always learning.”

“Chris has a great work ethic, on the job site and in school,” Eslick said. “He comes to all the local’s events, competes in state contests. He has excelled throughout the apprenticeship and we are very happy to have him here.”

“Your father has shown that first year. We’re very happy to have him here.”

While Houtz was in the fourth year of his apprenticeship, his brother Joseph tested in as a journeyman inside wireman at Local 236.

“I needed the hands-on time to see what an electrician did, to see the pleasure and enjoyment of doing this work,” Houtz said. “The CE/CW program gave me the chance.”

Houtz said he “can’t wait” to graduate this summer and says, not surprisingly given his degree, he is eager to get more involved in green technologies and renewable energy.

Young Members Step Up Activism, Build Hope

An Unconventional Path Back Home

Continued from page 3