The IBEW welcomed hundreds of members into the Brotherhood Sept. 27 when the workers at Electrolux’s Memphis, Tenn., plant voted by more than 2 to 1 to form a union. More than 90 percent of the 700-member bargaining unit voted in the election and more than 70 percent of them voted to join Memphis Local 474. The victory came 16 months after the first organizing campaign fell 59 votes short. It took two votes and more than two years of organizing by dozens of Electrolux workers, IBEW organizers from across the country and union activists from Sweden to ensure victory.

“This is the most important manufacturing victory in a southern, right-to-work state in my memory,” said Director of Professional and Industrial Organizing Carmella Thomas.

The southwest Memphis plant makes high-end commercial and residential stoves and ranges that cost from $2,000 to upwards of $10,000. It was one of the highest profile economic development projects in the city when it opened two years ago. The company received state and local subsidies worth nearly $180 million to build the factory, according to an investigation by Memphis’ newspaper, the Commercial Appeal.

But soon after the facility opened in 2014, there were problems, said Stanley Reese, the head of the volunteer organizing committee. Many people applied for jobs and started taking courses specifically for jobs at Electrolux after they were promised
starting salaries of at least $15 an hour. But when they started work, they made closer to $12, sometimes only $11 an hour.

Supervisors told workers to come in before their shifts were scheduled to start and punch in at the normal time, Reese said. People who missed work because their children were sick were written up even if they had a doctor’s note. New hires, promotions and job transfers were distributed by favoritism, not the quality of work or seniority. Unscheduled overtime was compulsory and often assigned with less than 12 hours’ notice, leaving parents scrambling for childcare.

“One lady was told to be in by 6 a.m. the next morning and her child’s daycare didn’t even open until 6,” Reese said. Reese, who had worked at Chrysler’s Memphis plant until it closed in 2010, started talking to his co-workers about how different things were when he had been represented by the United Auto Workers.

Eventually they asked him when he was going to stop talking about it and do something.

The First Campaign

Reese approached the IBEW on the recommendation of a union organizer who was a customer at his second job, a liquor store.

“She said we should come to the IBEW because we make electrical compo-

nents. So I called,” Reese said. He never got the woman’s name.

There is a playbook companies fol-

low to fight off a union drive. A company holds closed door meetings where unions are bad-mouthed. In-house organizers get increased scrutiny, leading to suspensions and even firings. Companies lie about the financial state of the union and radically overstate the size of future dues.

In that first election, Electrolux fol-

lowed the playbook and more.

The factory is divided into three departments. Higher skill workers in the press department made more money than the workers in the materials and assembly departments. Electrolux managers told workers in the press depart-

ment that they would lose money if the other departements got raises.

Management also situated con-

tract workers, almost all Latino immi-

grants who spoke English poorly or not at all, between the mostly African-Ameri-

can full-time Electrolux employees, Reese said. Not only did the Spanish speakers have a lan-
guage barrier that made organizing more challenging, they were literally placed as barriers, preventing the English speakers from talking to one another at work.

The final blow may have been when the Electrolux manag-

ers found out the date of the vote. A few days before the ballot, the company hired more than a hundred of the contract workers, pre-

sumably to throw the result, Thomas said.

All of that hap-

pened despite a global neutrality agree-

ment that Electrolux had signed with their home union, IUF Metall, in Sweden.

The organizing drive lost by 59 votes.

“They promised to raise wages and end the favoritism. ‘Give us a year,’ they said ‘and if we don’t get it done, have another vote,’” Reese said. “And when we lost the vote, they didn’t do a thing.”

The Rematch

There is no shame in being beat, only in quitting. And we never quit,” said Carl McPeak, the lead organizer for the IBEW on the campaign. “From the minute after the vote was lost we were looking at the game tapes to see what we could do better.”

“IT was heartening for them to see so many people who believed in the value of the IBEW. I think [the Electrolux workers] could see how important they were to us.”

– Paul Shaffer, Local 474 Business Manager

One of the big changes they made was expanding the organizing committee. Two workers from the press department — Renita Leah and Jocks Williams — joined Reese, Victor Jones, Larry Chatman and Tina Mull in materials and LaRodrick Wilson and Marquita Martin on the assembly line.

The employee organizers inside the plant were joined by IBEW organizers from California, Kansas City and Houston. Thousands of pamphlets were handed out during shift changes. They ran a tar-

geted social media campaign to educate workers about the benefits of uniting together. Dozens of educational meetings were held at a nearby church and, in the weeks leading up to the vote, organizers made more than 400 house calls.

The biggest challenge this time was making sure everyone understood what a union was, Reese said. Many people thought because Tennessee was a right-to-work state that unions were illegal.

“I told them all right-to-work meant is that we are a union-by-choice state,” McPeak said.

Reese said he started making and wearing T-shirts that read “Albert Einstein Supported Unions” and “Unions Built the Middle Class.”

“I had people ask me what unions were. They had no idea. One guy asked me what the middle class was. And I told them all to Google it or ask their grandparents what a union was,” Reese said. “Don’t take my word for it. Look for yourself and you will see what unions have done.”

In some campaigns, having organiz-

ers who are not locals has been counterpro-

ductive, but Local 474 Business Manager Paul Shaffer said, in this case, it was a help.

“It showed the true commitment of the entire Brother-

hood. I think it was heartening for them to see so many people who believed in the val-

ue of the IBEW. I think they could see they were important to us,” Shaffer said. “It might not have been the dif-

ference, but it made a difference that they got a sense of how large a group of people was behind them.”

– Jeanette DelGarza, an organizer with Kansas City, Mo. Local 53 and a native Spanish speaker, was brought in to focus on the Latino con-

tract workers in the factory who were not eligible to vote — as long as the company kept them as contract workers.

But as the organizers had learned from the first vote when more than 100 were brought on full-time just before the election, the Latino workers had to be part of the organizing strategy.

“We wanted to make sure that if any of them were made permanent before the vote they that they would vote yes,” DelGarza said.

Her job was made easier by what Electrolux had done after the previous election. The 120 contract workers who were brought on as “permanent” workers just before the vote were all fired two weeks later, DelGarza said.

In this mostly Latino community, her biggest challenge was also a lack of knowledge of what unions were.

“These are unions in Mexico, but they are for teachers and lawyers and the higher-ups, so when I talked about unions I mostly got blank stares,” she said. “I was surprised at how few knew about us.”

Doing house calls was also hard. Nearly all of the addresses for the con-

tract workers were fake.

All organizers faced strong head-

winds. The temporary agencies held closed door meetings, she was told. Managers told the workers they would be fired if they voted yes or helped pass out literature, actions in direct violation of labor laws.

“They were told they had no rights here,” DelGarza said.

One volunteer organizer, a legal immigrant from El Salvador, was fired for not showing up to work, even though she had evidence that she spoke to her super-

visor about her absence, she said. But the worker would not pursue an unlawful labor practice charge because the NLRB office in Memphis is in the same building as the Memphis Immigration Court.

“The fear is real, and we need to be real about it when we are organizing in this community,” DelGarza said.

The contract workers were not the only targets of management disinforma-

tion and unfair labor practices. A mainte-

nance worker was fired for a safety viola-

tion that McPeak said was standard practice, Reese’s brother was fired.

And stories would drift back to Reese.

“People would come up to me and say ‘I heard the union is paying you $40,000 to run this campaign.’ Or the company would show them fake tax docu-

ments that the IBEW was broke and needed our $70 a week dues to stay open,” Reese said. “If I heard it, imagine how far that must’ve spread before it came to my ears.”

The IBEW filed multiple unfair labor practice claims against Electrolux, and the company was penalized multiple times for violating labor laws in both cam-

paigns, Thomas said.

The unfair labor practice convictions got the attention of IF Metall, the union that represents Electrolux workers in Sweden, Thomas said. The leadership of IF Metall demanded the company cease honoring the global neutrality agreement it had signed with the union and cease interfer-

ing with the organizing drive. The leader-

ship also recorded a video supporting the organizing drive that was distributed by the IBEW before the vote.

“The video from our brothers and sisters in Sweden supported our message that the world is watching this and the world is supporting you,” Shaffer said.

The Vote

To prevent the company from conducting another mass-hiring right before the elec-

tion, organizers kept the election date a secret until the last minute, Thomas said. But in the days leading up to the vote, enthusiasm was clear.

“We were holding signs outside the hourly workers’ parking lot and nearly every car was honking and giving us the thumbs up,” DelGarza said. “And we rec-

ognized that a lot of the people giving us the thumbs down were managers going out the workers’ exit.”

The next step, Shaffer said, is first con-

tract negotiations early next year, mak-

ing sure the newly-contracted workers at the factory organize and spreading the word that unions are rising in the South.

“It is awe inspiring,” Thomas said. “This is a win for our new brothers and sis-

ters. It is a win for hungry families in the South and it is a model of how the labor movement can confront globalized com-

panies with a global labor movement.”

Continued from page 1
NextGen Young Workers Conference Inspires, Educates

With a focus on membership engagement, safety and history, IBEW’s next generation of sisters and brothers gathered for a weekend of motivation and networking at the NextGen conference, held in Toronto Oct. 28-30.

“The strength of our union comes from each and every one of our members being engaged and active,” said First District Vice President Bill Daniels, who attended. “I encourage you, over the next couple of days, to speak with your fellow members, ask questions of the guest speakers and workshop facilitators and take what you learn back to your local union.”

The theme was “Power Up Your Membership,” and 70 delegates representing 13 locals from across Canada heard from labor leaders, safety advocates and each other about how to engage their peers and continue the legacy of the Brotherhood.

Jim Belanger, a journeyman electrician and member of Toronto Local 353 and co-chair of his NextGen committee, said, “It can be hard to get a lot of young people to sit still and pay attention, but they made it work.”

NextGen is the First District’s initiative to engage young workers to get involved with their local unions. Along with its counterpart in the U.S., it comprises the RENEW/NextGen initiative.

The conference included workshops on organizing, IBEW history and structure and getting involved at the local level. There was also a workshop on how to build a NextGen committee, which Belanger and Ali Rossiter, program coordinator with Fredericton, New Brunswick, Local 37, attended.

