

THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1893

CONSTRUCTION • UTILITIES • TELECOMMUNICATIONS • MANUFACTURING • GOVERNMENT • BROADCASTING • RAILROAD

Printed in the USA

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Vol. 15 | No. 5 | May 2021

IBEW News



The President and the Lineman
Pittsburgh Member at Heart of Infrastructure Rollout **3**

What Happened in Texas?

Explaining the 2021 Power Crisis **4**

In This Issue

Editorials **2**

Letters to the Editor **2**

My IBEW Story **2**

North of 49° **7**

Politics & Jobs **8**

Circuits **9**

Transitions **10**

Grounded in History **12**

In Memoriam **13**

Local Lines **14**

Spotlight on Safety **19**

Who We Are **20**

World's Largest Grid-Storage Project Comes Online in California



Castroville, Calif., Local 234 members installed 400 megawatts of batteries in a shuttered oil generation plant, enough to power 250,000 homes for four hours. Battery storage at this scale helps to address some of the challenges intermittent renewable generation create for the grid.

The twin smokestacks of Moss Landing power station have been a landmark on the Monterey Bay coast for more than 50 years. They tower over the bright green fields of artichokes and are visible from Santa Cruz to Monterey.

But members of Castroville, Calif., Local 234 recently transformed those towers into a global landmark, turning an outdated oil-burning power station into a cutting-edge step toward solving the North American power grid's biggest problem.

Over the last year, more than 135 Local 234 members filled the cavernous hall of the decommissioned power station with enough batteries to power nearly a quarter million houses for up to four hours.

At 400 megawatts, Moss Landing became the largest grid-scale storage facility in the world when it was commissioned by PG&E in December. It far outstrips the previous record holder, the 250 MW Gateway Energy Storage facility in San Diego that came



IBEW-BUILT

online last year.

For scale, in 2018, just 311 MW of grid-scale lithium-ion battery storage was brought online in total.

"It is a sight to see for sure," Local 234 Business Manager Lamont Adams said of Moss Landing's sea of battery racks.

For this first phase, Adams said, workers cleared the original powerhouse to hold nearly 100,000 batteries, 22 in each rack, wired in series with safety modules between each rack. The installation's weight overwhelmed the floor, which was designed to hold turbines, so the structure had to be reinforced and rebuilt to hold 12,000 tons.

"Those DC batteries are no joke. They are heavy, and DC power can be very dangerous if you don't know what you are doing," he said.

The Moss Landing project has the potential to keep growing and providing more jobs in the future. The plant's owner, Vistra Energy, said the location could expand battery capacity up to 1,600 MW/6,000 MWh, a boon to the small local which primarily serves the agricultural communities of the Central Coast.

The higher wages and never-ending walk-throughs at San Jose Local 332 and San Francisco Local 6 are a constant pull for Local 234 members, Adams said. Having a reliable, high-scale job close by has made the choice to stay home a lot easier.

Once all the construction is finished, Local 234 will hand it off to their brothers and sisters at Vacaville Local 1245, who will run and maintain the facility for employer PG&E.

Solving the Grid's Biggest Problem

"The North American power grid is the most complicated and expensive machine in human history. It is also the most important to our economy, but it wasn't designed for intermittent generation like solar and wind," said Utility Director Donnie Colston. "Grid-scale storage is not only one of the ways we bridge that gap, but like at Moss Landing, it is evidence that decarbonizing power generation can provide good jobs."

For most of the history of the U.S. power grid there was no way to keep energy in reserve for later use. Every megawatt that left a generation station had to be used at that moment.

GRID-STORAGE PROJECT *continued on page 6*

THE IBEW's
2021 PHOTO CONTEST

Deadline: Oct. 1
See page 6 for details

FROM THE OFFICERS

A Lifetime of Work



Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

By now you've heard about President Biden's American Jobs Plan, and you'll hear a lot more about the details from us over the upcoming weeks and months.

It's hard to pick out the highlights from a \$2 trillion proposal that will transform the country and touch every branch of this union for the rest of our work lives, but it is worth taking a little time to understand the truth.

Included in the proposal is \$600 billion for improvements to our roads, bridges, ports and highways, including \$174 billion to accelerate the electrification of the transportation sector and \$80 billion for our neglected rail sector.

There's at least \$300 billion for grid modernization, including thousands of miles of new transmission lines, and \$100 billion for broadband expansion specifically targeting underserved rural communities.

Another \$300 billion is planned to modernize our manufacturing sector and to provide the parts and equipment needed for all the other infrastructure spending because of President Biden's "Buy American" requirements.

