Like many baby boomers who grew up in and around the Michigan cities of Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, W. Jeffrey Koepp had long heard tales from older family members who’d worked at the nearby Willow Run Bomber Plant of how the B-24 bombers built there turned the tide of World War II against Germany.

As vice president of operations of A.F. Smith Electric, an Ypsilanti signatory contractor since 1920, and as a member of Ann Arbor Local 252, Koepp leapt at the chance to preserve that particular piece of his community’s history when the building needed saving.

He’s doing so with the help of other IBEW brothers and sisters and the National Electrical Contractors Association’s Southeastern Michigan chapter. All are volunteering their time and donating money to develop a new Yankee Air Museum on the site of the long-shuttered factory.

“They’ve stepped right up,” said Koepp, a journeyman inside wireman whose family now owns A.F. Smith. “Any time I’ve asked for help, everyone has asked, ‘What can we do? What would you like from us?’ Suppliers have donated cable and lamps for temporary lighting. It’s been a group effort from the whole community.”

Koepp’s grandmother and grandfather worked at Willow Run, which was built by the Ford Motor Co. and opened in the summer of 1942. Henry Ford had retired as the company’s chairman, but still had a major say in its direction. He insisted it refuse public funding for the plant and instead build it itself and sell it to the federal government. The company then leased it back for the rest of the war.

The massive facility — it had about 3.5 million square feet of factory space — was built without pillars in many sections so it could house an assembly line more than 1 mile long and wide enough to allow planes to roll off it. Designed by architect Albert Kahn, it was believed to be the largest factory in the world under one roof at the time.

By 1944, workers were rolling out one B-24 every 55 minutes, 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Some historians believe the term Rosie the Riveter, used to honor the women who stepped up to handle the traditionally male factory jobs during WWII, originated at Willow Run in honor of Rose Will Monroe, a worker inside the plant.

“Without the Willow Run bomber plant, we would not have won the war,” said Dennis Norton, the Yankee Air Museum’s co-founder, whose mother worked at Willow Run. “We had to destroy Germany’s industrial might in Europe before sending troops in there, and that’s what the B-24 did.”

After the Allies’ victory, Ford declined to exercise its option to purchase the plant, we would not have won the war,” said Dennis Norton, the Yankee Air Museum’s co-founder, whose mother worked at Willow Run. “We had to destroy Germany’s industrial might in Europe before sending troops in there, and that’s what the B-24 did.”

With help from IBEW members, the Yankee Air Museum in Ypsilanti, Mich., will preserve part of the iconic Willow Run B-24 bomber factory, which played a pivotal role in winning WWII and helped create the legend of “Rosie the Riveter.”
An IBEW for Everyone

A t the last International Convention, delegates debated and approved a Diversity and Full Inclusion resolution committing, among other things, to creating and promoting a plan to continue the transformation of the IBEW, in rank and leadership, into a trade union that delivers the talent of the entire continent.

In this month's column, I want to update you on what we've done to deliver on that commitment.

Most importantly, as mandated in the resolution, last year I created a permanent Committee on Diversity and Inclusion that is now developing a strategic plan and a training program aimed at swelling our ranks with brothers and sisters from every background.

Once we have that plan and program in place, we will be investing the time and resources we need to move it forward. Already, we've held diversity and inclusion workshops at our annual officers' meeting and last month gathered leaders from our RENEW/NextGen, Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and Women's committees in Washington to start a dialogue on diversity that will help shape our future efforts.

We are a Brotherhood made it happen with sweat and resources, and in every case, the IBEW is stronger for it.

We are across the bargaining table.

...force is more diverse than ever before, and if we want to grow, we must make sure the IBEW represents the true diversity of North America.

Our construction and utility branches are facing a skilled worker shortage. In many parts of our industry, there is already too much work for the members we have. Someone is going to do this work, and our nonunion competition is happy to hire anyone as long as it costs less.

There is a simple truth that every true trade unionist knows: the more united we are across our differences, the stronger we are across the bargaining table.

There were skeptics when we committed to bring back organizing. There was no shortage of the fearful when we created alternative classifications. There were even doubters when we introduced the Code of Excellence. In every case, we as a Brotherhood made it happen with sweat and resources, and in every case, the IBEW is stronger for it.

If we aren't actively organizing and recruiting members from every part of our great and diverse nations — including historically underrepresented communities — then we aren't leaving future generations a union as strong as the one we were given.

The IBEW is not an exclusive club; it is a genuine trade union with the singular goal of organizing every worker in the electrical industry. I am proud to be delivering on that promise.

Protecting Your Pension

B ack in February, I wrote to you about America’s pension system and the urgent need for a solution for millions of hard-working men and women who deserve to get the benefits they worked and deferred their own wages for their entire working lives.

Thankfully, the vast majority, over 90 percent, of our IBEW pensions are safe and well-managed, as they ought to be. You worked hard to earn your pension, and you deserve to know that it’s going to be there for you when you retire.

But some of our union brothers and sisters aren’t so fortunate. For 400,000 union workers across the Midwest covered by the Teamsters Central States Pension Fund, soon-to-be retirees are facing the possibility of as much as a 50 percent reduction in benefits. But how could that happen? These men and women paid taxes and dues to keep the fund well-managed, as they ought to be. You worked hard to earn your pension, and you deserve to know that it’s going to be there for you when you retire.

Well, it turns out that government regulators put the foxes in charge of the henhouse. Back in the 1980s, as part of an effort to root out corruption in certain pension funds, the government let big banks like Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs and Northern Trust take over the fund’s investments. Can you imagine? Politicians sold out working people to line the pockets of Wall Street, and now they’re in a mess they’re struggling to dig their way out of.

As your Secretary-Treasurer and one of the trustees of the National Electrical Benefit Fund, I want to assure you that our investment choices are made by professionals whose sole responsibility is to you, not some profit-seeking corporation. They’re here to make sure that you get what you were promised, and I’m proud of that.

I also want to ask you to take a few minutes to call your members of Congress about a solution that could not only help our union brothers and sisters in troubled plans, but also keep those plans from infecting the whole system. It’s called the Butch Lewis Act, and it’s not a bailout like those given to the big banks back in 2008. It’s a loan that would be fully repaid over time, and it’s a responsible way for lawmakers to give those hard-working Americans what they earned.

As more and more of the private sector moves to 401(k) style retirement plans, I want you to know that there is a solution that could not only help our union brothers and sisters in troubled plans, but also keep those plans from infecting the whole system. It’s called the Butch Lewis Act, and it’s not a bailout like those given to the big banks back in 2008. It’s a loan that would be fully repaid over time, and it’s a responsible way for lawmakers to give those hard-working Americans what they earned.

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Automating the Rails
IBEW Helping Railroads Meet Critical Safety Deadline

U.S. railroads already are among the safest in the world. But over the past several years, IBEW members have helped install technology across the country that aims to make them even safer.

The system, called “positive train control,” pairs wayside markers with sensors on a locomotive through a GPS system that further automates safety-related components like speed, braking and other warnings and signals. It can alert an engineer of potential problems or even slow or stop a train for safety reasons, greatly reducing the possibility of human error as the cause of a rail accident.

“Members from our railroad branch and several other branches have been major players at every step of the PTC installation process,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. “We've brought to this project the know-how to handle the numerous systems and equipment to get the job done right.”

Various automatic train management systems had been proposed for decades. But Congress was spurred to take action following the Sept. 12, 2008, collision of a Metrolink commuter train with a Union Pacific freight train in Southern California that killed 25 people and sent more than 100 to hospitals.

Just over a month later, President George W. Bush signed into law the Rail Safety Improvement Act, requiring 41

Members of Local 531 were among thousands across the U.S. who have worked to install positive train control systems on tracks and in locomotives. When active, PTC will nearly eliminate operator error and help prevent deadly rail accidents.

By coordinating trains’ speed and movement data, PTC was intended to react faster than a human to detect problems, send alerts, and even take action. But there was one problem.

“After the law was passed, PTC had to be built from the ground up,” said Rick Reynoso, vice general chairman of Railroad System Council 2, which has jurisdiction over the union’s members at 10 railroads primarily covering the western portion of the U.S. “For the first two to three years, we were waiting for technology that didn’t exist yet, and it has constantly evolved with updates.”

This — along with the price tag — presented a number of challenges for everyone involved, Reynoso said.

“Railroads are businesses, all about the bottom line,” he said. “They didn't want to spend a penny on PTC, but they were spending all this money on it and feeling like they were not getting anything in return.”

Eventually, various federal agencies made available millions of dollars in grants to help defray some of the costs of inventing, installing and testing PTC’s complex mix of computers, radios and trackside equipment.

Because of the immense size of the PTC projects — along with the IBEW’s insistence that any contractors used to supplement this workload must be union — other IBEW locals besides railroad locals have been called in to help.

La Porte, Ind., Local 531 is an inside local whose members, helped by some fellow electricians from Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 692, installed several of these PTC components for rail cars and trains running on the 90-mile South Shore Line connecting Chicago-area commuters with South Bend, Ind.

“We were soldiers, doing whatever they needed us to do. It was quite an adventure,” said Danny Ellis, a member of Local 531’s executive board. “We worked five to six-hour days with an eight-day turnaround for most cars. [Management] told us, ‘You do stellar work,’ and that says a lot about our IBEW training.”

One of the biggest challenges with PTC installation has been interoperability. The trains of the “tenant” South Shore system, for example, need to move freely, and communicate with, equipment used by its “host” railroad, the Chicago area’s Metra commuter rail system. Similarly, Southern California’s Metrolink is a tenant of host railroad Union Pacific.

Following the California crash, National Transportation Safety Board investigators determined that Metrolink’s engineer had failed to notice a signal requiring him to wait for Union Pacific’s freight train to pass before entering a merge. Had it been installed at the time, PTC could have alerted the Metrolink engineer and, if necessary, stopped his train.

Congress had expected PTC to be fully implemented by the end of 2015. But it quickly became obvious that most railroads would not be able to meet that deadline, so Congress extended it to the end of 2018, leaving open the possibility of final extensions to Dec. 31, 2020, provided railroads could prove that they qualified.

Fortunately, the Federal Railroad Administration reported recently that by the end of 2018, PTC was operating on almost 46,000 of the nearly 59,000 required rail route miles — 83 percent of the required freight routes and nearly one-third of the required passenger routes.

“Everybody on our end came through, from the system level to the local level,” Reynoso said. “The IBEW’s reputation for quality helped us get the work. We’ve knocked it out of the park so far, and our carriers have been happy with the result.”

And thanks in part to the work of IBEW members, four railroads now boast fully certified PTC operation: the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) connecting Manhattan and northern New Jersey, San Diego’s North County Transit District, Oregon’s Portland & Western Railroad and Metrolink.

The remaining railroads successfully qualified for the 2020 extension deadline. Should they fail to meet it, they could face fines of nearly $28,000 a day.

“With just under two years to go, I’m confident that our members will continue to work as efficiently and as safely as possible to get the job done,” Bohné said. “Not only do we know that our employers and contractors are counting on us, we know that lives are depending on our success.”
After years of losses, the company moved its operations to Toledo, Ohio. General Motors Co., Ford’s chief rival at the time, began leasing the facility in 1953 and eventually purchased it. Kaiser-Frazer eventually became Kaiser Motors before eventually purchasing it. Kaiser-Frazer time, began leasing the facility in 1953 and eventually became Kaiser Motors before eventually being purchased by Chrysler. It became a licensed pilot and took young Jeff on flights out of adjoining Willow Run.

History there. His grandfather went on to raise the museum there. They’ve been fundraising and getting help from volunteers in the community ever since.

That’s where Koepp, the IBEW and the Yankee Air Museum, which Norton and others founded in 1981 to celebrate the area’s rich aviation history, was looking for a new home after its original facility was destroyed by a fire. They reached an agreement with the trust that owns the property to purchase and renovate a small part of the plant and house the museum there. They’ve been fundraising and getting help from volunteers in the community ever since.

That’s where Koepp, the IBEW and NECA came in. He knew about his family’s history there. His grandfather went on to become a licensed pilot and took young Jeff on flights out of adjoining Willow Run Airport and Ann Arbor Airport as a child. A.F. Smith was one of the signatory contractors used during the demolition, reaching an agreement with the trust that owns the property to purchase and renovate a small part of the plant and house the museum there. They’ve been fundraising and getting help from volunteers in the community ever since.

