A legacy project. Historic. Huge. All have described the endeavor to harness the vast natural resources of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada's easternmost province. And for good reason. Approximately 1,900 kilometers of transmission line—over land and undersea—will be built and laid to interconnect the province of Nova Scotia to Newfoundland and Labrador for the first time and supply them with hydroelectric clean energy. And IBEW members are making it happen.

"There’s enough guy wire on this project to wrap around the world twice," said St. John’s Newfoundland and Labrador Local 1620 Business Manager Terry Rose.

More than 1,400 members are currently working on the CA$8.5 billion dollar project, with more to come on as it continues through 2017. In addition to Local 1620, one other St. John’s local is working on site. St. John’s Newfoundland and Labrador Local 2330. Contractors of Nalcor Energy—the provincial crown corporation involved—also employ over 200 Innu, one of Canada's First Nations tribes, 35 of whom are IBEW members. (Nalcor also employs 250 members of Churchill Falls, Newfoundland and Labrador, Local 2351 at the hydro generating facility, and approximately 600 members of St. John's Local 1615 hydro operations throughout the province.)

Dubbed “Lower Churchill” after the river on which it relies, the project will be carried out in two phases, the first of which is currently underway at Muskrat Falls in Labrador. Tapping into the vast hydroelectric power of the area, it will make the province almost entirely greenhouse gas-free once complete. The first phase involves two parts: building the dam and generating facility at Muskrat Falls and constructing the transmission lines that will carry the electricity out. These lines will travel through Labrador to Newfoundland and into Nova Scotia, crossing two straits along the way. The entire project encompasses approximately 1,400 kilometers and has 20 work sites. It will eventually power not just the provinces involved, but much of Maritime Canada and the northeastern United States.

TRANSMISSION PROJECT continued on page 2
Canadian Members Help Build Historic Dam, Transmission Project

One of the rarities of this multi-year deal is that Nalcor wanted there to be only one union involved: the IBEW. The local unions in Newfoundland and Labrador already represent 250 members currently at the hydro generating station at Churchill Falls and more at Newfoundland Hydro.

‘Doing all that work under one banner, one union [IBEW], means there are no jurisdictional disputes with other trades. We have people doing all facets of the work.’

— First District International Vice President Bill Daniels

“Ed Martin, president and CEO of Nalcor, said, “Every time there’s a difference we sit at the table with respect.”

With the entire operation being done by the IBEW, this means in addition to the high-voltage work, there are members doing everything from clearing brush and building the power station to cooking the meals, as well as building the converter and grounding stations and entrances to the underwater transmission portion. Throughout the vast, rural terrain that encompasses the project, IBEW members are powering it all.

Phase One: Muskrat Falls

Four transmission lines will run from Muskrat Falls, two 355-kilovolt alternating current lines heading west and further inland to Churchill Falls where another generating station resides. The other two 500-kilovolt direct current lines will travel east to Newfoundland. The lines going east, called the Labrador-Island Link, will be a high voltage direct current transmission system, 60 meters wide and 1,100 kilometers long. After leaving Muskrat Falls, the Labrador-Island Link will travel across the Strait of Belle Isle, going undersea and resurfacing on land in Newfoundland. Nalcor says it will take about three years to complete this portion. The subsea transmission work will be performed by a specialty contractor. From there the project will head southeast across the province to St. John’s, including 700 kilometers of new high-voltage direct current transmission and a converter station at Soldiers Pond, near St. John’s.

Another transmission line, called the Maritime Link, will go from the converter station at Granite Canal on the west coast of Newfoundland, south to Nova Scotia. That line, a 480-kilometer high-voltage direct current transmission link, will also have an underwater component as it crosses Cabot Strait.

Among the challenges of building these underwater lines are pack ice and the icebergs floating down from Greenland. To deal with these frozen obstacles, there will be cables with a horizontal directionally drilled conduit to protect them from the ice. These conduits will be able to take the cables approximately 70 meters below the surface, said Nalcor.

Phase Two: Labrador-Island Link

Four transmission lines will run from Labrador-Island Link, two to northern Labrador and the other two to the west coast of Newfoundland. The Labrador-Island Link will go from the converter station at Soldiers Pond, near St. John’s, to the new high-voltage direct current transmission and a converter station at Granite Canal, also near St. John’s.

Energy for Future Generations

Beyond the massive size and scope of the project is the amount of clean energy it will bring to these provinces and beyond. The Newfoundland and Labrador government estimates that the Muskrat Falls Generating Station will have a capacity of 824 megawatts and an annual energy production of 4.9 terawatt hours. That translates to approximately 275,000-300,000 homes powered, said Gilbert Bennett, vice president of Nalcor. Or enough energy to supply power to 500,000 people according to First District International Representative Mike Power.

“It will supply an awful lot of clean power, and green energy to places that haven’t had it before now,” said Local 1620 Assistant Business Manager Don Murphy.

In addition to job creation, the massive project is harnessing a renewable resource that will be there for generations to come. “We’re going to pay big time for it up front, but in the long run it will save taxpayers money,” Rose said. “It’s a renewable resource and it will be there for 100 years or more to come. For our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and continuing generations.”

With a goal of creating a greener and more environmentally responsible energy source, Nalcor Energy and Emera, Inc., the company handling the project in Nova Scotia and the west coast of Newfoundland, have taken steps to ensure they make as much use as possible of the clean, renewable energy from the Labrador-Island Link and the Labrador-Island Link.

The Labrador-Island Link will also have an undersea component as it crosses Cabot Strait.
Scott Walker Vows to Spread his Union-Busting Policies Nationwide

Republican presidential hopeful Scott Walker declared all-out war on unions at a town hall meeting in Las Vegas on Monday, Sept. 14.

The famously anti-union Wisconsin governor unveiled a set of proposals designed to roll back decades of labor law, including scrapping all federal government employee unions, eliminating the National Labor Relations Board and making right-to-work the law of the land unless individual states opt out.

“He has been a disaster for working people in Wisconsin,” said IBEW International President Lonnie R. Stephenson, “and now he is trying to inflict the same pain on working people across America. And even if Scott Walker isn’t his party’s nominee, it’s telling that not a single one of his fellow Republicans has had the courage to call this policy what it really is—a direct attack on working people and on the American middle class.”

Ann Hodges, a professor at the University of Richmond who has studied labor law for more than 40 years, called Walker’s proposals “draconian,” telling the Associated Press, “This will take the breath away from anyone who’s worked in this on-time and on-budget,” Rose said.

“We're looking forward to doing business well, keeping issues to a minimum and ensuring safety is at the top of the list. Everybody’s happy,” Power said.

“His policies were something they liked. The proof is there that it’s working well, keeping injuries to a minimum,” Murphy said. “There is a lot of concern about the environment.”

Martin noted that this is the first time the island of Newfoundland has been connected electrically both ways to North America. He also noted that, in time the island of Newfoundland will be connected electrically both ways to the rest of the country.”

The project has been a long time in the making, beginning with meetings in 2010. In February 2012 Nalcor offered its unique partnership with the IBEW. Having been sold on the Code of Excellence—a promise to perform the job to the highest safety standards, skill and commitment to the project—the corporation wanted to make it an integral part of their new venture.

“Our philosophy was something they liked. The proof is there that it’s working well, keeping injuries to a minimum and ensuring safety is at the top of the list. Everybody’s happy,” Power said.

Nalcor also spoke of the relationship and benefits of the code, viewing it as a win-win that plays to the strengths of both organizations.

“It’s a good employment for good IBEW members. We’re looking forward to doing this on time and on budget,” Rose said.

Once this phase is complete in 2023, phase two begins at Gull Island, three years after the completion of Muskrat Falls, said Nalcor. It will involve the construction of 2,200-megawatt hydro generating facility and related transmission lines. The combined capacity will be more than 3,000 megawatts.

Newfoundland and Labrador is home to extraordinary natural beauty with no shortage of breathtaking scenery. Nicknamed the Big Land, Labrador boasts 293,000 square kilometers sprawling toward the Arctic Circle. Lonely Planet describes it as, “Undulating, rocky, puddled expanses form the sparse, primordial landscape. If you ever wanted to see what the world looked like before humans stepped on it, this is the place to head.”

‘He has been a disaster for working people in Wisconsin and now he’s trying to inflict the same pain on working people across America.’

– IBEW President Lonnie R. Stephenson

Pro-labor protestors campaign to remove Scott Walker from office in 2012. The effort was ultimately unsuccessful.

Photo used under a Creative Commons license from the Wisconsin AFL-CIO
Most IBEW members are more familiar working with the kind of power that flows through wires than the kind of power that moves through the marble halls of the Capitol. But as the Electrical Workers’ recent series about members in elected office shows, the IBEW is a crucial part of raising the voice of working families.

One of the most successful and highest-profile trade unionists in politics today is one of our own, U.S. Rep. Donald Norcross, a journeyman inside wireman from Folsom, N.J., Local 351 since 1983.

Norcross was elected in a special election last fall to replace the incumbent who had retired before his term ended. Norcross—then a state senator from the Camden area, across the Delaware River from Philadelphia—won the election, and unlike most newly elected representatives, he went straight to Washington to finish the remainder of his predecessor’s term. It gave Norcross a few months seniority over the rest of the incoming freshman class but it also meant that, for a month, he was serving on the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, who retired in 2015. One of the most successful and highest-profile trade unionists in politics today is one of our own, U.S. Rep. Donald Norcross, a journeyman inside wireman from Folsom, N.J., Local 351 since 1983.

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The Electrical Worker sat down with Norcross in July in his office in a House office building south of the Capitol.

**EW:** How has the transition to Congress been going?

**DN:** In New Jersey I had relationships built over 25 years so I knew the people, the players. When I went to Trenton, it was just an expansion of that to the northern part of the state where I knew many of the people, but we knew them very quickly. Here, my relationships were few and far between. So it is about building new relationships and finding new ways to work together.

**EW:** Have you had moments where you were able to make a difference because you were not just another lawyer?

**DN:** It was coming near the end of 2004 and the Kline-Miller Multiemployer Pension Reform Act was coming to the floor. I had my first executive order allowing project labor agreements to be signed with the federal government, we have nine federal PLAs in the whole country. In nearly six years. Nine.

