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IBEW News



One of Our Own
IBEW Widow Wins Iowa Senate Primary, Takes on GOP's Ernst **3**

Apprenticeships Go Virtual

Pandemic Prompts Shifts in Training for New Electricians **12**

In This Issue

Editorials **2**

Letters to the Editor **2**

My IBEW Story **2**

North of 49° **6**

Circuits **7**

Transitions **8**

Organizing Wire **9**

In Memoriam **9 & 10**

Who We Are **11**



THE IBEW's
2020 PHOTO CONTEST

Deadline: Oct. 1
See page 5 for details

The first page of the IBEW Constitution begins with a declaration:

“Our cause is the cause of human justice, human rights, human security.”

It’s a powerful statement of the values that IBEW leaders and members pledge to uphold when they take the oath of membership. And combined with the union’s first objective, to organize all workers in the entire electrical industry in the United States and Canada, the message is unmistakable.

BUILDING A STRONGER IBEW

“There is a place in the IBEW for working people of every race and gender, every religion and sexual orientation, every background,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson in launching the implementation phase of the union’s new diversity, inclusion and equity initiative, “IBEW Strong.”

“This diversity and full inclusion effort is about making sure that the IBEW genuinely represents the

interests of every single worker in our industries,” he said. “It’s about ensuring that people entering the workforce today — members of one of the most diverse generations in history — feel that they have a place in the IBEW.”

There’s nothing new about seeking to represent the voiceless and unrepresented. The IBEW has long stood for solidarity, equality and against oppression of any kind. So, IBEW Strong is a natural outgrowth of what this union has stood for since its beginning, Stephenson said. The IBEW should be a place that welcomes all workers and gives everyone a voice and a shot at a better life for themselves and their families.

“We need to include everyone, regardless of history, background, or job classification,” said Boise, Idaho, Local 291 Business Manager Mark Zaleski, who served on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. “Society is changing, but the thing is, everyone

BUILDING A STRONGER IBEW continued on page 4

FROM THE OFFICERS

A More Perfect Union



Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

In this month's *Electrical Worker*, I hope you'll all take the time to read about an initiative very near and dear to me and an effort critically important to every member and future member of the IBEW.

I'm talking about IBEW Strong, our plan to continue building an IBEW that is more diverse, more inclusive and better prepared to face the challenges of the future.

Since the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Labor has stood with those seeking equity and justice, but too often we've not taken the concrete steps to ensure those basic rights within our own unions.

With IBEW Strong, we will strive not just to educate, reach out and diversify our ranks, but to learn from one another, to empower a new generation of leaders and continue to grow and thrive collectively in a 21st-century economy.

This idea isn't new. All across North America, local unions have been recruiting from their entire communities for decades. You'll read about just a few examples in the accompanying article. Whether it's reaching into communities of color or working to make the trades more welcoming to our sisters or people with preferences or beliefs different from our own, the IBEW is stronger when it reflects the diversity of the communities we live and work in.

Four years ago, at the 2016 International Convention in St. Louis, we celebrated this brotherhood's 125th birthday, and the delegates to that convention unanimously called on us to make diversity and inclusion a priority.

I want to thank the officers and the members of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee we assembled after the convention for their tireless work in getting us to this stage. A great deal of thought and care has gone into setting IBEW Strong up to be successful.

Now, it's our turn. I want to ask each and every one of you to consider how you can help make the IBEW a more equitable and inclusive place that reflects the broader diversity of the nations we serve. We'll have materials and resources for you available through your local unions, but it's up to each of us to do our part.

As I've said many times before, joining the IBEW changed everything for me, just as I know it did for so many of you. This is our chance to make sure many more people from all walks of life enjoy the same opportunities we did. ■

Responding to Crisis

As I've heard stories of members and locals responding to the COVID-19 crisis both on and off the job these last five months, I've been filled with pride for this brotherhood of ours.

As secretary-treasurer, there's no job I take more seriously than my responsibility for your pension and health plans. Your health and your retirement security are always at the top of my mind, especially in times of crisis.

Over the last 14 years, we've grown the IBEW/NECA Family Medical Care Plan into a thriving health care option for locals and employers who choose to participate. The numbers tell an impressive story: We now have more than 100,000 people covered by the plan in all 50 states.

Because we've chosen to manage our own health care, we're able to respond more quickly to events like COVID-19. With our NECA partners, the FMCP has the ability to be more agile than large corporate plans to meet the immediate needs of IBEW participants and their dependents.

It's that flexibility that has allowed us to cover the costs associated with testing for and treatment of COVID-19 with no deductibles or side charges and to flex to cover telemedicine visits for participants who aren't able to have an in-person visit with a doctor. The plan's Live Health Online app has been invaluable in getting participants access to a real doctor from the safety of home.

But times like these aren't just for responding to crisis. They're about planning for the future. And that's another place FMCP can be a real tool for our local unions. Its benefits are usually equal to or better than company-offered plans, and as employers look to save costs, we can often provide the same health benefits at better rates because we don't spend a dime on advertising or shareholder profits.

The FMCP has proven to be a terrific tool for retaining members and for bringing in new ones, too. This year, six new individual bargaining units have signed on, bringing us to a total of 243, including at seven Fortune 500 companies.

For any local union leader who hears talk of cutting health benefits in response to this crisis, your first call should be to FMCP to see if there's a better way. Or start online at nifmcp.com.

Our goal, as always, is to give our local unions and our members the tools to take care of our families. That's even more important in turbulent times like these, and I promise we're on the job, working harder than ever.

Stay strong and stay safe, brothers and sisters, and thank you for the work you do every day. ■



Kenneth W. Cooper
International Secretary-Treasurer

Attention Business Managers and Press Secretaries

Local Lines will return on its normal schedule in October's *Electrical Worker*, starting with even-numbered locals and retirees' clubs. Odd-numbered locals will resume on their regular schedule starting in November. Please visit ibew.org/media-center or email locallines@ibew.org for more information. ■

LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

Editor's note:

Honolulu Local 1186 member Bill Schroeder saw a letter in his local newspaper, the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, attacking the cost of union labor during the pandemic and chose to respond. Send your own letters about the important work you and your IBEW sisters and brothers are doing during the COVID-19 crisis to your paper's "Letter to the Editor" section. It's a great way to share your IBEW pride in your communities.

Trained for Safety

I am a member of IBEW 1186.

Our members are highly trained and motivated to perform the work of our trade. We spend as much time in classes as those with a Ph.D., to get our electrical licenses and keep our skills up to date. Any member who does not meet the professional and work ethic requirements is asked to leave.

The current wage and benefits package affords us a good quality of life for our families and is fair based on the nature of our work.

The job of an electrician is to keep buildings from burning down; the National Electrical Code is written by the National Fire Protection Association of America. To perform our work, we must learn and adhere to those standards.

Anyone who desires "cheap" will receive what they paid for.

*Bill Schroeder, Local 1186 member
Honolulu*

We Want to Hear From You: Send your letters to media@ibew.org or *Letters to the Editor, The Electrical Worker, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.*



From Facebook: Every month the IBEW Facebook page receives thousands of comments from our dynamic and engaged community of members and friends.

Welcome to the IBEW

*Responding to "AGL Employees Ratify First Contract, Become Full IBEW Members Amid Pandemic" from last month's *Electrical Worker*:*

You'll never regret joining a union. Stick it out and you're set for life, from a happy IBEW Verizon retiree.

*Brian Harrigan, former Local 1451 business manager/president
York, Pa.*

Please visit IBEW.org/COVID-19 for the latest information about the IBEW's response to the coronavirus, and keep sending us your stories of everyday IBEW heroes at media@ibew.org

My IBEW STORY

Nicolas Wakeen, Retired Journeyman Wireman
Eau Claire, Wis., Local 14



"I served as an electrician's mate in the U.S. Navy and wanted to continue that work as a civilian. My IBEW apprenticeship prepared me for the demands of the trade and kept me safe through all my years on the tools. I started nonunion, and let me tell you, the difference is night and day. The IBEW afforded me the ability to have a family and take care of them, and though a back issue forced me to leave earlier than I wanted, I'm so lucky to have been a member of this brotherhood."

Share your story at ibew.org/MyIBEWStory



Des Moines Local 347 members staged a labor drive-by on primary day June 3 to cheer on pro-union candidate Theresa Greenfield, who won the Democratic race to challenge anti-worker Sen. Joni Ernst in November.

IBEW Widow Champions Workers in Iowa's U.S. Senate Contest

Theresa Greenfield awoke to bright, sunny skies on June 3, 1988, roused her lineman husband, packed his lunch and saw him off to work.

It was a typical weekday for the young couple. They had a 13-month-old son and another on the way. They were planning to buy a house and already saving for retirement, thanks to Rod's IBEW-wage job and benefits at Interstate Power Co.

She heard a knock at the door that afternoon, not long before she expected Rod home. Through a window, she saw her priest. A group of her husband's IBEW brothers stood somberly a respectful distance behind.

"I'm so sorry," the clergyman said, gently taking her hand. "There's been an accident at work. Rod was electrocuted."

She couldn't make sense of his words. "How is he?" she asked. "Where can I go see him?"

"No, honey," he said. "He's died."

ON JUNE 2, 2020, Theresa Greenfield won a four-way primary to become Iowa's Democratic challenger to U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst.

It was a day shy of 32 years since her world collapsed, since the moment she went from being a stay-at-home mom with financial security to a single parent who'd soon have two babies to raise by herself.

But she wasn't alone. Her IBEW family and other union members embraced her so tightly that she can still feel it today.

"They provided comfort and strength and courage," Greenfield said in a June 25 interview with *The Electrical Worker*. "They stopped by with meals, they watched my kids while I got groceries. They shoveled snow."

She remembers her anxiety that first blizzard without Rod. "I thought, 'I've got two babies. How am I going to deal with snow?' I woke to a clatter and union members were shoveling my driveway and my walk. I didn't have to shovel all winter. It brings me to tears."

Critical to her peace of mind, Burnsville, Minn., Local 949 leaders assured her



"I wouldn't be standing here today, fighting for this seat, fighting for you, if it were not for Social Security and hard-earned union benefits."

— Theresa Greenfield

she'd receive Rod's union benefits, along with Social Security survivor benefits.

Step by step she rebuilt her life — she returned to school, got a job, happily remarried, raised four children, and became president of a small family-owned real estate business.

It pains her to see families today bankrupted by medical bills, desperate workers a paycheck away from homelessness, farmers in her state buried beneath the weight of record debt, and so many other Americans in crisis.

She is running for office to fight for them, for the kind of opportunities and support system that saved her.

"I wouldn't be standing here today, fighting for this seat, fighting for you, if it were not for Social Security and hard-earned union benefits," she said on the stump during the primary campaign.

"I was able to go back to college. I got my very first job as a single mom, for \$8 an hour, and I couldn't have been prouder. I got my dignity back. Absolutely everybody in America wants the dignity of providing for their families."

HER MESSAGE is resonating with Iowans. She made national news in mid-June when a Des Moines Register poll put her three points ahead of Ernst, a first-term Republican.

Greenfield was thrilled, but not entirely surprised. "I grew up rural, and I know that people feel she's not representing them," she said. "They're feeling left behind."

Patrick Wells, business manager of Des Moines Local 347, said Greenfield is making a sincere connection with voters.

"She holds true Iowa values," he said. "No hidden agendas, no corporate PACs controlling her. She is in it for the hard-working people in this state."

Ernst, campaigning in 2014 for the vacant seat Democrat Tom Harkin held for 30 years, gained notoriety with an ad tying her skill castrating hogs to a pledge to cut pork in Washington.

In practice, she's spent five and half years slashing taxes for billionaires while undermining essential programs and services for everyone else.

"She's voted to repeal Obamacare, she's voted for budget bills that hurt Iowans, she's voted to put anti-worker, anti-union nominees in jobs that are supposed to protect workers," Wells said. "Joni Ernst does not support our issues."

Greenfield has been endorsed by labor unions representing some 120,000 workers across Iowa, including the IBEW State Conference.

"She's strong on protecting healthcare, Social Security and Medicare, and she's with us on multi-employer defined-benefit pension plans. That is critical for us," Wells said. "We want to make sure that any kind of reform protects our members, and she's on board with helping us do that."

June's poll numbers confirmed what his gut was telling him: "We've felt all along that she could beat Ernst."

No one, of course, is taking that for

granted. "We've got a lot of work to do to get to November," Greenfield said.

GREENFIELD GREW UP

helping her family raise hogs and crops, while her father also ran a crop-dusting business on a small Minnesota farm just across the border from Iowa.

Her parents, members of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, instilled the same values in their five children that she champions now. "We did door-knocking, we marched in parades, we went to county meetings," she said. "It's always been in my blood to be active."

The farm crisis of the early 1980s hit her family hard just as she was graduating from her 24-student high school. She enrolled in community college and got a job at Pizza Hut that covered her rent, tuition and books. She ended the year debt-free, a feat she knows is impossible today without student loan reform and greater investment in education and training.

She moved on to Iowa State University in Ames, where she met a big-hearted IBEW apprentice, Rod Wirtjes. "I was head over heels," she said. "We were so much in love that we actually eloped."

Greenfield laughs about the good fortune of having a cousin who was also an IBEW lineman.

"When we met, I think one of the reasons Rod liked me is because I actually knew what he did for a living. He said, 'You know what a lineman is?' I said, 'You go up poles and you do this and you do that.' He said, 'Yes!'"