The Willow Run Bomber Plant was rolling out its assembly line every hour in 1944.

“We always had a signatory contractor in there,” Bianco said. “It put a lot of people to work.”

Koepp said suppliers have stepped up to donate cable and lighting. Local 252 members have installed it, much of it on a volunteer basis. He arranged a deal with Square D, a company that manufactures switch gear, to have a switchboard delivered in just 13 weeks — about half the usual time, and Square D donated half the cost. That result was a 3,000-amp main electrical switchboard at a bargain price.

Local 252 has committed to donating time and money to the museum.

Wolfgang Run Airport officials informed the museum in mid-2018 that it could no longer use the hangar where it stored its planes, which include a B-17, B-25 and C-47, because it needed the space for its own operations. Many of the aircraft remain in use and public flights are available.

Museum officials must vacate the hangar by the end of this year. A drive to raise an additional $6 million to build a new hangar to store the historic planes is ongoing. Donations can be made at savethebomberplant.org.

“The was a big, big job,” Norton said. “We had no transformers and no connection. Lines had to be strung to put up temporary lights just so we could operate.”

Local 252 Business Manager Ryan Husse said renovating the museum doesn’t just honor the aviation history there; it also honors the IBEW’s and NECA’s history. Without them, preserving a critical part of the nation’s World War II history could have been difficult.

“Rosie the Riveter” poster. That place paid a lot of bills for our families,” Husse said. “That place paid a lot of bills for our families.”

That was a major blow,” Koepp said. “That really changed things up on us. We’ve got to come up with a place to store and move these flyables to.”

Local 252 has led the way for the IBEW, but it hasn’t been alone. Detroit Local 58 and other local unions in the state also have pitched in to help. Work is expected to continue on the museum for the next several years. More information is available at yankeeairmuseum.org.

Norton said he’s grateful for the help of the IBEW and other unions in the area. Without them, preserving a critical part of the nation’s World War II history would have been difficult.

“There’s been nothing like Willow Run before or since,” he said.

Continued from page 1
Like Father, Like Son:
Two Generations of Broadcasting Excellence

Jay Willis is accustomed to making quick decisions as an audio mixer during major sporting telecasts, primarily while working as a freelance mix engineer for CBS.

In 2012, the New York Local 1212 member made one that turned out to be one of the most important of his life — and his son Alex's, too. Willis got word from his CBS bosses that the scheduled audio assistant wouldn't be able to assist him during that week's NFL game due to a family emergency. Just two days before the telecast. All the other union sound personnel were unavailable.

Fortunately, the game was scheduled for Buffalo's Rich Stadium, just a few miles from Willis' home in Hamburg, N.Y. So he reached out to his son, Alex, a junior at the State University of New York at Fredonia, where he was majoring in sound recording technology. Jay had graduated from the same school with the same degree more than 30 years earlier.

The day before the game, Willis borrowed a booth kit — the audio gear used to complete the build of a network broadcast booth — and asked Alex to set it up in the family basement. He did so relatively easily with little help from his father.

The next day, the work was side-by-side with his dad in the production truck during the game.

"I was confident at that point he could troubleshoot things," Jay said.

Alex recalled, "I had an understanding of audio, so he said, 'If I show you everything you have to do, can you do it this weekend?' I said sure. I didn't know what I didn't know."

Alex — who goes by the family's given last name, Wieloszynski — began picking up assignments in western New York, primarily working hockey and college basketball telecasts. In 2014, he worked for CBS during an NCAA Tournament regional in Buffalo — a grueling stretch for a young man who worked six days in a three-day stretch.

After that, CBS began hiring Alex on a regular basis and he and his dad often worked together, including during the network's golf coverage, highlighted by The Masters every April. He followed Jay into Local 1212 as well.

Alex sometimes assists his father, but often works as what is called the "A" — the primary sound mixer at the uncommonly young age of 27.

"Jay's job has become so much more than mixing," said Broadcast International Representative Neil Ambrosio, who has known Willis for about 15 years. "There's a big engineering side to his job that's only expanded over time."

It's called the Puck, an attachment for a standard one-half-inch socket wrench.

"Ickontech.com is raising money through pre-orders to get a mold built. Twenty-five dollars will get the three-piece set at ickontech.com and 5 percent will go to his local," Vilsaint said. "Ickon is now trying to get where Bandura is — from a great idea to production. He wants to build something that can be sold to the electric industry."
With Canada’s next federal election only six months away, IBEW leaders and activists, alongside Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal Party majority in Parliament that they have not yet made good on one of their 2015 campaign pledges: to bring back the country’s federal fair wages law.

“Our members campaigned alongside our brothers and sisters in the larger labour community to help get these candidates friendly to our causes elected to office in 2015,” said First District International Vice President Thomas Reid. “Their promise to restore a federal fair wages law was one of the reasons we supported them.”

Operating in much the same way as the U.S. government’s Davis-Bacon Act, Canada’s Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act had for years mandated locally determined prevailing wage policies, which, among other things, prevented suppliers from using substandard wages as bargaining chips when competing for federally funded contracts on construction, remodeling, and other projects.

But for years, Merit Canada, a small but vocal open-shop lobbying group, had pressured Parliament to repeal the act, citing, among other false claims, that the law unfairly favored union shops over nonunion ones.

“In reality, the law allowed any contractor, whether they were union or non-union, to bid on federal jobs, as long as they also paid a livable wage,” Reid said.

Led by then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the majority Conservative government in 2011 abolished the act, buried within an omnibus budget bill. Once that budget bill became law, contractors across Canada had free rein only to pay the surrounding territory’s or province’s minimum wage for all federal projects and any procurement the federal government undertook.

“Now, employers can lower their bids on the backs of working people by driving down their wages to provincial minimums that aren’t in line with industry standards,” Reid said. “And who pays for this race to the bottom? Working people, their families and their communities.”

Shortly after his party took power following the 2015 general elections, however, Trudeau called on his government to work on a number of progressive priorities, including restoration of “a fair and balanced wage,” Reid mentioned the vice-president international Thomas Reid of the First District. « Le gouvernement du Canada a récemment appelé à leur aide d’un grand nombre de fournisseurs. »

Le fonctionnement de cette loi est le même que celui de la Loi Davis-Bacon du gouvernement des États-Unis, la Loi canadienne fait appel aux lois salariales et les heures de travail a depuis des années imposé des politiques salariales en vigueur déterminées localement, ce qui empêchait les fournisseurs d’utiliser des salaires inférieurs aux normes comme pouvoir de négociation pour obtenir des contrats de projets de construction, de rénovation et autres financements par le gouvernement fédéral.

Pour les années, Merit Canada, un petit, mais très puissant groupe de lobbying « open-shop » exerçait de la pression auprès du Parlement pour faire abroger cette Loi, en déclarant parmi d’autres fausses déclarations, que la Loi favoriserait injustement les “union shop” par rapport à celles non syndiquées.

“En réalité, la Loi permettait à tout entrepreneur, qu’il soit syndiqué ou non, de soumettre en vue d’obtenir des contrats du gouvernement fédéral, à condition d’offrir un salaire suffisant pour vivre”, dit Reid.

“Ce serait une bonne maniére au gouvernement libéral de renforcer une plus vaste stratégie face aux syndicats”, ajoute Reid. « Lorsqu’ils soumettent, cela peut même les amener à offrir des rémunérations plus élevées et de meilleures conditions de travail. »

“Cette Loi permettait à tout entrepreneur, qu’il soit syndiqué ou non, de soumettre en vue d’obtenir des contrats du gouvernement fédéral, à condition d’offrir un salaire suffisant pour vivre”, dit Reid. « Lorsqu’ils soumettent, cela peut même les amener à offrir des rémunérations plus élevées et de meilleures conditions de travail. »

“Nous voudrions aussi qu’elle couvre d’autres secteurs tels que le traitement de données et la technologie de l’information, qu’ils soient financés en tout ou en partie par le gouvernement. »

Toujours dit-il que les travailleurs temporaires touchent un salaire injuste ou ils n’ont pas accès aux mêmes avantages d’un compagnon ou d’un apprenti.

“Un vrai salaire prévisionnel qui est commun à toutes les provinces et tous les territoires ne pourrait que bâti une classe moyenne forte dans ce pays”, dit Reid. « Le gouvernement du Canada dépense proche de 35 milliards de dollars chaque année pour acquérir des biens et des services par le biais de contrats avec l’aide d’un grand nombre de fournisseurs. »

La politique sur les justes salaires peut stimuler ces contrats d’acquisitions dans le but d’améliorer la vie des Canadien.”

Le gouvernement du Canada a récemment sollicité des commentaires par l’entremise d’un forum en ligne à propos d’une nouvelle politique éventuelle, de ses exigences et de son application. Un regroupement d’informations publique a aussi été établi en table ronde à Edmonton, Ottawa et Halifax.

It’s Tax Season, and These Deductions for Working Families Disappeared

Tax season is here, and tens of millions of Americans are finding an unpleasant surprise when they enter the final calculations on their returns. Tax returns being filed in 2019 are the first under the tax reform bill passed in 2017 and more than a dozen deductions working Americans relied on for decades are gone. Changes to the withholding rules mean that many people expecting a refund check from the IRS are finding that they are the ones on the hook.

"People got used to their taxes being a certain way," said Political and Legislative Director Austin Keyser. "It isn't that way anymore and a lot of people are getting hit with some terrible news."

The last time a major tax reform bill was passed was 1986, so entire generations of working people have grown to expect consistency when tax time rolls around each April. When Republicans pushed through the most recent changes, most of the attention went to the hundreds of billions of dollars that corporations and the billionaires behind them would save, and the eliminated deductions for working families might have slipped by unnoticed.

Grand Rapids, Mich., Local 213 Business Manager Chad Clark was so concerned about the possibility of much higher taxes for his members that he joined a handful of business managers in sending a warning letter to his members in January.

"Due to the recent tax reform (effective January 1, 2018) many miscellaneous itemized deductions that you have claimed in the past are no longer deductible," he wrote.

Nearly a dozen tax deductions important to union workers were killed for this year, causing some nasty surprises at filing time.

The list of no-longer deductible items was fairly long:

• Union dues
• Tools and supplies used for work
• Work clothes and uniforms, if required and not suitable for everyday use
• Work-related travel, transportation and meal expenses
• Depreciation on a computer or mobile phone that your employer requires you to use in your work
• Work-related education
• Home office expenses for part of your home used regularly and exclusively in your work
• Expenses of looking for a new job in your present occupation, including travel
• Legal fees related to work
• Subscriptions to trade journals or magazines
• Business liability insurance premiums
• Dues to professional societies

The letter was similar to some he had seen other business managers write.

"This is a great opportunity for Sister Langevin to share her expertise as well as her experience as a tradeswoman and to ensure that our industry has a voice at the table," said First District International Vice President Thomas Reid.

The Future Skills Council, alongside its counterpart research facility the Future Skills Centre, is part of an initiative by the government to look at how new trends and technologies are shaping the future of work and to develop a plan that will help Canadians acquire the necessary skills to get good-paying jobs that will also grow the middle class.

"The world of work is changing and Canadians need to be equipped to seize the opportunities this presents," said Patty Hajdu, minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, in a statement released on Feb. 4. "Future Skills is part of the government’s plan to build an agile workforce that can find and keep good, well-paying jobs, and strengthen the middle class so that everyone has a fair chance at success — today and tomorrow.

Langevin is the only tradesperson on the council and one of two from the labour movement, joining Mike Luft of the Canadian Labour Congress. Others on the 15-member council include representatives from the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

"I think having a tradeswoman on the council speaks to the council's commitment to diversity, which is just as important a consideration for the future as issues like automation and the aging of the workforce," said Langevin, who brings years of experience promoting women in the trades.

Langevin is a founding member of Local 213’s women’s committee as well as the national and provincial chapters of Build Together — Women in the Building Trades. She is also president of the BC Tradeswomen Society, serves on the Governance Committee for the BC Centre for Women in the Trades and is a board member of the Industry Training Authority, which coordinates the provincial skilled trades system.