**EW:** President Bush issued an executive order forbidding project labor agreements in federal contracts. President Obama reversed that with his own executive order in 2009, but union contractors are still having a tough time. What are you doing about that?

**DN:** This is a big concern of mine and I had a meeting with Rep. Derek Kilmer out of my district on Air Force One. Was that your first time flying on the presidential plane?

**EW:** Yes it was. It was a remarkable day. We got a call here, asking if I would like to ride with the president up to the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst for his speech thanking the troops [and marking end of combat operations in Afghanistan]. So I checked my schedule… [laughs] I drove over to Andrews, walked in the waiting room, and we were about to get on and I asked, “Where is everyone?” and they said, “You’re it.”

And at that point, it was remarkable. From working in refineries, splicing wire, I am about to go on the most famous plane in the world with the most powerful man in the world, that sticks with me, and I am willing to share that story.

When people are sitting at home, they aren’t paying taxes and it is a drain on the self-esteem. It can get to you.

So I keep that with me, we have to remember why we are here.

**EW:** So how do you do that?

**DN:** Diversity comes in many shapes and sizes and one of them is your background and experiences. There are 212 lawyers in Congress; there is one electrician now. And I am proud to be it.

I bring those experiences. Time after time it comes back to affordable education opportunities. And I believe that. But not everyone goes to college. Now we have college. It is called our apprenticeship program.

**EW:** You mean the career military procurement officers are resisting signing the PLAs?

**DN:** Exactly. And what we want to get across is that they aren’t just about putting local people to work, but giving them the training to have a trade for life. It is also about the women and minorities that we recruit every month, it is about putting our veterans to work through Helmets to Hardhats. So when I hear project labor agreements are no good, I think, this is about paying back a debt we owe to these veterans for putting their lives on the line for us.
DN: Education is key. But education comes in many shapes and sizes. I had a conversation two days ago where I asked a colleague what was the largest private group of educators in the country. Ift were a college it would be the third largest university in the U.S. It’s called the union apprenticeship systems. We have over 90,000 apprentices.

When we talk about affordable education, nobody seems to talk about what is already in place and the value we get for it.

EW: Why isn’t apprenticeship included in national conversations about higher education?

DN: During the pipeline discussion, I heard comments from the floor, that these are only part-time jobs, short duration jobs. It infuriated me. That is my life. Short-term jobs are what make a career! Not that there was anything sinister, there was just a lack of understanding that this is what the building trades do. You start you are working yourself out of a job. But that is the nature of it. That is what happens. So when we talk about the highway bill or infrastructure, that is in my wheelhouse. So one of my primary jobs is to educate members about what our life is like, and what our priorities are.

I remember when I was a young apprentice, the first time I collected unemployment, it was devastating. My vision of unemployment was, you lose your job, that is the end. Well losing your job in the trades is the end, but it also the beginning of a new one. It is what we do. We go to work. We get laid off. We go to a new job. That is how it works. Start a new one. It is a very different perception than the average guy on the street, or member of Congress, understands.

DN: That was one of the saddest days I’ve had here. We worked very hard but the fact is when every Republican and some Democrats, very few, wanted it to happen, it is going to go through. It is giving me flashbacks to NAFTA, which we fought and that was 25 years ago. It is remarkable. Last week, just across the river from me in Pennsylvania, there is a Nabisco factory that makes the Ritz and Oreo. They announced it was made in Mexico, off the backs of the 350 people who were laid off. And this happened last week.

So when you talk about these trade agreements, when you talk about the entire economy, it might marginally help us. But let’s talk about the losses. All the working people down below are paying an ultimate price.

And for people who talk about trade adjustment programs, it is like offering a condemned man a last meal. The food might be really good, but he is still dead at the end. We still lose our jobs. The jobs don’t come back. And if they do, it is under different conditions, you make less, less benefits, and the pension is completely different. And these were the conversations we had in the caucus, but the vote was what it was.

I still believe for the U.S. this is a very bad deal.

DN: With so few working class members of Congress and so many lawyers, what do your colleagues simply not understand?

EW: Why is it important for our members to run, to get involved politically beyond supporting candidates?

DN: Why is that important? Every dollar spent by the New Jersey government comes under prevailing wage. There is no debate. It is part of the law. We can do project labor agreement as part of the law. We have family medical leave. It is part of the law. That is because people who hold the values we do understand that on a different level.

It is not just about corporate profits, it is about fairness across the board.

But when you are running for the first time, it is tough. You have no frame of reference. How do you put together a campaign concept? What are you going to run for? But once you see people in organized labor doing it, it is easier for the next guy to think, “I can do that” and they can build on what we’ve learned.

So I need friends in Congress. I could use them. Because there are not enough of us. I need more friends. Run.

EW: Norcross holds a section of the wire he used to splice when he worked in Camden’s waterfront refineries.

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Many collective bargaining agreements between employers and the IBEW or its local unions include “union security” provisions stating that employees must become and remain members of the union as a condition of employment. The National Labor Relations Act permits employers and unions to negotiate these clauses where they are not otherwise prohibited by state law. These provisions are also permitted under the Railway Labor Act and under many state public employee bargaining laws. Under these laws, employees may fulfill their “union security” obligations either by joining the union and thereby enjoying the full rights and benefits of union membership, or by simply fulfilling their financial obligations to the union.

Employees who elect to become agency fee payers—that is, who choose not to become full-fledged IBEW members— forfeit the right to enjoy a number of benefits available only to union members. For example, only union members are entitled to attend and participate in union meetings; to run for union office and to nominate and vote for candidates for union office; to participate in contract ratification and strike votes; to participate in the development and formulation of IBEW policies; to participate in the formulation of IBEW collective bargaining demands; and to serve as delegates to the International Convention.

Agency fee payers are generally charged the same dues and initiation fees uniformly required of IBEW members. However, agency fee payers who object to supporting certain union activities may pay a reduced fee to ensure that none of their money is used to support those activities. In particular, objectors are charged only for activities or projects that are reasonably related to collective bargaining. Examples of such “chargeable” activities are negotiating collective bargaining agreements; meeting with employer representatives; meeting with employees on employment-related issues; participating in proceedings on behalf of workers under the grievance procedure, including arbitration; and managing internal union affairs.

Among activities considered “nonchargeable,” which objectors are not required to support, are support of political candidates, general community service, legislative activities, certain costs of affiliation with non-IBEW organizations, and members-only benefits.

The IBEW Agency Fee Payers Objection Plan establishes the procedure for obtaining a fee reduction and is set forth in full below. By way of summary, fee payers must file their objections during the designated open period usually the month of November by sending in a signed statement of becoming agency fee payers. Current fee payers who wish to file objections for calendar year 2016 must do so during the month of November 2015. Objections must be addressed to the International Secretary-Treasurer, IBEW, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001, and must be postmarked during the November open period. Objections filed during this open period will be effective on January 1, 2016, and will remain effective for as long as the objector remains in the bargaining unit.

No special form is required to register an objection. However, please include your full name, your mailing address, the local union to which you pay fees, your nonmember identification number (if known), and your Social Security number. In addition, if you know, please include the International Secretary-Treasurer of your new address.

Dues and fees paid by employees covered by IBEW bargaining agreements consist of a portion retained by the local union and a portion that is transferred to the International. During January of each year, or as soon as possible after receiving a timely mid-year objection, the International will mail a check reflecting the reduction in the local union’s portion of the fees to each objector who has filed a timely objection with the International Secretary-Treasurer, along with a detailed explanation of the basis for the fee reduction. During these same time frames, the local union that represents the objector will provide him or her with a reduction in its portion of the objector’s fees, either by sending a reduction check or by adjusting the amount of the objector’s periodic payments, and will provide information explaining the basis for its reduction.

The reductions are based on the percentage of the union’s expenditures that were devoted to “chargeable” and “nonchargeable” activities during the previous fiscal year, as defined above. For example, the International determined that during its 2003-04 fiscal year, 47.65% of its expenditures were for “chargeable” expenditures and 52.35% of its expenditures were for “nonchargeable” activities. The locals’ portions vary, with most locals devoting between 90 and 95 percent of their annual expenditures to “chargeable” activities. In no year has any IBEW local union spent a smaller percentage of its expenditures on “chargeable” activities than the International, although some of the locals use the International’s percentage to calculate their own annual reduction—thereby giving objects a larger reduction than if the locals used their own figures.

Some public sector collective bargaining laws require different procedures for honoring the rights of nonmembers. If you are a public employee covered by such a law, your local union will advise you of the proper procedure to follow to register your objection.

The IBEW Agency Fee Payers Objection Plan*

1. Nonmembers’ Right to Object.

Any employee who is not a member of the IBEW and who pays agency fees to an IBEW local union (LU) pursuant to a collectively bargained union security provision in the United States has the right to object to expenditures of his or her fees for activities that are not reasonably related to collective bargaining. For purposes of this plan, such activities will be referred to as “nonchargeable activities.” The agency fees paid by a fee payer who perfects an objection under the procedures set forth below will be reduced to reflect the expenditures of the LU and the IBEW that are used for “chargeable activities” (including, for example, negotiating and enforcing collective bargaining agreements, dealing with employers on employment-related concerns, and union administration).

2. Procedure for Filing Objections.

Each fee payer who wishes to file an objection must do so in writing, addressed to the International Secretary-Treasurer (IST) at the International Office of the IBEW, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. In registering their objections, objectors must include their name and address, the LU to which they pay fees, their nonmember identification number, if known, and their Social Security number. Objectors must be postmarked during the first 30 days after an employee becomes an agency fee payer (either by being hired or transferred into the bargaining unit, or by resigning from union membership) and becomes obligated to pay agency fees to an IBEW LU under a collective bargaining agreement, or, for current agency fee payers, during the month of November. (The open period may be extended in Convention years.) Objections will be effective for as long as the objector is in the bargaining unit.

3. Reduction in Agency Fees.

No later than January 31 of each year (or as soon as possible, in the case of timely mid-year objections), both the International and the LU to which the objector pays agency fees will mail to each objector who has perfected his or her objection under this plan a check reflecting the reduction in payments to which he or she is entitled for that calendar year, or will otherwise advise the objector how their payments will be reduced for the year. Unless advised otherwise by their respective LUs, objectors will be expected to remit the full amount of fees charged by their respective LUs.