“We have a NextGen Committee, but it’s been relatively inactive for a couple of years,” Rossiter said. “It just needs the right person or group of people to get it in motion and get our NextGen-ers involved. And now we have a toolkit to make that happen.”

As with a lot of conferences, much of the learning and engagement came from meeting other members.

“It’s good to mingle with others,” Belanger said. “You can sit around and talk shop, get to know each other and hear what other committees have done that’s been successful.”

“There’s a ton of people out there supporting this initiative across North America and it’s great to hear from them,” Rossiter said. “This isn’t just a Local 37 thing, but something much bigger.”

The keynote was a highlight. Spencer Beach, a third-generation floor technician and safety advocate, spoke on the topic of safety. While at work in April 2003, he suffered third- and fourth-degree burns over 90 percent of his body as a result of a flash fire.

“It really opened my eyes to how easy it is to be safe, but also how easy it can be to be careless about safety,” Rossiter said. “Especially at home. As a new homeowner that really landed with me.”

Kate Walsh, strategic coordinator for the First District, said, “It was a cool way to end the conference considering that this is the 125th anniversary of the IBEW and that it began because of poor safety conditions. It was incredibly powerful.”

The discours was the best saillant. Spencer Beach, a former maintenance worker and electrician, said he was impressed by the stories of the Whitehead family fighting cancer — and winning. bitly/IBEW/CancerMiracle

Vimeo
When The Ed Sullivan Theater was renovated for Stephen Colbert to take over “The Late Show,” New York Local 1212 was there to make it happen. And for every show since. bitly/IBEWLateShow

HourPower
Check out the IBEW Hour Power Job Tips channel for new tools to make your life easier on the job site. Visit IBEWHourPower.com — and submit a job tip of your own!

ElectricTV
Electric TV travels North America telling the stories of your IBEW brothers and sisters and the projects they work on. Have a story of your own to share? Visit ElectricTV.net

www.ibew.org
Visit the IBEW website for great news and stories on our members — including the online version of The Electrical Worker! www.IBEW.org
Fact Check: Busting an Old IBEW Pension Myth

Pension and Reciprocity Department Director Bruce Burton heard of a misleading rumor making the rounds this summer that brought back memories. But this time he was in a position to do something about it.

The tall tale dealt with the return NEBF members receive on their pension contributions, with a member of one local union spreading the claim that the average IBEW retiree received only 18 monthly benefit checks before dying.

“That’s been hearing people say stuff like this since I was an apprentice electrician in Detroit back in the ’80s,” said Burton, whose department is responsible for the Pension Benefit Fund, more popularly known as the International Office pension. “It was clearly ridiculous. Everyone knows IBEW retirees are living long lives, including my own father.”

Burton’s dad, 89, has been retired from Detroit Local 58 for more than 24 years. “He’s in a darned good health, still mows his own lawn, and has been happily collecting IBEW pension checks for two and a half decades,” Burton said. “It’s anecdotal, of course, but I thought we should take a look and see if we could determine the real number anyway.”

So Burton reached out to actuaries at the National Electrical Benefit Fund, a supplemental pension for “A” members run jointly by the IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors Association, reasoning that they would have the most accurate data for IBEW retirees.

“IT turns out we were right,” Burton said. “Not only was it a completely made-up number, it was so far from the truth that we thought it was only right that we share the data with all of our members.”

In reality, the average life expectation for NEBF participants — and likely for IBEW members in general — is 82.3 years. Since roughly 53 percent of IBEW members choose early retirement at 62, that means the average retiree receives benefits for more than 20 years before passing away.

“That’s 244 pension checks on average, not 18,” Burton said. “It’s disappointing to see that this kind of rumor still has legs after all these years, but I hope we can put it to rest once and for all. The truth is, an IBEW pension is still one of the best investments a person can make in their retirement security, and it’s good to see the numbers to back it up.”

The PBF, which Burton runs, is the modern version of the original death benefit that Henry Miller and the IBEW’s founders established in 1891. In 1955, it made pension payments of more than $127 million and paid $8.6 million in death benefits.

The NEBF, which managed more than $12.6 billion in pension funds at the close of 2015, remains one of the healthiest defined benefit pensions in the labor community, investing in a diverse portfolio that includes real-estate projects that put active IBEW members to work all over America.

“We’re proud of the systems this union has set up to take care of our brothers and sisters in retirement,” said International President Lonnie B. Stephenson. “Making sure our members are able to retire with dignity and security is one of the most important jobs we have, and the PBF and the NEBF are key parts of that.”

Vermont Member Wins “Rising Star” Award

Montpelier, Vt., Local 300 member Danielle Bombardier has a new title to add to her growing collection: outstanding young leader.

On Sept. 26, Bombardier was named one of Vermont Business Magazine’s “Rising Stars,” an annual award given to 40 people under the age of 40 for their contributions to the Green Mountain State’s community and economy, says the website. And she is the first person from her local to receive the honor.

“I was definitely surprised,” Bombardier said. “I feel like a regular worker, not like someone who should win an award.”

Tim LaBombard, Local 300 membership development director and the one who nominated her, would argue otherwise.

A former two-time volunteer with AmeriCorps, a national service program, Bombardier has cooked food for the Ronald McDonald House, participated in trash pick-up for Green Up Day and volunteered with Vermont Works for Women, an organization dedicated to promoting women and girls professionally. She also participates with other Local 300 members in an annual dragon boat race for breast cancer survivors.

Now a second-year student, Bombardier was named the 2016 apprentice of the year. And she was running the solar panel at her job with Sherwin Electric as an apprentice — something that does not usually happen, LaBombard said.

“She deserves it,” LaBombard said. “Danielle’s very bright and she’s always working to promote the local.”

An inside wireman with a bachelor’s degree in molecular genetics, Bombardier also serves as her unit’s recording secretary and sits on the wellness committee.

The 40 winners were chosen from 140 entries by a panel of judges. This year’s class comes from areas including academia, finance, construction and entrepreneurship.

Bombardier says she’s happy for the recognition, and not just for herself.

“This is good for the union and want the union to succeed,” she said. “It shows our community involvement — and that there’s a place for women in the field.”

“Women are a demographic that we need to focus on,” LaBombard said. “Hopefully this award will show more women and girls that there are great opportunities for them in places they may not have thought of before.”

Annual RENEW Event Honors the Fallen

Young members at Omahna, Neb., Local 22 saw an opportunity to help grieving families last summer and seized on it, starting an annual tradition they hope will continue to help others in their region.

In 2015, leaders of the RENEW/Next-Gen chapter at Local 22 approached Business Manager Barry Mayfield after the sudden death of David Perez, a beloved member of the local’s leadership who suf-
The Electrical Worker  | December 2016

**DECEASED**

Ora “Rex” Dutton

The IBEW is saddened to announce the death of former Seventh District International Representative Ora “Rex” Dutton on Aug. 27.

He was 93.

Born in 1922 in Bentley, Kan., Dutton enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1942 and served three years aboard the mine sweeper U.S.S. Pursuit in the South Pacific. He was awarded six service ribbons and eight battle stars.

After the war, Dutton was initiated into Wichita, Kan., Local 27 in 1945. He was elected vice president in 1953, then to the executive board in 1955, and was brought on staff in 1959 as assistant business manager.

Dutton joined the Seventh District as assistant to then-International Vice President Ray Duke. When Duke retired in 1981, his replacement — International Vice President Orville Tate — kept Dutton on.

“Rex really took care of the business of the district and he was extremely good at it, because he really liked it,” Tate said.

“But his expertise and his love was the apprenticeship,” said Mayfield, who noted that many of the members who died.

Lucas and the rest of the team hope to eventually expand the benefit so that funds are available in the immediate aftermath of an active member’s death rather than having to wait until the annual fundraiser.

“It’s something we’d like to do in the future,” he said. “We’re really just getting started.”

**DECEASED**

Dan C. Bowers

The IBEW regrets to report the death of former Ninth District International Representative Dan C. Bowers, who died in Santa Maria, Calif., on Sept. 23 at the age of 83.

Brother Bowers concluded his 43-year IBEW career in 2003 when he retired from the Ninth District, having served as an international representative for 17 years.

Born in 1930, Bowers grew up in Santa Maria, 120 miles northwest of Los Angeles, where he graduated from high school in 1948. After serving in the U.S. Army in Korea, Brother Bowers worked briefly in the oil fields before entering the IBEW apprenticeship program in 1959.

The next year, he was initiated into Santa Barbara Local 435, spending the next 18 years as a journeyman wireman, during which time he served six years on the local’s executive board.

In 1978, Brother Bowers was elected business manager, a job he would hold until his appointment to the Ninth District office in 1986.

International Representative David Tilmont, who took over Bowers’ responsibilities upon Bowers’ retirement, said he will remember him for his depth of knowledge, which he wielded with a light-hearted touch.

“Danny was a kick,” Tilmont said. “He was always full of jokes, and he kept things light and loose. But he was such a resource for the rest of us. He knew the legal and historical reasons for every word of contract language, and he was always willing to share what he knew.”

In his spare time, Brother Bowers was an avid pilot, golfer, youth football coach and a proud member of the Orcutt, Calif., Jaycees and Elks Lodge.

Bowers is survived by six children, nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife Lela in 1977 and in 1992 by his wife Carol, whose four children Join the family in grief.

The officers, staff and membership of the IBEW extend their deepest condolences to Brother Bowers’ family and friends.

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If you are married and die before retirement, NEAP will provide your spouse with a Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit. Your spouse will receive this benefit if: (1) you have satisfied the minimum eligibility requirement of 100 hours of service; (2) you have a balance in your Individual Account; (3) you die prior to receiving a pension benefit; (4) you are married; and (5) you have not previously declined the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit.

If you are entitled to a Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit, NEAP will purchase an annuity contract from an insurance company for your spouse. The annuity contract will pay your surviving spouse a monthly benefit for life. Monthly payments will start within a reasonable period of time after your death. The amount of the monthly benefit depends upon (1) the amount in your Individual Account; (2) your spouse’s age (and, therefore, his/her life expectancy and prospective benefit payment period); and (3) the insurance company’s price for annuity contracts.