“We need to think about the face of the workforce as well as the technology driving it.”

– Local 213 member Lisa Langevin

The government of Canada has assembled a new council to address the future of jobs in the country, and Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213 assistant business manager Lisa Langevin will serve as a member.

The plan to repeal the so-called “Cadillac tax” has been introduced several times since the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 — including last year, backed by more than 30 co-sponsors — but has never passed in both chambers of Congress.

This year, however, rules passed by the new Democratic majority give the bill a real chance of becoming law, if it can get more than 290 co-sponsors once again.

“This is one of our highest priorities this year,” said Political and Legislative Department Director Austin Keyser. “Slapping a 40 percent tax on many, if not most, union health plans is bad for workers, bad for business and bad for the country.”

The Cadillac tax was introduced in the ACA, also known as Obamacare, as a misguided attempt to control health care costs nationally and discourage overly generous health coverage that was, allegedly, driving up health care costs, Keyser said.

“Make no mistake: this affects every member of the IBEW.”

– Political and Legislative Department Director Austin Keyser

But the lower limit was set so low — $50,000 a year for an individual, $120,000 a year for families — that $8 million workers were facing dramatic benefit cuts immediately, rising to nearly 60 million within a decade. The hit to working families was perhaps unintentional, but a hit all the same.

"Even if $10,000 and $27,000 seemed like a lot in 2010, there was no provision for inflation, which is much higher for health care. Pretty soon, most health insurance plans are going to be facing lethal tax increases," Keyser said. “Billionaires got their tax bonanza; we get the bill.”

The Cadillac tax has already been delayed twice. It was supposed to go into effect in 2018, stripping $100 billion in worker benefits. That has been pushed out to 2022, but the specter of the tax hike is complicating contact negotiations and a permanent fix is the only way for unions and employers to negotiate three-year deals with any confidence, Keyser said.

There was and is overwhelming support among both Democrats and Republicans for what is called a clean repeal with no amendments, but Republican leaders Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell never allowed one to come up for a vote. Instead, Republicans only introduced repeal bills that also tossed millions of people off insurance or went after the heart of the ACA. Democrats simply would not support that.

Now that Democrats control at least one legislative chamber, however, a clean repeal is one bill proposed in H.R. 748 — the Middle-Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act — could finally make it to the floor.

When Speaker Nancy Pelosi took the gavel, Democrats passed a new rule: every bill with more than 290 co-sponsors would be added to a list. Every week, one bill from that list would be chosen by the speaker to go straight to the House floor for an up-or-down vote. No long detours to committee, no opportunities for popular bipartisan bills to be poisoned with unrelated amendments.

Last year, a similar bill had 304 co-sponsors, 168 Democrats and 136 Republicans. The current bill has only 152 co-sponsors, nearly split 50/50 between the parties.

"Getting to 290 or more co-sponsors is probably our best opportunity to kill this tax," Keyser said. “McConnell doesn’t want to put forward a clean repeal, but the more co-sponsors we get in the House and the larger the margin of victory, the more pressure he’ll be under to give us something. Then it will be up to the Democrats to decide if the price he is asking is too high.”

The key, he said, is mass mobilization.

"Make no mistake: this affects every member of the IBEW. The tax weakens our hand in negotiations, but it also hurts our employers,” Keyser said. “This is one case where the Chamber of Commerce and labor see eye to eye.

Keyser encourages every member of the IBEW to ask their representative to co-sponsor the bill. The easiest way to find your representative is to type your ZIP code into the search box at www.house.gov and call or email them asking them to co-sponsor H.R. 748 to kill the Cadillac tax permanently.

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POLITICS & JOBS continued

Maine, Illinois Members Represent at the State of the Union

Retired Manchester, Maine, Local 1837 member Cynthia Phinney and Chicago Local 134 apprentice Lily Wu were invited as official guests to attend President Donald Trump’s State of the Union address on Feb. 5 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Phinney was the guest of Rep. Jared Golden of Maine, and Wu was the guest of Sen. Tammy Duckworth of Illinois.

“The president seems poised to charge ahead with the new NAFTA as written,” Phinney said, reacting to the speech afterward. “We know it’s not unusual to make changes even after these documents are signed, and this agreement as it stands isn’t sufficient. We’ll keep pushing Congress for a NAFTA that works for people and the planet.”

Trump mentioned a specific health care initiative for childhood cancer, she said, “but he failed to lay out a plan that will address the lack of affordable coverage that is impacting families across the country facing many health care challenges.”

Members of both houses of Congress are each allowed to invite one guest to watch the address from the gallery of the House of Representatives, where the speech has been delivered before a joint session of the House and Senate since 1993. Noting Wu’s membership in Local 134, Duckworth touted her as “one of the many Illinoisans working hard to shore up America’s crumbling infrastructure, and living proof of the concrete benefits that come out of career and technical education and apprenticeship programs.”

“I’m proud to work with my hands every day, rebuilding and repairing America one project at a time,” said Wu, a first-generation Chinese-American. “As I walked around D.C., it was great to see that many of the buildings are being maintained by the architect of the Capitol. It’s comforting to know the architecture and the history are well preserved, and that these projects provide skilled jobs to the people of the trades like us.”

Both IBEW members, it seems, were chosen because they represent the importance of working families and opportunity to the members who invited them.

“Golden made working people’s issues, trade, and unions central to his campaign message, and he continues to do so,” said Phinney, a former Local 1837 business manager who is now serving as president of Maine’s state AFL-CIO chapter.

Before being elected last November to his first term representing Maine’s 2nd Congressional District, Golden served two two-year terms representing Maine’s 60th District in the state’s House of Representatives.

“We worked closely with the congressman when he was in the state Legislature,” Phinney said. “He has always been a champion of working-class issues. Being invited to attend the State of the Union address as his guest was a good, symbolic choice.”

The U.S. Constitution directs that the president “shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” It’s up to the Speaker of the House to officially invite the president to deliver the address. In early January, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi invited Trump to deliver his address on Jan. 29. But as the partial shutdown of the federal government that began on Dec. 22 dragged on, Pelosi suggested that the president should delay his speech until after an agreement could be reached to resolve the budget impasse that caused the shutdown. After the government reopened on Jan. 25, the two leaders settled on Feb. 5 as the new date for the address.

“Congressman Golden contacted me before we knew when — or even whether — the address would be held,” Phinney said.

For Wu, being selected to be Duckworth’s guest was “definitely shocking,” she said. “I was very honored to be invited, and I’m starting to pay more attention to politics now. It’s amazing how influential politics can be.”

Meanwhile, watching and listening from the floor was Rep. Donald Norcross, an active member and former business agent for Folsom, N.J., Local 352, who has represented the Garden State’s 1st District since 2014.

Salt Lake City Local Blends Skill Building With Solidarity

When Salt Lake City Local 354 member Jared Brydson returned from the IBEW’s International Convention in 2016, he was looking for ideas to increase engagement among new members. Then he and Business Manager Russ Lamoreaux landed on the idea of a boot camp.

“Local 354 is a relatively young local, and we recognized that our future is going to hinge on how active our members are going to be,” said Brydson, who chairs Local 354’s Reach Out and Engage Next Generation Electrical Workers chapter, an IBEW initiative to engage and foster the next generation of union members.

“We’re actively trying to create a culture shift in participation.”

Local 354, like a lot of locals, has members coming in through traditional apprenticeships as well as through the construction wierman/construction electrician alternative classifications. Brydson and Lamoreaux decided that one way to bring people together would be to offer a monthly class that lets everyone practice their skills while doubling as a no-pressure space to talk about the union. And there would be food.

“I like that it’s member-operated,” said Zackary Webb, a CW who joined the local in February 2016 and is now an apprentice. “It makes it more easy going and it creates an atmosphere where everyone’s there for each other. And there’s free donuts.”

Brydson and others teach things like the basics of pipe bending and branch circuit wiring. And fifth-year apprentices studying for their state journeyman exams can come in and practice more complex sections like motor control circuits.

“As a new member to the trade, I felt ill-prepared and out of my element,” said Lodule “Lulu” Lubanga, an apprentice who started as a CW. “But like any diligent student, I saw the boot camp as a resource to bridge the gap of my understanding and piece together the full picture of what to expect on the job and the journeyman exams.”

The monthly boot camps are part of the RENEW committee’s goal to actively engage and educate all new members, Brydson said.

“In my opinion, the key to creating union activists is to get them to early and often,” Brydson said. “By creating a space where new members can ask questions, we’re giving them contacts within the union and we’re fostering relationships with our new members. And by building camaraderie we’re breaking down the barriers between CW/CWs and apprentices, and that makes our union stronger.”

Fostering this next generation starts with a new member orientation run by Brydson that occurs right before the new members’ first union meeting where they take their oath of obligation. Then Brydson notifies members about the boot camps and social events and educational classes. Those notifications are done by steward and through more modern avenues like text messaging and social media.

“Now more than ever, we get in front of our new members and constantly let them know about the happenings of Local 354,” Brydson said.

Having buy-in from Lamoreaux has been a big part of the program’s success, Brydson said.

“It’s helping to break down that intergenerational gap that tends to form between age groups,” Lamoreaux said. “I think it’s an excellent investment in the future of the union.”

Brydson, who is also Local 354’s vice president and an organizer, says the boot camps are primarily for skill-building, but the sense of union solidarity is creating its own muscle memory.

“I’m definitely happy I chose to work union. It’s been a great experience,” Webb said. “I like how organized and comprehensive the schooling is. Plus, I’m making more money than I ever have before.”

Brydson says he’s been in touch with a few sister locals about the boot camps, including Boise, Idaho, Local 291 and Pocatello, Idaho, Local 449.

“I read somewhere that, on average, only 10 percent of union members are active in their union. As trade unionists, our strength comes from our solidarity and our participation. When we grow active and educated members from within, we are securing the future of the local,” Brydson said.

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Superior Training Sees IBEW Members Nab Top Honors at Annual Competition

IBEW electricians from New York, Illinois and Minnesota swept the top honors at the third annual 2018 Ideal National Champion- ship, held Dec. 3-5 near Orlando, Fla.

The competition, sponsored by the tool and supply company Ideal Electric, judged union and nonunion journeymen and apprentices on skills such as installation, grounding and torqueing.

Working individually and in teams of three, contestants competed for bragging rights as well as for cash prizes — all while using Ideal’s tools, of course. The company also gave special awards for sportsmanship as well.

“These competitions are a lot of fun for everyone who participates, but I’m always proud to see the outstanding skill on display from these talented IBEW men and women,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. “We know we’re the best-trained electrical workers in the industry, but our brothers and sisters in this competition prove it year in and year out.”

Claiming victory in this year’s pro- fessional team category were Lilie Wu, Ill., Local 701 member Clay Noga and Elgin, Ill., Local 127’s Will Barnett and Greg Anliker. The contestant’s rules require that all members of the professional squads work for the same contractor — in this case, Elgin-based Kellenberger Electric.

“You’re giving 120 percent. It’s just go, go, go.”

— Lilie, Ill., Local 701 member Clay Noga

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“The competition gets better ten-fold every year,” Noga said. “It’s a fantastic experience overall.”

Five professional teams from the U.S. and one from Canada were tasked with trying to completely wire a framed studio apartment mockup in one hour.

“It’s a fierce competition, Noga said. “You’re giving 120 percent. It’s just go, go, go.”

No team finished in the allotted time. “But we got the closest,” Noga said, estimating that his crew could have gotten the job done if they had had another 45 seconds or so.

Weighing speed, craftsmanship, and safety, the judges declared the Kel- lenberger team the winners, netting them a $60,000 prize to be split evenly among the three team members.

Anliker also competed as an individ- ual professional category, which he placed second in 2017. Through a bruk- et-style elimination process, the IBEW member defeated 63 other union and nonunion electricians to win himself an additional $75,000 prize.

“I almost felt like I did better last year,” said Anliker, laughing.

Anliker said that he plans to put most of his combined winnings into sav- ings, but he admitted that he is consider- ing splurging a little on a paramotor — just for fun. His teammate Noga, a hunting enthu- siast, said he probably would spend some of his share of the prize money on a new crossbow.