Agency fees are composed of a portion forward to the International as per capita payments and a portion retained by the LU. When the IST receives timely objections, it will forward the names of the objectors to the LUs to which they pay their agency fees. As set forth in greater detail below, the International will determine the percentage reduction to be applied to the per capita portion of the objector’s fees and will issue checks reflecting the reduction in per capita payments to which objectors are entitled. In addition, each IBEW LU will establish its own procedure for determining the reduction in its portion of the agency fees and for reducing the objectors’ payments by the appropriate amounts.

4. Calculation of Reduction in Per Capita Payments.

Before the beginning of the calendar year, the IST will calculate the International’s per capita reduction as follows:

- The IST will determine the International’s total operating expenditures for all purposes during the preceding fiscal year, the expenditures made for activities that are chargeable to objectors, and the nonchargeable expenditures.
- The IST will then calculate the ratio of chargeable and nonchargeable expenditures to total expenditures.
- The International’s expenditures and calculations will be verified by an independent auditor.

5. Per Capita Reduction Check.

No later than January 31 for as soon as possible after receiving a timely mid-year objection, the IST will mail each individual who has filed a timely objection a check representing the reduction in per capita payments to which he or she is entitled for the entire calendar year. The reduction checks will be accompanied by a description of the major categories of expenditures, an explanation of how the amount of the reduction was determined and an explanation of the appeal procedure.

6. Appeal to Impartial Arbitrator.

An objector challenging both the International’s and the LU’s reductions must appeal through the procedures specified in paragraph 6.a., except that the appeal must be received in the office of the IST within 30 days of (a) the date on which the International mailed the objector the per capita reduction check or (b) the date on which the LU mailed its reduction, whichever is later.

*Where public employees are employed under a law requiring different procedures, the employees’ Local Union will provide information about the proper procedures to follow.

a. The appeal must be made in writing and must be received in the office of the IST within 30 days of the date on which the IST mails the objector his or her per capita reduction check. The appeal should explain the basis of the challenge.

b. The impartial arbitrator will be appointed by the American Arbitration Association (AAA) through its Rules for Impartial Determination of Union Fees, issued on June 1, 1986.

c. Such appeals will be consolidated to the extent practicable and heard as soon as the AAA can schedule the arbitration. The presentation to the arbitrator will be either in writing or at a hearing, if requested by any objector(s). If a hearing is held, any objector who does not wish to attend may present their testimony in writing by the date of the hearing. If a hearing is not requested, the arbitrator will set a date by which all written submissions must be received and will decide the case based on the records submitted. The International will bear the burden of justifying its calculations.

d. The costs of the arbitrator’s services and any proceedings before the arbitrator will be borne by the International. Individually incurred costs will be borne by the party incurring them.

e. While the appeal is pending, the IST will hold in escrow a portion of the fees paid by objectors in an amount sufficient to insure that the portion of the fee reasonably in dispute will not be expended during the appeal procedure. In the event that the impartial arbitrator determines that the objectors are entitled to a greater reduction in their fee payments than that calculated by the IST, additional checks will be issued for the balance of the reduction due, as determined by the arbitrator.

f. Appeals from Local Union Fee Reductions.

An objector who has filed a timely objection and who believes that the reduction provided by the LU to which he or she pays agency fees does not accurately reflect the LU’s expenditures on chargeable activities may appeal through procedures established by the LU. An objector challenging both the International’s and the LU’s reductions must appeal through the procedures specified in paragraph 6.a., except that the appeal must be received in the office of the IST within 30 days of (a) the date on which the International mailed the objector the per capita reduction check or (b) the date on which the LU mailed its reduction, whichever is later.

**Notice to Employees Covered by IBEW Union Security Agreements: Fee Payers Objection Plan for 2016**
Time for a Change? Building Trades Weigh in on the Canadian Elections

AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

Temps pour un changement? Les Syndicats des métiers de la construction interviennent aux élections canadiennes.

Le récent sondage d’opinion commandé en août par le bulletin des nouvelles de la chaîne CTV, 66 % des Canadiens disent : « il est temps de changer le gouvernement. »

Seulement que 61 % des Canadiens ont voté aux dernières élections, ce qui laisse la possibilité d’augmenter le taux de participation pour ce cycle. Le bloc d’Électeurs de 65 ans et plus est plus grand que le bloc des 18-35 ans. Le groupe des 18-35 ans est en croissance, le parti qui réussira à gagner leur confiance aura un avantage substantiel aux élections fédérales. L’élection est prévue pour le 19 octobre.

Le SMCC se concentre sur trois avenues différentes : investir dans l’infrastructure, créer de nouveaux emplois ainsi que d’encourager l’égalité et l’équité. Alors que 1 Canadian sur 14 œuvre dans le domaine de la construction, on attend de ce qu’il y ait une hausse en termes de croissance dans la population. Investir dans l’infrastructure est une question importante. Pour moderniser l’infrastructure du Canada, nous avons besoin environ 300 000 nouveaux travailleurs en construction. Ce qui représente une belle occasion pour les Canadiens qui désirent apprendre un nouveau métier avec un bon salaire.

Avec l’inégalité des revenus à la hausse, les meilleurs moyens de faire baisser la disparité entre les plus riches et le reste sont les emplois qualifiés et syndiqués. En août, le SMCC a lancé une campagne de messages publicitaires sur les médias sociaux qui apparaîtront après la fête du Travailler. Le site a aussi une section où les gérants d’affaires peuvent ouvrir une session et accéder à une trousse pour les membres, comme : casques de sécurité, autocollants, affiches, affiches de pétition et brochures. Le but est d’entrer en contact avec le plus de membres possible afin qu’ils saisissent l’importance de voter. Avec la réunion d’audience d’assistance professionnelle pour mettre les messages sur des questions fondamentales, ce groupe souhaite élargir leurs champs d’action afin de maximiser les résultats.

« Au lieu de nous concentrer sur notre territoire uniquement, nous travaillons en collaboration pour utiliser un message qui convient à l’ensemble de tous les secteurs, » mentionne Wayland. La coalition est non-partisan, donc aucun endossement ne sera effectué. Les membres peuvent avoir accès à l’information sur leur parti et leurs antécédents via le site web du SMCC. Les visiteurs peuvent ainsi trouver des images et autres informations qu’ils peuvent partager sur leurs médias sociaux comme Facebook et Twitter.

La coalition du SMCC inclut la FIOE, les plombiers, les menuisiers de charpentes métalliques, l’International Union of Painters and Allied Trades et le International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers.
New Labor Ruling Changes the Game for Millions

The days of companies hiding behind subcontractors and taking an intentional arms-length approach to employment matters appear to be numbered, following an Aug. 27 ruling by the National Labor Relations Board.

The decision means that if a parent company has a significant amount of control over conditions of employment—i.e. McDonald’s Corp. over restaurants owned by franchises—they also share in employer responsibility.

For contract workers, temporary employees and just about anyone who works for an employer contracted under a parent company, this could have far-reaching implications.

“This is a victory for working families,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson in response to the ruling. “The significance of this cannot be underestimated.”

In a statement on the ruling, the Board wrote, “With more than 2.87 million of the nation’s workers employed through temporary agencies in August 2014, the Board held that its previous joint employer standard has failed to keep pace with changes in the workplace and economic circumstances.”

The new standard for determining a joint-employer relationship says that, if a parent company contracts work and exercises a substantial amount of control over the conditions of employment, that company will now be considered a “joint employer” and therefore subject to the standards and laws that come with that. It also applies even if the parent company doesn’t necessarily exercise control but reserves the right to do so.

“The decision by the National Labor Relations Board could upend the traditional arms-length relationship that has prevailed between corporate Titans such as McDonald’s and its neighborhood fast-food franchises,” wrote Lydia DePillis for the Washington Post. “And it comes as concerns are growing about a generation of new Internet-fueled businesses such as Uber and Lyft that depend heavily on independent contractors.”

As for how this will affect IBEW members, much remains to be seen. Since many in construction already have agreements for contracting, for others however, this could give more power to workers and force more accountability on parent companies.

“Any time workers can organize and influence the party affecting working conditions, it’s a good thing,” said Elizabeth Hamilton, director of construction organizing for the Teamsters. “The NLRB is doing the right thing. For others however, this could give more power to workers and force more accountability on parent companies.”

For Vietnam veteran and Local 11 Business Manager Marvin Kropke, the 2013 decision to reach out to veterans was an easy one.

“We’re in the middle of one of the largest drawdowns of active duty troops since Vietnam,” he said. “There’s an opportunity for us to make a difference in these people’s lives, and it’s the least we can do to try to help them, to try and prioritize them and give them some opportunity for their service to our country.”

And in July, for the first time, Local 11 and the Los Angeles County chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association welcomed all-veteran pre-apprenticeship boot camp to their joint Electrical Training Institute in Commerce.

The 29 veterans who completed the two-week course spanned every branch of the military, with one even joining the program before his active duty service in the Marine Corps was officially over.

“These vets are such a good fit,” said Local 11 Treasurer Eric Brown, himself a former sailor who left the Navy in 1980. “They’ve got the discipline, the work ethic, and they crave the structure that it provides. We tell them exactly what’s expected of them, and that’s a lot like the military.”

During the 13-day program, a requirement for all apprentices starting at Local 11, instructors teach students the basics of pipe-bending, ladder safety, and OSHA lift operation, along with countless other skills that will put them ahead of schedule when they report to the job site.

“We give them safety training too,” Brown said, adding that first aid, CPR, ladder safety and some OSHA certifications are also covered. “So these are all things that give the contractor the comfort of saying, ‘Here’s a guy who didn’t just go in and out to a construction site, somebody who’s not going to walk off the side of a building.’”

And while dozens of veterans had already completed Local 11’s boot camps in mixed classes, the July program was unique thanks to the camaraderie an all-veteran group could provide.

“We had a day that we set aside to have a little bit of a lunch with them,” Brown said, “and we brought in some of the existing vets who were a little further into their apprenticeships, some for five or six months, and some for four years.”