Every dollar in this plan is backed with the strongest labor protections of any federal legislation yet written. Not only is prevailing wage built into every line item, but the right to form a union on any federally funded project is central to the proposal.

Not only are we going to get it done, it's going to get done union.

It doesn't matter how you voted. This is the investment in the United States that has been put off since most of us were kids.

You will be asked to call your senators and representatives in the days ahead.

Please do it. If you have ever taken your kids to the doctor on a union medical plan in a vehicle bought with a union salary or looked forward to a union retirement, then you owe it to future working men and women to pick up the phone and fight for this plan like you'd fight for your own family.

This is enough work to last from apprenticeship to retirement not just for you, but for tens of thousands of new union members in our brotherhood alone.

This bill means hundreds of thousands of jobs for construction members, but also for our members in utility, telecom, railroad and broadcasting.

Maybe the biggest impact will be felt by our manufacturing members who have watched for decades as we stopped making things in North America.

This bill should have the support of every single member of Congress, regardless of party. It won't, of course, because the "game" of politics means too much to some of our elected leaders.

But failing to support an investment in America — in American workers — is not an option.

The president has put forward a bold plan to create good union jobs and to return the U.S. to global leadership, and the IBEW will be at the front of the crowd demanding Congress make it law. ■

On Brotherhood

If the last year has taught us anything, it's that none of us can make it on our own. That's the entire point of the labor movement; that we're stronger when we work together, whether that's at the bargaining table, on the job or going about our daily lives.

It's why I've been so proud over the past year to see members and local unions pitching in to help your communities and fellow working families, many of whom have really struggled during this pandemic. From food drives to feed hungry families to putting our expertise to good use upgrading community buildings and so much more, so many of you have volunteered to help out those in need.

And even more of you have been doing it since long before COVID-19 reared its ugly head and made everything more difficult. Thank you to each and every one of you for all you have done and will continue to do in the name of the IBEW.

But I'm not just talking about the good work in our communities. So many of you do good work right at home in your local unions, volunteering your time for organizing campaigns, serving on committees, offering good ideas and constructive feedback and pitching in whenever asked.

You know, we talk a lot about the word "brotherhood" — it's right there in our name — but how many of us really know what it means? How many of us show up to work each day and live out everything that it implies?

When I call someone my brother or my sister, that carries weight. It means I've got your back and you've got mine. It means we can count on one another in times of need.

For most people, a job is a job. It's a paycheck, a way to put food on the table and pay the bills. And that's important, of course. But belonging to a union, to a brotherhood, a sisterhood, adds something else that's impossible to quantify in a paycheck or a retirement account.

We share a bond with one another that holds us to a higher standard. We swear an oath when we become members of the IBEW; you don't do that in just any job.

The point I'm making is that it's easy to show up and complain, and it's simple to focus on getting what's yours at the expense of those around you. But that's not what we signed up for when we became members of the greatest union in the world.

We're here because we know the power of brotherhood, of a collective fight for what we deserve as working people. I am my brother's and my sister's keeper.

We are so much stronger when we're all working together. Thank you for showing up and living out the meaning of "brotherhood" every day. ■



Kenneth W. Cooper
International Secretary-Treasurer

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remembering an Old Friend

I just received the March edition of The Electrical Worker and was saddened to read the wonderful article about the passing of John Hunter.

I can vouch for everything said about John. As a former business manager and negotiations committee member of Local 551, John was our International Office representative for years. He helped us through many tough negotiations and through some tumultuous times in our local in the late '90s and early 2000s.

He always was the consummate gentleman and professional in the room. You couldn't help but love John after spending a very short time with him. He was so genuine, cool and calm and funny. John loved to eat, and his favorite restaurant in our area was Willybirds, a local landmark establishment serving turkey-type dinners and lunches 365 days a year. John always had to eat there every time he came to town; it wasn't even debatable!

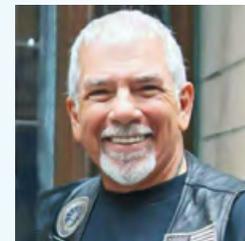
I will miss him and his contagious smile and attitude. He was truly a great man and brother!

*Steve Benjamin, Local 551 retiree
Santa Rosa, Calif.*

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.

My IBEW STORY

Stanley Stade, Retired Journeyman Wireman New York Local 3



“I was attending Queens College in October 1968 when my uncle, Al Migliozi, a Local 3 member, talked to me about stopping by the Joint Board to apply for an apprenticeship. It was just down the block from school, so I submitted an application and began the most fulfilling journey of my life.