Erik Martin, a member of Minneapo- lis Local 292, came in third among individ-
The Electrical Worker  | April 2019

The first-place Student/Apprentice team at the 2018 Ideal National Championship: from left, Minneapolis Local 292's Patrick Flanery, Kate Flanery and Jeremy Welle.

ual professionals in the 2018 competi-
tion — and won $20,000 — after placing eighth in that category the year before.

“It’s a blast,” said Martin, who demonstrated such skills as bending pipes, installing switches and trouble-shooting. “Each competition is a little more difficult. I’m looking forward to keeping it going.”

Martin, like many of his fellow competi-
tors, brought family members with him to Florida to cheer him on. Ideal provided bleacher seating for the supporters and created a general game show atmosphere for the contest, complete with large video displays, strobe lights and fog machines.

“It’s really intense,” said Watertown, N.Y., Local 90’s Benjamin Budd, who placed first in the individual apprentice category and picked up a $10,000 prize. “Ideal does a good job of keeping up the suspense.”

Last year’s first-place win-
er, Long Island, N.Y., Local 25’s Michael Yass, followed Budd at a close second place to become $20,000 richer.

“As a tradesman, it’s nice to be recognize-d,” said Yass. “Having my wife and kids on the sidelines really helped keep me going.”

Rounding out the IDEW sweep in the category and win-
ing $10,000 was Wichita, Kan., Local 275’s Corbin Rios.

“Every round gets harder and hard-
er,” said Rios, the 2016 individual appren-
tice champion.

The competition in Florida was the culmination of a series of local and regional
events held throughout North America over the previous 10 months, pitting thou-
sands of union and nonunion electrical workers against each other to whittle
down each category’s size.

Coming in first among teams of apprentices was a crew from Minneapolis
Local 292: Kate Flanery, her brother Pat-
rick (a member of the 2016 winning apprentice team), and Jeremy Welle, who was on last year’s winning team.

Derrick Atkins, the training director at the Minneapolis Joint Apprentice Train-
ning Center, said that determining which three apprentices work best together
was crucial.

“We get the apprentices together and they practice, and they rely on what they know and what they’ve done to get through,” he said.

Atkins said his team also prepared for the finals by watching video from pre-
vious years’ competitions, to try to get a sense of what the judges might be look-
ing for.

“There is some luck to it, too,” he admitted. The Minneapolis members spe-
cialize in residential work — and it hap-
pended that for Ideal’s final competition, the apprentice teams were required to
wire a mockup of a living room.

Welle, who evenly shared the team’s $30,000 top prize with the Flaner-
ys, found the competition to be a lot of fun.

“Most of the time, you don’t get to inter-
act with so many people from around the country,” he said.

Ideal started the annual event to help
gerate greater interest in the electrical trade, a field that the U.S. Department of
Labor estimates will have nearly 70,000 open-
ings in the coming years as greater numbers of older electrical workers retire.

Dozens of cable and broadcast tele-
vision stations in the U.S. scheduled a
showing of the half-hour highlight show from the 2018 competition. To find out
whether it’s airing near you, visit
idealnationals.com. The website also has information about the local and regional
qualifying rounds for the 2019 competition, which got under way in March.

Generation Z and the ‘Other’ Four-Year Degree

All parents want their children to get a good job that pays them a livable wage.
For many, that means attending a four-
year college institution. But for many oth-
ers, there’s an alternate path.

Martha Pultar, one of the older members of Generation Z, that is, the older side of the roughly 7- to 22-year-old age group, you’ve grown up during the Great Reces-
sion and may have seen older siblings pay tens of thousands of dollars to a college or
university that is no longer the guarantee of a good-paying job it once was. Home-
ownership rates have plummeted while wages have stagnated and more and
more wealth seems to only trickle up to the top 1 percent.

All this is happening during a major construction boom. Coupled with the

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Many in Generation Z, those in their early 20s and younger, are looking to the security of a job in the skilled trades as opposed to a college degree.

“A union apprenticeship is often called “the other four-year degree for a reason,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. “It’s a skilled trade that you need to learn, and it’s one that pays you a good wage with benefits and the ability to retire. That’s what all working people want.”

Unfortunately, career and technical education classes, also known as CTE or vocational-education classes, have been sidelined in favor of college and safeguarding the more illustrious-sounding college degree. “Starting about 30 years ago, it became a negative thing to work with your hands,” Skip Perley, president and CEO of signatory contractor Thompson Electric Co., said to Electrical Contractor. “Blue-collar opportunities became the ‘leftover’ jobs when you couldn’t make it in the white-collar world, and it became embarrassing for parents if their kids were trade or factory workers.”

Of course, they were never just “leftover” jobs, but the stigma caught on. “It’s a skilled trade that you need to learn, and it’s one that pays you a good wage with benefits and the ability to retire. That’s what all working people want.”

A 2017 report by the Brookings Institute stated that there’s been a resurgence in CTE in the past decade, citing increased enrollment in the area as well as media mentions. It also noted that in 2015 alone, 39 states instituted 135 new laws, policies or regulations relating to CTE, many of which increased funding.

As technology advances, and more people see the appeal of a job that is skilled craft, something that comes with a sense of accomplishment not to mention the earning potential, the tide may be changing. “The truth is electrical contracting is high-technology-driven today. It’s not just digging dirt and cutting wires, but about the cutting with cutting-edge technology, which appeals to tech-savvy young people today,” Kevin Tighe, the National Electrical Contractors Association’s executive director, said in the Electrical Contractor. “Our field is embracing changes in technology, which is helping to grow the industry and create opportunities for young people, who will help further that trend. The guts of new buildings will still come down to electrical work, and the operations behind this will attract people who use joysticks and mouses.”

While much remains to be seen with Generation Z, there’s already data suggesting this generation is more frugal and is prioritizing financial stability in a way that older generations may not have at a similar age. Fast Company reported in 2016 that 66 percent said their No. 1 concern was drowning in debt and more than half already have savings accounts. They also rate their top three priorities as getting a job, finishing college and safeguarding money for the future. And 75 percent believe there are ways to get a good education that don’t involve going to college.

“The thing is, these construction jobs aren’t going away,” Stephenson said. “So, if you’re looking to jump-start your career and want to be able to put away some money at the same time, trades are an appealing option. It’s nice to see that the message we’ve been putting out there for years is resonating with young people. We hope to see more and more of them applying for IBEW apprenticeships in the years ahead.”

Right-to-Work Win Propels Missouri Union Membership, Bucking National Trend

Missouri added 25,000 working people to its union membership last year, propelled by a major right-to-work win victory where Show-Me State workers made the entire picture of labor organizing in 2018, reported the Huffington Post. “[Last year] was one of the most substantial years for collective action in American history,” the federation said. “In the face of unprecedented attacks, the labor movement continues to show tremendous resilience. Public approval of unions is soaring. And new organizing campaigns in nonunion workplaces are gaining steam.”

In August of last year, Gallup released a poll showing that 62 percent of Americans approved of unions, roughly matching that of the prior year, and the highest since 2009.

Union membership rates of public-sector workers, at 33.9 percent, continued to be more than five times higher than that of private-sector workers, which is 6.4 percent.

Men continued to have a higher union membership rate, 11.1 percent, than women at 9.9 percent.

Black workers remained more likely to be union members than white, Asian or Hispanic workers.

The AFL-CIO also noted that the BLS report doesn’t paint the entire picture of labor organizing in 2018, and noted that membership union ticked up 66 percent said their No. 1 concern was drowning in debt and more than half already have savings accounts. They also rate their top three priorities as getting a job, finishing college and safeguarding money for the future. And 75 percent believe there are ways to get a good education that don’t involve going to college.

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New Signatory Contractor — Welcome to New Members

L.U. 8 (es,em,mar,mt,rts,sk&pa), TOLEDO, OHIO — Greetings, brothers and sisters.

Congratulations to Bodie Mechanical Services, which recently signed on as a new signatory contractor with Local 8 — and welcome to the Bodie electricians which recently signed on as a new signatory contractor.

The annual Local 8 Dinner/Dance was Saturday, March 30, and as always everyone had a great time. Congratulations to Bro. Dennis Duffey on his retirement! Pres. Eric Grosswiler presented Duffey with his retirement watch at the Sept. 17, 2018, union meeting for 42 years of service. Congratulations, Dennis, and enjoy your retirement!

We mourn the loss of Local 8 members who recently passed away: Ray McElheney Jr., William "Bill" Baldwin; and retirees Allen Kern, Spencer Niles, and enjoy your retirement!

Stay safe out there and remember to attend your union meetings.

Mike Bruinker, P.S.

‘Fantasy of Lights’ — Community Service Project

L.U. 16 (l), EVANSVILLE, IN — Despite the heavy demand for electrical workers over the holidays, Local 16 still honored its commitment to those in need. Fantasy of Lights is one of the local’s major community service projects. This holiday-themed light show generated over $163,000, the best it has done in its 25-year run. The amount raised represents 3,333 sessions of rehabilitative therapy for people who are not able to afford it otherwise. Since its inception, FOL has raised over $3,460,000, covering the cost of 70,000 therapy sessions. The Political Action Committee has had a busy spring. They sponsored their first BB Gun Shoot/Chili Cook Off/Texas Hold’em Tournament. The event provided a great afternoon of brotherhood. PAC will have a great time with their families to see that all the others had a great time. To the volunteers: Thank you for what you do. Our union is stronger because you care. — Peter P. Demchuk, B.M.

Projects on the Horizon; New Union Hall is Planned

L.U. 34 (es,em,es,ovt,mt,rs,sk&pa), PEORIA, IL — Local 34 enters the new year with renewed excitement and vigor. Throughout these winter months, work has remained steady. A busy spring and summer are anticipated. The area has projects on the horizon and the state of Illinois will soon release funding for solar projects. Quite possibly the most exciting news for Local 34 recently came from Washington, D.C.

IBEW Local 34 has received approval from the I.O. to construct a new office and union hall for its members. The new facility location in Bartonville, IL, will place the hall adjacent to the JATC and near NECA, creating a campus with great possibilities for collaboration and communication. Currently, the Local 34 Building Association is interviewing architects to find one that shares our vision for the future of Local 34.


Mark Your Calendars — 2019 Activities & Events

L.U. 26 (es,es,es,ovt,lgmt), WASHINGTON, DC — It’s finally springtime in Washington, D.C. Preparations have officially begun for the golf outing, the Virginia and Maryland picnics, and the fishing tournament.

A reminder for a few key dates to mark on your calendar:
• JATC Graduation — Saturday, June 1
• Dollars Against Diabetes Golf Outing — Monday, June 3
• Virginia Picnic (Manassas) — Saturday, June 22
• Chartered Fishing Tournament — Monday, July 15
• Maryland Picnic (Edgewater) — Saturday, Aug. 24
• 8th Annual Poker Run Benefit for Special Love — Saturday, Sept. 21 (Organized by the Electrical Workers Motorcycle Riders Club)

The Local 26 Scholarship Committee is reviewing the many applications received, and a decision will be made soon. Winners will be announced in our quarterly magazine and in an upcoming issue of The Electrical Worker. Thanks to the many outstanding applicants for their participation! Best wishes to new retirees: Jesse T. Miller III, Brian T. Leventhal, Charles F. Scullin, Roger L. Sweigert, Preston C. Taylor Jr., Elery Dunn, Donald J. Bellbaugh, Joseph C. Watts, Michael R. McLaughlin, Keith D. McKiver, Karen M. Greenfield, Christopher A. Toborek, Ralph E. Neidert, Barry A. Brown, Kim Yu Quy, Norman J. Vincent, Marcus W. Robinson Jr., Steven W. Redman and Richard D. Thomas Jr.


George C. Hogan, B.M.

Children’s Holiday Party; Contract Negotiations Update

L.U. 24 (es,es,es,ovt,mt,rs,sk&pa), BALTIMORE, MD — At press time, we are currently in negotiations with another one of our sign companies, Clear Channel Outdoor, and hope to again reach an agreement that will benefit all parties. Later this summer, we will be entering negotiations for the Eastern Shore and Rommel Electric agreements.