She felt the kinship of his union family the first time he took her to a Saturday picnic. She marveled at how eager everyone was to lend a hand, whatever a brother or sister needed.

She thinks of them on the campaign trail, talking about the value of unions and the vital jobs their members do and the risks that many of them take to serve others.

"I was really proud of the work that Rod and all of his coworkers did," she said. "I will never forget why the lights come on." ■

IBEW MEDIA WORLD

In addition to your monthly issue of *The Electrical Worker*, check out the wealth of IBEW-related information online.

www.ibew.org

Get all the news for and about IBEW members, including the online version of *The Electrical Worker*, at IBEW.org.

YouTube/Vimeo

Even as COVID-19 has continued to spread across North America, IBEW members have been getting the job done — whether wiring emergency treatment centers or delivering food and protective supplies to health care workers. Check out our collection of short videos and share them on social media at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker) or at [Vimeo.com/IBEW](https://www.vimeo.com/IBEW).

HourPower

The Veterans Electrical Entry Program



helps former servicemembers earn entry into IBEW apprenticeship programs across the U.S. Find out how at IBEWHourPower.com.

ElectricTV

More than 80 IBEW linemen from St.



Louis Local 2 worked long days to complete the 96-mile Mark Twain Transmission Line. Watch the story at ElectricTV.net.

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www.ibew.org/ChangeMyAddress
or call 202-728-6263

BUILDING A STRONGER IBEW

► **Continued from page 1**

deserves good wages and benefits, and we can offer that. That's how we stay strong."

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee grew out of a unanimously passed resolution at the 39th International Convention in 2016. Made up of officers and other IBEW leaders and members from every branch, district and background, its members have worked behind the scenes for the last three years. Through the work of the committee and discussions with the international vice presidents and executive officers, members of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, RENEW/NextGen and the Women's Committee, five themes were identified as part of a strategic plan to strengthen and grow the IBEW. They are:

Organizing/Expanding Membership: Develop and expand outreach, recruitment and marketing programs to young people, nontraditional and historically marginalized communities.

Education and Training: Provide training and education programs that address the importance and need for inclusion to all IBEW members and leaders.

Building Member Capacity: Provide inclusive opportunities for members to learn and develop leadership skills and foster local union activism.

Leadership Advancement: Provide opportunities for all local union members to take on leadership roles.

Replicating Best Practices: Document, share, and replicate best practices for creating a stronger IBEW through outreach and inclusion programs.

Now, the focus shifts to putting the ideas behind these themes into practice.

With input from the committee, the Education Department is working on a variety of trainings for locals, as well as outreach efforts, including to schools, and a collection of best practices that will be shared union-wide. The trainings will vary

in length, content and audience, including some geared toward leadership, and eventually include a train-the-trainer version.

"We want locals to see the value of diversity and inclusion," said Education Department Director Amanda Pacheco. "The IBEW will be stronger for this, and we can lead the way."

Learning from Experience

In locals across the U.S. and Canada, the principles and ideals of the initiative have already been in action, in some places for a decade or more. And many of those successful programs helped to form the backbone of the new international effort.

From Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213's outreach to aboriginal youth, to Boston Local 103's recent campaign to bring in more women and people of color, great strides are being made.

The Indiana Plan is a grassroots organization that recruits potential apprentices from areas that have been traditionally underrepresented in the trades. The Plan, which is exclusively union, works with area trades, including Indianapolis, Ind., Local 481. It also recruits from inner-city schools, churches and community organizations. Its executive director, Devon Doss, is a 21-year IBEW member and a product of the program.

"Not only do we look like the individuals that we are recruiting, our stories are

similar to theirs," Doss said. "In turn, I believe they can see themselves in us, and one day in the IBEW."

"Over the years, the Plan has connected us with a lot of members from minority communities who are now active members of RENEW, the executive board and performing valuable service elsewhere in the union," said Sixth District Vice President David J. Ruhmkorff, a member and former business manager of Local 481. "That speaks highly of the program, but it's also grown our union and been hugely important in bringing a diversity of perspectives that have made us better."

Doss is also deeply committed to the idea that diversity isn't just good for meeting federal requirements for government contracts.

"Diversity gives the trades a vast amount of creative thinkers that come from all walks of life," he said. "This can only enhance the trade."

In upstate New York, the Multi-craft Apprenticeship Preparation Program works with the Rochester Building Trades to help the area's underserved communities. The idea behind the program is to expose participants to all the local building trades to see which one they have the most interest in, says Rochester Local 86 Business Manager Michael Bader. As with many pre-apprenticeships, participants are taught the basics in safety, math, first aid and CPR and how to use power tools. They visit all the local training centers and learn the specifics of the application process and minimum requirements for each trade.

"While we have a lot more work to do to help the disadvantaged communities, this is a step in the right direction," Bader said. "It shows that the IBEW is stepping up to be part of the solution."

Kereem Berry, a Local 86 journeyman wireman and executive director of MAPP, says there was a study done a few years back that found that Rochester was the second-worst place economically for African Americans in the U.S.

"Being an African American man who's gone through the apprenticeship to become a journeyman wireman, I understand the challenges other African Americans will face while navigating their journey of apprenticeship," Berry said. "Further, sitting at the Rochester Building Trades Council, we are able to be the voice of



The International Convention adopted the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus' longtime practice of hosting a "Day of Service" with its events in 2016.

the inner city and advocate for the equality the unions tout for the residents where the work is actually taking place."

Similar programs can be found across North America. Toronto Local 353 works with the Hammer Heads program, created in 2009 by the Central Ontario Building Trades to work with at-risk youth and get them into apprenticeships.

"Before the program, most of our participants were living in community housing and the shelter system and were recipients of social assistance," Central Ontario Building Trades Business Manager and Director of the Hammer Heads program James St. John said. "Since graduating, [they] have entered into registered apprenticeships within the skilled construction trades and become contributing members of their communities."

Recruiting the Future

Boston Local 103 announced this June that it had increased its number of women apprentices by 34%. Business Manager Lou Antonellis says they did it by putting in charge Business Agent Kenell Broomstein, the first woman of color to serve as a business representative in the Boston building trades.

"We made this happen by staying true to what we believe and working hard to achieve it. We made a commitment to do better," Antonellis said. His local has also run recruitment ads specifically seeking to bring more young people of color from the city of Boston into the local's apprenticeship program and made huge strides in the area.

Detroit Local 58 has had similar success. Like Local 103, they made a concerted effort to reach out to potential members in their city, which is majority African American. Mike Richard, former Local 58 business manager and current director of the IBEW's Construction Department, says that a hurdle for them was the lack of math being taught in the public schools. So, they hired a tutor and got Local 58 member Felicia Wiseman to teach their first-year curriculum at the A. Philip Randolph Career and Technical Center. They also amended their standards to allow direct interview or entry for anyone who

successfully completed the program at Randolph. Their numbers went from a 4% success rate of Detroit residents getting into the program to almost 18% getting accepted in the first year.

Another issue they had was with getting women into the trades.

"Most people do not see the trades as a viable career choice for young women. Obviously, we disagree," Richard said.

Local 58 embarked on a multi-year media campaign featuring IBEW women. They created commercials highlighting sisters who told their stories about becoming an electrician in the IBEW and about the great wages and benefits that come with it. Now, the local's women's committee is one of their most active and engaged groups. With the enthusiastic support of Business Manager Brian Richard, the committee even opens its meetings to those interested but not yet a part of the union, and it is working with other trades on best practices for recruiting and retaining women.

Nearby, Detroit Local 17, which represents utility workers and tree trimmers, has been successfully working with utility DTE and formerly incarcerated individuals and soon-to-be released inmates to train them to work in the notoriously difficult and dangerous field of line clearance.

"I've learned from my peers — both in Michigan and in other states — that returning citizens who are looking for a second chance in life can be among your very best and most loyal employees. They just need to be given a chance," said Gerry Anderson, DTE's chairman.

In Colorado, Denver Local 111 is working with an area halfway house to educate



Cranston, R.I., Local 2323 member Jo-Ann LaRose has been a splice-service technician for Verizon for 21 years.

IBEW Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Vision Statement:

The IBEW will be a union that welcomes, supports and encourages diversity in our membership and leadership. We work to organize, fully respect and include all workers, regardless of our identity differences, in order to build a strong and indivisible IBEW for our families and our communities.

Committee Members:

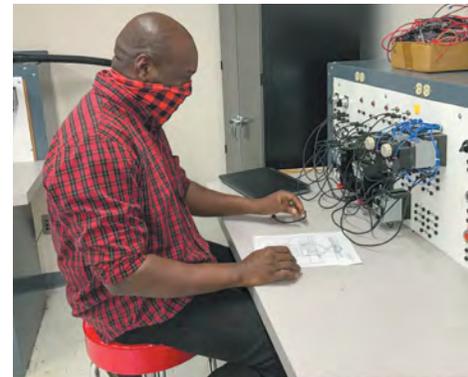
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Cheryl Paron
Tom Reid

Mike Richard
Roger Rose
Kim Sansom
Janet Skipper
Rick Thompson
Victor Uno
Adam Van Steinburg
Mike Welsh
Dave Young
Mark Zaleski



Boston Local 103 member Cleide Gomes is a third-year apprentice learning and working her way to the middle class.



Fourth-year apprentice Javier Harvey practices COVID-19 safety while being tested on motor control wiring at Orlando's Central Florida JATC.



Students from the Indiana Plan's September 2019 graduating class, above, completed their training and many have already been accepted into apprenticeships. Left, IBEW delegates attend the 2019 Tradeswomen Build Nations conference.



returning citizens about what the trades can offer someone after they complete their prison sentence.

"One guy told me how when he got out, he was given \$20 and a bus ticket. He wasn't sure what to do," said Business Manager Rich Meisinger. "Then he found the IBEW, and now he has a career."

Local 111 members are also going into schools to teach students about the opportunities available. The local represents roughly 4,250 members in areas including utility, communications and inside and outside construction.

"Kids get to see how a bucket truck works, how an excavator operates, all kinds of things," Meisinger said. "It's a great way to show young adults all that is offered through the union, not to mention the wages and benefits."

In Oregon, Portland Local 48 moved to recruit and retain more women earlier this year, working with the National Electrical Contractors Association to add a new maternity leave benefit for its members, as well as those of three other locals in the state. The benefit allows for six months of paid leave, with 13 weeks being available prior to the expected due date and 13 more available after.

"This leave policy will enable more women to join and remain in our industry, which is a huge benefit to contractors who rely on women to help them build their workforce," said Bridget Quinn, workforce development coordinator for the NECA-IBEW Electrical Training Center.

And when Local 291 successfully organized a group of DirecTV workers, it wasn't just new members; it was also a new classification for them. The local represents mostly construction, so the telecom drive was new territory. But what helped them win was their commitment to inclusion. Another union was also competing for the workers, but they chose the IBEW, in part because of its commitment to

organizing all workers, regardless of things like gender identity or sexual orientation.

"We opened our arms to this group of people that weren't being recognized by the other union, and it made a huge difference," Zaleski said. "It really opened my eyes to how we can grow."

Local 291 was also the first IBEW local to organize political workers in the state's Democratic party.

Education and a New Generation of Leadership

IBEW Strong will be integrated into organizing efforts and other programs like the Code of Excellence. In fact, the Code has gotten some attention recently from the AFL-CIO. President Richard Trumka invoked the Code as a means of addressing issues like racism by way of accountability.

"The Code is about doing your job well, but it's also about so much more than that," Stephenson said. "You are your brother's and your sister's keeper. Don't ignore injustice when you see it."

Stephenson recalled an organizing drive in Milwaukee years back where the IBEW was trying to reach a group of manufacturing workers who spoke mostly Spanish. Unfortunately, the organizers only spoke English.

"When we did our door knocking, we sent white males. We lost the

A Louisville, Ky., Local 2100 lineworker at LG&E practices safety and proper technique during a training session.



campaign," Stephenson said. "We need to have organizers who understand the community we want to organize."

Of course, in order to be truly inclusive, an organization needs to do more than just say the words. It's going to take a long time and will very likely involve some tough conversations.

"It's not about you, really, it's about the IBEW," said Nashville, Tenn., Local 429 President Kim Sansom, who also served on the committee. "People don't like change, but change is what we need if we want to be a better and stronger and a more diverse and inclusive IBEW. We can't have growth without change."

That concept of growth through inclusion is tied closely with the union notion of solidarity. When New York Local 3 member Erin Sullivan teaches her trade unionism class, she leads participants through an exercise where one person is asked to lift a table, to no avail. Then she gets the class to help and the task becomes manageable, something they can easily do — together.

"That's how solidarity works," Sullivan said. "We are and always will be stronger together."

Sullivan, who directs Local 3's mentorship program and serves as the Third District representative for the International Women's Committee, noted the importance of education and personal connection in creating a more truly inclusive IBEW.

"I think education and conversation are key. We cannot simply make people comply with the ideology of diversity and inclusion," Sullivan said. "When members share their stories with one another they will want to see change, because now it's personal. They can now see how a lack of inclusiveness has affected someone they know."

Sansom also noted the role of education.

"It comes down to the local. That's where we need to educate," said the inside wireman. "And it should be top-down, bottom-up, meet-in-the-middle education."