Elections/Consents

If you are under age 35, your spouse will automatically receive the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit upon your death (unless your spouse selects a lump sum payment instead of the annuity). You may not decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit unless you have permanently stopped working in Covered Employment. However, beginning the year you reach age 35 and at any time thereafter, you may decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit. Your spouse must consent in writing and the consent must be witnessed by a representative of NEAP or by a notary public. Consent given by a spouse is not effective as to a subsequent spouse.

You may revoke your election to decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit at any time. You may again decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit at any time by executing the appropriate form and obtaining your spouse’s consent. Your spouse may also revoke his/her consent at any time. Contact the Plan Administrator’s Office for the appropriate forms.

Lump Sum

If you decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit, your Individual Account balance will be paid to your designated surviving beneficiary in a lump sum. If your designated surviving beneficiary is not your spouse, your spouse must also consent to that as well, in order for it to be valid. If you have not designated a beneficiary (or your designated beneficiary is not living at the time of your death), the balance will be paid to the following persons, if living, in the following order of priority:

(1) your spouse; (2) your children; (3) your parents; or (4) your estate. The total amount of money received as a lump sum may ultimately be different (either greater or lesser) than the total amount of money your spouse would have received under the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit. It is because the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit is an annuity and depends on the time value of money and how long your spouse lives. Additional information is available from the Plan Administrator’s Office.
**Career of IBEW Service**

L.U. 2 (catv,lctt,o,t&u), ST. LOUIS, MO — IBEW Local 2 congratulates former Bus. Mgr. David Desmond on his recent retirement, effective Oct. 1, 2016. Although he initially planned to retire earlier in the year, he was persuaded to stay on until after the IBEW 39th International Convention. “I’m so thankful I stayed for the convention,” Desmond said. “It was a lot of fun and a great convention.”


One of Bro. Desmond’s most notable accomplishments while serving as business manager was overseeing the project for a training center. He helped to acquire property in Saint Clair, MO, for the local union. This 5-acre tract was used to build a training center that was completed in August 2010.

Desmond said, “Being in the IBEW is one of the best things that ever happened. It has been a pleasure to serve with everyone.”

Greg Benton, A.B.M.

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**2016 Women’s Conference**

L.U. 12 (l,okse), PUEBLO, CO — This past summer was a hot one for Local 12, with many days reaching over 100 degrees in Pueblo. Local contractors have had fairly steady work, and inside contract negotiations are completed. Unfortunately, some large solar projects in the area went nonunion. We had some out-of-state contractors doing a wind turbine project in our jurisdiction who hired on a few Local 12 journeymen wiremen. The signatory line contractors have projects going in our jurisdiction as well. The Black Hills Generating Station added another unit and the project manned up to almost 30 inside wiremen; that project was winding down as of press time.

Our retirees have a monthly luncheon gathering at a local restaurant that brings in a dozen or more brothers and their companions together for lots of storytelling and laughter. These are the same ones who always RSVP for the picnics, banquets, etc. I want to thank all of our retirees for their continued participation in our local’s events. It wouldn’t be the same without you!

Mike Brukaker, P.S.

**Work Picture Steady**

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Susan J. Johnson, P.S.

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**Labor Day Celebration**


The Labor Day Association’s 130th celebration featured four days of good food, numerous family activities (including free carnival rides), and a large parade. This year’s guest of honor was Indiana’s Democratic candidate for governor, John Gregg. Congratulations to Miss Taylor Kiesel, daughter of IBEW member Ed Kiesel, on being elected the 2016 Labor Day Association Queen. Thanks to all who made this event possible for the working people of the tri-state area.

Donald P. Beavin, P.S.

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**U.S. Rep. Cummings Speaks At Union Membership Meeting**

L.U. 24 (es,jk,spa), BALTIMORE, MD — On Friday, July 15, the JATC held apprenticeship graduation ceremonies for its year’s graduating class of 46 new journeymen. Bus. Mgr. Gary Grinnell reminded the new journeymen that this is their local union and they need to stay involved to make it stronger, not only for their future, but also for those who will follow.

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**Trade Classifications**

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Efforts are made to make this list as inclusive as possible, but the various job categories of IBEW members are too numerous to comprehensively list all.
Scholarship Award Winners; Officers Elected

L.U. 26 (ees,ems,goVL,k&m), WASHINGTON, DC — Local 26 election results were announced at the July general membership meeting. Bro. George C. Hogan was elected business manager, and Bro. Thomas C. Myers was elected president. Congratulations!

I hope you’ve made plans to attend one of our Christmas party/meetings to enjoy some brotherhood and holiday cheer. The D.C. area event is Dec. 2; Fire Royal, Dec. 3, and Roanoke Dec. 10.

Congratulations to this year’s Local 26 scholarship award winners: Brian Lilley, Darian Hileman, Alexis Cooper and Alyssa Goodwin. Brian is the son of Bro. Ralph Lilley and will attend Clsmon University. Darian, daughter of Bro. Joel Hileman, is a student at Stevenson University in Baltimore. Alexis, daughter of Bro. Bruce Cooper, is studying at James Madison University. Alyssa, daughter of Bro. Ronnie King, is a student at Virginia Tech University.


We wish to extend our sympathy to all newly elected officers. At our annual Labor Day celebration, we will remember the following members who we have lost this year: James G. Ferraro, Frank J. Mantele, Ed Ayala, Morgan J. Buchanan, Jim Mantele, Pres. Morgan J. Buchanan, Vice Pres. Ben McWhirter, Treas. JoAnn Wolf, Rec. Sec. Kyle Weber, Executive Board members Ben Cobos, Casey Curtain, Robert Delgado, Greg Milligan, Tony Pastore, Deb Tika, Dave Trujillo, and Examining Board member Ron Trace. Delegates voted to the convention were: Jim Mantele, Ed Ayala, Morgan J. Buchanan, Dan Cathey, Ben McWhirter, Jeremy Ross and Deb Tikka. Congratulations to all newly elected officers.

For Local 68’s annual picnic on Aug. 20, we were blessed with great weather and brotherhood. Attendance was near 700 this year, including more than 200 children. Everyone seemed to have a grand time. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with everything from set-up to clean-up. Without the volunteers, the picnic would not be as enjoyable and successful as it is. Thank you DJEATC and Local 68 held a turnover dinner on Sept. 5 for the graduating apprenticeship class of 2016. We welcome 31 new journeyman wiremen and one VDV journeyman to the ranks. Congratulations, graduates!

We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of our recently deceased brothers: James G. Ferraro, David S. Erickson, Robert W. Chavez, Edwin D. Fisher, Emerald Nelson, Daniel L. Cramp and Dale L. Stollard.

Local 68 congratulates the class of 2016 apprenticeship graduates.
Quality Work & Opportunity

L.U. 70 (kttnko), WASHINGTON, DC — N.G. Gilbert, a signatory union contractor new to our area, is working in Frederick, MD, for the Potomac Edison power company doing maintenance and system upgrades for the electric power utility.

N.G. Gilbert is the first union contractor on the Potomac Edison system in over 25 years. With the help of IBEW Local 70 linemen and apprentices, we believe N.G. Gilbert will be there for many years to come. Local 70 would like to thank Potomac Edison power company for the opportunity to prove that union labor is the best in the country. We also thank the members of Local 70 for working safely and doing an outstanding job for both the company power and our new contractor.

And to all of our Local 70 members, we thank you for all your hard work and commitment to help ensure the continued success of our contractors. With IBEW members’ commitment to safety and quality work, we have continued to get the work in our area and keep our members working, as well as bring on many new members that we can train to do the work in the union way. Thank you very much to all!

Jon “Jack” Buchal, Asst. P.S.

Local Raises 30K for Hospital

L.U. 102 (em,govt,mt,otko), PATERSON, NJ — July 23 saw temperatures rise into the high 90s but that didn’t keep our brothers and sisters away from our biggest fund-raising event of the year. Our 9th Annual Bike Ride & Cruise was a huge success as once again we raised over $30,000 for charity. This year’s recipient was Children’s Specialized Hospital. Past recipients include Goryeb Children’s Hospital and The Seeing Eye.

Fred Sisco and Nick DelleCava donated their time performing live music while the bikes and classic cars began arriving that morning. The ride started at Local 102 as area police personnel escorted the group on an uninterrupted ride through some of the most scenic parts of New Jersey. A barbecue, ice cream and a DJ were set up and ready for the returning riders as the ride concluded back at our union hall in Parsippany.

We thank all of our brothers and sisters who volunteered that day. A special thank-you goes out to our sponsors and the police department. Without these groups our ride would not be the success that it is. Local 102 is proud to continue an IBEW tradition of giving back to the communities we serve. Great job, brothers and sisters!

Bernie Carrigan, Pres.

Apprenticeship Graduates

L.U. 30 (es,rtb,spa&u), WAUKEGAN, IL — The following are the 2016 graduates of our apprenticeship program.

The Robert C. Hansen Award (highest GPA for the 2015-2016 school year) was awarded to Jason Wood and he received a Klein tool bag and a Milwaukee cordless drill set.

Second highest GPA went to Chris Gonzales. All graduates received a nylon Klein carrying shoulder bag from Klein Tools.

There was no perfect attendance award given this time. We wish all these young men a long and profitable career in the IBEW. Best wishes to all!

The Robert C. Hansen Award was presented to: Michael A. K籈hen, Jack Benson, Forrest Rose, Paul Hertel, Raoul Gonzales, Richard Stanley and Jason Wood.

Local 134 delegation and guests stand beside Eternal Flame at Henry Miller museum.

‘Exciting Year of Progress’

L.U. 164 (em,1,0,j,otko), JERSEY CITY, NJ — Local 164 had a productive year filled with progress and some exciting events.

In June, our local held its election of officers for the upcoming term. Congratulations to the officers elected and to all those who stepped up to run.

Also, in May, our president, Tom Sullivan, was honored to receive the 2016 Labor Leader of the Year Award presented by the United Labor Agency. Tom received this great honor in recognition for all his hard work in advancing the cause of union labor. Congratulations, Tom, and thank you.