On Feb. 4, 1969, I reported to my first job as a first-year apprentice at Turchin Electric. I began to meet the best mechanics who taught me to be a good electrician. With that knowledge, by the time I reached my journeyman year, I was a full-fledged journeyman and lucky enough to be assigned to a building where I served as the building electrician. I was working by myself and furthering my experience.

Through many years as a mechanic, sub-foreman, foreman and superintendent, I always brought the quality and excellence of the IBEW to the job. I was fortunate enough to meet and learn from some great leaders, including Harry Van Arsdale Jr., Thomas Van Arsdale and Christopher Erikson and many more who guided me through my life of unionism.

Now retired, and a proud member of the IBEW for 52 years, I still give back to the greatest union in the world through union functions, and especially through the Local 3 Motorcycle Club. We work with organizations like the Special Olympics and the New York-based programs for adults and children with autism AABR and QSAC.

All I am as a person and a brother, I owe to the IBEW and Local Union 3. Thank God for unions.”

Every member in every branch has a story to tell about how the IBEW has improved their life both on and off the job. Tell us yours today for a chance to be featured here.

ibew.org/MyIBEWStory

The President and the Lineman

The gravity of what he had to do that afternoon really didn't occur to Pittsburgh Local 29 member Mike Fiore until he was making pancakes for his wife, Julie, and kids, Victor Jr. and Capri.

"I woke up and it didn't cross my mind. But then I was like, 'Holy [cow], I am addressing the entire world and introducing the president in three hours,'" he said. "Little Mike Fiore from Western Pennsylvania — this is what you are about to do."

President Joe Biden was introducing the largest and most consequential proposal of his presidency, a \$2 trillion infrastructure plan that would transform the country and put union labor at the heart of that transformation, and he wanted a union worker to be the first to speak about what it would mean to the union trades — of the millions of jobs it would create if passed by Congress.

The White House reached out to the IBEW because electrical work will be at the heart of nearly every project the plan sets in motion. Local 29 Business Manager Kenn Bradley turned to Fiore. He was a lineman, a young father, and the transmission and distribution representative on the local executive board — a perfect fit.

Fiore said, "Thanks, but no thanks."

His dad, Victor, made more sense; the 50-year pin holder and recently retired president of Local 29 had given hundreds of political speeches. But that wasn't Mike Fiore, at least not in his own mind.

"You know that movie 'Talladega Nights,' where Will Ferrell is giving a press conference and he forgets how to talk? 'I don't know what to do with my hands. Car go fast,'" he said. "I was going to be a meme."

But after he talked to his wife, he thought about what it meant. The first voice announcing that this country was going back to what actually worked, back to investing in itself, back to promoting union labor, it could come from a guy with a broad western Pennsylvania accent who missed birthdays and anniversaries to work overtime for his family.

"How do you not get on board with that?" he said.

Once he said yes he said he prepared himself for when word got out. Most of the responses were jokes to keep it from getting too heavy. But there was a definite divide with the people who supported the previous president.

There have been plenty of times when guys in hard hats stood behind the people in suits over the last few years, like they were flags or plants. Symbols.

"When is that last time you saw a union guy like us up there talking?" he said.

That was enough to hold off the nerves, he said, until that breakfast, and then nothing helped. No matter who told him "You got this" or "You'll knock it out of the park," the nerves kicked in.

Not when he got to the Carpenter's local training center, not when he spoke to the IBEW staff, the president's staff. Not when they showed him the lectern where he would speak or the seat he would take when he was done and the president took over for him.

For him, "It didn't work," Fiore said.

It didn't click until he was standing next to the president himself.

"He walked straight up to me, stuck out his elbow and said it was an honor to meet me," Fiore said. "It was — I keep looking for the right word: Surreal? Unfathomable?"

Fiore can't remember the small talk, but he asked Biden if he was nervous about this day when he woke up, because Fiore sure was nervous now.

"He said he would be nervous about doing my job and then he told me a story about how he used to stutter, and I didn't know that, and that he worked



Pittsburgh Local 29 member Mike Fiore, a lineman for Duquesne Light, introduced President Joe Biden and his \$2 trillion plan to rebuild America March 31. He was back working three 12-hour shifts Easter weekend.

through it. I've talked with a lot of politicians and you can tell when they are saying whatever you want to hear and looking for someone else to talk to. This was sincere," Fiore said. "In the whole grand scheme it was the president that put me at ease."

Fiore stood up. Told the world who he was. What he did. About his family and about his union and about a plan that he believed would build a worthy American future.

The president thanked him, told the world that he would be nervous doing Fiore's job and then laid out a plan that will fill history books when it passes.