The final piece of the puzzle, Stephenson said, is to diversify the leadership within the IBEW so that, with time, IBEW leadership looks more like the members it represents.

"It's not enough for us to recruit members from all communities and walks of life if we don't provide those members the same opportunities to advance, grow and lead," he said. "When the leadership is all white men, others don't feel as connected or represented. That starts at the local level, but we want to see more women and people of color at the district level, in the kind of roles that can lead to vice presidents and more. I'm in my job because I got opportunities along the way. Every member deserves that opportunity."

Growing that base of leaders is an important component of IBEW Strong, which will work to encourage people of all backgrounds to run for office and assume leadership roles in their locals and elsewhere. Countless studies have shown the importance of having someone who looks like you in a leadership role. It helps to expand the boundaries of what is possible for someone and makes it easier for them to see themselves as a potential leader.

None of this will happen overnight, Stephenson said, but the concentrated effort starts now.

"Given all that's happening in North America and around the world, the timing of our work could not be more important.

"It's up to every single one of us to make sure that the IBEW not only survives, but thrives, long after we're gone. Being inclusive, expanding the borders of opportunity to everyone in our communities, is the way we make sure that happens. It's not just the right thing to do. It's the smart thing to do so this great union lasts another 129 years."

Is your local leading the way in diversity and inclusion? Let us know and we may highlight your work in a future story. Contact us at media@ibew.org.

Journeyman wireman John Zhao, a member of Local 3's Asian-American Cultural Society, at work in the Bronx.



THE IBEW's 2020 PHOTO CONTEST

Enter Today!
Deadline: Oct. 1

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

The IBEW's annual photo contest is an opportunity for members from across North America to share the images that remind us why we're proud to be members of the greatest union in the world. Whether you're working on an awe-inspiring jobsite or capturing the simplicity and beauty of an everyday assignment, we want to see and share the images that move you. We can't wait to see who will take home the top prize for 2020.

See official rules and submission instructions at IBEW.org/photocontest.

Entries **MUST** be submitted **electronically** via the Photo Contest link on IBEW.org. Please contact the Media Department at media@IBEW.org or 202-728-6102 with additional questions.

NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

Judge Squashes Manitoba Assembly's Move to Silence Public Sector Unions

The IBEW and its labour allies in Manitoba achieved a major win on June 11 when a judge threw out a controversial piece of legislation designed to hold down the wages of 120,000 public employees in the province and damage their collective bargaining rights.

"It's a big victory for all unions," Winnipeg Local 2085 Business Manager Russ Shewchuk said. "I think it's going to put our Conservative government in its place a little bit."

The Public Services Accountability Act was passed into law just a few months after the Conservatives secured a comfortable majority in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in 2016. It called for public employees to get no raises during the first two years, just a 0.75% increase in the third year and 1% in the fourth.

The bill was never proclaimed as law while it was in the courts but Shewchuk, Winnipeg Local 2034 Business Manager Mike Espenell and Winnipeg Local 435 Business Manager Bruce Krause said most public corporations treated it as though it had, nearly bringing contract negotiations to a halt. Those corporations risked being penalized by the provincial government if they offered any wage increases other than those prescribed by the bill.

Local 2034 represents about 2,200 members, many of whom are employed by Manitoba Hydro. It has been fighting attempts by Premier Brian Pallister and other politicians to reduce the workforce during the pandemic at Manitoba Hydro, even though the utility is still making a profit and residential use is up 9% over historical highs.

"The first wave of [the provincial government's attack] against public-sector unions was this bill," Espenell said. "Even though it wasn't proclaimed, it was still being used to limit collective bargaining."

"The second wave was when they mandated a reduction in the public sector labor force. They attacked our membership and other unions without showing they were under financial duress."

Local 435 has about 95 members employed by Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Corporation. They are in charge of the installation, maintenance and wiring of slot machines inside Manitoba's casinos, bars and lounges.

Krause said the bargaining unit voted down a four-year contract offer earlier in the year that followed the bill's guidelines. Negotiations were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic but are expected to resume sometime this year.

"Now we're kind of sitting in a good spot," Krause said. "We have to go back in and negotiate but with this decision, it



Credit: Creative Commons / Flickr User Dave Shaver

gives us the upper hand. They can't use this provincial order against us."

Local 2085 has about 20 electricians employed by Winnipeg's public schools, Shewchuk said. Their colleagues

include other working people who should be positively affected by the decision, such as teachers, nurses and janitors.

Shewchuk said the legislation's dangerous impact was obvious during

Winnipeg Local 2034 members at Manitoba Hydro won big when a provincial judge threw out legislation that suppressed public employee wages.

contract negotiations earlier this year. Emboldened school officials asked for reductions in sick days and the elimination of double-time pay for overtime.

"I just sat across the table and said, 'Are you serious?'" Shewchuk said.

Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench Justice Joan McKelvey wrote a blistering ruling, saying the act "operates as a draconian measure that has inhibited and dramatically reduced the unions' bargaining power and violates associational rights."

The government's actions were a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedom, a section of the Canadian constitution that lists rights and freedoms that are necessary to sustain a free and demo-

cratic society, she said.

"The legislation circumvents and compresses the leverage or bargaining power available and inhibits the unions' ability to trade off monetary benefits for non-monetary enhancements," she wrote.

Pallister has shown little regard for unions throughout his career. The Conservatives have declined to set a minimum living wage as had been customary, tying it to inflation instead. They also scrapped card-check certification during organizing drives, instead imposing a secret-ballot vote.

"It's almost a mirror image of what Gov. Scott Walker did in Wisconsin," Shewchuk said, referencing the U.S. governor who decimated public sector unions in his home state. "They've done as much as they can to put the boots to unions."

The suit was filed by the Manitoba Federation of Labour, of which the IBEW is a member. ■

La juge empêche l'adoption de la loi antisyndicale au Manitoba

La FIOE et ses alliés syndicaux au Manitoba ont remporté une grande victoire le 11 juin lorsqu'une juge a rejeté une mesure législative controversée qui vise à empêcher les hausses salariales de 120 000 employés du secteur public dans la province et à porter atteinte à leurs droits de négociation collective.

« C'est une grande victoire pour tous les syndicats, » mentionne Russ Shewchuk, le gérant d'affaires du local 2085 situé à Winnipeg. « Je crois que les conservateurs seront remis à leur place un peu. »

La Loi sur la viabilité des services publics a été adoptée seulement quelques mois après que les conservateurs aient obtenu une grande majorité à l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba en 2016. Elle ne prévoit aucune hausse salariale pour les deux premières années, seulement une augmentation de 0,75 % pour cent dans la troisième année et une augmentation d'un pour cent dans la quatrième année pour les employés du secteur public.

Pendant qu'il était contesté au tribunal, le projet de loi n'a jamais été proclamé loi, mais M. Shewchuk, le gérant d'affaires Mike Espenell du local 2034 à Winnipeg et le gérant d'affaires Bruce Krause du local 435 à Winnipeg mentionnent que plusieurs sociétés publiques la traitaient comme si elle s'agissait d'une loi, ce qui a presque mis fin aux négociations de convention collective. Ces corpo-

rations risquaient d'être pénalisées par le gouvernement provincial si elles proposaient des hausses salariales autres que ceux prévus par le projet de loi.

Le local 2034 représente environ 2 200 membres et plusieurs d'entre eux travaillent au Manitoba Hydro. Le local s'est opposé aux tentatives du premier ministre Brian Pallister et à d'autres politiciens parce qu'ils voulaient réduire la main-d'œuvre chez Manitoba Hydro pendant la pandémie même si le service public a réalisé des profits et que l'utilisation résidentielle a augmenté de 9 % par rapport aux sommets historiques.

« La première vague [l'attaque du gouvernement provincial] contre les syndicats du secteur public a été ce projet de loi, » dit le gérant d'affaires Mike Espenell. « Même s'il n'était pas proclamé loi, il s'en servait pour limiter le droit de la négociation collective. »

« La deuxième vague a été lorsqu'ils ont imposé une réduction de la main-d'œuvre dans le secteur public. Ils ont attaqué nos membres et d'autres syndicats sans montrer qu'ils étaient sous contraintes financières. »

Le local 435 compte environ 95 membres qui travaillent à la Société manitobaine des alcools et des loteries. Ils sont responsables de l'installation et de la maintenance et le câblage des machines à sous à l'intérieur des casinos, des bars et des lounges du Manitoba.

Krause dit que l'unité de négocia-

tion a rejeté l'offre d'un contrat de quatre ans plus tôt cette année qui suivait les directives du projet de loi. Les négociations ont été suspendues en raison de la pandémie, mais devraient reprendre au cours de cette année.

« En quelque sorte, nous sommes maintenant dans une bonne position, » dit Krause. « Nous devons retourner et négocier, mais avec cette décision, nous sommes en position de force. Ils ne peuvent pas utiliser ces ordres provinciaux contre nous. »

Le local 2085 compte 20 électriciennes et électriciens qui travaillent pour les écoles publiques de Winnipeg, dit M. Shewchuk. Leurs collègues y compris d'autres travailleuses et travailleurs seront affectés de manière positive par cette décision, tels que les enseignantes et enseignants, les infirmières et infirmiers et les concierges.

M. Shewchuk a déclaré que lorsque les négociations ont eu lieu plus tôt cette année, l'incidence dangereuse du projet de loi était évidente. Les autorités scolaires enhardies ont demandé de réduire le nombre de journées de maladie et d'éliminer la rémunération du temps double des heures supplémentaires.

« J'étais assis de l'autre côté de la table et j'ai répondu, "êtes-vous sérieux?" » Déclare M. Shewchuk.

Dans sa décision cinglante, la juge Joan McKelvey de la Cour du Banc de la Reine du Manitoba a déclaré que cette

loi : « fonctionne comme une mesure draconienne qui vise à empêcher et à réduire le pouvoir de négociation de manière considérable pour les syndicats et viole les droits des associations. »

Les actes du gouvernement contreviennent à la Charte des droits et libertés, un article dans la Constitution canadienne qui énumère les droits et libertés nécessaires au maintien d'une société libre et démocratique, déclare-t-elle.

« Cette législation contourne et réduit le moyen de pression ou le pouvoir de négociation disponible et empêche le syndicat d'échanger des avantages pécuniaires pour des améliorations non monétaires, » a-t-elle écrit.

Tout au long de sa carrière, Pallister a manifesté peu d'intérêt à l'égard des syndicats. Les conservateurs ont refusé d'établir un salaire qui permet de vivre, comme c'était le cas auparavant, le liant plutôt à l'inflation. Ils ont également annulé la carte d'adhésion pendant les campagnes de syndicalisation en imposant un vote secret.

« C'est presque le reflet de ce que le gouverneur Scott Walker a fait au Wisconsin, » dit M. Shewchuk, en faisant référence au gouverneur des États-Unis qui a décimé les syndicats du secteur public dans son État d'origine. « Ils ont tout fait pour serrer la vis aux syndicats. »

La plainte a été déposée par le Manitoba Federation of Labour, dont la FIOE est membre. ■

CIRCUITS

New Jersey Members Answer Call for COVID-19 Work in the Virgin Islands

Ten members of Jersey City, N.J., Local 164 recently answered a special job call that transported them on a 1,700-mile journey south.

The National Guard in the Virgin Islands needed people to help them turn one of their dorms into a temporary COVID-19 hospital, said Local 164 Business Manager Daniel Gumble. "Like a lot of places, they wanted to make sure they had enough hospital beds to handle a possible coronavirus outbreak."

The New Jersey-Virgin Islands connection came courtesy of Huen Electric, an IBEW signatory contractor that had been tasked with turning a gymnasium at the Bergen New Bridge Medical Center in Paramus into a temporary COVID-19 treatment facility. Huen also had been tapped to take on similar work at a National Guard facility on St. Croix, the largest of the three main islands that make up the southeastern-most U.S. outpost.

"Huen asked if they could take some of the folks out of our hall and we cleared it with the appropriate jurisdictions," said Local 164 President Thomas Sullivan. Along with its companion territory Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands fall under the purview of the IBEW's Fifth District.

Since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic in February, the number of cases within the Virgin Islands has remained relatively and fortunately low. Of approximately 106,000 residents, 76 had been diagnosed with the novel coronavirus by mid-June, and six deaths were attributed to it.

New Jersey, sadly, has much more experience dealing with COVID-19. Over the same time period, the Garden State has recorded nearly 170,000 COVID-19 cases, the third-highest number in the U.S., as well as the second-highest number of deaths caused by the disease, behind only its neighbor, New York.

But though the Virgin Islands' government had seen a measure of success in keeping COVID-19 from spreading, it wasn't about to take any chances. Watching the virus spread rapidly across much of the rest of the U.S., the territorial health department reached out to its local National Guard unit for help locating facilities that could be converted into emergency hospitals should a more serious outbreak occur.

The Guard determined that one of its buildings, a barracks at the 210th Regional Training Institute on its Estate Bethlehem compound, was an ideal facility that could be quickly turned into an alternate care facility specifically capable of treating COVID-19 patients.

"The building was really screwed up when we got there, though," said Matthew Curatola, one of the 10 journeyman

inside wiremen from Local 164 who were flown to St. Croix on April 25.

Given a two-week deadline, the crew — which also included members from New Brunswick, N.J., Local 456 and Miami Local 359 — worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to quickly convert the barracks into a treatment facility capable of meeting residents' potential COVID-19 needs.