As we near the end of the year, Bus. Mgr. Dan Gumble, Pres. Tom Sullivan, the officers and staff of Local 164 would like to thank our members for all their hard work throughout this year and to wish you and your families a merry Christmas, happy holidays, and a safe, healthful and prosperous new year.

We anticipate and look forward to the continuing rebound of our work picture, continuing our progress, and another exciting year in 2017.

Warren Becker, V.P.

Career of IBEW Service

L.U. 222 (b), ORLANDO, FL — Hello, brothers and sisters. The work picture in Local 222 has been a little north of steady; we have our local members working and quite a few travelers as well. By the time this makes print it will be December and we may have a few more travelers down here getting out of the snow.

As I write this, Local 222’s delegates have just returned from the IBEW 93rd International Convention. At the convention, our then-business manager, Mike Bell, had the privilege of chairing the IBEW Fifth District caucus and nominating longtime friend and Fourth District International Executive Council member William W. “Bill” Riley.

The other big news for October was that after 42 years in the IBEW and 27 years as Local 222’s business manager, James M. “Mike” Bell has retired, effective Oct. 1, 2016. IBEW Local 222 was chartered in November of 1969 and since that time has been under the leadership of Mike Bell. With that leadership we have grown tremendously and our future looks bright. We all wish Mike a happy and well-deserved retirement.

William “Bill” Riley, B.M.

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Volunteers Mobilized

L.U. 734 (ct,em,1,mt,11tb,тки,su&u), CHICAGO, IL — At this writing, prior to the November 2016 election, our members were out in force to turn out the vote.

Local 734 mobilized hundreds of volunteers going door to door to well over 1,000 households, phone banking, registering voters, promoting early voting and sending blast emails with the goal of supporting and getting out the vote for labor-friendly candidates at the local, state and national level.

In other news, we had a good presence at the 9th IBEW International Convention in St. Louis. The accompanying photo (below) shows our contingent at the Eternal Flame at the Henry Miller Museum newly opened in St. Louis. Also, retired member, Vietnam veteran and Hines VA Hospital volunteer Pat Stack spearheaded a coalition of various veteran groups and organizations in purchasing aquariums for the hospice section at the hospital.

We have finalized the sale of our “home” for the last 62 years. Due to all the new construction occurring in the neighborhood and the lack of parking for our membership, it was time for a move. Our new union hall will be at 2722 S. Martin Luther King Drive. The building needs upgrades and will be ready for us by autumn of next year.

On behalf of the entire Local 134 membership, Bus. Mgr. Don Finn extends his best holiday wishes to everyone in the IBEW.

Frank Cunningham, R.S.

Local 70 members work with union contractor NG Gilbert on Potomac Edison power company site.
Newly Elected Officers

L.U. 234 (UAW), CASTROVILLE, CA — Our local is proud to report that at our July 13 general membership meeting, our newly elected officers were sworn in to office by our former business manager, James “Ray” Nichols.

Congratulations to our Local 234 officers: Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Andy Hartmann; Pres. Dennis “Mike” Ihnot; Vice Pres. Al Randall; Rec. Sec. Stephen Slovacek; Treas. Nick Preglovsk; and Executive Board members Andy Gattis, Rick Keaton, Stefan Marcerson and Gale Michalek.

Local 234 officers, from left, front row, Mike Ihnot, Nick Preglovsk, Al Randall; back row (partially obscured), Gale Michalek, Andy Gattis, Rick Keaton and Stefan Marcerson. Not pictured: Andy Hartmann and Stephen Slovacek.

Calgary Stampede 2016

L.U. 254 (res,em,moo,ots,sj&l), CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA — You may not know where Calgary is geographically, but anyone hearing the name associates it with the city with the Calgary Stampede. The annual 10-day festival takes place every July.

On June 20, 2013, southern Alberta suffered one of the worst natural disasters in Canadian history, wreaking havoc in Calgary’s downtown core and leaving much of Stampede Park under water. That year with less than two weeks before Stampede 101, the highly skilled IBEW electricians employed by the Stampede Board, proud members of Local 254, rose to the challenge that the “Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth” would go on “hell or high water.” They truly define the IBEW Code of Excellence. The accompanying picture (at bottom, left) portrays a much more relaxed and stress-free group of Local 254 electricians assembled for Stampede 2016.

John Biegel, B.M./I.S.

Officers Elected; 2016 Apprentice Graduates

L.U. 266 (UAW), PHOENIX, AZ — Congratulations to our 2016 apprenticeship graduates! [Photo at top, right] The graduates include: 10 linemen, five electricians, two cable splicers, two construction & maintenance men, one metal fabricator, and five relay technicians.

We also congratulate our newly elected officers: Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Jerry Long, Pres. Tom Oliveras, Vice Pres. Tom Clifford, Treas. Carmela Lamadore, Rec. Sec. Katrina Trevillyan; and Executive Board members Tony Bane, Byron Begay, Greg Bronson, Randall Caron, Joseph Fenzl, Ray Powell and Anastacia Williams.

At Navajo Generating Station elected were: Chmn. Robert Wood, Vice Chmn. Steve Vital, and Unit Recorder Chris York.

At Navigo Generating Station elected were: Chmn. Andrew Beatty, Vice Chmn. Harold Brockie, and Unit Recorder Darlene Dodson. We also congratulate and welcome newly appointed Asst. Bus. Mgrs. Chris Miller and Chris Galloway.

We are excited for all of our newly elected officers, and we are confident they will do a great job and make our local stronger!

Jerry Long, B.M.

Local 266 congratulates class of 2016 apprenticeship graduates.

Officer Transitions & 2016 Apprentice Graduates

L.U. 270 (I&MT), OAK RIDGE, TN — Congratulations to our 2016 apprenticeship graduates! [Photo at bottom, right] Their five years of hard work has paid off!

The recent graduates are: Scott Bolden, Brandon Cardwell, Elijah Cook, Jordan Hamby, Caleb Headrick, Andrew Howard, Nicholas Morton, Curtis Norman, Michael Peterson (outstanding apprentice of the year), Chris Ruby, Michael Taylor and Kevin Webster.

IBEW 270 has lots of changes to report. Bro. Ray Day, who served as Local 270’s business manager since 1998, retired in July 2016. We wish him and his wife, Linda, a well-deserved, long and happy retirement. We thank Bro. Day for his hard work and dedication in building for the future of our great Brotherhood.

Bro. Don Russell, former president, was appointed as Local 270’s new business manager. Bro. Robert Williams, former vice-president, was appointed as local union president; and Bro. Rex Ruppe was appointed as our new vice-president.

The Oak Ridge training alliance now has a new training director in place, Bro. Daniel Smith. We have great faith that Training Dir. Smith will keep us on track to upholding our high standards of graduating top-notch wiremen and continued training for our journeyman wiremen.

Local 270 is excited about our future with these new officers in place and work slowly appearing on the horizon. We send our best thoughts throughout the Brotherhood.

Regina Guy, P.S.

Local 254 IBEW Local 254 electricians gather in preparation for Calgary Stampede 2016.

JATC Student Council

L.U. 292 (em, govt, i, rtb, rts & spa), MINNEAPOLIS, MN — Apprentices in Local 292’s JATC program have taken it upon themselves to form a JATC Student Council. The Student Council consists of five members, one from each apprenticeship class year.

In order to run for the position of council president, the student must be a fifth-year apprentice who has met various standards from all their previous years of apprenticeship and continues to meet those standards for the remainder of their term. The Student Council officers must also be elected by the student body. “I am proud to be the first Student Council president, said current council president Amanda Olson.

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., 2015), and at www.ibew.org.

The Student Council helps with bonding as a brotherhood, beginning in the early years of apprenticeship. The council has set up many study groups for apprentices to help one another, and they have also held some sporting events. At the time of this writing, a picnic was being planned for the fall sea-

At Local 270 apprenticeship graduation. Standing: graduates Elijah Cook (left), Scott Bolden, Curtis Norman, Caleb Headrick, Michael Peterson, Andrew Howard, Brandon Cardwell, Chris Ruby, Jordan Hamby, Kevin Webster, Nicholas Morton. Not pictured: graduate Michael Taylor. Seated: Training Dir. Daniel Smith (left) and Training Dir. Emeritus A.J. Pearson.
Community Volunteers

L.U. 300 (govt., int's & P.U.), MONTEPELIER, VT — Congratulations and thanks to Local 300 members who volunteered their time to make meals for families at the Ronald McDonald House in Burlington, VT. Families who have relatives in nearby hospitals can stay at the R.M. House when traveling is a hardship on the family. Local 300 continues to seek venues for community and member involvement. 

Negotiations with Asplundh Tree continue to progress at the time of this writing, and we anxiously wait for the signing of the first agreement. Keep the faith and keep your chin up.

Anyone ever wonder why we in the IBEW continue to call ourselves the “power professionals”? With the significant emphasis on organizing labor groups from all walks of life, wouldn’t it be appropriate to broaden how non-IBEW, or non-organized groups perceive who we are, what we are, and the impact we have on both members and non-members? We represent more than just the electrical industry. Local unions are recognizing what they do, how they do it and most importantly — why. Non-organized workers want a voice, and we (IBEW) are that voice. Organizing outreach is a continual journey. Local 300 wishes everyone a safe and healthy holiday season. See you in the new year 2017. Cheers!

Jeffrey C. Winnette, B.M./F.S.

Tour of National Park Site — 'Rosie the Riveter' Honoree

L.U. 302 (Int’s & P.U.), MARTINEZ, CA — On Sept. 9, Local 302’s Retirees Club visited the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park in Richmond, CA.

Retirees Club Vice Pres. Steve Robert (retired Central Labor Council Secretary and council liaison to U.S. Dept. of Labor, Region 10) called upon a friend and former colleague, docent Deanne Amaden (retired regional director of public affairs, Dept. of Labor, San Francisco, CA) to lead the Visitor Center tour. 

Evelyn McClelland, age 91, who had worked at the shipyard as a young woman, was honored on the day of the tour. Evelyn is the widow of Dick McClelland, the mother of Don McClelland and the grandmother of Mark Gaede, all from Local 302. Deanne Amaden presented Evelyn with a special surprise — a replica “Rosie the Riveter” pin that workers used to “brass in.”