Brown, who also serves as Local 11’s apprenticeship coordinator, said Kropke went around the room and had each service member introduce themselves with branch and rank, and that the exercise was helpful in developing the bond between them.

“The whole thing really helped me out because I was still in that military mindset,” said Cesar Miramontes, a Marine Corps veteran just days removed from a five-year stint as a drone technician. He credited the boot camp with helping to ease his transition into civilian life.

“The camaraderie was really important,” Miramontes said. “I was there with people who understood what I was going through, and I probably would have had a harder time in a group with fewer vets.”

The idea to put on an all-veterans boot camp was partly the brainchild of Sgt. Maj. Mike Kufchak, a 32-year veteran of the Marines who retired in 2013 and was recruited to Local 11 by Kropke (See “Iron Mike’s New Mission,” July 2015).

Before shedding the uniform, Kufchak was the highest-ranking senior enlisted officer in the Marine Corps’ 1st Marine Division. Dubbed “Iron” Mike by his comrades, he helped to lead more than 26,000 men and women into combat, earning himself two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart.

But when the time came to leave the Marines, Kufchak was looking for a mis-
tion, and he found it at the IBEW. Today, he is charged with helping Local 8a recruit military veterans, and by July he had enlisted enough former service members to make the idea of an all-veterans boot camp feasible.

“Those guys and gals,” he said, “they’re reliable, responsible, dependable, and they have great aptitude about themselves, and they show up with a great work ethic.”

“Coming out of Iraq and Afghanistan, we have this tremendous number of veterans with combat experience who wanted to serve their nation, and now they’re looking for careers that will stay with them the rest of their lives. And the IBEW offers that opportunity, with the same benefits, which allows the veterans to bring the same sense of community and common purpose they had in uniform.”

And Local 8a’s commitment to veterans doesn’t stop there. With so many new veterans entering the trade thanks to Kropke’s leadership and Kulpchak’s efforts, said Brown, “A bigger goal is to have a veterans group or a veterans’ mentorship going on, so there’s even more of an internal brotherhood within the Brotherhood.”

And Kropke hopes other business managers, other contractors’ associations and other unions take notice. “I’m in a position to help,” he said, “and I’m stepping forward. I hope others in my position around the country will step up just like these young men and women did when they volunteered.”

Spotlight on Safety

The Great Dismal Swamp is much more inviting now that Norfolk, Va., Local 8a members have helped construct a smooth path across an area with the greatest biodiversity in the state.

Over a hot and sticky weekend, nine members of the Young Brotherhood of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers from Local 8a volunteered with the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance to construct a boardwalk in a cypress marsh. The Young Brotherhood is part of IBEW’s Reach out and Engage Next gen Electrical Workers, which aims to encourage young workers to become active in their local unions.

“Our young workers group actually had a lot of fun working that weekend,” said Greg Evert, noting that Kabatt often said that for many retirees, it was their first encounter with the International Office and the least he could do was make sure their experience was a positive one. “The IBEW could do worse than getting more men like Leo.”

Kabatt retired in March 2003, after 35 years with the Brotherhood. In recent years, he enjoyed playing golf, remodeling his home, talking politics and walking his dog Barney. Brother Kabatt is survived by his wife, Alice, and four sons, Paul, Philip, Michael and Gregory, and four grandchildren. His oldest son, Paul, is an inside wireman and member of Local 380. Brother Kabatt was always proud to report that all of four of his sons served in the U.S. Marine Corps.

On behalf of the entire IBEW membership and staff, the officers send our condolences to Brother Kabatt’s family and friends.

Transitions

Leo T. Kabatt

The IBEW regrets to report that former Pension and Death Claims Department Director Leo Kabatt died on Aug. 6, he was 70.

A native of Pennsylvania, Brother Kabatt was initiated in 1962 as a member of Norristown, Pa., Local 380. He worked as a journeyman inside wireman for numerous contractors in the Philadelphia area and was active in the COPE committee and other local union activities. Prior to that, he served in the Air Force from 1960-1966 as an electronics technician stationed at Westover Air Force Base in Massachusetts.

After attending night school, Kabatt received a Bachelor of Science from Villanova University. In 1979 he was appointed international representative and worked at the International Office in the Pension and Death Claims Department. In 1982, he was appointed director of the Purchasing and Office Supplies Department. Among his many duties was setting up displays at labor union shows. Five years later he returned to the Pension and Death Claims Department as director.

In addition, he worked for 12 years assisting directors of the Council on Industrial Relations on facilitating cooperative labor relations.

“He was an energetic person,” said Dale Dunlop, former executive assistant. That sentiment was echoed by Mark Evert, a longtime friend and former executive assistant to International Secretary Jack Moore. “He was a busy guy. And he did a bang-up job.”

Evert also said the work Kabatt cherished most was helping retirees and their families.

“He was particularly sensitive to that. He never wanted to make any mistakes,” Evert said, noting that Kabatt often said that for many retirees, it was their first encounter with the International Office and the least he could do was make sure their experience was a positive one. “The IBEW could do worse than getting more men like Leo.”

Kabatt worked for 35 years with the Brotherhood. In recent years, he enjoyed playing golf, remodeling his home, talking politics and walking his dog Barney. Brother Kabatt is survived by his wife, Alice, and four sons, Paul, Philip, Michael and Gregory, and four grandchildren. His oldest son, Paul, is an inside wireman and member of Local 380. Brother Kabatt was always proud to report that all of four of his sons served in the U.S. Marine Corps.

On behalf of the entire IBEW membership and staff, the officers send our condolences to Brother Kabatt’s family and friends.

Spotlight on Safety

Work Safe, Please. But Just in Case...

The IBEW prides itself on having the best trained workers in the business, and no skill claims a higher priority than safety.

But IBEW Director of Safety and Health David Mullen has been flying blind. When Mullen began his job in July 2014, he found that accidents and fatalities were woefully underreported. Many local leaders and business managers were not even aware of their constitutional requirements to report serious lost-time accidents and fatalities to the International Office.

“Imagine as a business manager, you were going into contract talks without information about wages and benefits,” Mullen said. “That’s what it’s like for me going to Occupational Safety and Health Administration or the American National Standards Institute without an accurate accident information.”

So, for the last year, Mullen, with help from the IBEW’s Information Technology Department, has overhauled the electronic accident reporting system, Form 173, making it both easier to find and simpler to understand and use. Now, he is leading web-based information sessions, or “webinars,” teaching business managers and local staff how to use the new system.

In them, Mullen delivers some surprising statistics. In 2014, only 10 IBEW fatalities were reported to the International Office using Form 173. “I wish that were all we had,” Mullen said, “but the number was clearly higher.” OSHA officials estimated the number of fatalities at anywhere from 22 to as high as 38.

“We have to do better than that,” Mullen said. Of the nearly 800 IBEW locals, just 125 have used Form 173 to report accidents or fatalities, and only 25 to 25 to do so regularly.

The new system, accessed from the ‘Safety and Health’ page of IBEW.org, aims to fix that. The new Form 173 takes just a few minutes to complete and, for the first time, can be edited later if new information comes to light, like accident investigation results or when citations are issued to an employer. “We hope this will encourage business managers to fill out the form within a few days of the accident instead of waiting for the results of investigations that sometimes take months to complete,” Mullen said.

Another feature of the revamped system allows business managers to designate other members and staff who can also fill out Form 173, again with the hope of increasing the rate at which accidents and fatalities are reported. Business managers were sent a PowerPoint presentation in early August with instructions on how to register new users and navigate the website.

With the improved system and his department’s aggressive education program, Mullen hopes the IBEW will have a much better picture in the months and years to come.
Local Union Picnic Oct. 18


Local 26 will hold its family picnic on Sunday, Oct. 18. This annual event features excellent food, nice door prizes, gifts and entertainment for the children, award ceremonies, and a great opportunity to connect with other brothers and sisters. Volunteers are always very welcome, so if you can make some time available, please come on out to help. For more information, check your mail or contact the union hall.

As of this writing, Evansville Teamsters have been going through challenging negotiations with the school board that potentially could have a lasting negative effect on their union. Many thanks to all who have shown solidarity and who realize that harm to any trade is a threat to all.

Donald P. Beavis, P.S.

Apprenticeship Graduation

L.U. 24 (es,j,kpa), BALTIMORE, MD—The officers and members of Local 24 congratulate the Baltimore JATC graduating class of 2015. When this class started five years ago, there were 80 apprentices. On July 17 the graduation event there were 43, of those original 80, who persevered and successfully completed the five-year program to graduate. Of those 43 graduates, seven had perfect attendance for all five years. Two of the graduates received the Highest Average Award with a 94 percent grade average over five years. We wish all the new graduates a long, healthy and prosperous career.

[Editor’s Note: The National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (NJATC) rebranded in 2014 and transitioned into the Electrical Training Alliance. See “NJATC Transitions into the Electrical Training Alliance,” The Electrical Worker (Sept. 2014), and at www.ibew.org.]

Gary R. Griffin, B.M.

Trade Classifications

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<tr>
<th>Trade Classification</th>
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<td>Advanced Alarm &amp; Signal</td>
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<td>(et) Electric Technicians</td>
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<td>Atomic Research Service</td>
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L.U. 26 (es,j,kpa), WASHINGTON, DC—Local 26 is proud to announce the four winners of this year’s scholarship award: Ryan Brode, Carly Herber, Katelyn Murphy and Anna Nelson.

Ryan is the son of Bro. Douglas Brode and will attend Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to pursue a degree in engineering, with the goal of becoming an aerospace engineer. Carly is the daughter of Bro. Stephen Herber and will attend Liberty University to pursue a bachelor’s degree in business administration. Katelyn is the daughter of Bro. Richard Murphy and will attend Towson University to pursue a degree in environmental science. Anna is the daughter of Bro. Mark Nelson and she plans to attend St. Mary’s College to pursue a degree in biology/environmental science.

I’d like to remind everyone of the importance of the elections on Tuesday, Nov. 3. It is extremely important that you help re-elect friends of labor in the state and local races.