And some of the hundreds of texts he got in the next few days were from his brothers and sisters who voted a different way, most saying something like, "Like it or not, that was awesome. Thank you."

"That was important," Fiore said. "Like an inkling of hope set into them."

Read more about President Biden's historic infrastructure announcement on [IBEW.org](https://www.ibeew.org) and look for many more details in next month's *Electrical Worker*. ■



Detroit 'History-Maker' Featured Alongside Vice President

Detroit Local 58 member Felicia Wiseman joined a diverse set of women recently in the Lifetime special "Women Making History," including Vice President Kamala Harris.

"It was an honor to be included on the same show as so many other accomplished women," said Wiseman, who teaches at Detroit's A. Philip Randolph Career and Technical Center. "Anytime I can represent Local 58 and the IBEW, I will."

"Women Making History" aired on March 30 as part of the channel's celebration of Women's History Month.

"Felicia is a great ambassador," said Local 58 Business Manager Brian Richard. "She embodies the IBEW, and beyond just the duties of the job."

The special included an exclusive interview with Harris about the influence of various women in her life. Interspersed with the vice president were stories of women, including nurses working on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic, an immunologist who worked on Moderna's coronavirus vaccine, a Nobel Prize nominee, and a Golden Globe-winning actress.

For Wiseman, a journeyman inside wireman and Local 58 treasurer, the experience was a great way to provide some much-needed visibility for women in the trades.

"One of my passions has always been to expose young people, especially inner-city kids and especially females, to the path of, 'This is how you become an electrician; this is how you become a tradesperson,'" she said in the special.

Wiseman credits International President Lonnie R. Stephenson with the opportunity to be included in the Lifetime special.

"It's a testament to all he's doing, in D.C. and elsewhere, that I was even considered for the show," Wiseman said. "I'm grateful for that."

The wide-ranging backgrounds of the women showcased the numerous ways



Detroit Local 58 member Felicia Wiseman was featured in a Lifetime special, "Women Making History," that included Vice President Kamala Harris.

in which women are making history every day. While some of those trailblazers are high-profile politicians and performers, many more are making a difference far outside the spotlight. But a common thread they all share is the experience of being a woman and a strong desire to forge new paths for the girls who are coming after them. As Harris' mother told her growing up, "You may be the first to do many things. Make sure you're not the last."

"Some people just want to go to work and go home, and that's fine," Wiseman said. "But there are so many opportunities available to you, especially in the union, if you choose to get involved. You just need to be bold enough to ask for it." ■

Everyone Knew it Was Coming

The Texas Power Crisis of 2021 and What Needs to Happen Now

Nearly 5 million Texans lost power Valentine's Day weekend, most for days as temperatures plunged to minus 2 degrees Fahrenheit in Dallas, colder than Anchorage, Alaska.

Demand for power to heat frigid homes set a winter record in the state.

Then catastrophe struck as, one after another, more than 180 coal, gas, nuclear and wind generators went offline, each one crippled by the cold.

Natural gas production plummeted in west Texas, reducing pressure at gas plants below the level they needed to function. Meters froze, destroying pumps and other equipment. Certain gasses began to liquify and clog in uninsulated pipelines. Coal piles froze back into solid mountains. Discharge pipelines for plant cooling froze at one of the units at the South Texas Project nuclear plant, shutting it down.

At the height of the crisis, nearly half of the Texas system's generating capacity — 52,000 megawatts out of roughly 108,000 — was forced offline, according to data from the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, the nonprofit that runs the power grid for 90% of Texas. El Paso is on another grid, as is the upper panhandle and a chunk of East Texas.

Inside ERCOT's control room, grid operators watched in horror as the frequency on the grid began to fall below the nominal level of 60 hertz.

For more than four minutes it stayed there, falling as low as 59.3 hertz. Had it stayed there for just over four more minutes, the grid itself would have begun to damage the plants and equipment that were still functioning, potentially triggering an uncontrolled grid shutdown with no clear path to restoration.

"If you have a motor and it is spinning and you put more load on it, it will spin slower, sort of like if you are pedaling up a hill on your bike," said Joshua Worthey, a nuclear equipment operator at the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant in Glen Rose and a member of Ft. Worth Local 220. He was not on duty at the time but talked with his brothers and sisters who were.

"The large motors are not designed to operate when the frequency gets out of band like that, and they will start to tear themselves apart. We had entered a timeline where we were two, three minutes from shutting down," he said.

If Comanche went dark and its 2,500 megawatts disappeared, it could have taken the whole grid down. And power plants need power from the grid to run. The lights, the equipment, the computers, they all run off the grid like any other building.