Evelyn welded at Kaiser Shipyard #2, assigned to the Liberty ships’ double bottoms. Being small in stature, she crawled through with her line, hood and rods to the mainheads, often performing welding work while hanging upside down. "All in all, it was quite an experience,” Evelyn said.

A “tip of the hat” to all who served. Rosie the Riveter Trust Exec. Dr. Marsha Mather-Thrift also met with Evelyn and the Local 302 Retirees Club tour, which included three former Local 302 business managers: Mike Yarbrough, Herschel Barton and John Hunter, also a retired Ninth District rep. For more information about the Rosie the Riveter Trust and national park, visit website www.RosieTheRiveter.org.

Eric Peterson, B.R.

39th International Convention

L.U. 340 (Int’s & P.U.), SACRAMENTO, CA — This is my first article since being elected to office in June. The last six months have been getting a crash course in “Business Manager 101” and enjoying the heck out of it. I have learned so much in such a short period of time; the members have welcomed me with open arms and that, along with the help I receive from my phenomenal staff and our I.O. representatives, is keeping me very enthused for the future of Local 340.

In September I attended the IBEW 39th International Convention along with Local 340’s president and delegates. A huge amount of business was taken care of at this event, and it confirmed for me the fact that the IBEW is highly efficient with respect to the laws and resolutions governing all IBEW offices. At the convention, the Law Committee and the Resolutions Committee present laws and resolutions for consideration, and delegates take action to pass, or not pass, the measures.

Thanks to IBEW Local 1 in St. Louis for sponsoring my attendance.

Jeffrey C. Winnette, B.M./F.S.

Military Appreciation Night

L.U. 400 (Int’s & P.U.), ASBURY PARK, NJ — The annual Lakewood Blue Claws’ military appreciation night took place on June 16. The BlueClaws are a minor league baseball team based in Lakewood Township, NJ. The Local 400 Military Committee accepted donations from the membership leading up to the event, and at the gates to the baseball field before the game began. The membership gathered to greet attendees and help load military vehicles with all donations. We thank our many members who were there to show our support for the military in this great event. [Photo at top, right.]

The Local 400 annual picnic was held Aug. 6. Families and friends gathered and the brotherhood of members with families had a great time; the members have welcomed me with open arms, and our members remain optimistic that they will get what they need and deserve.

On May 1, a wildfire began southwest of Fort McMurray, Alberta, home to 90,000 residents. The fire swept through the community destroying approximately 3,000 homes. During the evacuation, more than 400 members and their families had to rapidly leave the city, some with very little more than the clothes on their back. Most were evacuated to Edmonton and other areas for the next five weeks as firefighters fought the wildfire, remembered as “The Beast.”

Members were allowed to begin returning to their homes during June. More than 20 members lost their homes, and many others’ homes had extensive damage. Many had to take up temporary residence elsewhere, while waiting for insurance claims to be settled for rebuilding.

Local 424 thanks everyone who made donations to the Red Cross to help those affected by the disaster. Rebuilding will be a long process, but the city and our members remain optimistic that they will get back to their normal lives once again.

Scott Crichton, P.S.

NW Redwater Refinery Project; Aftermath of May 2016 Wildfire

L.U. 424 (Int’s, E.E., E.M.S., L.M.R.P., P.T.C, R.T.B., S.P.A, & U.), EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA — In August, Local 424 members elected John White as our new business manager, Paul Cherry as president, Wade Ashton as treasurer, James Hawrelak as recording secretary, Liam McEvoy as Unit 1 chairman, Mike Kennedy as Unit 2 chairman, Stephen Blum as Unit 3 chairman, and Jim Round as Unit 4 chairman.

As Canada’s economy faces the lowest oil prices in years, it is good to know that IBEW Local 424 members can find employment at the North West Redwater refinery. Situated northeast of Edmonton, the North West Redwater Sturgeon Refinery project is the first new refinery to be built in Alberta in 50 years. The refinery has the potential for 10 years of employment once the provincial government approves the second and third phases for construction.

Local 424 members continue to be affected by the major wildfire of May 2016. On May 1, a wildfire began southwest of Fort McMurray, Alberta, home to 90,000 residents. The fire swept through the community destroying approximately 3,000 homes. During the evacuation, more than 400 members and their families had to rapidly leave the city, some with very little more than the clothes on their back. Most were evacuated to Edmonton and other areas for the next five weeks as firefighters fought the wildfire, remembered as “The Beast.”

Members were allowed to begin returning to their homes during June. More than 20 members lost their homes, and many others’ homes had extensive damage. Many had to take up temporary residence elsewhere, while waiting for insurance claims to be settled for rebuilding.

Scott Crichton, P.S.

‘True Brotherhood’ — Assistance for Families

L.U. 446 (I), MONROE, LA — IBEW Local 446 would like to give honorable mention to a very special and outstanding member. Julian "Ronnie" Fontana of Monroe, LA, has gone above and beyond in demonstrating what the real meaning and purpose of a brotherhood is.

This year he coordinated and funded two raffle drawings, for rifles both times, to help and aid the memb-
IBEW Members’ Donation For Local 494

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Lighting for Historic Cabin

L.U. 648 (em,spa,kt), HAMILTON, OH — Local 648 members took time out of their busy days to install landscape lighting around Hamilton’s most historic cabin, located in Monument Park along the Great Miami River. The two-story house, described as Hamilton’s oldest known structure and a link to its pioneer roots, features two large chimneys, a stone foundation, leg walls, chinked with cement and a gabled roof. Axe marks are still visible on the wood from when the cabin was hewn.

Local 648 volunteers did all the outside landscape lighting at the cabin, and also provided concealed electric on the inside, hanging fixtures that resemble frontier-era lanterns.

Editor’s Note: To read more about the renovated historic cabin, which was unveiled to the public in May 2016, see Journal-News article online at: www.journal-news.com/news/news/local/renovated-historic-cabin-will-be-unveiled-saturday/nRWMZ

Kudos to all our IBEW members who volunteered for the community service project.

Matthew Von Stein, Pres./Mbr. Dev.

Officers of Local 692

L.U. 692 (Lm,spt,cpr,k), BAY CITY, MI — We would like to thank the following outgoing officers for their service to our local: former president Paul Protasiewicz, vice president Rich Rytlewski, business manager Jack Aultman, B.R./P.S.

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2017!

Bro. Albert J. Stender. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of two of our long-term members who recently passed away. Bro. Keith Lewis passed away on July 28, 2016. Bro. Lewis was initiated into Local 704 on Oct. 1, 1968, and was a loyal member for nearly 48 years.

Bro. Louis “Bill” McGovern passed away on Sept. 23, 2016. Bro. McGovern was a World War II U.S. Navy veteran. He was initiated into the IBEW on Aug. 1, 1949. Bill was a very loyal Local 704 member for 67 years. I personally had the privilege of working with Bill.

Tammy Gottleber, P.S.

Apprentice Graduates; Tribute to Lives of Service

L.U. 704 (catv,em&i), DUBUQUE, IA — On June 28, Local 704 honored the 2015 fifth-year apprenticeship graduates at a dinner and presentation. The new apprenticeship graduates are: Bro. Matt Lynch, Matt Steffen, Alex Willenbring, Brain Klele, Derek Simms; and former Executive Board members Todd Aultman, Travis Aultman, Dave Doran, Jamie Jarrard, Art Vosline; and Executive Board members Chris Burgett, Brian Klele, Derek Simms, Mike Faunce, Nick Tobolski and Al Vogel.

We are sad to report the passing of three retired members: Bro. Patrick A. Kert, Bro. Joyce E. Moe and Bro. Albert J. Stender. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2017!

Robert Melton, B.M./F.S.

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Membership Appreciation Day

L.U. 760 (i,ltk,r1s,spa&t), KNOXVILLE, TN — Local 760 held its second annual Membership Appreciation Day in August at the IBEW training center. Bus. Mgr. Tim Tate and Pres. Lonnie Hundley wish to thank the picnic committee and all the members for contributing their time and effort to make this event the huge success that it was. The burgers and hot dogs were grilled, the kids enjoyed the dunking booth and the bounce houses, and there were plenty of giveaways at the festival. A special thank-you goes out to office manager Janice Davis as we wish her a happy retirement.

With regret we report the passing of retirees Ed Crooks, Don Coult, Carliss Phillips and John Trimble. Bro. Dave Potton also passed away after a brief illness. Our brothers will be remembered. We extend our condolences to their families.

Lynford C. Lowell, B.M.

Annual Scholarship Award

L.U. 1066 (w), DAYTONA BEACH, FL — Members of Local 1066 would like to congratulate Sadie Tolbert, daughter of Bro. Randy Tolbert, on winning the annual Local 1066 scholarship award this year. The award was started in 2008, and each year the children or grandchildren of Local 1066 active and retired members are eligible to compete for the award. We also wish to congratulate and honor members Kirk Martin and Keith Davis for their service to the IBEW throughout their careers. These gentlemen have decided to retire, and they will be missed. We wish them both a long and happy retirement.

Mario Menic, B.M./Pres.

2016 Annual Picnic

L.U. 968 (atw,i,mt,o,ts,spa&2), PARKERSBURG, WV — IBEW Local 968 held its annual picnic Sept. 20 at the Shriners. Boy Scout Troup 129 and their leader Allen Lloyd, a Local 968 member, and wife Denise did an excellent job with the kids games. Members were entertained by the Sour Mash String Band. Winners of the Corn Hole Tournament were members Mark Holbert and Tim Richards. Special thank-you to Bros. Steve Wigal, Keith Leehew and Clayton “Tater” Griffin for bringing out their cars. Shown in the group picture (at right) are Local 968 retirees in attendance at the 2016 picnic.

Mike Wile, B.M.

Annual Fall Gathering

L.U. 1466 (u), COLUMBUS, OH — Local 1466 would like to thank all of our members and families who attended our Annual Fall Gathering on Saturday, Sept. 24. This event seems to grow in both popularity and attendance each year, and 2016 was no exception! All who attended seemed to enjoy both the festivities and getting to kick back and relax outside of work. We would also like to recognize Executive Board Mem. Jason Wright and the E-Board members for planning, setting up, and making sure the event went off without a hitch. Our Fall Gathering would not be the success that it has been the last few years without their hard work.