We extend condolences to the families of members who passed away since our last article: Joseph K. Neuland, Howard W. "Smitty" Smith, Albert N. Miller and Steven B. Reba.


Charles E. Graham, B.M.

Tribute to a Life of Service

L.U. 32 (ct,wa), SEATTLE, WA—Local 32 is saddened to report that John "Stumpy" Kohl Sr. passed away on June 17.

With Bro. Kohl’s passing, the local lost a leader; our office secretary Penny Kohl lost her husband; and Local 32 member Nicholas Smith and apprentice Richard Kohl lost their dad. Bro. Richard “Stumpy” Kohl fought a courageous battle with cancer. He served the
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Groundbreaking Ceremony For New Training Facility

L.U. 34 (i,mt,rt&S), PEBRIA, IL—On July 24, the long-anticipated groundbreaking ceremony for our new JATC facility took place. (Photo at bottom, left.)

The $2.5 million, 22,000-square-foot facility was carefully designed through many meetings over the past year with the members of the JATC board. Local 34 members understand that excellent training sets us apart from nonunion workers, and so voted to take 40 cents an hour off base wages to help fund construction and operations of the new facility. Not only will it accommodate training for apprentices, but also will provide a modern training facility for journeymen update classes as well.

Welding booths, manholes for confined-space training, and an overhead crane to teach rigging are just a few highlights of the school. There are future plans to install solar and wind technologies to train our members in those booming, high-tech power generation and distribution systems.

The JATC committee also took a tour of the Marvel Furniture factory in Chicago to look at the furnishings planned for the new training facility. All furnishings are union-made and installed. Keeping pace with the aggressive timeline, the general contractor hopes to have the facility built and ready for apprentices by the start of the second semester in January 2016.

[Editor’s Note: The National Joint Apprentice- ship Training Committee (NJATC) rebranded in 2014 and transitioned into the Electrical Training Alliance. See “NJATC Transitions Into the Electrical Training Alliance,” The Electrical Worker (Sept. 2014).]

Dennis Meaney, B.M./F.S.

Certification Requirements

L.U. 42 (kcmu.gov/LLtcb), HARTFORD, CT—Local 42 held its chartering fishing trip, "BAM" members picnic, "A" members picnic, and cod fishing trip. The events were all very successful and everyone had a great time.

A note to the "A" members and travelers who would like to sign Local 42 Out-of-Work Books: Journeyman linemen and apprentices are required to have completed all required classes for First Aid, Basic Life Support, Bucket Rescue and Pole Top Rescue, and to have current certifications. All other classifications should have completed classes and have current certification for First Aid and Basic Life Support at a minimum. Commercial Driver’s License holders must have an updated medical card issued by a physician registered with the Department of Transportation. A reminder from the Local 42 OSHE Safety & Training Department: The State of Connecticut Department of Transportation is in the process of changing the Class A Commercial Driver’s License (CDL-A) testing requirements. If you hold a CDL-B license at this time, we strongly encourage you to get it upgraded to a CDL-A as soon as possible. All CDL-A license holders will be grandfathered in automatically.

Continuing education classes were held for Connecticut Electrical License holders on Sept. 12 and Sept. 19. The "BAM" membership has been growing steadily throughout the year. Local 42 and Lewis Tree Service Inc. have started a Safety & Training program, which is going well. We have seen a positive growth in the number of stewards this year as well.

Upcoming events include the trap shoot on Oct. 3 and the union meeting and Christmas party (smoker) on Dec. 10.

Jacqulyn Moffitt, P.S.

Industry Nights & Specialized Training Sessions

L.U. 68 (i), DENVER, CO—Greetings, brothers and sisters.

Work remains steady here in Local 68. We are still hitting book with job calls. On June 10-11, Local 68 held Organizing Industry Nights in Ft. Collins and in Denver. We had a good turnout for both events and have signed up several new members as a result.

On June 16, IBEW Int. Rep. Guy P. Runco was at our hall to conduct the eight-hour Stewards Class for 12 members. Thanks to Guy and all who participated.

The Denver Joint Electrical Apprenticeship Training Committee (DJACET) hosted Interview Training at its building on 54th Avenue. It was well-attended and will help keep us on track with consistent and meaningful interviews. "Editor’s Note: The National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (NJACET) rebranded in 2014 and transitioned into the Electrical Training Alliance. See “NJATC Transitions Into the Electrical Training Alliance,” The Electrical Worker (Sept. 2014)."

Local 68 and the other IBEW Colorado locals hosted the Eighth District Progress Meeting held July 22-29. We had good presentations and work- shops downtown at the Denver Convention Center. Thanks to those who worked to help make this event a success. Local 68 thanks all members who attend- ed. Hope all the out-of-town brothers and sisters in attendance had an enjoyable time in Denver.

Local 68’s summer picnic was Aug. 5. I will give an update on the picnic next month.

Remember to work safe and professionally as always, brothers and sisters.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of our recently deceased members: Merton F. Brooks, Gregory B. Coffman, James R. Tucker, James A. Meissner, Paul Karuzas, Donald Musich, Matthew D. Lamb, Joshua J. Pina and Anthony R. Deckert.

Jimmy Horton, B.R.

2015 Apprentice Graduates; Young Worker Volunteers

L.U. 80 (Ro), NORFOLK, VA—Local 80 recently held its apprenticeship graduation ceremony for the class of 2015. The graduates are: Ken Young, Kevin Hill, Shawn Hoffman, Chris Lizzle, Daniel Hernandez, Kyle Hewitt, Robert Reyes, Joshua Bryant, Jeremy Francisco, Mat- thew Lessard, Mark Agnese, Joshua Taraskewicz, Council Lennon and Ed Hickey. Congratulations to all of these new journeymen. For the first time in Local 80, three apprentices received the Outstanding Apprentice Award: Daniel Hernandez, Jeremy Francisco and Mat- hew Lessard. Joshua Taraskewicz received an award for perfect attendance throughout his apprenticeship.

The Young Brotherhood of Local 80, the local’s young worker group, has been busy. They have con- tinued to volunteer their time, recently working to

At the groundbreaking for Local 34’s new training facility. From left, Adam Larson, JATC; Dave Zeller, NECA; Local 34 Pres. Tim Sprout; Ron Mauerman, JATC; Training Dir. Brandon Currie; Mark Kawolsky, NECA; Mike Snyder, NECA; Local 34 Bus. Rep. Dave Lowder; Steve Gardner, NECA; and Local 34 Bus. Mgr. Paul Flynn. (See "Editor’s Note" in article.)

Local 70 members are working with Henkels & McCoy Inc. on Peppa projects.

*IBEW Workers Get It Done*
install new lighting on the battleship USS Wisconsin at Nauticus in Norfolk. They also worked for a weekend installing new lighting on the battleship USS Wisconsin at Phila.

Politicaly Active Members

L.U. 98 (ei, it, &nats) PHILADELPHIA, PA—Philadelphian’s 174th District. Neilson previously served in the Pennsylvania’s 174th District. Neilson previously served in the State House and on the city council. [Editor’s Note: Neilson won the Aug. 11 special election.]

Local 98 (as, catv, em, i& it), PHILADELPHIA, PA—Neilson previously served in the State House and on the city council. [Editor’s Note: Neilson won the Aug. 11 special election.]

Motorcycle Run Benefit

L.U. 102 (em, gov1, it, &nats), PATerson, NJ—Our 2nd Annual Motorcycle Run and Cruise-in was July 25. It was a great turnout on a beautiful day. Over 100 bikers enjoyed a one-hour ride, while classic cars were enjoyed by members at the back of the event. More information on our local event can be found at www.ibew.org.

Mobilizing & Moving Forward

L.U. 134 (catv, gov1, it, &nats), CHICAGO, IL—At our August membership meeting, we heard a strong pro-labor, anti-right-to-work speech by Illinois State Rep. Lou Lange. Local 134 is mobilizing now, to help ensure that Rep. Lang and all labor-friendly state legislators retain their seats in next year’s election. Also, in an effort to broadcast our message, our members will be wearing T-shirts every Friday with an anti-right-to-work message. We hope this mobilization campaign will help to secure the participation of other labor organizations in Illinois.

In July, Bus. Mgr. Donald Finn appointed Carole Pollitz as a business representative. Carole is the first female construction business representative at Local 134. Carole, a 28-year member and former apprenticeship instructor, brings a wide range of experience to the administration. Our best wishes go with her in this new endeavor.

In other news, our first local union picnic was a success. The local plans to make this an annual event, and we look forward to double the attendance next year.

At press time, plans were underway for the 15th Annual Golf Outing was held in June, and this year’s team of Shannon J. Pierre, Daniel McSperritt, Kevin Leveck and Kevin White were victorious. Local members this summer have volunteered at the Macon County Fair, the Decatur Celebration and the Annual Labor Day Picnic.

Our opening goes out to the families and friends of three members who recently passed away: Bros. Arthur Thies, Matthew Grissom and Kenneth Gordon.

Rich Underwood, R.S.

Historical Photographs Needed

L.U. 150 (es, it, &nats), WAUKEGAN, IL—Local 150 will celebrate its 100th anniversary this year. I am still looking for photos of Local 150, particularly photos of old jobs. This is your last chance to contribute something to our 100th anniversary celebration and let all our members see these items, so take a look at your old photos. Please see me at any union meeting or leave items at the hall in my name. Thanks for any and all contributions and just to clarify: all items will be returned to the owners.

The JATC has scheduled many [new] update classes for the upcoming months ranging from conduit bending, CPR/first aid, PLCs, foremanship, license prep, NFPA 70E, OSHA 10, OSHA 30, building automation, troubleshooting, code calculations, Code NEC22-2013, and significant changes to Code NEC22-2013. What a great opportunity to brush up on our skills, review past course material and earn continuing education units. Please take this opportunity to check it out and sign up for a class or two. Many of these would be helpful if you plan on going on the road.

[Editor’s Note: The National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (NATC) rebranded in 2014 and transitioned into the Electrical Training Alliance. See “NATC Transitions into the Electrical Training Alliance,” The Electrical Worker (Sept. 2014), and at www.ibew.org.]

I am also looking for any photos our members might have that show the membership of places they might have worked on the road in the past. See you at the union meeting.