This year two wage surveys were conducted, one by the state of Maryland and another by the federal government. We entered over 400 surveys for the state and the same for the federal. As of this writing, Maryland has concluded their survey and it appears they chose not to include all the surveys submitted for two counties, which lowered the rate in those counties. We filed objections and were able to overturn one. However, we are still fighting to have the other changed. Thanks to Bro. Sam Curreri and Administrative Asst. Marielle Stokker for their hard work and diligence on this.

Thanks to the members who helped make the annual Children’s Christmas/Holiday Party a success. Helping with handling out toys, serving food and drinks, introducing the children to Santa, and hosting the puppet and magic shows, these volunteers gave up time with their families to see that all the others had a great time. To the volunteers: Thank you for what you do. Our union is stronger because you care.

Donald P. Beavin, P.S.

Trade Classifications

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<tr>
<th>Trade Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>(al)</td>
<td>Alarm &amp; Signal</td>
<td>(es) Electronic Technicians (es) Motion Picture Studios (es) Radio-Television Service</td>
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<td>(lp) Lighting Protection Technicians (es) Professional, Technical &amp; Clerical</td>
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<td>Electric Signs</td>
<td>(mr) Marine (es) Radio-Television Manufacturing (es) Warehouse and Supply</td>
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Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officers via email at ibew@ibew.org or U.S. Mail. We have a 200-word limit. We make every effort to assist local unions in publishing useful and relevant local union news; however, all final content decisions are based on the editor’s judgment. Our guidelines and deadlines are available at www.ibew.org/media-center/IBEW-News-Media-Center/Submitting-Local-Lines. Please email or call the Media Department at (202) 728-6294 with any questions.

Trade classifications are made to this list as inclusive as possible, but the various job categories of IBEW members are too numerous to comprehensively list all.
It was a great turnout consisting of newly organized members, newly turned journeymen, and members looking to be more involved. These members showed an ability to listen, be impartial, think before acting, and respect other points of view. The participants learned the importance of the steward’s role and the tools to use while being a shop steward, such as acting as the first step in dispute resolution, promoting the IBEW, and cultivating a union environment. After this class, these members are prepared and looking forward to representing the IBEW and acting as a steward when called upon.

In addition to the steward training, the members attended the Los Angeles Kings ice hockey game on March 2 and wore matching IBEW-themed Kings shirts. Attending events like these provides an opportunity for the members to get to know one another outside the workplace and build stronger relationships within our membership.

Stephan Davis, R.S.

**Good Wishes to a Brother**


Making a turn, Bill hit a dump truck, fell, and instantly broke his spine. The wreck knocked Bill out. He was airlifted to Great Falls and landed across his 213-pound bike followed Bill and landed across his shoulders, instantly breaking his spine. Bill spent eight days in the intensive care unit, and he was told he would never walk again.

On Oct. 30, Bill stood for the first time since the wreck; he stood with assistance, but still he was standing. Five days later he walked with assistance as well. On Oct. 30, he left Harborview using a walker.

Bill’s goals for 2019 are to go back to work, ride a bike with his son, dance with his daughter and finally to walk with his wife, Misty. Follow Bro. Kipp’s progress on Facebook: Bill Kipp update and prayers.

Dwight Rose, Mbr. Dev.

**Upcoming Election of Officers**

L.U. 68 (i), DENVER, CO — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Local 68 held its annual Christmas party for our members and their families on Dec. 8 last year. There were 417 kids at the party, with total attendance over 800; this was one of the largest Christmas parties we have hosted in a while. Thanks to all of the volunteers — it is because of their efforts that the Christmas party was such a success. Thank you all!

The election for Local 68 officers is coming up soon. Nominations will take place at the general membership meeting on May 7, and the election will be held in June. Please ensure that the hall has an accurate mailing address for you and watch the mail for notices. I would also like to encourage anyone who is considering running for an office or position to do so. Talk to someone who holds, or has held, the position that you would like to run for so that you have an understanding of the responsibilities that come with that position.

Good news for Colorado: On Jan. 29, right-to-work legislation was defeated once again. We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of our recently deceased Local 68 brothers and sisters, including: Larry Guenier, Joseph L. Wolfanger, Howard J. Goodman, Jack Averman, Clifford J., Houston, James R. Pinkston and Allen L. Oakley.

Morgan L. Buchanan, Pres.

**Projects Scheduled for Spring**

L.U. 80 (sk), NORFOLK, VA — We hope all our brothers and sisters had a wonderful holiday. With a new year underway, Local 80 has an abundance of work coming up in our jurisdiction. We have numerous projects starting in early spring. This includes work at the Microsoft project in Boyton, VA, and jobs on our military facilities. The Wegmans grocery store in Virginia Beach, VA, is progressing and should be completed in early spring.

The local looks forward to our upcoming Local 80 Annual Picnic, scheduled for May 4.

We also have negotiations in March. To all our brothers and sisters, keep up the solidarity and always remember: “We stand together, we shine together.”

We mourn the loss of several members: Bros. Larry Webb, Timothy Woddington, Jan Sutton Sr., and Robert A. Smith. They will be remembered.

Will Morris, A.B.M.

**Historic Building Renovation**

L.U. 38 (i), CLEVELAND, OHIO — Renovations have started at the historic May Company Building on Public Square. At press time, the job is ramping up with many members from Local 38 on site working for Urban Electric. The May Company opened in 1915 and during its heyday reportedly was the third-largest department store in the United States with 800,000 square feet of space. Many of us who are older remember shopping there and especially going there during the Christmas season via the rapid-transit train. The store closed for good in 1995.

The plans for the project presented by Bedrock, which is owned by Cleveland Cavaliers owner Dan Gilbert, call for 388 apartment suites with 590 parking spaces. Retail and entertainment usage will be a part of both the top and bottom floors of the building. The top floor will have an outdoor green space for residents plus a bar or restaurant with an outdoor patio for the public.

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

**Steward Training Class**

L.U. 40 (em,lm,mps), HOLLYWOOD, CA — On Jan. 26, Local 40 hosted an excellent steward training class in conjunction with our sister Local 45. The class was taught by Ninth District Int. Rep. Tim Dixon and Int. Rep. Tracy Prezeau. Special thanks to sister Local 45’s business manager, Elaine Ocasio, and Victor Marrone, Local 45 business rep, for attending as well.

Participants attend steward training class hosted by Local 40 in conjunction with sister Local 45.

**Rep. Tracy Prezeau. Special thanks to sister Local 45’s business manager, Elaine Ocasio, and Victor Marrone, Local 45 business rep, for attending as well.**

Marc Bunnop, P.S.

**ADT Contract Negotiations — Update From Locals 46 and 76**

L.U. 46 (acs,cm,em,la,im,mg,mt,rb,tlt&ko), SEATTLE, WA / L.U. 76 (tlt&ko), TACOMA, WA — IBEW Locals 46 and 76 have been in negotiations with ADT for over two years. Throughout, we’ve had the unwavering support of our business managers, Ninth District representatives, and organizers. Recently the Ninth District office, at the direction of Int. Vice Pres. John J. O’Rourke, committed two international representatives to assist us. Through their experience, we are pursuing several avenues. We continue to be clear with ADT that our preference is to work collaboratively, but collaboration requires willingness by both labor and management.

ADT’s lead negotiator, Jim Nixdorf, who’s LinkedIn profile states: “Specializes in Decertification Campaigns,” tried to spearhead a decertification here. He failed. When ADT contested that election, that effort failed also.

In the afternoon, Nixdorf has created a division within the bargaining unit that must be overcome if we are to be effective at the negotiating table. As it stands, ADT is offering a contract far inferior to members’ expectations, yet blames the IBEW for the inability to reach an agreement.

ADT’s illegal conduct has been recognized on several fronts. In the days after the decertification election, ADT fired two employees. The general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board prosecuted ADT for firing these employees on the basis of unlawful retaliation. A decision from the administrative law judge is due at any time. No matter how much rhetoric comes out, these terminations (and perhaps a third) will be challenged in arbitration as they lack the “just cause” required by the contract.

Second, ADT illegally changed the pay cycle from weekly to bi-weekly, then ignored the arbitrator’s binding decision to start paying weekly. The IBEW filed suit in federal court to enforce the arbitrator’s decision. The judge found that ADT acted in “bad faith” by refusing to comply. ADT was ordered to explain to the arbitrator why it has not complied and to pay the IBEW’s attorneys’ fees that were incurred in order to enforce the decision. Unfortunately, the legal process is slow.

In the meantime, our sisters and brothers at ADT and Protection One are suffering through this process.

Throughout all of this, ADT has used the former Protection One employees as pawns. On the one hand ADT says the former Protection 1 employees are now fully part of the bargaining unit and the CBA is applicable to them. Nixdorf made this representation to the NLRB, to the arbitrator, and to the federal court. Yet at the same time, ADT refuses to extend the contract conditions to these employees, including paying some former Protection 1 employees up to $4 per hour less than the current negotiated pay scale. A grievance challenging ADT’s failure to honor the CBA with regard to the former Protection 1 employees is pending and it, too, will be litigated in arbitration. ADT attempted division of the former Protection 1 employees from the rest of the bargaining unit, like its efforts to divide our members as a whole, continues; but this will not be tolerated, and it will not succeed.

Mark Samuelsens, B.R., L.U. 46

Clint Blyson, B.R., L.U. 76

Morgan L. Buchanan, Pres.

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

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Morgan L. Buchanan, Pres.

**‘A Great Year of Progress’**

L.U. 98 (as,cat,um,jsl), PHILADELPHIA, PA — 2018 was a great year for Local 98. 2019 should be even better. Business Manager Mike Kyle, who passed away Jan. 30, Mike was a former IATC instructor who continued to volunteer and stay involved with the local beyond his days as a working journeyman. Rest easy, brother.

Morgan L. Buchanan, Pres.

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three-year health care agreement with Blue Cross that saved the local $8 million in the first year alone. Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney has signed 139 project labor agreements (PLAs) with the Building Trades, which include single-source projects, bringing the total to more than 160.

Phase One of the East Market redevelopment project by National Real Estate Advisors, which includes significant IBEW pension dollars, was recently completed. When finished this year, the $1 billion project will transform this dormant but important section of Center City Philadelphia.

The $5.2 billion New Medicine Pavilion includes the construction of 500 new patient rooms and 47 operating rooms. Both the Sheraton Hotel and the Loew’s Hotel in Center City are undergoing major renovations. At least nine new hotels will be coming out of the ground this year.

The $250 million transformation of the former Inquirer building into the new Police Administration Building will begin this year. The city’s second casino, located in the stadium district in south Philadelphia, has broken ground and will include a hotel and office complex.

Business for our Sound and Communications division is up, as is our market share in Montgomery County, thanks to the hard work of our Philadelphia team. We secured three important Responsible Contractor Ordinances (RCOs), two townships and a school district, assuring 98 North of ample work in these important regions.

L.U. 124 (elec,em,emrs,nc,pa,spkb), KANSAS CITY, MO — Local 124 has been around for 114 years. Some years have been better than others for sure. In our industry, the work comes and goes. We stress to our apprentices to save and spend down any debt during the good times to help for the inevitable lean times. This common sense lesson is absent from the new federal tax code passed by the Republican-controlled Congress and signed into law by Pres. Trump. The new tax code adds an estimated $2 trillion to our national debt. Yet another credibility hit to the Republican lie that they are the fiscally responsible party. This tax law permanently strips most of the working persons’ deductions. We will survive this anti-labor administration — this is our day. But continually playing defense gets old. Measuring our success by mitigating loss instead of actual gains gets old. Labor certainly deserves better. Better representation that undermines our success by funding direct competition could feel-good legislation to further apprenticeship could undermine our success by funding direct competition at the community college and college levels. Tax dollars given to organizations without a proven track record, unlike the IBEW, will create problems when the money grab begins. Such legislative proposals come with the belief that apprenticeship can be done solely in the classroom. This undermines the whole “earn while you learn” backbone of our training.

On the heels of these potential threats, Gov. Kate Brown visited a local that’s a solid challenge: the state of Oregon. Our union is not a spectator sport! Get active. Ordes Electric was awarded work in the PBF Refinery in Chalmette, LA. It is one of the few electric contractors that actively pursue industrial construction.