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. Thank you to everyone for helping to make 2016 a good year!

Sharon Williams, P.S.

Transitions & Organizing

L.U. 1116 (em,lt,ktl,k), TUCSON, AZ — We have had some leadership changes at the local level. First, we want to say goodbye to J.D. Perez. J.D. was the local’s unit chairman for Trico Electric Co-Op and he has moved on to new adventures. We all wish him the very best. Replacing J.D. is Chris Neely, who will no doubt continue to represent the TRICO membership as well as J.D. did. Sarita Morales was selected to fill the position of business representative, replacing Danell Carter. Sharon Williams was chosen to fill Danell’s administration seat on the Executive Board.

Organizing is our key focus this year, and we encourage all of our members to talk to their co-workers about joining the IBEW. If you are interested in helping on the Volunteer Organizing Committee, please contact Sarita at the union hall.

Regular, member unit meetings are held at 6 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month. We invite the members from Trico and Asplundh to join us! Springerville’s meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

We wish all of our members and their families a happy holiday and a safe and prosperous new year.

Jimi Jette, P.S.
Active & Engaged Retirees

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, NASSAU CHAPTER — At this writing, we’re enjoying a beautiful fall season in the New York/New Jersey area! Members enjoyed our fall luncheon at Bellissimo’s Ristorante. We enjoyed the delicious meal and the great camaraderie along with the meeting led by Chmn. John McCormick.

Recent chapter activities included our summer barbecue, and many of us also enjoyed a performance of “Saturday Night Fever” and a luncheon at the Westchester Broadway Theater. Our week at the Long Island Educational Center in Cutchogue, NY, was well-attended. We enjoyed a gorgeous September week there! The educational sessions were informative and greatly appreciated! On Tuesday of that week we were fortunate to attend a delicious dinner at the center catered by one of our members and a Wednesday evening pot-luck dinner, provided by members!

We are happy to welcome several new members.

John Milligan, P.S.

‘Welcome to New Members’

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, NORTHERN NEW JERSEY CHAPTER — At this writing, we’re enjoying a beautiful fall season in the New Jersey/New York area! Members enjoyed our fall luncheon at Bellissimo’s Ristorante. We enjoyed the delicious meal and the great camaraderie along with the meeting led by Chmn. John McCormick.

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John Milligan, P.S.

2016 Activities & Events

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, SUFFOLK CHAPTER — At our June meeting, we had our Annual Retirees Club Luncheon. At the June meeting, we discussed planned activities for 2016, including: our stay at the Long Island Education & Cultural Center, our bus trip to New York City, our summer barbecue in September, and our Annual Holiday Party in December.

Chmn. Jack Foley wished everyone a safe and happy summer.

In July, we went to the Long Island Educational & Cultural Center, where we were greeted by Tom Galager, Local 3 pension director. We attended informative lectures on topics including how to stay healthy and Alzheimer’s disease. On Tuesday evening we had our BBQ, which was a big success due to all those who volunteered to work in the kitchen, tend the barbecue, serve and clean up.

Our September BBQ was enjoyed by all. There were games, contests, plenty of food and lots of friends. At our September meeting, we made plans for our Annual Food Drive and Toys for Tots Drive for our November and December 2016 meetings. Our membership always shows strong support for both of those successful drives.

At press time, final plans are set for our Annual Holiday Party on Dec. 7, 2016, as well as our trip to New York City on Dec. 12, 2016. These events only happen when people devote their time and effort to make them possible.

Wishing all a happy holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year.

Harvey Goldman, P.S.

Retirees Honored at Ceremony

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 35, HARTFORD, CT — The membership of the Retirees Club has increased significantly. We had a great time over the summer at our monthly luncheons. We also had a greater number of retirees attend the Annual Clambake held in August. It was wonderful to see so many members and retirees having a great time and sharing memories.

IBEW Local 35 held its Retirees Recognition Ceremony on Saturday, Oct. 15. Congratulations to our newly retired members who attended: John Baracchi Jr., John Blessis, Tina Bray, Christopher Chesanek and Jean deSmet. They were recognized for their years of service and awarded jackets and watches. Congratulations also to those newly retired members who were unable to attend: Michael Belanger, A. Peter

At the Local 3, Nassau Chapter, Retirees Club’s 2016 annual picnic.

At this writing plans were underway for a holiday luncheon meeting. Our activities committee is busy formulating plans for 2017! Happy holidays to all!

John Krison, P.S.
Retirees Meeting/Luncheon

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 53, KANSAS CITY, MO — The Retirees Meeting/Luncheon held Oct. 12 was called to order by Pres. Bob Stuart. Attendees stood for the Pledge of Allegiance led by SecretaryDuane Pearce and the blessing offered by Imam Adkins, wif of Bro. Dave Adkins. A catered luncheon was served. A huge thank-you to Bus. Mgr. Steve White and the members of Local 53 for sponsoring the lunch. Thank you to Lisa Garcia, executive assistant, for all her work setting up the luncheon and arranging for the caterer. The food was excellent and enjoyed by all!

A moment of silence was observed for departed Bros. John Laper and Junior Smith. We also stood for a moment of silence, for the late Nancy Duval, wife of Bro. Jerry Duval, former president and longtime member of Local 53. May the departed rest in peace. Service pins were awarded to those who were present at the meeting. We also had a raffle and awarded gift cards donated by Local 53.

There was a discussion about the November 2016 elections and Bro. Stuart encouraged everyone to get out and vote.

Season’s Greetings

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 134, CHICAGO, IL — Season’s greetings to all, as the holidays approach and winter arrives. Some of us will have sunshine, some will have rain, and some can expect lots of snow. This is one of the things that makes the USA so great. We can travel a little and be in another climate right here in our own country. And our local unions bring all of us together as one great IBEW.

The new year ahead will also bring changes, some of us will have sunshine, some will have rain, and some can expect lots of snow. This is one of the things that makes the USA so great. We can travel a little and be in another climate right here in our own country. And our local unions bring all of us together as one great IBEW.

Wishing all IBEW members and their families, a merry, happy, healthy and safe new year.

Richard Launder, P.S.

‘Best Wishes for New Year’

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 212, CINCINNATI, OHIO — God help us! The most bizarre election ever is over. It’s hard to believe that “we the people” tolerate all that we have witnessed during the campaign season and the process of choosing the leader of the free world. May God grant peace and comfort to the families of the following recently departed Local 212 brothers: Fraysure, Victor Day and Raymond Schrand Sr.

Club members number 130 “sparkles.” We meet on the first Wednesday of each month including the July picnic and the December Christmas party. It’s always great to get together with old and new friends. Welcome to new members: Mike Kiefer, Fred Honhorst, Gary Thomas, and Elmer Begley.

The memorial wall is well on the way in honoring departed members from 1901 to the present. Today’s members benefit from the vision, sacrifices and struggles of these past members. As you scan these names, your mind will be fondly jogged back into past memories of knowing these people.

Wishing all IBEW members a happy holiday season and a safe, healthy new year.

Bob Schaefer, P.S.

‘Full State of Activities’

RETIREE CLUB OF L.U. 537, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA — This past summer featured a full slate of social activities for our members. The fun began on July 8 when the Unit 2 Retirees and wives did a superb job with the Members Pancake Breakfast & Lunch, held in conjunction with the beginning of the famous 10-day Calgary Stampede and Exhibition.

Next was the July 9 Family Picnic in Edmonton. This event is the brainchild of Tina Stevenson, who has been the impetus behind it ever since its inception nine years ago. Along with husband Scott, she did another excellent job with the logistics of keeping several hundred kids and parents entertained with numerous activities, along with BBQ fare and other treats. It had been said before but bears repeating … along with the Kids Christmas Parties, the picnic is an affirmation of family values. Thank you to Tina and Scott!

For the July 22 opening of Edmonton’s 10-day Exhibition & Chuck Wagon Races, the Unit 1 Retirees (and some wives) held a successful Annual Members Pancake Breakfast & Lunch, an event started 29 years ago by then-retired business manager Bob Lamont. The fun finished off Aug. 5 at “The Ranch” in

The Electrical Worker | December 2016
Sarnia Happenings

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 530, SARNIA, ONTARIO, CANADA — On Sept. 7, the Local 530 Retirees Club held their Annual Golf Tournament. Herb Burdett and Bob Friedrich once again organized a successful and fun-filled day for all. We had 29 golfers on the greens, and 37 retirees along with spouses and guests sat down to enjoy a wonderful chicken and ribs dinner. The winning team with the lowest score this year was: Pat LaPore, Dave Schieman and Tom Schliehauf. Congratulations to all three golfers.

The IBEW Local 530 Annual Dinner Dance Banquet held Nov. 18 this year was a very special occasion for us as we are celebrating the 75th anniversary of Local 530. Several members of our Retirees Club received IBEW service pins at the banquet. Sarnia comedian John Wing provided entertainment and it was a night for all to remember.

On Thursday, Dec. 8, directly after our monthly meeting, we will hold our only Retirees Christmas Dinner at the Best Western Hotel, Janet Burdett and Marion Lawton are once again organizing this event and they do a great job. Everyone looks forward to attending.

We send our condolences to Kent Wilcox and his family on the loss of his wife, Alleen. We feel fortunate to belong to the great family of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Nancy Stinson Phiblin, P.S.

2016 Activities & Events

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 595, DUBLIN, CA — At this writing, we were just weeks away from electing a new president to lead this great nation, along with many other public officials who set policies that affect working people. We hope our votes help elect leaders who will protect the rights of working people. We demand that elected officials understand that good paying jobs with health care and pensions are the reward for an honest day’s work.

Our Retired Members Club enjoyed a great year of monthly themed lunches, numerous day trips, a four-day train trip to Reno and an awesome 10-day cruise to Alaska. We also shared great times at our Benefits Fair, the annual Oakland A’s baseball game, our summer barbeque, and a terrific union picnic. At press time, still to come were our holiday luncheons, where we give away many raffle prizes; Old Times Night; and Santa at the union hall for our grandkids. We are blessed as a local to have so many great events and opportunities to get together. Let’s keep it up!