"Every workday started at 7," Curatola said. Arriving at the job site, Guard personnel took the workers' body tem-



Ten members of Jersey City, N.J., Local 164 flew to the U.S. Virgin Islands in April to build a temporary COVID-19 hospital.

peratures using a contactless laser thermometer, and they supplied the electricians with protective face masks and hand sanitizer. "We would also wash our hands constantly," he said.

The crew installed new lighting and outlets in the building as well as hospital-specific items such as a nurse's call center and a negative pressure room, a chamber where a machine brings in fresh air and then filters out contaminants before pumping the air back outside, thus helping to prevent airborne disease viruses from spreading.

"Of course, we had to keep our masks on at all times, and that was tough because the heat there felt extreme," Curatola said. Although the tropical breezes keep the islands' outdoor areas comfortable, the average high temperature on St. Croix hovers in the upper 80s to low 90s year-round.

"Probably the biggest challenge was getting material," he said, with the closest U.S. mainland point in Florida about a 1,200-mile airplane ride away. "You could order things, but it took a while for it to get there."

It wasn't hard for the wiremen to drive out for an occasional small-supply run, though, considering St. Croix is 22 miles long and 7 miles across at its widest point. Typically, they could get what they needed from the island's nearby — and only — Home Depot.

But sometimes, their supplies would arrive on a massive military cargo airplane. "It was pretty cool seeing a C-130 come in with all of our material," Curatola said.

With tourism on the Virgin Islands practically nonexistent on account of COVID-19, the Guard was able to put the Local 164 members up at one of the island's mostly vacant resorts. In their downtime, the crew managed to get out and explore their temporary neighborhood.

"The Army Corps people said, 'We're so happy you guys are here,'" Curatola said. "Or, you'd be in the local deli or gas station and tell people what you were there for, and they would say 'thank you.'"

Also on the job from Local 164 were Edwin Espinal, Mike Grey, Jack Hetherington, Robert Lambert, Dave Mallet, Anthony Matesic, Shawn Mathews, Dave McCluney, Mike Schmidt, Scott White and Jim Zelenka.

Despite the plush accommodations and the island's renowned natural beauty, the trip was anything but a vacation, Curatola said. Working 12-hour days helped the workers get a good handle on the job from the start. They finished by the May 5 deadline and got safely home to their families with thanks from grateful islanders for a job well done. ■

Long Island Members Power New Navy SEAL Museum

When members of Long Island, N.Y., Local 25 learned of a museum being built to honor a local Navy SEAL hero, they were all in.

"Anytime somebody calls us to help out with any military or veteran causes, we're always happy to help," said Local 25 Business Manager Kevin Casey.

The Lieutenant Michael P. Murphy Museum, located on the waterfront in West Sayville on the south shore of Long Island, has deep roots in the community. Murphy was from Long Island and died in Afghanistan on June 28, 2005. He and three other SEALs were conducting a reconnaissance mission high up in the mountains when they were spotted and then attacked by a force of more than 50 militia members. Murphy risked his own life when he moved out into the open to get a signal to call for help.

Despite being fired at, he made the connection, though it cost him his life. Only one person survived, fellow SEAL Marcus Luttrell, who went on to write a book that became the movie "Lone Survivor." More Americans died that day than any other during Operation Enduring Freedom. It was also the single largest loss of life for Naval Special Warfare since World War II.

"In my house, Mike Murphy is a hero," said Casey, whose son is currently serving in the Army in South Korea, and is a member of Local 25. Casey also has other family members in the military.

Between six and 10 Local 25 members worked on the project, doing all of the

electrical work including power, lighting, fire and burglar alarms, and teledata. Some members are even planning to volunteer to come in on weekends and work without pay. In addition to getting much of the material donated, NECA and Local 25 raised more than \$75,000 for the project.

"I've run a lot of projects in my career. Those projects were just, 'Hey, let's put up another building.' This project is so heartfelt," Mike Ferrante, director of maintenance for signatory B&G Electric said in a NECA video.

The work on the 10,000-square-foot space, which began in 2019, was halted because of the COVID-19 pandemic but is expected to be completed later this year. The museum is the first of its kind in the Northeast.

The Murphy museum project is an extension of Local 25's ongoing work to support veterans. Casey says members have donated their time to restore a local Veterans of Foreign Wars hall and a veteran's hospital in Northport. At the hospital, contractors paid for the lights which members installed for free.

Local 25 members also worked on two field hospitals in Long Island to help with the demand for beds created by the coronavirus pandemic. ■

Pa. Food Drive Fills Shelves of Area Charities

By the numbers, there were seven pickup trucks, 30 deliveries, six food banks and \$15,000 in cash donations to help feed the community that Chester, Pa., Local 654 has served proudly for 80 years.

The acts of kindness, generosity and solidarity, though, were countless.

"It takes everybody," said 35-year member Tommy Loughhead, a journeyman inside wireman who serves on the executive board. "All our local brothers and sisters, everybody came together and did a great job. It was really uplifting."

Two months into the COVID-19 crisis, volunteers including Loughhead and Business Manager Paul Mullen pitched in at a food drive sponsored by state Rep. Jennifer O'Mara. The urgency was clear. At a virtual meeting of the executive board, they proposed that Local 654 run its own.

"We know that food pantries are in need of resources more than ever, and our members aren't the type to just sit back and not get involved," Mullen said. "We wanted to do our part. The response was unbelievable."

They scheduled the event for three



Volunteers at Local 654 headquarters in Boothwyn, Pa., load food drive donations from community members and IBEW brothers and sisters into pickup trucks for delivery to six area food banks.

hours on June 6, ran two full-page ads in the newspaper, hung flyers in grocery stores and take-out restaurants, and spread the word on social media.

Some eager donors began dropping off groceries early, but most rolled through the carefully planned drop-off site in Local 654's parking lot at the appointed hour.

"At our local hall, we set up tables, so we wouldn't have contact," Loughhead said. "They'd drive through and pop their trunks. We'd unload the donations and put them on pickup trucks to go to six different food banks."

Mullen said three other IBEW locals in the region were especially generous. Philadelphia Local 98 filled a U-Haul truck and drove a half hour southwest to the local's Boothwyn, Pa., hall, near the state's shared border with Delaware and New Jersey. More groceries came from Trenton, N.J., Local 269, an hour away, and members from Philadelphia Local 614 arrived with \$1,100 they raised on a GoFundMe page.

In all, the local collected \$15,000 in cash donations that they will use to buy more groceries for food banks in Delaware and Chester counties.

"We have been struggling to keep up with distributing food and supplies because of COVID-19," said Rev. Ben Greimer, whose church runs a food pantry. "The food and supplies from IBEW 654 will greatly benefit our compassion ministry."

Jean Beck of the Trainer Community Food Bank said through her charity alone, "Local 654 has helped feed the 45 families, 15 veterans and 15 seniors that we serve."

Among many other good deeds, the local sent 1,500 meals to workers at three hospitals on designated days in May, which had the bonus of bringing much-needed business to an area catering company. "Our local is founded in community service and all of our members love getting involved and giving back," Mullen said.

More plans are in the works, said Loughhead, whose father and two brothers were also Local 654 journeymen. Looking toward the holidays and the certainty that more families than ever will be in need, he said a toy drive may be on the fall agenda.

"On the news, you see people out of work, people who live paycheck to paycheck and now they don't have a paycheck," he said. "We're trying to do whatever we can." ■



Members of Long Island, N.Y., Local 25 worked on a museum project to honor local fallen hero Lieutenant Mike Murphy.

TRANSITIONS

DECEASED Douglas Fisher



The officers are saddened to report the death of former Director of the Research and Technical Services Department Douglas

Fisher on May 10. He was 78.

The IBEW came to rely on Brother Fisher's ability to bring the transformational power of new information technologies to the International Office in the 1990s. He first saw the power of computing when he automated Memphis, Tenn., Local 474's office system and oversaw 44% membership growth following the change.

At the International Office he became a tireless evangelist for the potential of new technology to help the membership. He found faster, cheaper ways to get information from the I.O. to members and representatives in the field. And he was an enthusiastic promoter of the value of continuing education for himself, his staff and the membership of the IBEW.

Brother Fisher was born in Memphis, the nephew of George Peek, former Business Manager of Local 474. After high school he served from 1959-67 as a security policeman in the U.S. Air Force. Following an honorable discharge, he was initiated into Local 474 in 1968, beginning a 36-year career in the Brotherhood.

Within three years of initiation, Fisher became vice president of the local, holding positions of recording secretary and executive board member before serving as business manager from 1984-92.

Brother Fisher's service to organized labor was not limited to his local. He was press secretary of the Memphis AFL-CIO and later served on its executive board as well as on the Memphis Building Trades Council.

In 1992, then-International President J.J. Barry appointed Fisher an international representative in the Research and Economics Department. Three years later he was transferred to the Construction and Maintenance Department.

Barry then appointed Fisher director of the renamed Research and Technical Services Department after consolidating corporate affairs, employee benefits, education and the IBEW library under its control.

As Brother Fisher rose through the IBEW ranks he went back to school, earning first a bachelor's degree in labor studies from Antioch University via the George Meany Center for Labor Studies and then a masters degree in labor and policy studies from Empire State University.

What made him effective wasn't just that he understood technology. He was an expert on how people understood information and found tools to get it to them the way that suited them best. For example, he developed a chart with the Political/Legislative Department that showed how the nation had fared since 1968 under different presidents in employment, federal deficits and imbalance in trade.

It crystallized for people with facts

something they may have only felt. He called it "Just the Facts" and, over the years, the IBEW distributed more than a million copies of the chart.

But you wouldn't have known it just by looking at him, said Research Director Jim Voyer.

"He was the physically toughest director of research this or any other union has had," he said. "And he was committed to education, for himself, his staff and the IBEW and he fought for good ideas wherever they came from."

Voyer said that Fisher was as responsible as anyone for moving the IBEW to take advantage of the tools created by the information technology revolution of the late '90s.

Fisher retired back to his native Tennessee in 2004 where he was an award-winning gardener and woodturner.

Fisher is survived by his wife of 44 years, Gloria; daughter Catherine and sons William, a member of Pueblo, Colo., Local 12; Christopher and Robert, members of Local 474 and Glenn, a vice president at Oak Ridge, Tenn., Local 270.

On behalf of the IBEW's members and staff, the officers offer our deepest sympathies to Brother Fisher's family.

Editor's Note: The original version of Brother Fisher's obituary, published August 2020, misidentified two of his children. The Electrical Worker regrets the error and has corrected it in this updated version. ■

DECEASED Max R. Ladusch



Retired Seventh District International Representative Max R. Ladusch died on May 20. He was 86.

Ladusch was born Aug. 7, 1933, in Austin, Texas, and he lived there his entire life. After graduating from Austin High School in 1953, Ladusch was initiated into his hometown Local 520, but he was also drafted into a two-year stint with the U.S. Army. He completed his apprenticeship after being honorably discharged.

Immediately active in his local, Ladusch volunteered his services for just about every available committee over the years. He went on to serve as Local 520's vice president from 1960-62. That was followed by two separate terms as president: from 1962-64 and again from 1966-70, before he began a nine-year run as business manager. He also served as an instructor for Local 520's joint apprenticeship training center.

Ladusch was active outside of the IBEW, too, serving as vice president of the Texas AFL-CIO from 1972-79, as well as terms as vice president of the Texas State Association of Electrical Workers, secretary of the Austin Building and Construction Trades Council and as a member of Austin's Electric Board.

In 1979, then-International President Charles Pillard appointed Brother Ladusch to serve as an international representative for the union's Seventh District, which covers members in Texas as well as Arizona, Kansas, New Mexico and Oklahoma.

Ralph Merriweather, a fellow member of Local 520 and Seventh District international representative, had known Ladusch since 1972, when Merriweather was still working as a forklift operator at Wide Lite, an IBEW-represented plant that made outdoor lighting fixtures.

"Max was directly responsible for my career in the electrical industry," Merriweather said. "He was one of those guys who was a true union guy. Our conversations would always be about the IBEW."

Merriweather recalled how Ladusch, Local 520's business manager at the time, asked him to go through an IBEW apprenticeship, explaining that the government was pressuring the local to increase membership of persons of color.

"When you say you want me, it had better have nothing to do with color or government," Merriweather said, declining Ladusch's invitation. "I think he was startled. He had never heard people come back to the business manager that way."

But Ladusch understood Merriweather's point, and he spent the next three years learning from that conversation and convincing his new friend to join the IBEW and later to become an organizer.

"He was an old-school union type of man, hard core. That's just the way we came up," said Merriweather. Even in retirement, "he would always call and see how I was doing. He is going to be uniquely missed."

"He would start out every conversation with a joke," said retired Seventh District International Vice President Orville Tate, who recalled how Ladusch had been the protégé of Local 520 brother Marcus Loftis, who eventually served at the International Office in Washington as Pillard's executive assistant.

And although Ladusch mainly serviced locals in the Lone Star State, Tate said, "he fit in everywhere," including a short run working closely with a Kansas local.

Ladusch had a passion for politics, Tate said, often describing himself as a "yellow dog Democrat," voting a straight blue ticket in just about every election.