"If the whole grid goes dark, then it would be like trying to start your car with no battery. They would have had to bring in emergency diesels on trucks just to start us up again. And with us being nuclear, we would have to wait until other generators had started up and the grid had stabilized," Worthey said.

As terrible as things were in those few days, the disaster could have been much worse: the nation's second-largest state could have been in the dark for weeks, possibly months.

"That is the thing we cannot allow to happen," said then-ERCOT CEO Bill Magness in the days immediately after the crisis. "If we have a blackout of the system, the system is out for an indeterminate amount of time and it's extraordinarily difficult to bring it back."

In ERCOT's pre-winter report the absolute worst-case-scenario assumed demand would peak around 58,000 megawatts and 8,600 megawatts of generation would be knocked offline.

In reality, demand peaked at 77,000 megawatts in the season when demand is usually lowest.



Demand in the scorching Texas summer regularly tops 125,000 megawatts.

But the problem wasn't the demand. It wasn't power lines sagging and breaking under a blanket of ice. Transmission and distribution worked. It was a failure of generation.

"In a storm of this nature it is usually transmission that goes down, not generation," Utility Director Donnie Colston said. "T&D stayed up and intact and was waiting on generation."

At the darkest moments, the grid was 34,000 megawatts short of demand, according to ERCOT. In one single calamitous 30-minute span on a Sunday morning, 26,000 megawatts disappeared from Texas' power grid.

"This was not a surprising event. It is a tragic event. But it wasn't surprising. I told my mom the week before there would be blackouts," Worthey said.

In some cases, it wasn't loss of gas supply or frequency drop, but equipment failure.

The South Texas Project nuclear generating station lost an entire unit dropping 1,280 megawatts from the grid. The cause was reported as a loss of steam pressure by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission but, Worthey said, there was never a loss. The problem was that a small pipe off the main feed where cooling water intake pressure is measured was uninsulated.

"One of the flow instruments froze; there never was a real drop in flow in the main feeder pipe. It was a loss of indication to computers, but once you have more than one or two signals drop out the computer will shut down," Worthey said. "In colder climates, those pipes are insulated."

At 2 a.m., ERCOT ordered utilities to dump load, blacking out millions. In total, ERCOT ordered the black-out of 20,000 megawatts, what Bloomberg reported was the largest forced power outage in U.S. history.

"We excluded anything critical, any circuit that had hospital or police," said Paula Gold-Williams, CEO of CPS, the utility that serves San Antonio.

As many as 5 million homes and businesses were abruptly thrust into frigid darkness for nearly four straight days. Power was cut not only to homes and businesses but to the compressor stations that power natural gas



When temperatures in Texas fell below Anchorage, the ERCOT power grid (left) nearly collapsed and millions were plunged into darkness, including huge sections of Houston (above, before, during the crisis).



pipelines — further cutting off the flow of supplies to power plants, according to the Wall Street Journal.

Seventh District International Representative Chris Wagner, former business manager of Austin Local 520 and lifelong resident of the city, never lost power because, he believes, his family lives near a fire house. But his wife's sister and her family and his mother-in-law did lose power. They came to stay at Wagner's house.

Then the faucets went dry.

"As the water pressure started to fall, we filled up five-gallon buckets and the bathtub, as much as we could before they went dry," he said.

For four days, some bottles and whatever snow they could melt was the only water eight adults had.

"We filled the crawfish pot with snow and had it running 24/7 just so we could flush the toilets," Wagner said. "It wasn't easy but many, many people I had it far worse than we did."

More than 30 Texans died, including Cristian Piñeda, an 11-year-old boy who froze to death in an unheated trailer while trying to keep his three-year-old brother warm. It was 12 degrees when Cristian's mother put him to bed Feb. 15.

The fallout from the catastrophic failure was swift. Magness was fired. The head of the Texas Public Utility

Commission resigned along with five members of its board of directors.

Within a week, investigations had been launched by both houses of the Texas Legislature, the attorney general, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

And while Texas had it worst, the state was far from alone in struggling with the frigid temperatures. Power failures extended out of ERCOT, affecting thousands of utility customers in Kansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. People as far away as the Great Lakes lost power. At least 20 more died across the U.S. in seven states. Over 300 people were hospitalized from carbon monoxide exposure from using grills or cars or other devices to try to stay warm.

But for most people outside Texas, blackouts were brief. What was it about Texas that made everything so much worse?