At this writing, the election of club officers was scheduled for our November 2016 meeting; results were not yet available at press time. Thank you to everyone who steps up to lead. Pres. Walt Corvello has done an incredible job. Thank you, Walt! Treas. Linda Bratset does most everything for the club and we appreciate it! We also thank our awesome secretaries, Nancy Tallaferro, for all she does!

We encourage new retirees to become active in our club. Jump on board and give us a test drive. Have a great new year!

Tom Mullaney, P.S.

Service Awards Presented

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 595, DUBLIN, CA — This month, we were just weeks away from electing a new president to lead this great nation, along with many other public officials who set policies that affect working people. We hope our votes help elect leaders who will protect the rights of working people. We demand that elected officials understand that good paying jobs with health care and pensions are the reward for an honest day’s work.

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Tom Mullaney, P.S.

Service Pins Awarded

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 756, DAYTONA BEACH, FL — Our September began with service pins being awarded. We congratulate and thank everyone who attended the awards presentation, as well as those who were not able to be there, for their dedication to the Brotherhood! Members present at the meeting to receive their pins were: Rex L. Rawlins (60-year member), Gary D. Dill (50-year member), and Steven E. Gibbs (45-year member).

We wish everyone a happy, healthy holiday season and look forward to a wonderful 2017. We hope to see all of you at our upcoming meetings.

Sadly, since our last article, we have had several members pass. We send our condolences to the family and friends of departed Bros. James M. Sullivan, Carl M. Hicks, Rodney H. Connell, Henry H. Garvis and Steve B. Sullens.

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

Diane Gibbs, P.S.

Community Service Project

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 1245, VACAVILLE, CA — Over the summer, IBEW Local 1245 retiree Ron Borst challenged members of the Local 1245 Reno/Sparks Retirees Club to collect as many electric fans as they could in order to donate them to low-income seniors in the area. “Temperatures in the Reno/Sparks area can exceed 100 degrees, and many seniors cannot afford to pay for air conditioning,” said Borst. The club succeeded in collecting a total of 41 fans from retirees. Each fan was adorned with an IBEW Local 1245 sticker before being given away to needy local seniors.

Rebecca Band, P.S.
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<tr>
<th>Local Surname</th>
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<td>McCartney, R. E.</td>
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<td>Osborn, H. L.</td>
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<td>Rikmus, S. J.</td>
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The Electrical Worker was the name of the first official publication of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1893 (the NBEW became the IBEW in 1899 with the expansion of the union into Canada). The name and format of the publication have changed over the years. This newspaper is the official publication of the IBEW and seeks to capture the courage and spirit that motivated the founders of the Brotherhood and continue to inspire the union's members today. The masthead of this newspaper is an adaptation of that of the first edition in 1893.

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International President

Lonne R. Stephenson
International Secretary-Treasurer

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Myles J. Culver

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James Burgham

Fourth District
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Sixth District
Chris J. Wagner

Seventh District
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Ross Galbraith

Ninth District
David J. Ruhlormott

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Jerry Bellah

Eleventh District
Curtis E. Henke

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Rix Oakland

FROM THE OFFICERS

An America That Works for Everyone

Last month, Donald Trump was elected the 45th president of the United States. It wasn’t the outcome I had hoped for, but I offer my congratulations to the president-elect. I also offer my congratulations to Hillary Clinton on her hard-fought campaign.

This was a long, and at times, divisive campaign, but as brothers and sisters in the IBEW, there remains much more that unites us than divides us.

If we learned anything from this election it is that Americans are increasingly anxious about declining economic opportunity and stagnant wages and are alienated from a political system that seems rigged to the benefit of the top 1 percent.

Insofar as President-elect Trump is serious about addressing those issues and developing policy that would put working people first, I am more than willing to work with him to accomplish those goals.

On issues like trade, infrastructure, jobs and outsourcing, there exists potential common ground between a Trump administration and the IBEW.

But let me be clear. Building an economy that works for everybody and restoring that shared prosperity that made the American dream possible for millions of working families requires a sharp break with trickle-down economics that has done nothing but drive income inequality, reward corporate greed, cut retirement and health security and attack the basic right of workers to come together and collectively bargain.

It also means rejecting divisive policies and rhetoric that seek to divide working people against each other. More than ever, we need solidarity, not division, in America.

Restoring the middle class means raising wages, protecting and expanding benefits that secure our families’ health and future, and making sure every American who wants to, can join a union in their workplace.

The IBEW has seen many administrations come and go in our 125-year history. But our interests remain today the same as they always have been, the well-being of you, our brothers and sisters in this movement.

We’ll continue to fight to make sure you have good-paying jobs, quality health care and the promise of a secure retirement. You can bet on that.

As Hillary Clinton said in her concession speech: “Our democracy demands our participation, not just every four years, but all the time.” So let’s get to work together to build the kind of America that works for all of us.

Our Future is Still in Our Hands

There are still a lot of questions about Trump’s agenda and nobody knows exactly what the next four years will mean for organized labor. It will likely be hard.

But regardless of how strong the headwinds are from Washington, our future is still in our hands. Looking to someone else to ensure the IBEW’s success has never been our way.

We don’t wait for someone to save us. We organize and build our own future.

For now, let us celebrate — and learn — from the victory at the Memphis, Tenn., Electrolux plant. It is a model for how we can build a strong future no matter who sits in the Oval Office.

Lesson 1: Don’t Give Up, Smarten Up
Our organizing campaign — which won by more than 2 to 1 — came just over a year after a disappointing lost election ridden with unfair labor practices. We did an immediate postmortem and before the momentum died we got right back to work.

Lesson 2: We Organize Anywhere
This victory came in the heart of the right to work South, in the same state where the United Auto Workers lost a major election at Volkswagen. When we get our message out, nowhere is off limits.

Lesson 3: Organizing is Personal
Organizers made more than 400 home visits during the campaign, and members of the volunteer organizing committee were vocal and visible advocates for the IBEW. It made a difference for the Electrolux workers to see organizers from across the country and from their own community. More importantly, through social media, every IBEW member can now connect to organizing drives or reach out to nonunion members in their own bargaining unit.

So speak up. Any member of the IBEW is doing something every nonunion worker isn’t: working under a collective bargaining agreement. It is up to all of us to speak up and speak out about the benefits we get by coming together in a union.

This is a victory every member of the IBEW can be proud of, most importantly the 700 new members who will be joining us.

More than just pride, it should fill every member with some optimism. No matter what happens, the power of working families to make their lives better is now, as it always has been, in our own hands.
Pension a Pillar of the IBEW

Regarding the article “Busting an Old IBEW Pension Myth” about the number of pension checks typically received by retirees and posted on ibew.org, I’m only five years into my retirement, but so very glad to be an IBEW member. The pension makes our lives and our union great. Thank you.

Brad Purfeerst, Local 46 retiree
Seattle

I just started drawing my IBEW pension. My dad drew one for more than an 18 years. The PB, NEAP and NEFB are all excellent plans. Thank God for the IBEW.

Don Woolridge, Local 702 retiree
West Frankfurt, Ill.

This is a must read, to secure your future. Only you can do it.

Ronny Lee Meadows, Local 22 retiree
Los Angeles

Unions have been and will always be the backbone of America. Any corporations that resist organizing aren’t worth working for, no matter what they pay you.

Gerry Beagan, American Postal Workers Union retiree
Warwick, R.I.

Nuclear Still is Key Alternative Energy

Regarding the article “The Uncertain Fate of Illinois’ Most Reliable Energy Source” posted at ibew.org, decommissioned nuclear plants account for the largest loss of green energy leaving the grid. There’s not enough real estate to compensate for it with solar.

Mike Bennett, Local 490 member
Dover, New Hampshire

The Win in Tennessee

Congratulations to workers at the Electrolux plant in Memphis, Tenn., on voting for IBEW representation. The only way to fight big money is with solidarity. No matter what people think of unions, they remain the best thing on this planet.

Richard Smith, Local 234 retiree
Kansas City, Mo.

Welcome brothers and sisters. Together, we win.

Paul VanOss, Local 58 member
Detroit

Congrats! This proud 50-plus year IBEW member says, “Why beg when you can organize?”

James W. Kilburn, Local 124 retiree
Kansas City, Mo.

Wisconsin Local Opens Its Own Museum

I read the story about Milwaukee Local 494, celebrating its 110-year anniversary with the opening of its museum. Don’t ever forget your past. It will serve all who follow us and opening of its museum. Don’t ever forget your past. It will serve all who follow us.

Robert Carman
Sayville, N.Y.

CONGRATS! This proud 50-plus year IBEW member says, “Why beg when you can organize?”

Gerald Gomes, a wireman member of Vacaville, Calif. Local 1245, is a recipient of the Jefferson Award, which honors volunteerism in America.

Jeff Gomes routinely watched his father help others while accepting nothing in return. One memory in particular convinced him he wanted to be just like dad.

“Watching him get up in the morning and go to work and help an elderly lady and cut her wood for the fireplace,” said Gomes, now a lineman for PG&E and a member of Vacaville, Calif., Local 1245.

“She didn’t have a lot of money and he just helped her out tremendously. It was rewarding to go along and split the wood and stack it for her.”

Frank Gomes, his father, remembers that story well. The woman was 92 years old and had no one to turn to, he said.

That spirit of helping others rubbed off on Jeff and led to him receiving one of the nation’s most prestigious honors for volunteers. He is a recipient of the 2016 Jefferson Award, named after Thomas Jefferson and awarded to people whose volunteer work makes a lasting impact on their communities.

The awards were founded in 1972 and are administered by the Jefferson Awards Foundation and its board of directors. The foundation honors several hundred community volunteers from across the country each year.

Gomes has served as a volunteer firefighter in Orland, Calif., a city of nearly 7,000 residents about 100 miles north of Sacramento, for the last 26 years, including five as chief.

It’s made for a lot of long nights and early mornings and more than 15,000 hours of volunteering. Gomes insists he’s not much different than others living in small towns across the United States.