Wendy J. Cordts, P.S.

Training Facility Additions

L.U. 158 (uf, mar, mt&spa), GREEN BAY, WI—At our July membership meeting, the local approved plans to build an addition to our current facilities for some new classrooms, a training lab and an expanded parking lot. If everything goes well we should be done with construction by early 2016. Local 158 has experienced a resurgence in the need for training for our current members and hoped-for future members. Our Education Committee is working hard at setting up classes, including new classes, and also recruiting teachers. We eagerly anticipate the achievement of these positive new developments.

We have been fairly busy this summer in terms of our work picture, and we should be busier this fall, with some projects starting and a shutdown at Point Beach Nuclear Plant scheduled. We hope the work will last through the winter.

Donald C. Allen, B.M.
A Career of IBEW Service

L.U. 164 (cem,Lo&Lo), JERSEY CITY, NJ—Local 164 wishes to congratulate and thank Bro. Jeff Gallup, who retired June 26. Jeff has served our local with distinction throughout his 40-year career. He served in many capacities, both in the field and as an officer. He was a Local 164 Executive Board member, recording secretary, treasurer and business agent. Jeff has also served our local as our longtime substance abuse counselor, and he is committed to serving our members in this capacity in retirement.

Jeff has always been there for his fellow brothers and sisters and their families and will continue to do so, because brotherhood is something we share for life. We thank Jeff for his service and commitment to this local and we wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Warren M. Becker, V.P.

Tribute to Leadership; Annual Picnic in October

L.U. 234 (lk&m), CASTROVILLE, CA—Our local wishes to commend Int. Pres. Emeritus Edwin D. Hill for his tireless efforts on behalf of IBEW members, as well as all electricians and everyone who works to provide a living wage for their family. It has been an honor and privilege to uphold and serve the principles of the IBEW under his leadership. We extend our congratulations on his years of successful leadership. Pres. Emeritus Hill, you deserve all the best in retirement and we wish that for you. Thank you from each of us here at Local 234.

We also congratulate newly appointed Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson. We proudly pledge to uphold and serve the IBEW principles under his leadership.

As we round out the summer here on the Monterey Bay, it is time to note that our Local 234 Annual Family Picnic will be held Oct. 20. The picnic is our opportunity to recognize our members for their years of excellent service and share great barbecue on a fun-filled day.

Stephen Slowacek, P.S.

Newly Elected Officers

L.U. 236 (alt&at&cm,cm,Lo&Lo&Lo&Lo&Lo), ALBANY, NY—On July 7, the newly elected officers of Local 236 were sworn in by former business manager Donald Rahm. After serving as business manager for 12 years, Don decided not to run for re-election. We would like to extend our privilege to uphold and serve the principles of the IBEW under his leadership. We extend our congratulations on his years of successful leadership. Pres. Emeritus Hill, you deserve all the best in retirement and we wish that for you. Thank you from each of us here at Local 234.

We also congratulate newly appointed Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson. We proudly pledge to uphold and serve the IBEW principles under his leadership.

As we round out the summer here on the Monterey Bay, it is time to note that our Local 234 Annual Family Picnic will be held Oct. 20. The picnic is our opportunity to recognize our members for their years of excellent service and share great barbecue on a fun-filled day.

Stephen Slowacek, P.S.

Steward Training Via Webinar

L.U. 340 (L&Lo&Lo&Lo&Lo), SACRAMENTO, CA—in June, Local 340 held a Steward Training class in Sacramento for 25 attendees (17 inside wimen, one county employee, and seven sound and communication installers).

What was different about this class from those we’ve had in the past was the fact that our Redding members were saved from having to travel the 300 miles roundtrip to Sacramento, by participating in the training via Webinar. Thanks to Int. Rep. Tracy Prezeau, from the IBEW Education Dept., who worked closely with our members and our Redding Asst. Bus. Mgr. Andrew Benedict to make this happen. Congratulations to all of Local 340’s new stewards. With work picking up the way it has in our jurisdiction, this training will definitely benefit all of our members.

Speaking of work, at this midsummer writing, Local 340’s biggest job—the Sacramento Entertainment & Sports Center, home of the Sacramento Kings basketball team—is in full force and going very well. You can log on to our website www.ibewlocal340.org for a live feed of this project.


Dave Anderson, P.S.

Summertime Union Activities

L.U. 424 (a,es,es,sf&lo,Lo,LoLo,Lo&Lo&lo&Lo&Lo&Lo), NEW JERSEY CITY, NJ—On July 19, Local 424 hosted its annual Dragon Boat Festival & BBQ Lunch at the 51st annual dragon boat race. The event was well-attended and enjoyed by all.

Officers Sworn In; Member Runs for State Office

L.U. 400 (es&lo), ASBURY PARK, NJ—On July 24, recently elected officers were sworn in at the monthly union meeting. Re-elected officers include: Bus. Mgr. Guy Petrowicz, Pres. Ed Wells, Vice Pres. Larry Sciscia and Rec. Sec. Brian Huska. Thanks to Jim T. Tucker who was elected for a first term. Local 400 members are: Pat O’Keefe, Lee Sanborn, Robert Shinkuma, Joe Volpe and Rich Volpe. The election Board members: Pete Dinicolas, Bill Mansfield, Mike Ricca and Brian Waterman. The leadership strives to represent each and every member to ensure Local 400 a steady and strong future.

Local 400 is also active on the political front to advance the cause of workers. Bro. Eric Houghtaling, a longtime Local 400 member, is running for a seat in the New Jersey State Assembly. Eric is officially endorsed by the state AFL-CIO and the New Jersey State Building and Construction Trades.

Local 400, under the name Circuit of Hope, participated in its very first Relay for Life in Wall, NJ. We are proud to report that the team raised over $3,800 for the American Cancer Society to aid in the fight against cancer.

Raven Morris, P.S.

2015 Apprenticeship Graduates


Regina Gay, R.S.
Solidarity for Success

L.U. 466 (em,es,i&rts), CHARLESTON, WV—Hello from “Almost Heaven” West Virginia. Our local is in its 101st year as a chartered IBEW local.

We wish to acknowledge the following Local 466 members for their service in positions of leadership: Bert McDermitt, IBEW regional organizing coordinator; Dave Elaw, secretary-treasurer, West Virginia State Building & Construction Trades Council; John Boyd, IBEW State organizing coordinator; and Roy Smith, former secretary-treasurer of the West Virginia State BICET. We thank them for their dedicated service.

We thank Pres. Terry Turley, Sec./Treas. Mike Anderson and memb. Mo. Jim McCreless for the successful Bass Fishing Tournament at Sutton Lake. Despite relentless rain, everyone had a great time. The rain continued during our annual picnic at Shawnee Park in Dunbar, WV, which also was a great success. We thank Bus. Mgr. Joe Samples and committee members Jason Cobb, Jason Samples and Chris Samples for their work to make the picnic a great time for all, especially the members’ children. We thank all those whose generosity contributed to the success of the picnic.

We have much to be thankful for, but we do face challenging work ahead in order to divert a political disaster, given that the last election turned our state districting process over to the GOP. Please go vote in the next critical election.

With great sadness we report the death of several members as a result of the accident that occurred earlier this month. We wish them each a peaceful transition to their eternal home. We are proud to have a “Proud Union, Red,” as in the GOP. Please go vote in the next critical election.

We are excited to report that we have reached a five-year agreement with Tombigbee Electric in Hamilton, AL. The work picture here was slow throughout the summer. However, we do foresee several major projects later this year. We extend our gratitude to all the fellow IBEW locals that were able to provide employment for our members this summer. We wish the entire Brotherhood and all fellow members the best for the upcoming season.

Tony Quillen, Pres./A.B.M.

Editor’s Note

Attendance at the first meeting of the Local 606 RENEW committee.

At Local 568 apprentice graduation banquet. Front row: wiremen graduates Matt Corsbie (left), Randy Holliman, Daniel Sullivan, Andrew Borden and Robert McGee III and Chase Smith. Back row: then-Assistant Training Dir. Mac McCreless, recently appointed as the new training director; wiremen graduates Andrew Huggins, Bart Gillis, Daniel Bates, Lakin Newton; and then Training Dir. Ron Weaver.

Active RENEW Committee

L.U. 606 (em,es,rb,sp&ku), ORLANDO, FL—Local 606 is proud to announce that we have a vibrant and active RENEW committee. In May this year, Local 606 Pres. Clay McNeely and journeyman wireman David Ramos led their first RENEW (Reach Out and Engage Next-gen Electrical Workers) meeting and immediately started planning how they could help the local.

The RENEW committee’s first project was volunteering for the Industry Night event the organizing department was planning for July. Twenty-five volunteers were at the Industry Night to direct traffic, assist the organizers in gathering and entering data from attendees, and help those whose first language was not English. The event was a huge success and the RENEW committee played a major part in making that happen. (Photo at top, right)

The RENEW committee now meets on a monthly basis and plans on expanding their membership and continuing to make an impact on the local.

With great sadness we report the death of several Local 606 members: John Griffiths, Keith Johnson, Willis Edgar, Joe Hill, Robert Light and Bill Waites, who was a 65-year member. These gentlemen all personified what it means to be an IBEW brother, and they will be sorely missed.

Fernando Rendon, R.S./P.S.

Apprenticeship Graduates

L.U. 640 (em,es,i,rtb,ts,sp&ku), PHOENIX, AZ—Congratulations to the members of the most recent apprenticeship graduating class of the Phoenix Electrical JATC. The graduates are: Chukor Chabane, Jasen Ericson, Sergio Gonzalez, Anthony Hernandez, Daniel Spanbauer, Jorge Tec and Oleyary Yazzie. Good luck, brothers, in your career as journeyman wiremen.

[Editor’s Note: The National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (NJATC) rebranded in 2014 and transitioned into the Electrical Training Alliance. See “NJATC Transitions into the Electrical Training Alliance,” The Electrical Worker (Sept. 2014), and at www.ibew.org.]

Our work outlook is still very slow here in Phoenix. We hope the work picture will start picking up toward the end of the year and get some of our brothers and sisters back to work. We send a big thanks to all the locals out there that are employing our members who are currently traveling.