"When Ann Richards and Jim Mattox ran for the Democratic nomination for governor of Texas in 1990, Max supported Ann," Tate said. "He fought tooth and nail to get her elected." Richards went on to win both the nomination and the governorship. Ladusch also was a vocal supporter of long-serving Rep. Lloyd Doggett, whose district includes Austin.

Although Ladusch retired from the IBEW in 1997, he remained active, spending time with his family, going to Local 520 get-togethers and attending functions as a member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. His many friends also recalled how much he enjoyed his down time swimming and hunting.

The officers and membership extend their deepest condolences to Ladusch's wife of 56 years, Marsha, and to their two children and five grandchildren. ■

DECEASED James Wolfgang



Retired First District International Representative James Wolfgang, who led the formation of Ottawa Local 2228 and was an organiz-

er on many other successful drives involving federal employees in Canada, died at his home in Nanaimo, British Columbia, on May 14. He was 87.

Brother Wolfgang retired in 1985 due to a battle with multiple sclerosis, but it didn't slow him down much. He was long active in the MS Society of Canada.

Wolfgang's work inspired the First District to make the MS Society its official national charity, a move that is believed to have made the IBEW the first union in Canada to adopt a charity on a national basis. It has held an annual golf tournament since 1989 to raise money in the fight against multiple sclerosis and held several other fundraisers.

"He was just one of the smartest men I've ever met," said Laird Cronk, president of the British Columbia Federation of Labour and a former First District international representative. "He had a mind for facts and figures like no one else did and he had a way of using them at just the right time."

Brother Wolfgang was an electrician and became a member of Victoria, British Columbia, Local 230 in 1952, where he was employed by the federal government at the Esquimalt Royal Navy Dockyard in Victoria. There, he helped organize and was elected the first president of the West Dockyard Trades and Labour Council. The council is a coalition of all unions that represent employees working at the dockyard, which is the permanent western dock of the Canadian Royal Navy.

That caught the eye of then-First District Vice President William Ladyman, who brought Wolfgang on staff as an international representative. He was tasked with organizing electrical technicians employed by the federal public service, who were granted collective bargaining rights along with other federal employees when the Public Service Staff Relations Act went into effect in 1967.

Despite some initial resistance from governmental leaders who were concerned that the IBEW was an international union, workers accepted it as the bargaining representative. Local 2228 was chartered in October of that year.

But the fight was far from over. Local 2228 continued to face resistance for several years and had difficulty in its early contract negotiations. Because of his and others' efforts, today it represents about 1,900 electronic technicians. It is chartered in the nation's capital but its members live across Canada and a handful are employed in Canadian embassies around the world.

"Jim Wolfgang was the salt of the earth," Local 2228 Business Manager

Paul Cameron said. "He embodied what the IBEW was all about. Without his tenacity, [Local 2228] wouldn't exist. It was really tough going back in the days of the transition but he led us through that."

Des Davidge, who was the British Columbia representative on the Local 2228 organizing committee in the mid-1960s, was asked to be a lead organizer by other committee members. He was hesitant to accept at first but agreed to do so after Wolfgang assured him he was the right person for the job. Davidge went on to become the local's first business manager.

"He was a mentor as well as a co-worker for me," Davidge said. "I didn't have too much of a clue of what I was doing. That was a pretty big job to organize a nationwide local, but he inspired so much confidence in you."

What made it even more impressive is that Wolfgang was leading a successful organizing drive of telephone workers in Quebec at the same time, Davidge said. He routinely made the two-hour drive from Montreal, where he was living, to Ottawa. He also made it a point to learn French when organizing workers in Quebec.

"I don't know how many tickets he got on that road [between Montreal and Ottawa] but he probably could have paid off his car with them," said Davidge, who also retired to his native British Columbia and remained close friends with Wolfgang until his death. "He made a lot of fast trips."

While still in his 30s, however, Wolfgang was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. He continued to work as an international representative and traveled across Canada organizing federal workers but was forced to retire at the relatively young age of 53.

He stayed active in union affairs and charitable efforts, however. Wolfgang often served as a labour representative on the Canada Industrial Relations Board. His more than 30 years of work with the MS Society of Canada was recognized by the organization when it made him one of a select group of honorary directors for more than a decade until his death.

Wolfgang was a mentor to IBEW leaders like Cronk, a Local 230 member whose father served as the first business manager of Vancouver Local 258 and has known Wolfgang since childhood, and current Business Manager Phil Venoit.

"Jim was thoughtful, intelligent, had a great heart and was a 100% union man," Venoit said. "I enjoyed immensely our conversations and his recollections about Canadian and British Columbia labour in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. We owe so much to Jim and those like him who made the IBEW and the labor movement in Canada strong and resilient."

Added First District Vice President Thomas Reid: "Jim was one of the many talented reps who built the IBEW in Canada into what it is today. The legacy he left is what we all should aspire to."

Wolfgang is survived by his wife, Halina. The officers and staff wish her and his many friends and other family members their sympathies during this difficult time. ■

ORGANIZING WIRE

West Virginia Solar Agreement Brings New Work and Members

A disturbingly small percentage of the electrical workers who install residential solar panels in North America belong to a union. Thanks to a new partnership between the IBEW and an innovative West Virginia-based solar firm, that portion is growing.

In June, Huntington, W.Va., Local 317 Business Manager James Gillette announced that a company called Solar Holler had signed the union's Central Regional Agreement with the National Electrical Contractors Association. This brought into the IBEW fold nearly a dozen workers from the relative newcomer to the solar industry, and that number is expected to go up as the demand for residential solar installations continues to rise.

"Thanks to this agreement, the IBEW won't just be representing Solar Holler's workers on the job, but we'll also be giving them the training they'll need to keep current in this growing industry," Gillette said.

The regional agreement, signed by seven IBEW locals and the Central Ohio and West Virginia/Ohio Valley chapters of NECA, governs the IBEW's smaller inside work projects in most of the Mountain State plus several counties in neighboring Ohio. Among other things, it covers solar work that involves installation of 500 panels or fewer.

"Solar Holler started out as a program for training displaced coal miners," said Local 317 organizer Skip Bailey. When the company launched in 2013, it was part of a Huntington-based nonprofit coalition known as Coalfield Development, whose mission is to help find meaningful work for miners who are



More residential solar work in Appalachia is going IBEW thanks to a partnership between Huntington, W.Va., Local 317 and contractor Solar Holler.

being laid off as demand for domestic coal declines and mines close down.

Since then, Solar Holler has evolved into a thriving business installing residential solar panels throughout West Virginia and parts of Ohio and Kentucky.

The partnership between the IBEW and Solar Holler turned out to be a real meeting of minds, said Bailey, who noted that while the company itself is headquartered across the state in Shepherdstown, it has a Huntington office located near a busy intersection in the city's Westmoreland neighborhood. The parking lot full of Solar Holler's colorfully outfitted vehicles easily drew the attention of passing drivers.

"State organizing coordinator Todd Gardner came down and called on them with me," Bailey said, and the pair soon realized just how closely Solar Holler's values aligned with the IBEW's. "Dan really likes the benefits aspect," he said.

Solar Holler founder and CEO Dan Conant agreed that partnering with the IBEW fits with his company's

mission to support workers, granting them access to such things as paid health care while they work and defined benefit pensions in retirement.

"We believe that health care is a human right, that the people wearing boots are the ones who bring our systems to life, and that our company has a responsibility to honor and care for those who make the magic happen," Conant said.

He also noted with pride that Solar Holler was the first solar firm in West Virginia to become what's known as a "benefit corporation," which he said legally commits his company to keep its workers, its Appalachian communities and the environment on an equal footing with profits.

Gillette and Bailey also invited Conant to spend some time with Local 317 Training Director Tim Akers and tour the local's Joint Apprentice Training Center. "Basically, we impressed them with our facility," Bailey said. The JATC is adjacent to the Local 317 hall and about a five-minute drive from the Solar Holler office.

"Now, they're getting all the training they need from Local 317," Bailey said.

Union growth in West Virginia is something to celebrate, Gillette noted, especially after the state's anti-union Legislature approved a right-to-work measure in 2016. A coalition of unions including the IBEW filed a successful injunction to keep the law from taking effect, arguing that such a regulation unfairly grants nonunion workers all of the benefits of a negotiated agreement without being required to pay for it. But the state's Supreme Court settled the matter in April when it voted to uphold the originally passed bill.

"What's hurt us more than right-to-work is the loss of prevailing wage," Gillette said. After an 80-year-old state law governing fair wage provisions on public works projects was repealed in that same 2016 legislative session, such jobs have increasingly gone to low-bidding, nonunion contractors, driving skilled workers to prevailing wage states in search of better pay. Perhaps unsurprisingly, problems with public works projects in the West Virginia have been increasing ever since.

For now, the work outlook for Local 317 remains healthy, Gillette said, with the local's many valuable customers continuing to keep his members busy. Meanwhile, residential solar work is expected to increase, he said, especially as more people begin to realize that federal tax credits for solar installations are heading toward a sunset over the next couple of years.

"Solar Holler signed the regional agreement, then COVID-19 hit and things kind of went into a period of hibernation for a bit," he said. "But we've stayed pretty steady, and we're hoping things keep rolling." ■