The Lone Star Grid

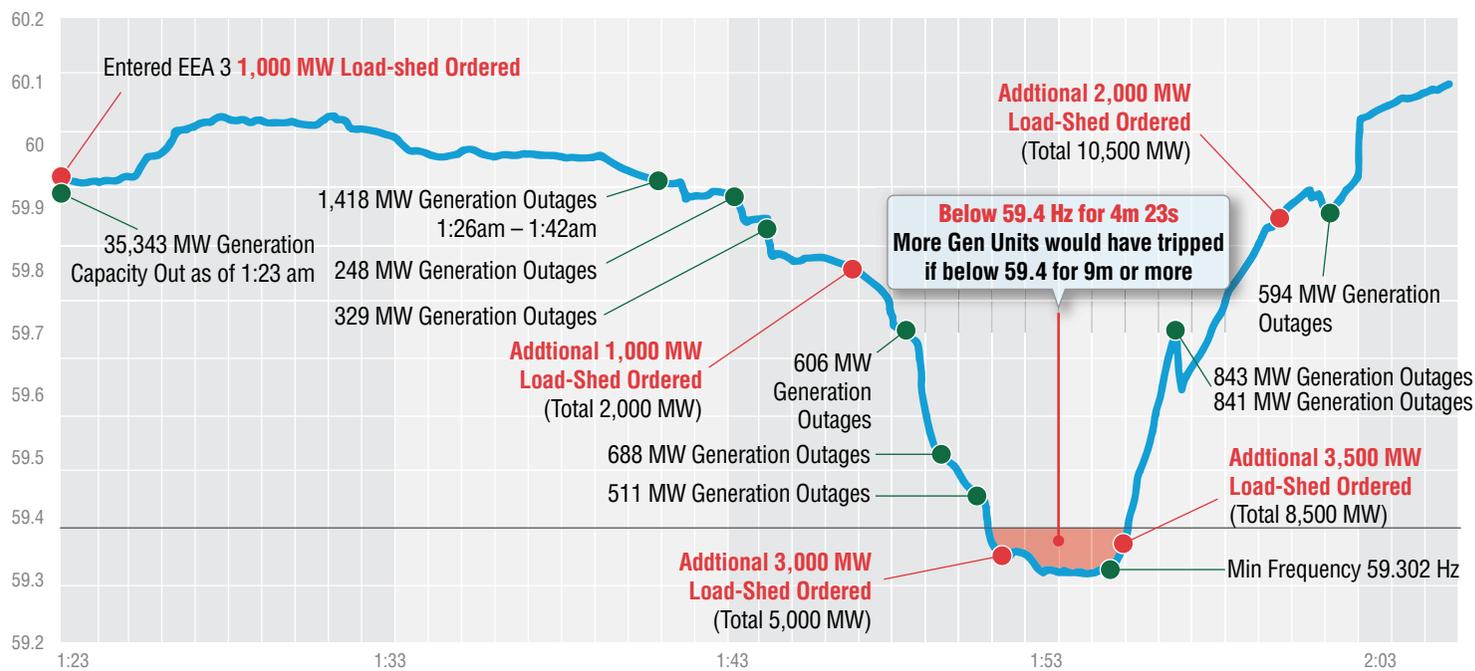
As he watched the outages roll across Texas, Seventh District International Representative Todd Newkirk thought back to a pamphlet the IBEW printed up back in the late '90s when "deregulation" was the rage.

Credit: Creative Commons / Flickr user Jonathan Culter

Credit: Joshua Stevens

Credit: Joshua Stevens

As Generation Fell, Grid Frequency Fell, Threatening a Total Collapse



Source: ERCOT



Credit: ERCOT

ERCOT grid operators dumped at least 20,000 megawatts of demand, likely the largest forced power outage in U.S. history. Texas came within 9 minutes of a regional blackout that could have lasted weeks or even months.

“It was called, ‘Will Electric Deregulation Short Circuit America’ and we talked about all this,” Newkirk said. “I used to have boxes of them in my car and handed them out to everyone and we laid it all out. Before Enron, before this; all the chaos is what we forecast.”

Utility-grade power is unlike nearly any other commodity. Except for a relative-few pumped hydroelectric reservoirs and a growing handful of early-stage battery storage facilities, there is no way to warehouse or bank energy for the future. If you want power now, you have to make it now.

Under normal circumstances and for most Americans, if a power station nearby goes down, the grid simply serves up power generated somewhere else. Most Americans live in either the Eastern or Western Interconnects, vast webs of transmission and distribution lines divided roughly by the Rocky Mountains.

These interconnects are further broken down into Regional Transmission Organizations, with names like CAISO, MISO and PJM, which oversee the integration of local distribution grids, customers, transmission and independent generators.