Our condolences go out to the families of our recent deceased members: James W. Sylvander, Wayne Key, Charles T. Robinson, Dale O. Faust and Harry W. C. Smith. Rest in peace, brothers.

Remember to work safe always. In solidarity.

Jeff Sears, P.S.

Election of Officers

L.U. 666 (Lumbro), RICHMOND, VA—The election of local union officers took place in June. A great big thanks goes out to everyone who ran for an office; our local is strongest with interested and involved members.


There was greater participation in this election than the last. As always, a good democracy requires involvement. Turn out, cast your ballot next election, and attend your union meetings between now and then.

Recent retirees are: Vance D. Harris and Robert B. Winfree.

Charles Skelly, P.S.

Outstanding Work Picture

L.U. 684 (c,i,rts&st), MODESTO, CA—Greetings, brothers and sisters. This year has been outstanding for us so far. The Quinto Solar Project is still going strong and Gallo Glass Plant is still hiring more help. Our books are almost empty. The upcoming Wright Solar Project has been delayed a few months, but as of press time it is still expected to man up toward the end of the year. We should be able to roll right into it,
and the future looks bright for next year too. Many thanks to all the traveling brothers and sisters who have helped man these projects.

As this article went to press, Local 684 was looking forward to our Sept. 12 annual picnic at its new location—The Turlock Sportsman Club. With all the traveling members working in our jurisdiction, we were hoping for a great turnout and good opportunity to spend some time away from the job sites with the many new faces we have met. All were welcomed to join us at the picnic.

Dave Jones, P.S.

Former Local 692 Training Dir. Paul LeVassuer with his grandchildren.

Training Director Retires

L.U. 692 (i,mt&spa), BAY CITY, MI—We wish former Training Director Retires with his grandchildren.

L.U. 692 (i,mt&spa), BAY CITY, MI—We wish former Training Director Retires with his grandchildren.

L.U. 692 Training Dir. Paul LeVassuer a happy and healthy retirement. Paul started his inside wireman apprenticeship in 1986 and served as Local 692 training director from 1993 until his retirement. He retired on April 1 this year.

A reminder to members: Please remember to take your morning and afternoon work breaks. These work breaks are a negotiated provision of our contract agreement. We need to remember that our members, both past and present, have worked very hard to win the benefits we enjoy every day. We do not want them taken away. We have some important elections coming this fall for seats on the City Commission in Bay City. Elections for Ward 2, 4, 6 and 8 are scheduled. If we win these seats, we could possibly make gains in securing prevailing wage. Please contact your state legislators about the importance of our state’s prevailing wage law.

We are saddened to report the passing of three retired members: Bros. John H. Gilmore, Anthony W. Rupar, and Dan Schumacher. Bro. Nicholas Johnson graduated as a telecommunications technician/installer.

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Congratulations to graduates of the five-year journeyman wireman program and the three-year journeyman technician program. We all know that the apprenticeship process can be very challenging at times. Local 704 fellow brothers and sisters with all of the graduates a smooth start to long and successful careers as IBEW journeymen.

Local 704 members Mike Bumgarner (left), Jimmy Yost, J.T. Savage and Jerry Williams (not pictured) participated in the 2015 Illinois AFL-CIO 8th Annual COPE Golf Day, winning the tournament and the $600 prize money, which they graciously donated back to the COPE fund.
Tribute for Longtime Service

L.U. 1116 (em,clt&ku), TUCSON, AZ—We would like to recognize our 2015 retirees who retired during the first quarter of this year and thank them for their many years of service and commitment to the IBEW. Without the struggle of these men and women, we would not have the benefits, wages and safety standards that we enjoy today. They are a testament to the principle that “Every Member Counts!”

Congratulations to the recent retirees: James Hartnett (29 years of service), Wayne Terpstra (42 years of service), James Morris (33 years), Edward Hermosa (34 years), Jon Agguire (34 years), Steve Spencer (33 years), Christopher Buck (27 years), George Martinez (34 years), Bruce Buffum (44 years), Nancy Kane (16 years), Martin Overholtz (41 years) and Michael Riesgo Jr. (35 years). Thank you to these brothers and sisters for their years of service.

Roger Asplin, P.S.

Solidarity & Strength

L.U. 1466 (u), COLUMBUS, OH—So far, 2015 has been a good year for Local 1466. In addition to ratifying our three-year agreement with American Electric Power, we have been busy swearing in new members and working to add to our ranks. It is our hope that the recent trend of hiring new apprentices in the Line Department, combined with our continuing organizing efforts in all classifications, will help our local to grow and gain strength.

Jimi Jette, P.S.

Photo Contest Rules:

1. The contest is open to active or retired IBEW members only. The person submitting the photograph must be the person who took the photograph. Members may enter more than one photo.
2. International Officers and staff are not eligible.
3. Photos can be submitted as digital files of at least 300 dpi, in color or black and white, on slides or prints. The preferred print size is 8x10. For more guidance on electronic photo sizes, go to www.ibew.org. Click on the Photo Contest button, and see the “Contest Rules and Photo Guidelines.”
4. All submissions become the property of the IBEW Media Department.
5. Photo entries must have an IBEW theme of some sort, with IBEW members at work, engaged in a union-related activity or subjects conveying images of the electrical industry or the union.
6. If members are featured in the photo, they should be identified. If large groups are pictured, the name of the group or the purpose of the gathering (e.g. a safety committee, a union’s picnic, a union meeting) can be submitted in place of individual names.
7. Photos previously published in IBEW publications or the website are not eligible for submission.
8. The preferred method of entry is through the Photo Contest application on the IBEW website at www.ibew.org.
9. If entering via U.S. mail, please fill out the contest entry form and affix it to each photo you submit for the contest and mail it to the IBEW Photo Contest, 900 Seventh Street NW, Washington, DC, 20001.
10. Fifteen finalists will be selected and posted on www.ibew.org for final judging by the public. The winners will be featured in an upcoming issue of The Electrical Worker.

What makes a good photo? Is it the lighting or the contrast? Is it the colors or the subject? Maybe it’s the story that’s being told through the photo. Who better to convey the experiences and stories of IBEW membership through photography than members themselves?

For more than 16 years members of the IBEW from all over the U.S. and Canada have sent in images of their work. They capture shots that exemplify who we are as one of the largest and highly-skilled unions in the world. Now it’s your turn.

IT’S TIME FOR IT’S TIME FOR THE 2015 IBEW PHOTO CONTEST

Enter Today! Deadline Nov. 30

1st Place: $200
2nd Place: $150
3rd Place: $100
Honorable Mention: $50

Photo Contest Entry Form

Name

Address

City and state

Zip code

Phone number

E-mail address

Local union number

IBEW card number

Photo description
Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in August 2015

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Unions Rising

We all know this economy puts the screws on working families. Something that seems to be forgotten is that this is not an act of God. Laws written by people run the economy, not the laws of nature.

The recessions and financial crises of the last decades have created an upside-down waterfall of money to the already rich. It is a crazy thing, a waterfall that goes up, but the rich and their powerful friends have been trying to convince us that it is normal.

You have to say they had some success. Many Americans support politicians who have been eagerly tearing down the economy our parents and grandparents built.

All of us in the organized labor movement know what makes workers better off: a collective bargaining agreement between a company and a unified workforce. You know who is catching on? Everyone else.

In an August Gallup poll, 60 percent of Americans approved of unions, up from 48 percent seven years ago. Only about one-third thought unions should have less power than we do today.

Not surprisingly, in an economy with little promise for millions except the children of billionaires and millionaires, the younger you are, the better a union looks to you. Among 18-to-34-year-olds, two out of three support unions.

Ten years of hard times has blown away acres of fairy dust. They are ready to listen to us, and more importantly, ready to speak for themselves. Every member of this union can be an organizer, and every working man and woman can get organized. So speak up. They are listening.

Our Founding, Our Future

When the IBEW held its first convention 125 years ago, only 10 delegates attended. It was so small it was held in a room in the boarding house where our founding father, Henry Miller, was staying. What they started in that room though, laid the foundation for what our 725,000 members enjoy today. As we look ahead to our 39th convention, in the city of our union’s birth, we would do well to remember these roots.

As we walk the streets that long ago held the footprints of our founding father, Henry Miller, was staying. It’s time to go back, to the future.

How we achieve our power and why we use that power is our founding, the core of our identity. It’s what made us who we are.

We have far more than 10 delegates at the convention next year, but the objective remains the same: to come together from our diverse backgrounds and focus on the shared goal of organizing all working men and women in the electrical industry. And with our theme “Our Founding, Our Future,” we will honor our past as we move forward.

It’s time to go back, to the future.
A Real Example

John Weber is a true forefather of San Antonio Local 60. On May 14, John received his 75-year service pin along with an appreciation plaque at a special awards luncheon hosted by the Local 60 Retired Members Club.

A World War II veteran, John Weber was initiated into Local 60 in 1940. Starting with his first job with Wright Brothers Electrical, John also worked for sick Electric, URH, Graham & Collins, Blessings and a few others.

As a member of Local 60, John held the office of president from 1967 to 1973 and the office of secretary for four years. He was also on the apprenticeship committee and a member of the AFL-CIO council. John would often step by apprentice classes to encourage the young members to attend their union meetings. He firmly believed in his union.

In 1965, a young journeyman foreman, Richard Suggs, needed help running a three-story, 60-bed barracks job at Lackland Air Force Base, and John Weber was sent to mentor him. Richard stated “although John had been in the trade much longer than I, he respected my position on the job and was there for me in any capacity for which I needed him. He treated me as an equal. I am thankful that I had John as an example of how a real Brotherhood works. In the 50+ years that I have known him, John has not changed.”

After 47 years, John hung up his hard hat in 1987 to enjoy retirement with his lovely wife of 69 happy years, Dorothy.

Kudos to Prison Program

Upon reading my August 2015, Electrical Worker, the article on the front page, “Angola Prison Program Offers Skills, Redemption,” caught my attention and imagination immediately. Please credit Judges Laurie White and Arthur Hunter along with Warden Cain for thinking outside the box, and leave “in” mentality that so dominates our archaic prison system in America today. Also, credit our brothers, sisters and union-minded employers, of which there are so few in Louisiana. A progressive program like Angola’s could prove to be a model for many young people stuck in America’s futile prison system. I hope this program proves itself a valuable rehabilitation tool that can put many young people back on the right path in life.