The RENEW Committee meets regularly to strategize on workers’ goals. Our younger members are active and involved. Thank you, brothers and sisters, for your participation. Our organizers are using new technology to attract new members. Geo-Fencing allows us to send a union commercial to every phone in a geographical area, such as a job site or open-shop contractor. With job-site visits and informational handouts, organizers are keeping a steady flow of new members. We look forward to another productive year and maybe a second chance at the Super Bowl. Go, Saints! 

Billy Buckle, R.S./P.S.

**’Elections Are Key’**

L.U. 212 (elec,em,emrs,nc,pa,spkb), 14 LOCAL LINES

**’Another Productive Year’**

L.U. 150 (l), NEW ORLEANS, LA — Our year kicked off with steward training provided by the L.U. That was followed by the Louisiana Building & Construction Trades Conference, and an instrumentation seminar given by Fluke and other industry professionals.

In March, Local 150 provided the venue for the five-day AFL-CIO Executive Committee meeting held in our Alexander Room. Our Alexander Room is the new shining star in the business and catering world. It has attracted attention as a versatile facility for business functions. Dignitaries from Tulane University, Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity, the Jefferson Parish government, Chappelle High School, and area businesses are regular clientele.

Our Apprenticeship Committee is busy working to convert day school to night school, due to a recent contract change requested by our contractors. On-the-job training is a requirement of apprenticeship.

L.U. 212 (l), CINCINNATI, OHIO — Local 212 members recently received commendations for their life-saving efforts.

On Sept. 6, 2018, Juan “Manny” Montoya found himself in the middle of a chaotic scene. A shooter entered a building where Juan was working. Instead of running out of the nearest exit, Juan ran to warn those in harm’s way and showed them safe passage. Juan received a Certificate of Recognition from the International Office of the IBEW. It was noted that, “His actions brought great credit to our industry and our Brotherhood and we are grateful.”

In the early hours of Dec. 10, 2018, a fire broke out in an Avondale home. The family was awakened by their smoke alarms, Joseph Schott and Anthony Mazzella, both Local 212 members, were on a team of four people who installed those smoke alarms. They were there as part of the Home Fire Campaign with the Red Cross in 2018.

As a result of the earlier smoke alarm installation, all 15 family members made it out unharmed. Joseph and Anthony were commended at a ceremony at The Red Cross.

Our union is not a spectator sport! Get active. Tag, you’re it.

Phil Bovard, P.S.

2018 Annual Family Barbecue; Longtime Service Honored

L.U. 234 (i&m), CASTROVILLE, CA — Our Local 234 Annual Family Barbecue, held Sept. 29, was very well-attended, reflecting how our membership has grown. Heartfelt thanks go to our barbecue organizers. It was particularly satisfying to see our many members and families, young and old, enjoy the food, fun, and games.

Among the many other wonderful activities, the local uses this opportunity to honor our members’ diligent years of service. Although there are too many names to list here, we wish to particularly honor the following long-time members: Leland Knisely (72-year member); James Myers, Donald Moors, Siegfried Matt, Robert Koenig, Richard Baker (65-year members); and Ronald Smith and Lawrence Tuckness (60-year members). Thank you all to your service to our community and industry.

Stephen Slovacek, P.S.

**Strong Work Picture; IBEW Apprenticeship Training**

L.U. 280 (c,es,em,emrs,lmr,mt,rtk&dl), SALEM, OR — The work picture remains strong in our jurisdiction. Data centers continue to employ traveling brothers and sisters in central Oregon. Work is picking up in the Eugene/Springfield area with University of Oregon’s rebuild of the historic Hayward Fields track facility. This project is state of the art from the ground up. Not far from that project are the accelerated science buildings, also at the University of Oregon. Manpower is at a premium as of this writing.

Apprenticeship and CTE (Career and Technical Education) programs have become buzzwords in our Capitol buildings in Oregon. The worry now is that feel-good legislation to further apprenticeship could undermine our success by funding direct competition at the community college and college levels. Tax dollars given to organizations without a proven track record, unlike the IBEW, will create problems when the money grab begins. Such legislative proposals come with the belief that apprenticeship can be done solely in the classroom. This undermines the whole “earn while you learn” backbone of our training.

On the heels of these potential threats, Gov. Kate Brown made a visit to us at the soon-to-be Central Oregon Training Center on Feb. 1. This is the first time that I am aware of that a sitting governor has visited a Local 280 training facility in the valley or high plains. The trades have our elected officials’ attention.

Drew Lindsay, B.M./P.S.

**New Contractors Organized; Mentoring High School Students**

L.U. 236 (ataev,gees,gnm,lmr,rtk&dl), ALBANY, NY — As of this writing our work picture has slowed, but we have some large projects on the horizon. We thank the Locals that are currently putting our members to work.

Local 236 organized two new contractors. Organizer Chris Lambert signed Stonecreek Electric, and organizer Kevin Fuller signed Hometown Electric. As usual, it was a wonderful event and well-attended by members and their families. Our Apprenticeship Committee is busy working to convert day school to night school, due to a recent contract change requested by our contractors.

Brothers and sisters, we have taken on a new project; Local 236 will mentor high-school students and help wire a “tiny house” for a veteran who has fallen on hard times. One of our local signatory contractors, H. Clune Electric, has generously offered to donate the material. We will keep you posted as this project progresses.

Local 236 has contract negotiations coming in 2019 and we created an e-mail site for your suggestions. We welcome your comments and suggestions during this important time. Call the union hall for the e-mail site address.

Joseph Hlat, A.B.M./P.S.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, visiting the site of an upcoming Local 280 training facility, with Local 280 Reps. Kari Zuschlag (center) and Robbie F. Smith. The training facility site is undergoing renovation and is planned for completion in the spring of 2019.
Welcome to New Members; Community Service Volunteers

L.U. 302 (Ut&Ispa), MARTINEZ, CA — Local 302 accepted 454 apprentice applications in January, and we look forward to bringing in new brothers and sisters soon. Organizing efforts are paying off. We swore in 87 members during December.

We are encouraged to see members getting involved in the local and the community. Thanks to those who volunteered at the Women’s March in Concord, on Jan. 19, for the Grateful Garment Project. Participation in community events, and letting people know who and what our organization represents, benefits us all! 

Melissa Vaughn, R.S.

Service Awards Presented

L.U. 306 (i), AKRON, OHIO — In December our annual Children’s Christmas Party was held at Tod’s and as usual it was a huge success. Thanks once again to our group of officers, committee members and volunteers. We couldn’t do it without you.


Congratulations and thank you to all for your dedication to the IBEW and Local 306!

With great sadness we report the passing of our group of officers, committee members and volunteers. We couldn’t do it without you.

We are encouraged to see members getting involved in the local and the community. Thanks to those who volunteered at the Women’s March in Concord, on Jan. 19, for the Grateful Garment Project. Participation in community events, and letting people know who and what our organization represents, benefits us all! 

Melissa Vaughn, R.S.

2019 Projects Scheduled; Organizing & Training Classes

L.U. 340 (Ut&I), WINSTON-SALEM, NC — On Dec.15, IBEW Local 340 held its second annual Christmas party at the Holiday Inn in Greensboro. The staff at the hall put this event together and did a fantastic job. We had a great turnout, from retired members and their families to apprentices and their families, and everyone in between. Brotherhood and solidarity were on full display as the 50/50 raffle for the sick and needy was raffled off again and again, before a brother donated it back to the fund.

Looking back at last year, signatory contractors Abco South Electric, White Electric, and Cogburn Brothers were working in our jurisdiction just to name a few. Int. Rep. Carmela Thomas was here for a weekend to conduct new officer training, as well as Code of Excellence and CORE steward classes.

We are optimistic that 2019 will see our local flourish with several large projects slated to begin in our jurisdiction. The local union staff are working tirelessly to organize the best and brightest in our area, and they are visiting contractors to educate them on what the IBEW has to offer. We are confident our local will grow due to the excellent quality of work our members demonstrate.

The local is seeking a larger space to further the education of our members by incorporating labs and an assigned craft-certification space. By instituting education of our members by incorporating labs and an assigned craft-certification space. By instituting education of our members by incorporating labs and an assigned craft-certification space.

We would like to thank all members for their hard work and dedication to the IBEW. We are optimistic that 2019 will see our local flourish with several large projects slated to begin in our jurisdiction. The local union staff are working tirelessly to organize the best and brightest in our area, and they are visiting contractors to educate them on what the IBEW has to offer. We are confident our local will grow due to the excellent quality of work our members demonstrate.

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We would like to thank all members for their hard work and dedication to the IBEW.

Spring 2019 Open House; Pin Presentation Events

L.U. 340 (Ut&I), SACRAMENTO, CA — A pin presentation was held in October 2018 for Local 340 members who received their 50-plus years of service pins and certificates. Among the things I really enjoy at this event are the stories these members share about their years in the trade as apprentices and as journeymen. I always wish that the newer members, or the members who have just turned a little apathetic about the local, could be there to see these proud retired members sitting with brothers and sisters they haven’t seen in years and filling that room with laughter and true brotherhood.

I gave me an idea that I want to do this year’s pin presentation event a little differently. Since the local has moved into a new building, we are going to have a Local 340 Open House for all the members this spring and incorporate it with a pin party for all members. We’ll be presenting pins to members for their years of service ranging from five years to 65 years.

This is the absolute perfect time for Local 340 right now, not only to honor the members who got us this far but also to show our new, younger members (who will keep us strong for years to come) that the IBEW is much more than a job. We’re about loyalty to a union trade, comradery, families, community involvement and brotherhood — and we are growing! I am happy to report that Local 340’s active member count just went over 2,700 in January, and almost everyone is working. What a great time to be IBEW!

Robert D. Ward, B.M.

Politically Active Members

L.U. 446 (i), MONROE, LA — Congratulations to our four Local 446 members who retired in 2018: Bros. Floyd E. Sandford II, Johnny B. Evans III, Robert V. Wade Jr., and Bruce A. Black. We want to thank you, brothers, for your years of service in representing IBEW Local 446 with such pride and dedication. Best wishes to each of you in your retirement years!

Ken Green, B.M./F.S.

Tribute to Recent Retirees

L.U. 446 (i), MONROE, LA — Congratulations to our four Local 446 members who retired in 2018: Bros. Floyd E. Sandford II, Johnny B. Evans III, Robert V. Wade Jr., and Bruce A. Black. We want to thank you, brothers, for your years of service in representing IBEW Local 446 with such pride and dedication. Best wishes to each of you in your retirement years!

Ken Green, B.M./F.S.

Newly Organized Members

L.U. 538 (i), DANVILLE, IL — Congratulations to the Danville City inspectors, a newly organized group of six new members for Local 538. After almost two years of negotiations and arbitrations, they achieved their first contract with the City of Danville, IL. They can now enjoy the benefits of being represented by the IBEW. Thanks for everyone’s dedication, patience and solidarity in sticking with the process to get to this point. 

John Gallez, A.B.M.

Mazda/Toyota Plant Project

L.U. 558 (i), GUNTERSVILLE, AL — Congratulations to the Danville City inspectors, a newly organized group of six new members for Local 538. After almost two years of negotiations and arbitrations, they achieved their first contract with the City of Danville, IL. They can now enjoy the benefits of being represented by the IBEW.

John Gallez, A.B.M.

Scott Clayton, P.S.


Recently retired Local 446 members Robert Wade Jr. (left) and Floyd E. Sandford II.

Local 400’s December 2018 Annual Breakfast with Santa for members and their families was a great success.

Local 538 first-year apprentice wiremen participate in obligation night at union meeting on Nov. 5, 2018.

The Electrical Worker | April 2019

WWW.IBEW.ORG

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Organizing New Members

Good year for us. Our work picture continues to look very bright for 2019. We welcome our traveling brothers and sisters to come and help with the work, and enjoy the weather.

We have hired three new organizers and our program is progressing very well.

We would like to congratulate our Local 640 bus. Mgr. Dean Wink on his appointment to the International Executive Council.

We would also like to recognize our apprentice graduating class for their hard work and diligence in achieving their goal.

Congratulations to our new journeyman brothers and sisters!

Brett MacLean, P.S.