In Memoriam

Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in May 2020

| Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death |
|-------|--------------------|---------------|-------|--------------------|---------------|-------|--------------------|---------------|-------|---------------------|---------------|-------|------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Promnitz, J. S. | 12/3/18 | 46 | McCulloch, J. I. | 3/6/20 | 112 | Gage, D. R. | 3/21/20 | 294 | Clark, T. K. | 3/13/20 | 424 | Laycock, B. C. | 4/11/20 | 812 | Hurley, J. M. | 3/18/20 |
| 3 | Boudreau, H. | 3/16/20 | 48 | Deal, B. D. | 6/27/19 | 120 | Walsh, P. R. | 3/4/20 | 294 | Jensen, R. W. | 2/17/20 | 424 | Wittal, R. L. | 1/27/20 | 816 | Cossler, W. R. | 12/2/19 |
| 3 | Ciaravalli, A. | 10/25/19 | 48 | Eidman, W. W. | 8/1/19 | 124 | Flynn, R. E. | 11/17/19 | 300 | Provost, L. J. | 1/8/20 | 424 | Yost, M. E. | 2/1/20 | 840 | Manzer, B. A. | 10/5/19 |
| 3 | Colon, P. A. | 12/26/19 | 48 | Fleming, W. P. | 3/27/20 | 124 | Kramps, J. P. | 3/29/20 | 304 | Brader, J. D. | 2/2/20 | 429 | Reynolds, C. E. | 4/12/20 | 861 | Bergeron, D. L. | 1/19/20 |
| 3 | Morzigliano, J. J. | 1/30/20 | 48 | Hettland, G. L. | 2/24/20 | 125 | Jones, F. D. | 3/26/20 | 305 | Renkenberger, J. D. | 2/8/20 | 461 | Houline, K. W. | 12/20/19 | 915 | Parsons, J. P. | 3/7/20 |
| 3 | Pironti, C. R. | 1/3/20 | 48 | Nelson, D. M. | 11/7/19 | 126 | Butterbaugh, A. L. | 2/21/20 | 306 | Staton, J. E. | 2/27/20 | 474 | Casey, M. W. | 11/24/19 | 993 | Giassa, S. | 1/14/20 |
| 3 | Pironti, D. | 1/23/20 | 53 | D'Urso, G. R. | 1/9/20 | 130 | Olivier, G. E. | 3/13/20 | 309 | Croissant, K. F. | 3/23/20 | 494 | Gaulke, W. D. | 3/26/20 | 995 | Gross, M. A. | 2/27/20 |
| 3 | Schwarzhoff, W. G. | 11/13/18 | 58 | Brown, R. A. | 2/7/20 | 131 | Addington, C. M. | 2/17/20 | 309 | Kalbfeisch, G. | 3/22/20 | 520 | Ray, O. D. | 10/14/19 | 1003 | Morrison, K. J. | 12/24/19 |
| 3 | Vladimirov, V. | 5/13/19 | 58 | Carr, F. J. | 1/18/20 | 134 | Herrick, L. W. | 1/19/20 | 309 | McGrath, J. M. | 4/21/20 | 558 | Farmer, J. L. | 3/26/20 | 1003 | Walsh, J. L. | 12/21/19 |
| 4 | Hooss, R. C. | 1/28/20 | 58 | Cheslock, G. A. | 2/10/20 | 134 | Johnson, J. T. | 12/13/19 | 313 | Vaughan, W. H. | 1/20/20 | 558 | Harris, C. O. | 3/31/20 | 1186 | Calleon, L. C. | 8/22/19 |
| 5 | Badzgon, A. E. | 1/10/20 | 58 | Ferguson, J. M. | 1/8/20 | 134 | Lee, J. E. | 11/8/19 | 332 | Lillquist, P. G. | 10/8/19 | 570 | Felton, M. T. | 4/1/20 | 1205 | Hall, D. D. | 3/9/20 |
| 5 | Pillion, T. J. | 2/15/20 | 58 | Fligger, M. | 2/21/20 | 136 | Dorough, A. W. | 3/30/20 | 332 | Robinson, V. L. | 3/9/20 | 595 | Hepburn, R. E. | 2/27/20 | 1245 | Helton, H. W. | 1/27/20 |
| 6 | Bacciocco, R. L. | 3/21/20 | 58 | Idol, G. R. | 3/3/20 | 141 | Palmer, R. F. | 2/2/20 | 349 | Fritz, J. P. | 2/20/20 | 602 | White, R. T. | 1/10/20 | 1319 | Schiel, T. J. | 3/11/20 |
| 6 | Myers, K. D. | 2/15/20 | 58 | Kates, R. F. | 2/13/20 | 145 | Arney, E. J. | 4/5/20 | 351 | Delmonte, P. M. | 3/2/20 | 606 | Long, R. W. | 1/24/20 | 1426 | Wanzek, S. J. | 1/21/20 |
| 6 | Thompson, G. W. | 10/5/19 | 58 | Lewis, A. | 3/9/20 | 153 | Ingle, D. L. | 3/25/20 | 351 | Hess, G. L. | 12/11/19 | 617 | Murphy, J. P. | 12/22/19 | 1516 | Stabbs, J. W. | 1/12/20 |
| 9 | Madigan, W. T. | 3/15/20 | 58 | Morningstar, C. V. | 3/5/20 | 160 | Cobb, E. R. | 1/19/20 | 351 | Leeds, J. J. | 2/4/20 | 640 | Freeman, I. | 1/4/20 | 2085 | Scheuer, J. V. | 12/26/19 |
| 9 | Monfeli, R. J. | 4/7/20 | 58 | Puckett, R. C. | 2/2/20 | 160 | Trnka, D. M. | 3/20/20 | 353 | Ballantyne, R. K. | 4/12/20 | 640 | Killman, W. | 3/2/20 | 2150 | Hawkins, L. D. | 11/10/19 |
| 11 | Archer, D. P. | 8/24/19 | 64 | White, R. C. | 3/9/20 | 163 | Wilson, W. J. | 1/25/20 | 353 | Bartlett, C. W. | 4/1/20 | 666 | Wilkinson, W. L. | 3/4/20 | I.O. (327) | Fletcher, J. H. | 3/4/20 |
| 11 | Hedgecock, R. D. | 1/26/20 | 68 | Averman, J. D. | 12/14/18 | 164 | Bozeat, R. P. | 3/22/20 | 353 | Krichbaum, H. H. | 3/31/20 | 681 | Taylor, R. D. | 2/4/20 | I.O. (682) | Paul, D. A. | 12/9/19 |
| 11 | Swanson, S. C. | 12/6/19 | 76 | Bloomfield, M. | 12/24/19 | 175 | Brown, J. | 1/20/20 | 353 | Myles, W. | 4/1/20 | 683 | Robey, G. E. | 12/9/19 | Pens. (280) | Fox, D. D. | 1/6/20 |
| 16 | Richter, D. F. | 1/29/20 | 77 | Eads, E. H. | 12/19/19 | 175 | Pitts, P. A. | 2/17/20 | 353 | Rugard, E. H. | 2/12/20 | 683 | Sekinger, T. P. | 2/27/20 | Pens. (485) | Compton, M. L. | 4/13/20 |
| 18 | Townsend, L. L. | 9/29/19 | 77 | Ellis, J. P. | 3/8/20 | 175 | Potter, J. M. | 5/7/17 | 353 | Swankie, R. H. | 3/14/20 | 697 | Eckert, H. T. | 3/5/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Aanerud, L. A. | 4/6/19 |
| 20 | Taylor, B. G. | 1/19/20 | 90 | Carew, J. J. | 1/3/20 | 176 | Mulinazzi, D. D. | 2/12/20 | 353 | Szalay, S. | 3/8/20 | 697 | Gutierrez, M. A. | 2/27/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Dunn, G. H. | 11/28/19 |
| 24 | Belford, W. C. | 3/15/20 | 96 | Salo, A. A. | 3/12/20 | 212 | Boggess, A. L. | 1/13/20 | 357 | Ashley, T. E. | 3/9/20 | 701 | Hejka, E. J. | 8/24/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Goodman, L. G. | 2/21/18 |
| 24 | Hess, J. A. | 12/25/19 | 98 | High, T. E. | 3/8/20 | 212 | Schwier, R. A. | 1/23/20 | 357 | Lantz, R. R. | 3/27/20 | 702 | Reed, J. T. | 12/16/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Johnson, L. F. | 12/17/19 |
| 24 | Simon, F. C. | 1/26/20 | 100 | Jones, R. M. | 3/11/20 | 212 | Sprague, J. A. | 1/6/20 | 357 | Wiser, J. D. | 2/6/20 | 712 | Haber, P. J. | 2/19/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | LaPorte, G. J. | 1/31/20 |
| 26 | Sparrough, R. L. | 3/21/20 | 103 | Connolly, P. A. | 11/22/19 | 213 | Fisher, B. P. | 12/2/19 | 363 | Myers, J. F. | 12/6/19 | 714 | Gussey, J. E. | 2/15/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Mall, H. J. | 12/31/19 |
| 38 | Curtis, T. A. | 3/10/20 | 103 | McDonnell, B. P. | 3/5/20 | 223 | Good, A. J. | 2/17/20 | 364 | Sulouff, T. E. | 12/8/19 | 714 | Wagner, T. R. | 2/14/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | McCormick, E. R. | 3/12/20 |
| 38 | Kepler, J. E. | 2/22/20 | 103 | Morrison, M. D. | 3/13/20 | 226 | Combs, C. R. | 1/9/20 | 369 | Barber, D. R. | 3/12/20 | 716 | Current, D. W. | 1/10/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Murphy, T. W. | 1/6/20 |
| 38 | Willis, E. P. | 3/22/20 | 106 | Robbins, E. O. | 1/5/20 | 236 | Avallone, T. J. | 12/6/19 | 369 | DePugh, A. E. | 3/12/20 | 716 | Mickelson, D. A. | 1/11/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Petty, C. L. | 3/16/20 |
| 42 | Chapman, R. L. | 1/1/20 | 110 | Becker, W. L. | 2/26/20 | 254 | Frederiksen, M. C. | 1/14/20 | 369 | Keown, D. E. | 1/24/20 | 725 | Burton, L. W. | 3/1/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Quintana, L. | 9/1/19 |
| 42 | Schlehofer, T. F. | 4/24/20 | 110 | Pulkrabek, R. A. | 10/8/19 | 292 | Deutsch, W. J. | 3/2/20 | 369 | Meadors, E. P. | 2/28/20 | 725 | Poe, P. L. | 1/20/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Toyias, J. A. | 12/12/19 |
| 44 | Altimus, J. W. | 4/14/20 | 110 | Schmidt, P. F. | 3/1/20 | 292 | Herlofsky, G. A. | 6/4/18 | 369 | Paul, E. E. | 1/25/20 | 760 | Lay, J. B. | 1/18/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Whiteside, G. E. | 1/20/20 |
| 46 | Hollis, J. J. | 2/3/20 | 112 | Detty, M. E. | 2/15/20 | 292 | Kilian, J. J. | 3/4/20 | 369 | Portwood, E. D. | 3/14/20 | 773 | Starling, J. G. | 12/31/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Young, D. R. | 4/3/19 |