The federal government first started to set the rules for those connections when Franklin D. Roosevelt was president. Every state signed on to this idea: in

exchange for greater resilience and reliability, there would be a new layer of federal regulation that would set the rules of the road.

Every state except Texas. With its huge supplies of fossil fuels and self-confidence, Texas made itself an electrical island. Texas regulators never let its grid stray across state lines

The state could make its own rules as long as it lived on its island. The rules are set by the state Public Utility Commission for energy. The Texas Railroad Commission handles gas regulation. For the last 20 years, since Texas unleashed market-based reforms in its rawest form, the buying and selling of power in Texas has been handled by ERCOT.

By design, federal regulators have no say and no sway in Texas.

The market they built is the simplest possible. The only way a power generator makes money is by selling power. There is no money to be made in building emergency capacity; many other independent system operators and regional transmission organizations allow what are called capacity payments, but not ERCOT.

“When utilities owned their own generation, they made sure they could cover their customers. But it’s all generated by third parties now and they have no similar

commitment,” Colston said.

There is no regulation in Texas requiring generators to produce a minimal amount of energy, as other markets do, nor is there a body that can require generators to winterize, nor can any organization require that more capacity be built. Market signals and only market signals determined the size, shape, location and cost of the Texas power grid.

The thinking of the deregulators was that market incentives alone would be enough to convince generators to prepare for worst-case scenarios. If they set the maximum legal price for energy at some unimaginably high level — they settled on \$9,000 per megawatt-hour when it normally hovers just about \$25 — ERCOT believed some company would see it was worthwhile to build for the outlying opportunity. If you were the only company selling power when the price was that high, you would make a killing.

But not one of them did. In the end, the generators that could produce with their normal equipment did, and the ones who couldn’t paid no price for producing nothing.

“Generation could not magically appear, and the price signals did not stabilize the situation,” wrote Patrick Woodson, chief executive of Green Energy Exchange, a retail electricity provider in Texas.

The generators that somehow stayed online hit the jackpot. Some of the “lucky” people whose power stayed on and had chosen the variable pricing programs in the power marketplace were stuck with utility bills in the tens of thousands of dollars.

“When you pay just for the cheapest system, that’s all you will ever get. Not inexpensive power. Not reliable or resilient power. Just cheap,” Colston said. “Cheap doesn’t mean an honest deal for customers; profits are coming out no matter what. All you get yourself is the cheapest. And in this particular case, cheap killed people.”

In actuality, it hasn’t even been that cheap. Since the energy marketplace was created in 1996, individual Texans have chosen among a blizzard of private energy providers. It’s so complicated that there are consultants whose only job is helping people navigate the marketplace.

“Somehow individual Texans are supposed to get a better deal than utilities,” Colston said.

The evidence is that they can’t. Even before the

immense — in some cases immeasurable — losses of the blackouts, a Wall Street Journal analysis of data from the federal Energy Information Agency found that, since 2004, Texans with retail electricity providers have paid \$28 billion more than Texans who buy their power from traditional utilities.

Overpaying for What?

In 2011, during the Super Bowl, record cold temperatures caused Texas-wide blackouts. Something similar happened in 1989.

Reports warned it would happen again unless the gas distribution and power generation systems were winterized to handle the high-cost, low-probability cold snap.

In the last 12 months, the two largest states in the U.S. with power systems that function under rules that could not be more different had massive opposite extreme weather-related power failures.

Heavily regulated and interconnected California was knocked out by heat waves, free-market Texas by a cold snap.

The cause was different, but on closer examination, they were not that dissimilar.

“If the problem was a simple one of policy difference — too much or too little regulation; too much fossil generation or more renewables — either Texas or California would have kept the lights on. But neither did,” Colston said.

What they have in common is a decades-long national abandonment of investment.

“We support construction of all new generation sources, but the market has to be able to look past how cheaply a megawatt can be built,” Colston said. “There are other priorities like the lives of customers during cold snaps like what Texas experienced. Markets must be changed to reward baseload that is the foundation for everything else.”

Colston said this includes capacity pricing and rewards for grid services provided by baseload generation like frequency smoothing and black-start capacity that renewable and gas generation rely on but don’t pay for. There should also, he said, be some kind of penalty for regular producers that disappear in emergencies.

But, Colston said, price signals are not enough either. Where the carrot hasn’t worked, the stick must be tried. Regulations should be passed requiring generation in emergencies and hardening of the gas distribution system. Consumer markets for electricity must also be rethought given all the evidence that they are bad deals for consumers and utilities.

On an even larger scale, despite billions of dollars of investment by utilities, the U.S. is still far behind where it needs to be.