Calling IBEW Musicians

I host a radio show from Arkansas State University called “Blues Where You least Expect It” (featured in February 2011 Electrical Worker article, “Ark. Member Spins Blues-Inspired Tunes for College Radio”). It airs every Saturday night at 9 p.m. central at 91.9 FM and streams live at kasu.org. Local 556 has supported and written my show for the past eight years. Every season I write two or three thank you shows supporting the IBEW in general and my local specifically. This is not your regular blues show. I highlight just how far the blues have influenced all other musical genres since. I do not play blues artists, but artists that are known for the blues.

There must be a lot of musicians affiliated with the IBEW and I’m looking to highlight their music. While I get requests from my brothers and sisters to play their favorite songs, this time I would like to hear your music, with a few stipulations:

- It must be or have been commercially available, which includes digital downloads (whether it’s free or not such as Reverbnation.com, or freemusicarchive.org or any of the pay per song websites).
- It must be radio friendly (watch the language).
- While the show covers blues it can be any sub-genre of blues: rock, country/blues, just to name a couple. If you are interested in this project please contact me at thatwasblues@yahoo.com.

Jim Drennan, Local 556 member, Jonesboro, Ark.

RENEW: Busting Union Stereotypes in the South

For Caleb Long, hard work, public service, and the importance of education were values instilled early on in life. Long’s father, Eddie Long, is a 45-year veteran of Charleston’s local 175, and growing up in a working-class household meant security and a chance to chase not only one college education, but a master’s degree as well.

But after years at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, including two during his apprenticeship, Long was ready for a career, and not one that left him sitting in a cubicle all day.

“When I was a student, I had no experience or any kind of background in construction other than being from a blue-collar household,” he said. “But coming out of school, I was just like any other kid. I didn’t know what I wanted to do, and I came to know construction work as something I enjoyed a lot.”

Today, Long is a journeyman inside wireman working on the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Watts Barr Unit 2 nuclear plant. Expected to be completed later this year, Unit 2 will be the first nuclear reactor to come online in the United States in more than two decades.

But Long has been making the most waves in Chattanooga where he works he isn’t being paid for. As one of the leaders of Local 175’s active RENEW (Reach out and Engage Next-Gen/ Electrical Workers) chaplains, he and his fellow young leaders are giving back to their community and drawing the right kind of attention.

Most recently, the group of about 20 RENEW members collected 52 backpacks worth of school supplies along with the Chattanooga Area Labor Council, accounting for more than half of the North Chattanooga Recreation Center’s goal. And in May, RENEW members coordinated logistics and entered four teams in Hamilton County’s Relay for Life charity walk, raising more than $5,000 for the American Cancer Society and drawing lots of positive press in the local newspapers.

“It’s a way that [the community] can see there’s not a bunch of young knuckleheads out there wasting or squandering the hard work and effort that got Local 175 to where it is today,” Long said of the group’s service activities.

“Every meeting, we ask our group a simple question,” Long said. “What do you want to do? And then we’ll do it. And we’ve used that to empower the individual, we’ve used it to empower the local, and we’ve used it to advertise labor’s value within the community.”

The last part, Long says, is integral in growing union density in the historically unfriendly South. As the Ten District representative on the RENEW committee, he hopes to continue harnessing the energy from RENEW projects to promote labor in communities across every district.

Zack Ballard, left, Toby Shelton, Darius Long, and Zac Painter of Chattanooga Local 175 RENEW volunteering at the city’s Relay for Life event.

Want to Start a RENEW Chapter in Your Local Union but Not Sure How?

RENEW, the young workers initiative of the IBEW since 2011, has chapters across the United States and Canada. But the goal is for every local union to have one, said the Civic and Community Engagement Department’s Rachel Bryan, international representative for community outreach.

With the input of the RENEW Advisory Committee, RENEW is rolling out a new toolkit. Available electronically on the Local Connections section of www.ibew.org, it offers guidance to young workers looking to create a RENEW program, including:

- How to establish and structure a committee
- Determining relevant issues crucial to younger members
- How to reach out and work with other labor unions and community groups
- Templates and proven strategies to move the IBEW forward

“With so many nearing retirement,” she said. “It’s time for us to step up.”

If you have a story to tell about your IBEW experience, please send it to media@ibew.org.
The Secret Plot to Undermine an American Cornerstone


In 2008, Peter G. Peterson, the former CEO of Lehman Brothers, formed a foundation and endowed it with a billion dollars of his own cash. Unlike foundations formed by other billionaires, Peterson’s wasn’t aimed at alleviating world hunger or eradicating disease. In fact, one of the foundation’s primary goals is to promote cutting Social Security and other popular programs that keep millions out of poverty in the name of “deficit reduction.” Social Security, established in 1935 during Franklin D. Roosevelt’s administration as an antidote to the Depression, was originally composed of two insurance programs—unemployment insurance and old age insurance. It included aid to dependent children and the blind. Developed under the leadership of Secretary of Labor Francis Perkins, the program was described by FDR as “a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty old age.”

In “Social Security Works: Why Social Security Isn’t Going Broke and How Expanding It Will Help Us All,” authors Nancy J. Altman and Eric R. Kingson place Peterson’s opposition to Social Security in the context of an 80-year war of misinformation against the program that began even before it was passed. Despite compelling narratives on the founders and adversaries of a program that continues to keep millions of seniors, children and disabled workers out of poverty, “Social Security Works” isn’t just a history book. Altman and Kingson make a strong, convincing and well-documented case for why the program is essential, how Social Security can be strengthened not just for current retirees, but for generations to come.

Policy experts who served on a bi-partisan national commission in the 1990s to reform Social Security, the authors discuss the collapse of private, collectively-bargained pension plans. Many of the plans covered manufacturing workers whose jobs have been outsourced over the past few decades, a development that has decimated the savings of retirees, including tens of thousands of IBEW members. Layered on top of the decline in the wealth of working families is the growing divide between the wealthiest Americans and average workers, a gap that has reduced the payroll deductions and taxes on Social Security income that have helped to build Social Security’s $2.8 trillion surplus.

But fixing the program for the future would not be difficult, say the authors. By very slightly raising the current cap on income that is taxed to fund Social Security and implementing other common sense measures, the program can be strengthened. Eight bills to expand Social Security have been introduced in Congress. The beneficiaries of an “All Generations Plan” proposed by the Social Security Works coalition, co-founded by the authors, will not be just current retirees or the baby boomers who will be retiring in large numbers over the next few years.

“Younger generations will reap greater benefits from an across-the-board increase [in benefits] than today’s old,” say the authors. “That’s because, in raising the benefits of current beneficiaries, we also raise the benefits of those who will receive them in the future, and because today’s old will receive this benefit improvement for fewer years than tomorrow’s old.” Peterson and others label any attempt to increase Social Security’s tax revenues as a move to “punish the entrepreneurs.” In response to that charge, the authors cite stark statistics and pose sharp questions on what will happen if Social Security benefits are cut or the program is privatized:

• Who will help the growing number of grandparents who save taxpayers billions of dollars in foster care while they stretch their savings to the breaking point caring full-time for their grandchildren?
• Who will help middle-aged workers of medium and low incomes who are forced to supplement the savings of their aging parents while simultaneously providing for their children’s education?

New Election Rules Boon to Organizing

The National Labor Relations Board’s new rules governing union representation elections have shortened the time between a petition for an election and a binding vote by nearly 40 percent, according to NLRB statistics released in August.

The new rules implemented in April allow unions to electronically file petitions for a union election and cut the time between the acceptance of the petition and the election from 45 days to 21. Companies are required to notify their employees of the election with posters and, in some cases, by email, and provide the union with a full list of the workers eligible to vote, including shifts and locations, or lose the right to contest the makeup of the bargaining unit.

“It has absolutely made things faster, and our win rate in elections since April has been nearly 50 percent,” said IBEW Director of Professional and Industrial Membership Development Carmella Thomas. “Employers just don’t have as much time to terrify their workers or simply wear them down.”

Employers’ groups like the Chamber of Commerce have condemned the rule, saying it does not leave them enough time to mount a response to what they called “ambush elections.”

Companies also have to declare whether they will fight specific issues raised in the union petition. If the company is silent about any part of a petition, it cannot later contest it in court.

“Sometimes all the issues are on the table early and the companies can’t delay and delay and delay by continually raising new objections at the NLRB or in court,” Thomas said. An NLRB statement said the rule was “designed to introduce common sense changes that will eliminate barriers workers face when they decide to have a vote on whether to form a union.”

The rule does require more of unions as well. They must notify an employer as soon as a petition is filed. That gives employers several more days to act than in the past, when notification came from the NLRB after it had processed a petition.

The new rule has improved the likelihood of a successful election, but the early notification of employers and the short window before a vote means organizing campaigns have to do more preparation before they file a petition.

“It all has to be in order and locked down before we move for a vote,” Thomas said. “We can’t hope to line up more people in the weeks before the election because there isn’t time. I tell our organizers to prepare their contacts, ‘You aren’t going to be working for the next three weeks; it is going to be wall-to-wall anti-union meetings. You have to be ready now.”

Social Security Works convince us that the 80-year-old program is more important than ever.

• How will we build a strong and vibrant future for working families if guys like Paul Peterson succeed in undermining Social Security and placing a heavier financial burden on already struggling families?

“Social Security Works” provides not just answers, but ammunition for union members and retirees to set the record straight, to convince our fellow citizens to support the strengthening of a critical program that, while still overwhelmingly popular, is under relentless attack.

After all, that support is essential to move politicians away from the harmful prescriptions of some of their wealthiest campaign donors.

“This book is an important call to the U.S. Congress,” says AFL-CIO President Richard L. Trumka. “Social Security Works” explains how and why expanding Social Security is a solution to our nation’s retirement income crisis.”

Employers just don’t have as much time to terrify their workers

Carmella Thomas, IBEW Director of Professional and Industrial Membership Development.