Jurisdiction Busy with Projects; Members Active & Involved

L.U. 666, (m,mtb,spa), RICHMOND, VA — Local 666 is heading into spring with a strong, focused eye on the future. We are pleased to report that our jurisdiction is busy with several projects of varying sizes and states of completion. As always, we sincerely thank the IBEW brothers and sisters from other jurisdictions who have filled calls, and we encourage other travelers to keep us in mind as more projects man up in the near future.

When challenged to bend a Christmas tree out of scrap conduit, journeyman Michael Painter not only completed the task, but also constructed a donation box underneath it (see photo below). He was able to turn a humorous brainstorm into a $2,700 collection for the Make a Wish Foundation. His efforts earned praise from the general contractor and demonstrated to all the trades the skill and spirit of our Brotherhood.

A special effort was made, in conjunction with the Virginia AFL-CIO, to organize member involvement during the 2019 Virginia General Assembly session. Thanks to all the members who called, emailed, or met in person with lawmakers during the 45-day session. Their actions ensured that our voices were heard, not only on the job site, but also in the legislative halls as well.

Jeremy Davis, P.S.

Vetcen Contract Ratified; PLAs, Prevailing Wage Restored

L.U. 702, (es,ctt,spa), WEST FARGO, ND — We recently completed early bargaining with Vetcen and members there ratified a new three-year agreement.

Many other properties will be in negotiations this year, including Vistra, formerly Illinois Power Generating Co. - Newton Energy Center, (both Clerical and Physical groups); Ozark Border Electric Cooperative (Physical group); SEMO Cooperative (both Lineworkers and Clerical groups); City of Miner (both Police Officers and City Employees groups); Silseton Board of Municipal Utilities; Pemiscot Dunklin Cooperative; and Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

This year, we anticipate work picking up for our Inside Construction members as New Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker has restored project labor agreements (PLAs) and prevailing wage. As such, we will be starting a new class of inside wireman apprentices this year, so watch our website for further details.

We continue our strong support for the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance with a $25,000 charter-level sponsorship for the year.

The local will once again host our golf tournament on June 21 this year with all proceeds benefiting The Postcard Foundation for Abused Children.

As of this writing, our referral books are as follows: Inside Construction — 114; Outside Construction — 28; Line Clearance — 4.

Mark Baker, B.R./P.S.

Hundreds of IBEW Electricians Needed for Long-term Project

L.U. 712, (l,bl), BEAVER, PA — The work outlook is still very good here. We have contractors Great Arrow Builders, Sargent Electric, Enefab, Hatzel & Buehler, VEC, Lighthouse and Prime Electric working on the Pennsylvania Chemicals project in Monaca, PA. This is a long-term project with scheduled completion by 2021. The project is currently working five 10-hour days plus one 8-hour day per week. A background clearance is required, which normally takes one to two weeks, and workers with TWIC cards normally take one to two days. Initial manpower projections indicate the need for 1,000 electricians by the end of 2019.

Workers who have a permanent residence more than 60 highway miles away from the plant shall receive a per diem allowance of $63 for each day reporting for work, and all workers employed at PA Chemicals will receive $14 for a site allowance each day they report to work.

Additional calls will be coming for the 1-gigawatt combined-cycle Hickory Run Energy Center. This is a Kiewit project with Bruce & Merrilees Electric Co. as the electrical contractor. The Hickory Run power station project is currently working five 9-hour days per week.

The referral office is open for signing the book from 8 a.m. to 4:20 p.m. on Monday through Friday. A current dues receipt is required.

Larry Nelson, B.R./P.S.

Transition of Officers; Membership Participation is Key

L.U. 716, (em,ctt,rtb,spa), HOUSTON, TEXAS — Hello to brothers and sisters here in our local and all across the IBEW.

At the time of this writing work is still slow in Houston, but there is a lot of work being bid. Hopefully our work picture will brighten soon. We appreciate all the local unions around the country who have put our members to work.

Congratulations to Bro. Damon Sebren on his appointment as Local 716 business manager/financial secretary to fill the unexpired term of Bro. John E. Easton Jr. Again, we thank Bro. Easton for his continued service to our local.

We thank all the members and families who participated in the St. Patrick’s Day parade and the Cesar Chavez parade. Building and decorating the float, walking or riding in the parade — these are just additional ways for Local 716 to get our name out in the community. Brothers and sisters, your community service is truly appreciated. Not feeling appreciated? Volunteer and donate some time to help your local union perform a community service project.

Still seeking all members to get registered to vote and help advance the interests of working people. Reminder to members: The Death Benefit Fund and the Sick and Accident Fund were set up for the benefit of members and their families.

David R. Allely, Pres.

IBEW Career of Service; Apprenticeship Graduates

L.U. 728, (em,ctt,rtb,spa), FT. LAUDERDALE, FL — Big congratulations to Local 728 retired former business manager David Svetlick, who received an honorary plaque from his local.

Born in 1949, Bro. Svetlick has had a successful career with the IBEW. It all started in the 1970s when he began an apprenticeship. Bro. Svetlick traveled the U.S. as a journeyman wireman, lending his skills to job sites across the country. In 1983, he joined the negotiation committee. In 1994, he was hired into the hall as an organizer, and his career took off from there. He began serving on the trust committee in 1997.

Retired former Local 728 business manager David Svetlick.
Springtime in Charleston, S.C.

L.U. 776 (i,o,rts&spa), CHARLESTON, SC — Everyone hunkered down for the winter and things slowed as the temperature dropped to polar levels in January, February and March. As soon as the latest front had blown through, the dawn of a new day was on the horizon. Our leadership recognizes that our signatory contractors are our “partners in industry,” and that our union and our contractors need each other to be successful. Mark’s team has worked to strengthen relationships with our employers, and both parties to the collective bargaining agreement have a renewed sense of confidence in one another. The draconian rules once attached to market recovery initiatives have been adjusted, and we now see our contractors willing to bid projects that they would not have considered bidding in the past.

The local union’s renewed relationship with its contracting partners continues to move toward that of a highly effective partnership, which will enhance our chances of being successful today and tomorrow. Each party to the agreement has a role to play, and we must ensure that we give our employers an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay.

Brett McKenzie, P.S.

Motorcycle Club Chili Cook-Off

L.U. 1340 (i6o), NEWPORT NEWS, VA — The Local 1340 Motorcycle Club held its first Chili Cook-off on Jan. 27. Plans are to make this an annual event. The Chili Cook-off was held to benefit the Virginia Peninsula Food Bank. We had four divisions for the event, Retiree division: winners Paul and Vivian Bryan; Apprentices division: winners Rachel, Rachel, Rachel; Apprentice division: winners Rachel, Rachel, Rachel; Apprentice division: winners Rachel, Rachel, Rachel. Congratulations to all service-award recipients!

Jason Heidenreich, P.S., Organizer

New Leadership Charting New Direction

L.U. 890 (i), JAMESVILLE, WI — IBEW Local 890 Bus. Mgr. Leo Sokolik presented Bro. William Lois with his 55-year IBEW service pin at the local’s annual holiday party held Saturday, Jan. 5. This year, Bro. Lois was initiated into the IBEW on April 1, 1963. Bro. Neil Bell is the recipient of a 45-year pin.

Others receiving service pins included: Nick Bell, Jim Laveen and James Steig (30-year pins); James Antoon, James Bemus, John Blake, Michael Duda, Jason Heidenreich, Jacob Jacobson, James Kubiak and Matt Messerschmidt, initiated on Oct. 1, 1973, received his 45-year pin.

With sadness we report the passing of Bro. Joseph Pacheco. Turnout was phenomenal, and everyone had a good time. With sadness we report the passing of Bro. Joseph "J.J." Jarrell. Bro. Jarrell passed away on Friday, Jan. 11, at the age of 70. Our confidence go out to his family.

James Avery, P.S.

IBEW Service Pins Awarded

L.U. 2304, the IBEW, and the labor movement, thank you from the IBEW Local 2304, the IBEW, and the labor movement!

Local 2304 then-business manager/president Dave Poklinskirovskki started his career with Madison Gas & Electric as a temporary laborer at Blount Generat- ing Station in the fall of 1978 and joined the company full time shortly thereafter. Following probation, Dave became a steward and in September 1985 was elected president and business manager of IBEW Local 2304, where he served until his retirement in October 2018. Dave played an instrumental role during his time with Local 2304, most notably maintaining 100 percent membership despite the more recent change whereby Wisconsin became a right-to-work state.

Dave also actively contributed to the broader labor movement in addition to his Local 2304 service. He helped organize support for the UFCW Local P-9 strike at Hormel in August 1985 to preserve fair labor practices for plant employees. Dave also helped found the Utility Workers Coalition in the early 1990s to fight deregulation of the utility industry, integrate workforce planning at utility companies, and establish maintenance and service standards for the generation, distribution and transmission of electricity.

For all Dave’s hard work and dedication to the labor movement, thank you from the IBEW Local 2304, the IBEW, and the labor movement!

Note: Rasmussen, B.M., Pres.

Motorcycle Club Chili Cook-Off

L.U. 2304, MADISON, WI — One of the IBEW’s most longstanding local union business managers has retired.

Dave Poklinskirovskki started his career with Madison Gas & Electric as a temporary laborer at Blount Generat- ing Station in the fall of 1978 and joined the company full time shortly thereafter. Following probation, Dave became a steward and in September 1985 was elected president and business manager of IBEW Local 2304, where he served until his retirement in October 2018. Dave played an instrumental role during his time with Local 2304, most notably maintaining 100 percent membership despite the more recent change whereby Wisconsin became a right-to-work state.

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For all Dave’s hard work and dedication to the labor movement, thank you from the IBEW Local 2304, the IBEW, and the labor movement!

Note: Rasmussen, B.M., Pres.
Funding and Investment Policies

The Plan divides its assets by its liabilities on the Valuation Date for the plan year to get this percentage. In general, the higher the percentage, the better funded the plan. NEBF’s funded percentage for the Plan Year and each of the two preceding plan years is shown in the chart below. The chart also states the value of the Plan’s assets and liabilities for the same period.

### Year-End Fair Market Value of Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valuation Date</th>
<th>December 31, 2018</th>
<th>December 31, 2017</th>
<th>December 31, 2016</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value of Assets</strong></td>
<td>$13,979,474,971</td>
<td>$13,565,952,876</td>
<td>$13,206,610,625</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Value of Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>$15,946,256,755</td>
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<td><strong>Funded Percentage</strong></td>
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<td>82.96%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Endangered, Critical, or Critical and Declining Status

Under federal law a plan generally is in “endangered” status if its funded percentage is less than 80 percent. A plan is in “critical” status if the funded percentage is less than 65 percent (other factors may also apply). A plan is in “critical and declining” status if it is in critical status and is projected to become insolvent (run out of money to pay benefits) within 5 years (or within 20 years if a special rule applies). If a pension plan enters endangered status, the trustees of the plan are required to adopt a funding improvement plan. Similarly, if a pension plan enters critical status or critical and declining status, the trustees of the plan are required to adopt a rehabilitation plan. Funding improvement and rehabilitation plans establish steps and benchmarks for pension plans to improve their funding status over a specified period of time. The plan sponsor of a plan in critical and declining status may apply for approval to amend the plan to reduce current and future payment obligations to participants and beneficiaries.

PBGC will loan the plan the amount necessary to pay benefits at the guaranteed level. Reduced benefits may be restored if the plan’s financial condition improves. A plan that becomes insolvent must provide prompt notice of its status to participants and beneficiaries, contributing employers, labor unions representing participants, and PBGC. In addition, participants and beneficiaries also must receive information regarding whether, and how, their benefits will be reduced or affected, including loss of a lump sum option.

### Benefit Payments Guaranteed by the PBGC

The maximum benefit that the PBGC guarantees is set by law. Only benefits that you have earned that you have a right to receive and that cannot be forfeited (called vested benefits) are guaranteed. There are separate insurance programs with different benefit guarantees and other provisions for single-employment plans and multiemployer plans. Your Plan is covered by PBGC’s multi-employer program. Specifically, the PBGC guarantees a monthly benefit payment equal to 100 percent of the first $11.00 of the plan’s monthly benefit accrual rate, plus 75 percent of the next $33.00 of the accrual rate, times each year of credited service. The PBGC’s maximum guarantee, therefore, is $357.50 per month times a participant’s years of credited service.