In Memoriam

Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in June 2020

| Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death | Local | Surname | Date of Death |
|-------|-------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|---------------|-------|---------------------|---------------|-------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Appelbaum, D. P. | 2/6/20 | 60 | Barker, T. L. | 2/23/20 | 212 | Smith, P. L. | 1/31/20 | 494 | Czerwan, M. W. | 3/16/20 | 666 | Redford, O. C. | 2/8/20 | 1547 | Johnston, R. L. | 11/5/19 |
| 1 | Freund, R. W. | 1/3/20 | 66 | Sanders, R. L. | 12/4/19 | 213 | Heliar, D. G. | 11/26/19 | 494 | Hillstrom, J. P. | 3/22/20 | 668 | Robbins, O. W. | 1/3/20 | 1553 | Timpe, C. J. | 2/2/20 |
| 1 | Hood, M. D. | 4/11/20 | 66 | Weidner, D. | 2/1/20 | 222 | Cooper, J. Z. | 2/10/20 | 494 | Kercheck, R. R. | 2/7/20 | 673 | Giannelli, A. R. | 1/12/20 | 1579 | Solomon, B. G. | 4/17/20 |
| 2 | Workman, L. M. | 2/17/20 | 68 | Sherwood, R. E. | 1/14/20 | 222 | Edenfield, E. L. | 1/23/20 | 494 | Nitschke, R. H. | 2/10/20 | 674 | Roy, B. M. | 2/10/19 | 1579 | Timmerman, D. L. | 3/4/20 |
| 3 | Alfano, C. T. | 2/14/20 | 68 | Trinkaus, A. F. | 1/4/20 | 222 | Jenkins, P. W. | 12/26/19 | 494 | Wildes, D. L. | 1/25/20 | 692 | Coates, R. K. | 10/27/19 | 1583 | Thomas, T. A. | 2/8/20 |
| 3 | Camhi, M. | 2/3/20 | 68 | Vandeven, S. G. | 2/7/20 | 222 | Mask, W. D. | 2/22/20 | 498 | Esson, P. G. | 2/9/20 | 697 | Dillon, R. J. | 2/9/20 | 1701 | Ambas, C. L. | 3/15/20 |
| 3 | Carlsen, B. | 1/30/20 | 70 | Arbogast, A. W. | 2/19/20 | 223 | Van Deusen, F. G. | 2/3/20 | 505 | Morris, G. H. | 8/29/19 | 697 | Florin, R. C. | 2/22/20 | 1852 | MacDonald, D. W. | 1/3/20 |
| 3 | Diers, O. | 10/27/19 | 71 | Pope, J. A. | 10/7/19 | 230 | Game, R. L. | 1/23/20 | 527 | Carrigan, D. R. | 3/22/20 | 697 | Webb, C. R. | 4/14/20 | 1920 | Most, H. J. | 12/16/19 |
| 3 | Dillon, G. M. | 12/15/18 | 71 | Tompkins, R. A. | 2/25/20 | 230 | Kulai, R. W. | 2/7/20 | 530 | Mathieson, G. | 12/12/19 | 701 | Kramer, B. J. | 4/23/20 | 2085 | Suhr, A. K. | 2/10/20 |
| 3 | Foster, M. | 1/30/20 | 71 | Work, R. B. | 2/27/20 | 234 | Mellick, L. H. | 2/10/20 | 530 | Robbins, G. A. | 2/17/20 | 701 | Zupancic, L. | 3/4/20 | 2113 | Evans, J. S. | 3/3/20 |
| 3 | Frazier, J. O. | 10/18/19 | 72 | Sharp, B. C. | 1/11/20 | 236 | Lange, M. A. | 1/28/20 | 532 | Appell, T. | 4/27/20 | 702 | Barber, D. R. | 3/30/20 | 2286 | Jordan, L. A. | 1/31/20 |
| 3 | Galiano, P. A. | 4/15/20 | 76 | Reinhardt, G. L. | 2/25/20 | 242 | Toppings, H. O. | 3/22/20 | 538 | Modglin, S. K. | 1/31/20 | 702 | Neisz, H. | 3/14/20 | 2330 | Follett, L. J. | 1/5/20 |
| 3 | Gayle, P. I. | 2/6/20 | 77 | Burton, R. E. | 2/15/20 | 242 | Wayt, R. W. | 10/18/19 | 549 | Davis, P. R. | 2/3/20 | 714 | Engelman, L. S. | 12/24/19 | I.O. (3) | Jackowski, C. J. | 3/20/20 |
| 3 | Giandana, C. R. | 12/31/19 | 77 | Howard, B. R. | 3/26/20 | 246 | Urich, H. J. | 3/7/20 | 557 | Bankston, F. T. | 2/8/20 | 714 | Powell, B. W. | 4/12/20 | I.O. (11) | Dilbeck, G. L. | 1/14/20 |
| 3 | Goring, P. W. | 2/24/20 | 77 | Orwick, J. D. | 2/26/20 | 252 | Doneth, D. G. | 3/3/20 | 558 | Goad, W. E. | 12/24/19 | 716 | Lewis, J. G. | 1/25/20 | I.O. (97) | Blackburn, R. P. | 1/26/20 |
| 3 | Hague, G. E. | 2/29/20 | 84 | Wilson, J. R. | 2/28/20 | 258 | Shemko, A. | 6/5/19 | 569 | Adams, R. F. | 3/17/20 | 716 | Sims, D. L. | 2/4/20 | I.O. (97) | Earley, M. H. | 3/31/20 |
| 3 | Joyce, T. J. | 3/1/20 | 86 | Collier, V. E. | 10/5/19 | 271 | Camp, W. R. | 3/29/20 | 570 | Jenkins, M. A. | 2/18/20 | 725 | Herrington, J. B. | 1/28/20 | I.O. (134) | Bolden, C. L. | 1/3/20 |
| 3 | McCabe, J. | 1/26/20 | 90 | Halloran, F. R. | 2/11/20 | 280 | Strickler, V. J. | 1/19/20 | 570 | Martinez, J. G. | 3/21/20 | 728 | Pole, R. F. | 11/6/19 | I.O. (134) | Freyer, J. J. | 4/5/19 |
| 3 | Monastyrskiy, Y. | 1/19/20 | 96 | Wright, D. P. | 1/29/20 | 288 | Ruggles, M. W. | 2/12/20 | 570 | O'Heir, R. A. | 2/13/20 | 747 | Sarkis, J. C. | 10/29/18 | I.O. (134) | Pirvu, S. | 2/13/20 |
| 3 | Mooney, F. | 1/13/20 | 97 | Delmonaco, W. J. | 1/8/20 | 295 | Watkins, W. K. | 3/15/20 | 570 | Reyes, O. L. | 2/24/20 | 768 | Newlin, D. H. | 2/4/20 | I.O. (340) | Williams, E. P. | 3/10/20 |
| 3 | Padawer, J. T. | 3/7/20 | 97 | Meacham, H. L. | 5/10/20 | 301 | Aubert, J. H. | 2/19/20 | 583 | Varela, J. O. | 2/20/20 | 769 | Livingston, J. D. | 9/12/19 | Pens. (982) | Carnahan, V. L. | 1/16/20 |
| 3 | Ripp, S. D. | 10/8/19 | 98 | Archer, O. D. | 12/15/19 | 302 | Rossi, D. E. | 1/7/20 | 584 | Craig, S. K. | 2/6/20 | 776 | Flood, T. J. | 4/3/18 | Pens. (I.O.) | Buskens, J. | 12/7/19 |
| 3 | Siano, V. F. | 2/7/20 | 98 | Kelly, J. J. | 4/17/20 | 302 | Villalva, N. | 1/4/20 | 595 | Cupples, P. J. | 11/19/19 | 807 | Ellison, J. L. | 2/4/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Caetano, A. A. | 1/30/20 |
| 3 | Simms, D. A. | 1/13/20 | 98 | Romano, P. A. | 1/22/20 | 303 | Billy, M. W. | 2/15/20 | 595 | Doran, G. W. | 12/19/19 | 816 | Summerville, C. F. | 1/30/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Cambis, G. F. | 2/12/20 |
| 3 | Stang, F. | 12/27/19 | 99 | Lepore, W. O. | 1/31/20 | 305 | Wheeler, S. P. | 1/31/20 | 595 | McClure, M. D. | 3/2/16 | 852 | Skinner, B. P. | 3/9/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Chapman, B. | 2/27/20 |
| 3 | Sudak, H. | 2/29/20 | 102 | Young, J. J. | 2/4/20 | 317 | Hutchins, A. R. | 9/25/19 | 595 | Smith, J. S. | 2/5/20 | 915 | Banks, A. E. | 2/27/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Doehrel, L. E. | 1/22/20 |
| 3 | Waters, G. | 1/29/20 | 103 | Ahern, T. J. | 3/18/20 | 322 | Bracken, G. J. | 2/4/20 | 602 | Quakenbush, W. P. | 2/21/20 | 915 | Ferguson, J. L. | 3/4/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Ferrarie, E. F. | 8/5/19 |
| 3 | Watts, J. L. | 2/10/20 | 103 | Norcott, T. E. | 4/19/20 | 322 | Shoup, G. D. | 2/13/20 | 605 | Causey, F. W. | 2/7/20 | 915 | Severance, L. T. | 3/23/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | French, R. M. | 2/17/20 |
| 5 | Ashcroft, A. G. | 3/24/20 | 103 | Wall, T. H. | 9/9/18 | 325 | Cook, K. W. | 4/1/20 | 611 | Akin, D. S. | 1/13/20 | 915 | Stinson, R. A. | 3/21/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Heide, H. R. | 2/12/20 |
| 5 | Cypher, P. S. | 2/19/20 | 103 | Welch, S. P. | 12/14/19 | 325 | Murcko, J. J. | 1/25/20 | 611 | Craig, R. D. | 3/28/20 | 934 | Byrd, J. A. | 2/17/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Hutcheson, R. G. | 2/1/20 |
| 6 | Allen, J. A. | 10/26/19 | 105 | Grillo, A. | 9/17/19 | 332 | Cowan, S. A. | 12/24/19 | 611 | Fowler, R. M. | 3/6/20 | 972 | Lloyd, J. I. | 1/24/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Joy, J. R. | 1/19/20 |
| 6 | Kihara, C. | 2/11/20 | 106 | Long, E. W. | 12/18/19 | 332 | Federman, M. Y. | 12/12/19 | 611 | LaJeunesse, V. P. | 3/30/20 | 995 | Letz, A. O. | 2/4/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Kapustiak, C. F. | 7/25/19 |
| 6 | Shives, J. H. | 1/19/20 | 108 | Williamson, M. C. | 1/30/20 | 332 | Lillquist, P. G. | 10/8/19 | 611 | Rarrick, R. O. | 1/17/20 | 1105 | Hottinger, D. T. | 2/8/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Knoppel, J. L. | 4/13/20 |
| 8 | Stuckey, W. A. | 12/17/19 | 110 | Berg, G. E. | 2/2/14 | 332 | Mawhinney, W. C. | 11/23/19 | 613 | Howard, S. G. | 2/14/20 | 1206 | Clark, S. L. | 3/2/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Larson, W. K. | 2/9/20 |
| 9 | Paulson, E. L. | 1/21/20 | 110 | Glancey, L. T. | 10/24/19 | 332 | Perretta, M. R. | 1/26/20 | 613 | Ponce-Gonzalez, A. | 3/12/20 | 1209 | Clark, L. D. | 3/28/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Leupold, L. | 2/15/20 |
| 9 | Wolos, T. J. | 2/22/20 | 110 | Nasseff, E. N. | 10/2/19 | 343 | Dressen, E. D. | 2/3/20 | 613 | Sauls, C. E. | 3/10/20 | 1245 | Childers, D. R. | 12/12/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Lyons, D. J. | 10/13/19 |
| 11 | Outler, A. G. | 2/29/20 | 111 | Cushing, D. E. | 12/31/19 | 351 | Barbera, M. A. | 11/19/19 | 613 | Valentine, K. D. | 1/6/20 | 1249 | Bauer, D. F. | 10/2/18 | Pens. (I.O.) | Manos, J. | 2/13/20 |
| 11 | Page, D. K. | 1/13/20 | 124 | McCullough, A. J. | 3/25/20 | 351 | Maurer, W. L. | 4/25/20 | 613 | Wofford, R. M. | 2/7/20 | 1253 | Dauphinee, J. T. | 1/2/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | McLaughlin, P. F. | 2/14/20 |
| 11 | Seebold, J. L. | 11/28/19 | 124 | Morrisey, P. | 12/24/19 | 353 | Chapman, R. E. | 2/7/20 | 613 | Womack, G. E. | 2/22/20 | 1253 | Therault, A. L. | 2/11/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Niebuhr, F. | 1/2/20 |
| 11 | Sterling, J. | 12/9/19 | 124 | Muller, M. P. | 1/30/20 | 353 | Fleming, J. | 4/9/20 | 640 | Chaparro, T. L. | 3/29/20 | 1260 | Hayashi, H. I. | 12/31/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Pasch, E. W. | 3/8/20 |
| 13 | Foglesong, J. F. | 12/27/19 | 124 | Young, K. T. | 2/9/20 | 353 | Harder, C. | 3/7/20 | 640 | Meissner, D. H. | 1/28/20 | 1316 | Aspray, H. A. | 12/6/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Reddin, C. F. | 1/26/20 |
| 13 | Fry, M. R. | 3/1/20 | 125 | Barber, J. E. | 3/5/20 | 353 | McGeachie, A. H. | 12/12/19 | 648 | Haight, V. J. | 3/10/20 | 1377 | Bundzoski, D. T. | 12/24/19 | Pens. (I.O.) | Roe, R. | 1/24/20 |
| 13 | McAlister, R. S. | 2/18/20 | 125 | Cochran, R. B. | 1/5/20 | 353 | Zimmermann, K. | 2/23/20 | 648 | Hendrickson, S. | 2/13/20 | 1393 | Lambert, J. V. | 2/12/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Sparks, J. | 4/11/20 |
| 16 | Somers, S. E. | 12/22/19 | 125 | Sticka, J. A. | 12/2/19 | 354 | Burrell, K. L. | 2/18/20 | 648 | Neuenswander, J. W. | 2/2/20 | 1393 | Snider, M. L. | 3/23/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Stettler, J. C. | 2/26/20 |
| 17 | Halt, J. M. | 2/27/20 | 125 | Walstrom, T. A. | 2/20/20 | 357 | Allen, P. L. | 2/28/20 | 659 | Morgan, J. N. | 3/5/20 | 1439 | Fink, C. B. | 4/8/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Taylor, F. D. | 3/5/20 |
| 20 | Roach, D. B. | 2/1/20 | 126 | Carhart, D. R. | 3/4/20 | 357 | Bescup, T. W. | 2/17/20 | 659 | Whiting, R. C. | 1/10/20 | 1439 | McElroy, A. J. | 3/31/20 | Pens. (I.O.) | Winkas, A. B. | 3/13/20 |
| 20 | Stinnett, C. | 2/12/20 | 126 | Estep, D. | 1/12/20 | 357 | Keenan, T. R. | 12/15/19 | 665 | Pratt, L. R. | 11/29/19 | 1547 | Anderson, R. A. | 10/23/19 | | | |
| 20 | Wallace, N. W. | 2/9/20 | 126 | Grove, K. R. | 2/4/20 | 357 | Purmal, R. B. | 2/9/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | Schinker, G. M. | 2/16/20 | 126 | Mason, C. E. | 1/3/20 | 357 | Shaw, E. | 2/25/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | Bermel, E. W. | 1/21/20 | 126 | Salmons, F. C. | 2/15/20 | 357 | Wayne, K. W. | 3/22/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | Timmons, E. L. | 2/4/20 | 126 | Schomburg, G. C. | 1/6/20 | 363 | Gumb, H. D. | 4/3/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | Polhamer, S. A. | 12/31/19 | 129 | Shaw, J. V. | 2/5/20 | 364 | Herrmann, R. E. | 12/13/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | Raynor, K. F. | 1/12/20 | 130 | Stiegler, F. A. | 4/7/20 | 369 | Brewer, C. R. | 12/16/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Graves, K. R. | 1/27/20 | 134 | Bailey, A. S. | 2/15/20 | 369 | Clifford, J. C. | 1/1/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Smith, A. C. | 1/9/20 | 134 | Bardach, R. E. | 1/23/20 | 369 | McWhorter, M. B. | 4/17/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Wasson, J. | 2/23/20 | 134 | Casey, E. J. | 11/7/19 | 369 | Standifer, C. D. | 4/15/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | Bailliez, M. A. | 3/1/20 | 134 | Cassin, M. P. | 2/23/20 | 375 | Carney, B. D. | 1/27/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | Dingledine, G. | 2/29/20 | 134 | Geschrey, R. A. | 1/4/20 | 375 | Greb, R. J. | 2/2/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | Greiner, D. A. | 2/15/20 | 134 | Martinez, R. A. | 1/26/20 | 400 | Bollinger, B. G. | 2/6/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | Hubert, C. L. | 2/10/20 | 134 | McGinnis, S. T. | 2/14/20 | 401 | Marks, R. | 1/17/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | Tolaro, L. J. | 1/31/20 | 134 | O'Brien, T. F. | 12/28/19 | 402 | Edwards, D. | 11/29/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | Van Dyke, A. A. | 1/24/20 | 134 | Podgorski, R. L. | 3/13/20 | 405 | Eimen, C. E. | 1/24/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 40 | Bonneville, R. P. | 1/1/20 | 134 | Salinas, B. | 12/29/19 | 405 | Halvorson, J. E. | 3/7/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | Rettig, P. R. | 2/10/20 | 134 | Seidel, F. A. | 2/7/20 | 413 | Collins, W. R. | 7/4/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 43 | Coe, A. M. | 2/25/20 | 136 | Cox, C. C. | 2/23/20 | 413 | Hindmarsh, J. L. | 2/2/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 44 | Maynard, R. L. | 2/2/20 | 136 | Powell, T. W. | 1/29/20 | 415 | Ketron, P. W. | 1/31/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | Callander, D. M. | 12/21/19 | 143 | Hawk, R. S. | 1/17/20 | 420 | Giblin, M. F. | 2/2/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | Howell, R. L. | 10/21/19 | 150 | Letkey, W. A. | 1/2/20 | 424 | Healey, G. M. | 2/7/20 | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | McManus, P. N. | 2/2/20 | 153 | Trippel, R. F. | 2/16/20 | 424 | Nakonechny, L. P. | 2/22/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | Box, J. W. | 3/25/20 | 158 | Maus, M. | 3/3/20 | 424 | Way, G. R. | 1/30/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | Durdin, B. W. | 12/30/19 | 160 | Illi, M. K. | 1/24/20 | 429 | McCandless, L. R. | 12/31/19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | Wilson, R. D. | 2/2/20 | 164 | H | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

WHO WE ARE

Verizon Leave for Volunteer EMT 'Invaluable' to Jersey Community

Fred Ackerly already was helping a volunteer ambulance crew on an overnight shift and alternating weekends when COVID-19 roared into New York City, an hour outside his New Jersey hometown.

He pitched in as much as he could on other EMT shifts as the crisis exploded, on top of his day job as a Verizon network technician who maintains switching and transport equipment at a central office in Hackensack, N.J.

Ackerly, who is also an alternate shop steward for statewide Local 827, based in East Windsor, N.J., was stretched thin. But he was eager to do all he could for the volunteer Wanaque First Aid Squad, where he'd been an emergency medical technician since graduating as valedictorian of a night school course in August 2019.

He could hardly believe his eyes when he got a text from local business agent Tom Kelly telling him about a newly negotiated benefit at Verizon: eight weeks' paid leave to allow medically trained and certified members to serve their communities at the height of the crisis.