“A lot of communities can’t afford to pay for staff and services, so people step up and serve,” said Gomes, who oversaw a staff of 40-50 people during his time as chief. “Everyone has jobs, but they still get up at 2 a.m. to respond to calls. It’s just a way of life.”

“He was always helping people and not expecting things in return,” he said.

“Gomes grew up on a 20-acre ranch near Orland, where hard work was a given. Much of his day was spent taking care of cows. He and his three siblings were rewarded for pulling weeds with a trip to the town swimming pool.”

“His dad instilled great moral character in me with his work ethic and his demeanor,” Gomes said. “He was an all-around great person and still is.”

Frank, now 73, has worked most of his life as a truck driver. He retired once, and found it tedious, so he returned to work. The elder Gomes learned responsibility early. As a teenager, his 27-year-old sister died of cancer, leaving behind four children. The father was out of the picture, so Frank helped his parents raise them.

He was determined to make sure his own children learned the value of helping others. But with Jeff, it didn’t take much effort.

“He was always a loving kid and loved helping people, just like I did,” Frank said. “I helped elderly people all the time and didn’t expect nothing for it. I tell kids all the time, ‘If you do something for someone, don’t expecting something in return.’”

Jeff spent seven years as a meter reader for PG&E before beginning his apprenticeship in 1999. He finished it two years later and has worked throughout northern California ever since.

“Once I got in as a groundman and started learning the trade, I had a great foreman who taught me a lot,” he said. “He was very patient. He taught me about being conscientious and safe. I enjoyed it. It’s a great career. I enjoy being outdoors when they turn people’s lights back on or something has been repaired. It’s nice to see the reaction.”

Throughout his career, he’s served on the Orland Fire Department, including as Chief from 2007-08 and 2011-15. It came without pay, but it felt like a second job. Gomes said he could not have done it without the help of his wife Becky and his three children — Shayne, 26, Sarah, 22, and Natalie, 19.

“Thankfully, I have a very supportive wife and kids,” he said. “They were great. They had to deal with a lot of work after hours. When I was chief, I had to do the administrative duties and the training and the day-to-day operations. My pager was always going off in the middle of the night and I tried to make as many calls as I could.”

Local 234 Business Manager Tom Dalzell said Gomes sets a terrific example for his Local 1245 brothers and sisters both on the job and in his hometown.

“Doing excellent work on the job and playing an active role in the community is what we encourage from all of our nearly 20,000 members,” Dalzell said. “Jeff is the epitome of that. He does a dangerous job incredibly well and still finds time to serve others. I can’t tell you how proud we are of him. What a tremendous honor.”

Gomes also is a recipient of the Mielke Award, which PG&E awards to employees who exemplify the best in community service. Company officials also nominated him for the Jefferson Award.

The honor earned Gomes his first-ever trip to the East Coast last summer, where he did some sightseeing in and around Washington, D.C., and visited with Rep. John Garamendi, D-Calif., whose congressional district includes Orland.

He also got to mingle with other Jefferson Award winners. It proved to be a rewarding experience.

“I was never one that needed recognition for what I do and I would do it again in the future if I had to,” Gomes said. “But it was really intriguing and interesting to listen to all the different stories from every part of the country from people doing great things that I think makes our country what it is today. I can assure you volunteerism is alive and well.”
How the Code of Excellence Increased Membership — and Profit Margins

Marketing tool benefits members in two states

It’s not every day that two locals from two different states help secure a new business contract for their employers — and one that leads to increased membership — but that’s what happened for Chelsea, Mass., Local 1499 and Milwaukee, Wis., Local 250. And it’s in part because of the Code of Excellence.

“Never. That’s how often this happens,” said Local 250 Business Representative Mike Bruening.

“It’s precedent setting,” said Second District International Representative John Horak, who was business manager for Local 1499 during the talks.

The conversation started about a year ago, just two years after Local 1499 members ratified their first contract with Rea Magnet Wire Co. Chief Steward Doug Ammann said that Rea used to supply wire to SPW-Waukesha in Wisconsin, an atomixer plant. Ammann, who is regularly involved with orders, asked Horak, who then reached out to someone he knew there: Bruening. They both serve on the Code of Excellence product identification committee.

Bruening said that if Rea was a Code of Excellence certified plant, it would make securing a new deal easier. The Code was rolled out at SPX around 2013 to great reception from both members and management. Since implementation, SPX decided to invest more than $70 million at the Waukesha plant and bring on more employees, Horak said. Increasing membership from fewer than 300 to about 430, Bruening said.

“Management really likes the Code and it was definitely a factor in the expansion,” said Bruening. “If Rea was Code-certified, I could use it as a selling point and assure them they’d get a quality product.”

“It’s the mark of quality,” Horak said. “There’s an assurance that you’re getting something you can rely on. It’s good branding.”

The success of the Code had also allowed Bruening to establish a solid relationship with members of the management team, he said, which made pitching Rea as a new supplier possible.

“When the Code, it’s more of a partnership with management,” Bruening said. “It’s a better relationship.”

SPX management agreed to start ordering small amounts of the wire, to test the quality. The high-voltage substation transformer plant, one of the largest in North America, had been purchasing wire from South Korea and it was causing problems, which was costing the company money. Employees were having issues with coils and insulation, and portions not being wrapped correctly, Bruening said.

“There are times when faulty wiring costs us $10,000, if not more,” Bruening said. “Good quality wire conductors are critical.”

SPX soon found that the wire from Rea was the quality product it was looking for. With Rea wire, failures went down and productivity went up, Bruening said.

“It’s the premium of the premium,” he said. “Our guys said it’s the best they’ve ever worked with.”

And Bruening says they loved hearing that it was built by fellow IBEW members.

“When we told them at a meeting that it was coming from a sister IBEW shop, they all smiled,” Bruening said.

The relationship didn’t just give Rea a new customer, or SPX a better quality product. Once SPX started increasing its orders, Rea had to upgrade some of its equipment, nearly $5 million worth. And they did so at the plant in Guilford, Conn., where Local 1499 members work, and decided to close down a nonunion plant in Arkansas, Horak said.

The general manager also reached out to Horak about going into negotiations a year early to secure a contract for four additional years. Rea would be increasing output by 30 percent and hiring more employees, Horak said.

“This doesn’t happen every day,” Horak said. “For 1499, it was a win when we implemented the Code, but getting the extra business and members, that makes it even better.”

Local 1499 has increased its membership at Rea by 50 percent since hiring began, Horak said, and the plant is still hiring.

Horak and Bruening also said the Code is an excellent internal organizing tool.

“It brings everyone together,” Bruening said. “And we’re seeing positive results with management.”

“We’re helping these businesses succeed beyond what they expected, and it’s great to be a part of that,” Horak said. “That’s something we can all take pride in.”

The Uncertain Fate of Illinois’ Most Reliable Energy Source

Illinois relies on nuclear energy more than any other source. And it’s about to lose two of its plants.

Eleven nuclear reactors provide almost half the state’s electricity and 90 percent of its carbon-free energy. These plants provide a constant source of energy, even on the hottest and coldest of days, employ thousands of employees at a $40 million payroll and pay almost $300 million in taxes, according to the Nuclear Energy Institute. Due to $180 million in losses over the past seven years, Exelon Corp. has announced plans to close two.

“Nuclear power is so vital,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson at a forum discussing nuclear energy in the state. “We can’t as a nation keep our energy grid secure and online while reducing our carbon footprint without nuclear.”

The forum at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on Oct. 18 was designed to focus public and legislative attention on the impact of the closings. Stephenson was joined by other speakers from labor, federal and state government, academia and industry groups.

The Clinton Power Station is scheduled to close June 1, 2017, with the Quad Cities Generating Station following a year later. Springfield, Ill., Local 51 represents employees at Clinton, and Downers Grove, Ill., Local 45 represents those at Quad Cities.

Two state Senate bills have been introduced to keep the plants operating. One would provide clean air credits to nuclear plants, recognizing their clean energy contributions and making them more competitive in the energy market, said Local 51 Assistant Business Manager John Johnson.

The other bill addresses the regulatory process and how prices are determined. The current system puts nuclear plants in a deregulated market like the one in Illinois at a disadvantage, said Johnson, who has been lobbying the Senate and Assembly on the issue, along with members from Local 15 and the Illinois AFL-CIO.

If the legislation doesn’t pass by the session’s end, the window for saving the plants closes, and nearly 300 members of Local 51 would likely lose their jobs, Johnson said.

In Rock Island County, home to the Quad Cities, Exelon is the single largest taxpayer, said U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos, whose district encompasses the area.

“We need nuclear,” Bustos said, noting that New York recently faced a similar situation and reached a legislative solution, something she is advocating in Illinois.

About 350 members of Local 15 would be affected if the Quad Cities plant closes, not to mention the thousands of workers who are employed during shutdowns and refueling, said Local 15 Assistant Business Manager Bill Phillips. Phillips attended the forum with Business Manager Dean Apple.

“There was a lot of support in the room for what nuclear offers,” he said, noting the number of legislators present. “I’m optimistic about the legislation. I think we can get it to the floor for a vote.”

As a zero carbon-emitting energy source, nuclear is seen as a crucial component to an energy mix that meets the Clean Power Plan standards, an EPA rule that requires states to reduce power plant emissions by 32 percent by 2030.

“Sustaining the current fleet of nuclear power plants and building new nuclear capacity can play an important role in meeting this goal (the CPP) and is also critical if the U.S. is to maintain its global leadership as the world looks to nuclear power to meet its clean energy needs,” said John Kotek, acting secretary for the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Nuclear Energy.

Kotek noted that the plants would close at the same time the CPP would go into effect. The Department of Energy has been studying the economic challenges facing the nation’s nuclear plants and is looking into solutions to properly value them, he said.

Operating at 96 percent capacity for the last 10 years — above the industry average — this baseload energy source provides reliable electricity that also helps offset price volatility, an NEI report found.

“Illinois is the birthplace of nuclear power,” said Jim Stubbins, head of the Department of Nuclear, Plasma, and Radiological Engineering. “The state has been an international leader in the development and uses of nuclear energy. We should value and preserve them (nuclear plants) all for their major current and long-term contributions.”