Example 1: If a participant with 10 years of credited service has an accrued monthly benefit of $600.00, the accrual rate for purposes of determining the PBGC guarantee would be determined by dividing the monthly benefit by the participant’s years of service ($600.00 / 120), which equals $5.00. The guaranteed amount for a $5.00 monthly accrual rate is equal to the sum of $11.00 plus $24.75 ($5.00 + $33.00), or $35.75. Thus, the participant’s guaranteed monthly benefit is $357.50 ($35.75 x 10).

Example 2: If the participant in Example 1 has an accrued monthly benefit of $200.00, the accrual rate for purposes of determining the guarantee would be $200.00 / 120, which equals $1.67. The guaranteed amount for a $1.67 monthly accrual rate is equal to the sum of $11.00 plus $42.75 ($1.67 + $33.00), or $54.75. Thus, the participant’s guaranteed monthly benefit would be $547.50 ($54.75 x 10).

For additional information about the PBGC and the pension insurance program guarantees, go to the Multiemployer Page on PBGC’s website at www.pbgc.gov/multiemployer. Please contact your employer or plan administrator for specific information about your pension plan or pension benefit. PBGC does not have that information. See “Where to Get More Information.”

### For More Information

For more information about this notice, you may contact the Trustees of the National Electrical Benefit Fund, who are the plan administrators, at 2400 Research Boulevard, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland 20850-3266, or (301) 556-4300.
Trapped Car Crash Victims

Local 465 Gas Worker Rescues

Biring his utility truck to a stop at a traffic light south of San Diego one morning in January, Martin Barraza was shocked to see an overturned sedan, its crushed hood and front end pressing against the pavement.

The second jolt for the veteran San Diego Gas & Electric meter service technician was that no one in a line of cars at the wide three-way intersection was heading to help.

It may have been a case of a shell shock for motorists who’d just seen one vehicle strike another violently enough to send it flying. While some undoubtedly called 911, the clock was ticking for two senior citizens pinned upside down inside a car that was starting to smoke.

Barraza, a 36-year member of San Diego Local 465, wasted no time.

Flipping on his truck’s hazard lights, he jumped out and raced toward the car, hoisting for others to lend a hand. The driver and his wife, who appeared to be in their 80s, were conscious but clearly traumatized.

“They were in shock,” Barraza said. “They didn’t talk — that’s how I knew that they weren’t doing well. The man was bleeding.”

Two men answered his shouts, rushing to help pry open the damaged doors. As thick smoke filled the car’s interior, the trio’s teamwork made it possible to pull the couple to safety.

Barraza ran to get his truck’s fire extinguisher and was dousing the sedan as paramedics and firefighters arrived. The husband was taken to the hospital; the wife was OK, as was the second driver involved in the accident.

“It is without a doubt that Mr. Barraza’s immediate use of his emergency first aid training, his situational awareness he displayed at the hectic crash site and his heroic actions extinguishing the burning car and pulling the family from the wreckage saved the lives of two complete strangers,” Fairman said in the letter.

International President Lonnie R. Stephenson approved the award in February. Fairman has invited Barraza’s family to see him receive the award at a spring membership meeting.

For Barraza, a single dad whose son and daughter are now young adults, responding to the Jan. 30 accident was an extension of what he’s done in his job for 3½ decades — taking care of people through service calls. “I like what I do, I like being with the public and meeting new people every day,” he said.

SDG&E likes him, too. In an article on the company website, field operations manager Russ White said Barraza is a conscientious worker who always goes above and beyond.

“He’s been a terrific employee all of these years,” White said. “I am not surprised he would go the extra mile for anyone who needs help.”

WHO WE ARE

‘Good People Like You Make This World’

Local 465 Gas Worker Rescues Trapped Car Crash Victims

IBEW MERCHANDISE

HiViz Beanie Hat $8.00

100% acrylic; high-visibility safety green beanie cap featuring IBEW initials, fit and tightening bolts.

Silver Logo Watch With Date $80.00

Men’s silver-tone watch with IBEW logo and date. Watches have a two-year manufacturer’s warranty.

Ladies V-Neck Shirt $14.50

100% certified ring spun organic cotton v-neck shirt. Semi-fitted for the perfect length and fit. Features IBEW initials in script on the left sleeve.

www.ibewmerchandise.com

The Electrical Worker was the name of the first official publication of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1893 (the NB EW became the IBEW in 1899 with the expansion of the union into Canada). The name and format of the publication have changed over the years. This newspaper is the official publication of the IBEW and seeks to capture the courage and spirit that motivated the founders of the Brotherhood and continue to inspire the union’s members today. The masthead of this newspaper is an adaptation of that of the first edition in 1893.

HOW TO REACH US

Send letters to:
Letters to the Editor, The Electrical Worker, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001
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an Oliver has always wanted to know how things work. The nitty-gritty of machinery, how it’s engineered, and what happens mechanically when you pull a lever or flip a switch.

So he was fascinated by the Bellefonte Nuclear Plant that his family would pass on trips toward the Great Smoky Mountains, asking how it generates power, how long it took to build and other rapid-fire questions steeped in his passion for science.

Ian got all his answers and then some in February on the most VIP tour imaginable, a visit initiated by IBEW members. They were determined that the inquisitive 11-year-old from Huntsville, Ala., would see the inner workings of a nuclear plant while he still can.

Ian is going blind. Even scarier, the limited, blurry sight he still has could vanish without warning.

At Bellefonte, a plant safe to visit because it’s never been activated, he saw, touched and experienced things that few people outside the nuclear industry ever have.

“It was sooo coool,” Ian said afterward, stretching his o’s for maximum effect. “I wanted to see a lot so that I can remember, so if I’m blind I can know what it looks like.”

It was an unforgettable day as well for the union tradesmen and managers who rolled out the red carpet.

“Everyone really felt like it was a blessing, that it was one of the best days at work they’d ever had,” said Jim Springfield, a Tenth District international representative.

“Virtually every person there participated in one form or another, and they were tickled to death to do it,” he said.

“It’s a great kids — very curious, very respectful, a very nice young man.”

Ian’s Challenges

Jennifer Oliver feared early on that something was different about her infant. He would stare at lights but not other objects. Noise didn’t wake him, not even the roar of her vacuum cleaner a few feet away.

Ian got his first pair of glasses when he was 6 months old and hearing aids a year later. Doctors diagnosed Sticker Syndrome, a rare connective tissue disorder greatly affecting his eyes and ears, and weakening his bones and joints.

He’s undergone 40 surgeries since he was a year old, 32 of them on his fragile eyes. What’s left of his failing vision could be gone in an instant, like the day in first grade when he stood up in class and his right eye went black. It had been his “good eye.”

His battles have gotten steeper in the years since: more complicated surgeries, chronic retinal damage, diagnoses of glaucoma and cataracts, treatments that left him vomiting on the 2½-hour drive home from his Birmingham hospital visits.

There’s also weekly speech therapy and physical therapy and no end of other appointments related to Ian’s multiple medical conditions.

None of it has stopped Ian from being a typical, active, goofy fifth-grader who loves video games and silly jokes. He’s also a nearly straight-A student with a passion for anything STEM — science, technology, engineering and math.

“Ian’s been into science and math since he was little,” Oliver said. “His favorite toys are Legos, toys that you can put together. He didn’t watch cartoons. He likes shows about how things are made, how they’re built.”

She and his dad — a master plumber — always stress that one way or another “he can be whatever he truly wants to be.”

“He knows that being a pilot or being in the Army isn’t attainable, but there is no reason why he can’t do something to support those careers,” Oliver said. “This past summer, he met a NASA scientist who is completely blind.”

She’s raising Ian no differently than his four siblings, same rules, expectations and chores. For him that includes scooping the cat box, cleaning his room and folding his laundry.

But with no time to waste, she also wants him to experience as much as he can. Last year, she encouraged him to start a “vision bucket list.”

Among other activities, he’s spent time with Huntsville police officers and airport firefighters, operated a flight simulator and, thanks to a Facebook friend’s time-share donation, he and his family are hoping to attend the National Federation of the Blind conference in Las Vegas in July.

Oliver, a paralegal, wrote about the bucket list on “Ian’s Vision,” a Facebook page she launched in 2015 to reach families like hers. A force advocate for her son and other vision-impaired children, she also uses the page to raise awareness about such things as the urgent need for more and better Braille curriculum.

“Ian will say, ‘Don’t feel sorry for me. This is God’s plan,’” Oliver said.

“I’ll say, ‘Everything I’m going through, everything my mom’s going through, it’s not just about us. It’s about the kids who come after us and the parents who don’t know how to help their kids.’”

It was their Facebook page and one of its followers — the wife of an IBEW member — that brought Ian to Bellefonte.

The IBEW’s Social Network

When Glenn Camp, president and assistant business manager at Pitts-burgh Local 29, needed eye surgery last fall, his wife began searching for information about people with retina problems.

Paula Camp discovered “Ian’s Vision” and was soon in tears reading about Ian’s struggles and his mom’s devotion. She felt powerless to help until she scrounged through his bucket list and spotted his wish to see a nuclear plant.

She called her husband, whose local represents nuclear workers.

“I’ll see what I can do,” Glenn told her. He called a retired international representative, leading to the Tenth District office and ultimately to Jim Springfield, who called Bellefonte’s site manager, Jim Chardos.

Camp had no idea how much his phone call had accomplished until the day of the tour, Feb. 20, when his wife began texting pictures that Oliver — with Chardos’ permission — was posting online.

“I was pretty happy to see them,” Camp said. “We were actually in early negotiations and to be frank it wasn’t going real good. So seeing those pictures was kind of my high point.”

Grateful and overwhelmed, Oliver also stored copies of the mountain of pictures of Ian and Chardos’ crew sent home with Ian, including a hard hat with IBEW and other trade union stickers, a “Vision Bucket List” T-shirt, a plant badge with his photo, framed certificates, a personalized booklet chock full of plant history and even materials for Ian’s classmates.

“Imagine the most amazing day,” she said.

“They were there to make the day great for Ian and it seemed like Ian made their day great, too. It made me smile, to know that Ian touched them.”

Bellefonte employs 32 people, most of them trade unionists maintaining the offline plant while the Tennessee Valley Authority works to sell it. One of the many things Ian had wondered about was “how that big of structure needs that little people.”

It all became clear as Chardos, Springfield and eager workers guided him behind the scenes, from the control room to buildings housing generators and reactors to the massive cooling towers. There, Ian was amazed by what he didn’t see:

“It looks like there should be something inside them, but there’s nothing,” he said later. “Nothing!”

With an emphasis on safety, “super-nice” workers let him push buttons to start equipment and trained him to operate a scissors lift. Harnessed in, with a journeyman at his side, up, up he went inside a hanger-sized warehouse. “I looked down and, oh my, how did I survive,” he said, laughing. “I was having fun, but 1 percent was like ‘Uhhhhhh’.”

Just going from building to building “through a little hatch, like on a ship,” was a thrill. He even waxed poetic about the narrow hallways he navigated with his white cane.

“I call it the ‘music tunnel,’” Ian said, a song in his voice. “I have a cane, so I have to wheeze it around, so it made a racket every time I did that.”

He touched a fuel assembly and other components that he couldn’t have gotten near if the plant were radiated. Being able to feel things “helps my memory,” he said.

In his mind’s eye, he’ll never forget.

“It was three hours long,” he said. “I will remember every second of it.”

Above: IBEW and other trade union members at the Bellefonte Nuclear Plant in Alabama were “tickled to death” to serve as tour guides for February in 11-year-old Ian Oliver and his mom, Jennifer Oliver.

Top right: Control room operator David Wayne, a retired Local 723 member, on an contract at Bellefonte, shows Ian how the plant’s control panel works.

Left: Bellefonte site manager Jim Chardos shows Ian a model of a fuel assembly containing empty fuel rods.

See more photos of Ian’s Bellefonte visit and learn more about him on his mom’s Facebook blog, “Ian’s Vision,” at www.facebook.com/Ian.Worley.Oliver