"I thought, 'This would be fantastic!' I knew if I could take this leave it would be a huge help for my squad," Ackerly said. "They've got their day jobs, too. It's been a struggle for all of us."

Immediately, he hopped on the company's COVID-19 resource page but found nothing posted. He fired off an email to the head of human resources, who assured him the details were coming.

Within a whirlwind couple of days, he was approved for leave beginning mid-April. "I was ecstatic," he said.

So was his squad supervisor, Captain Patricia Norton.

"I was absolutely flabbergasted," said Norton, who wrote a letter in support of Ackerly's leave. "I said, 'Corporate America just does not do these things.'"

Norton said the squad was short-staffed and Ackerly, in addition to assigned shifts, filled in whenever needed. "Being in charge, it was comforting to know that he was there. He's just that kind of guy you know you can rely on," she said.

"Kudos to Verizon and his union for coming up with a plan like this. It was invaluable to us."

Local 827 Business Manager Bob Speer was one of the IBEW leaders who helped strike the deal, covering Verizon workers in the Northeast. He said Ackerly could have played it safe but chose to serve.

"He stepped up, he's a vet and he went to the front lines," Speer said. "He took the virus on, faced it down and helped people. He's a hero. I'm very proud to say that he's a member of Local 827."

Safety in the COVID-19 era demands that medics don more personal protective equipment than normal. As the virus



As COVID-19 surged in New Jersey and New York, medic Fred Ackerly had to layer protective gear, inset, over his regular Wanaque First Aid Squad uniform.

surged, Ackerly often was covered head-to-toe — gloves, N95 masks, booties, goggles, head coverings, and gowns that made him sweat.

"At one point the protocols were changing almost daily," he said, noting that his EMT squad, like doctors and nurses, had to stretch out PPE intended to be used once and thrown away.

To minimize risk, the squad asks patients who are mobile to meet them outside their homes so medics don't have to go in.

While the rate of infections has plummeted in New York and New Jersey, the EMTs aren't letting their guard down. That includes masking all patients, a requirement that is unlikely to change in the near future.

"We can't bring anybody into a hospital without a mask on, even if it's just a cut on the arm," Ackerly said.

A call in the early weeks of the crisis reminds him never to get complacent about safety.

"One lady, she was in a car accident that required extraction. We were in the rig. I had a mask on her, she's bleeding, I'm trying to contain it," Ackerly said. "Halfway to the hospital she tells me, 'My mother tested positive for the coronavirus.'"

Ackerly jumped at the opportunity to join the Wanaque squad after visiting its booth at a town picnic in 2018. As a former Marine and Boy Scout leader for both his sons' troops, he'd always been a big proponent of learning first aid.

"I was sold," he said. "A lot of people want to be volunteer firemen, which is great. I wanted to do this."

Excelling as a trainee, he advanced quickly from rookie to crew leader. His team normally works overnight Wednesdays and every other weekend.

"He was quite the shining star when he decided to join the ranks," Norton said. "He's a pleasure and a joy and we

are very lucky to have him."

Ackerly feels lucky, too.

"This opportunity has me speechless," he said in a video that Verizon produced. "My company is paying me to be a fulltime EMT for my organization. Words can't describe that."

Similar to reports from medics across the country, Ackerly said the number of nuisance calls dropped dramatically when the virus struck — people who summon ambulances for minor ailments or sometimes no medical reason at all. More worryingly, calls for potential heart attacks, injuries and other real emergencies dropped, too.

"For a while people were afraid to go to the hospital, even when they really should, but now we're starting to get a little bit more of that," he said in June.

Being there for people in those dark moments, when they're in pain, bleeding, having difficulty breathing, is what he signed up to do.

"They're calling you at a bad time with a serious medical issue, or they're hurt and they're scared, especially now," he said. "We had one woman with cancer who called us. She told us she was lonely. I wanted to hug her, but I couldn't. I felt so badly for her."

A high point of being able to volunteer during the day was the monthly parade of emergency vehicles to celebrate children's birthdays and occasions such as Mother's Day, a procession of fire trucks, police cars and ambulances to take some of the sting out of canceled parties and visits.

"They'll stand in the front yard and wave to us, some of them holding up signs," Ackerly said. "It's a special day for all of us."

His exuberance for his EMT duties suggests every day on the ambulance is special.

"The more help I can be," he said, "the happier I am." ■



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

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Pandemic Prompts Shifts in Training for New Electricians

Move to Virtual Apprenticeship Classes Picks up Pace

Apprenticeship education inside construction was experiencing plenty of change before the COVID-19 pandemic brought the North American economy to its knees in March.

Months later, leading instructors and experts expect the changes to continue as the pandemic drags on, perhaps even after it ends. If anything, they say, it will spur change at an even faster rate — making for better-prepared apprentices.

“It’s kind of forced us into accepting and using these things like virtual learning and remote learning that were on the horizon anyway,” Construction & Maintenance Director Mike Richard said. “I think we’ll come out better for it.”

Virtual learning has been making inroads at many JATC training sites for several years. Increasingly, apprentices work on real-world simulations looking at a computer screen, often modeled with situations seen on a jobsite.

“There are challenges, but [the pandemic] has also opened the door to what we’re capable of doing.”

— Pocatello, Idaho, Local 449 Training Director James Smith

That isn’t intended to replace hours worked in the field. Rather, it is another tool for instructors looking to make better use of classroom time and get apprentices better prepared for when they do go out for on-the-job experience.

What had begun to change more recently, however, was how remote learning had become so advanced that many instructors could work with apprentices without them even coming into the training center. They could stay home in front of their computer and learn the skills of the trade while getting feedback from an instructor who could be across the street — or hundreds or thousands of miles away.

“We had started in the last couple of years to move our curriculum over to computer-mediated learning,” said Todd Stafford, executive director of the Electrical Training Alliance, the educational partnership between the IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors Association. “The idea is to use the hours at the JATC as hands-on training as opposed to lecture-based training.”

Stafford said those changes are especially beneficial to the apprentices themselves. The onset of the pandemic likely will compel those JATCs that haven’t made the changes as quickly as others to catch up.

“It does make it a better learning

experience for the apprentice,” he said. “He or she can go back and review content, lecture materials, all the different tools we use. And, a student can see it and view it multiple times.”

The transition was well underway at places like Pocatello, Idaho, Local 449, which draws apprentices from all over the spread-out state. Now, apprentices don’t always have to drive several hours to attend class, especially after a long day on the job.

“There are challenges but [the pandemic] has also opened the door to what we’re capable of doing,” training director James Smith said. “These are things we’ve always thought about because we are such a spread-out area. It definitely shows we have the capabilities to teach online.”

For San Francisco Local 6, the challenge is different. About 440 apprentices were taking classes in its training center, a former Catholic girls school in the heart of the city, when the pandemic struck.

Space was at a premium and holding classes while following social distance guidelines was impossible. Moving them outside — as some local training centers did — was impossible because there was just a small parking lot. Many apprentices rely on public transportation.

That forced training director Peter Chursin and his staff to change their approach quickly, and Chursin is pleased to report it went better than expected. He said Kristina Vennarucci, an instructor at the training center, took the lead and helped her colleagues become proficient in Zoom, a videoconferencing platform that’s been popular during the pandemic.

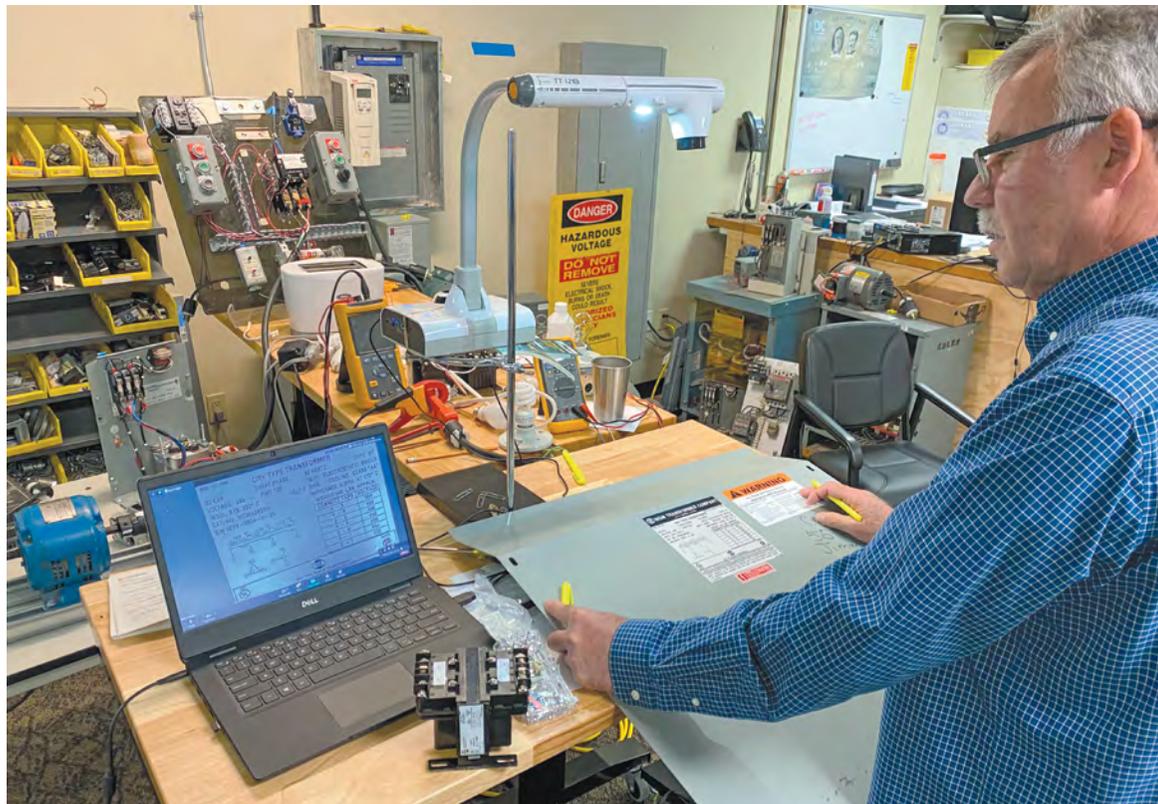
They also installed Enos interactive whiteboards with overhead projectors, which allowed instructors to observe and grade apprentices on various tasks, whether it was bending pipe or working with conduit.

“Having to piecemeal everything in, I expected us to really skin our knees and have some glaring hitches,” Chursin said. “We did have a few, but nothing we couldn’t handle.”

Because the pandemic is ongoing, Chursin said he expects to use a similar system when apprentices return later this summer. He also thinks virtual learning will play an increasingly important role after the pandemic ends.

Still, he’s not quite ready to call it the wave of the future, especially for a local in an urban area. Some Local 6 apprentices drive nearly two hours from Sacramento for classes but many live in or near San Francisco.

“I actually would suggest that people slow the roll a little bit,” he said. “Let’s see what happens and how this plays out. We do have blended learning we use all the time, but I don’t see butts in the seats



San Francisco JATC instructors Bart Murray, above, and Christie Peterson, right, are just a few of the many instructors across North America who have moved to training online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

changing. Our people can get here [to the JATC once the pandemic ends].”

Even the best infectious disease experts have a hard time predicting how long the pandemic will last. That makes predicting the impact it will have on construction and apprenticeship education difficult, said Al Davis, an international representative and former business manager of Las Vegas Local 357.

But Davis hopes it does not have the same impact as the economic crash in 2008, which set the construction industry reeling. Many JATCs cut back heavily on apprenticeship education because of that. Some even eliminated classes entirely for a year or two.

Because of that, the IBEW and other construction unions struggled to meet the demand for workers when the economy rebounded, especially as baby boomers began to retire.

“That is a concern,” Davis said. “I’m of the belief you always have to take an apprenticeship class, but it’s a balancing act. You are making a commitment to that young man or woman that they’ll be paid over the next five years and they’ll have the skills to go to work.”

Like others, Davis thinks the emphasis on virtual learning will increase due to the pandemic and the aftermath. That’s good in one sense because it will increase time apprentices can take part in hands-on work, he said.

But he hopes it doesn’t take away from the camaraderie apprentices often have with their classmates.

“It was always a big deal for everyone to be in the same room,” Davis said. “When

we finished every year, we would take them all out back for a big barbecue. You hope you don’t lose things like that.”

Added Richard: “Anything we can do that streamlines the process without compromising the delivery of the curriculum, and affords the JATCs more hands-on instruction, is a good thing. The curriculum is essential, but hands-on application and essential skills is really what makes a good apprentice and a good wireman.”

In his role, Stafford has seen apprenticeships often compared to traditional higher education in this country — something that isn’t quite accurate.

The Electrical Training Alliance and the JATCs answer to the Labor Department, not the Education Department, like colleges and universities do. Their essential mission is to ensure apprentices have the skills to succeed on a job site immediately after advancing to journeyman status. Colleges have no such charge, even after offering a degree, he noted.

As long as that is the focus, he’s confident apprenticeship education will make the needed adjustments.

“The training will always be here,” said Stafford, who is a journeyman wireman and also has a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Louisiana



State University. “We’ll find a model that will succeed and make it work for our local training instructors. We’ll strike the right model to make sure our apprentices have the tools to be successful journeyman wiremen and linemen.” ■

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