“The reality is that we have gone two generations without sufficient investment in our power grid,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. “President Biden has delivered us a far-reaching, comprehensive infrastructure plan that includes major upgrades to our nation’s power grid. We are going to fight like hell to get that through Congress.”

We have lived off the infrastructure investment our grandparents made after World War II for too long, he said.

“Only a mix of investment, regulation and market reform will prevent another disaster like what happened in Texas,” he said. “IBEW members stand ready to advise and, more importantly, build and run this nation’s next-generation grid to make sure this never happens again.” ■

Continued from page 1

World's Largest Grid-Storage Project Comes Online in California

But that wasn't a drawback as long as both supply and demand were reasonably predictable, and for the most part, they are. Yearly power demand peaks in summer when air conditioners are running full blast. Daily energy use peaks, outside of anomalies like a global pandemic, when commuters get home and a nation cooks its dinners, turns on its lights and flips on its televisions. Variation happened, but within relatively small bands, and long-term growth was on the scale of years.

Power production was, if anything, more predictable. The majority was supplied by baseload generation that was nearly always on and at the same level, mostly massive turbines spun up by steam from boilers heated by coal, nuclear and natural gas. When demand spiked, less efficient peaker plants — usually powered by natural gas — would spin up quickly and make up the difference.

Renewables are different. They produce most of their power when demand is low and switch off when demand peaks. As renewables penetrate more deeply, if no changes are made, that variability goes from a nuisance to a genuine problem for two reasons.

First, the misalignment of demand and supply will simply be harder to cover. Baseload coal and nuclear plants can't just turn on and serve up power on demand when the sun sets. Building more peaker plants — as is happening — solves some of the problem, but they are less efficient in general, especially compared to nuclear.

Second, because renewables produce energy so cheaply, they make legacy baseload generation economically unsustainable. So even though the grid needs the power baseload sources produce, the market won't pay them enough to stay in business.

"We are going to build more and more renewables. We need to make it more reliable," Colston said. "Every baseload generation plant that shuts down because the economics don't make sense makes our power grid more precarious."

Today, the most economic storage system is pumped hydroelectric — using excess power to fill reservoirs and then letting the water run back out when the power is needed — but that can only work in some locations, and very few of those are near desert solar farms.

There are dozens of possibilities being used, including molten salts super-



Local 234 members installed nearly 100,000 batteries, 22 in each rack, weighing nearly 12,000 tons in total.



Building Where the Infrastructure Exists

To meet its carbon-free goal, California will need hundreds more megawatts of storage, and the IBEW will be a major part of making that happen.

Reusing decommissioned fossil fuel plants is common because they are increasingly vacant large industrial sites with existing transmission infrastructure in place. But more and more, generators are siting storage on the solar and wind farms where the energy is produced.

Driving it is a state procurement mandate of 1.8 GW of energy storage, 500 MW of which must be behind-the-meter and 1 GW of which the California PUC is targeting for installation by 2026.

The partially complete 500 MW Maverick solar-storage project in the jurisdiction of Riverside Local 440 is likely to overtake Moss Landing, but probably not for long.

Los Angeles Local 11 and Dublin Local 595 each have major storage projects done, underway or on the books.

And the growth of storage is not limited to the West Coast.

New Jersey is on track to procure 600 MW of storage by the end of this year, rising to 2 GW by 2030, said Third District International Representative Wyatt Earp.

In New York, any hope of meeting the state's zero-emissions target of 2040 is expected to require 1.8 GWh of storage by 2025 and 3 GWh by 2030.

But even if an extensive network of storage is built, there is still a place for a diverse generation portfolio, Colston said.

Battery projects, he said, are crucial to solving some of the problems renewables create, but much more has to be done to save existing baseload generation, expand the transmission grid and reform markets that collapse under entirely predictable stresses.

"This facility is a model for the future and fantastic news, but we still need an answer for baseload generation now," Colston said. "As Langston Hughes said, 'We cannot live on tomorrow's bread.'" ■

THE IBEW's 2021 PHOTO CONTEST

Enter Today!
Deadline: Oct. 1

1st Place: \$200

2nd Place: \$150

3rd Place: \$100

Honorable
Mention: \$50

The 2021 IBEW Photo Contest is here, and with it a chance to show your union sisters and brothers what being a member of the greatest union in the world means to you. So, grab your cameras and smartphones and get to it! We want to see your best shots of 2021. See below for rules and details, and as always, contact us at media@ibew.org for more information.

Photo Contest Rules:

1. The contest is open to active or retired IBEW members only. The person submitting the photo must be the person who took the photograph. Members may enter up to five photos each.
2. International officers and staff are not eligible.
3. Photos MUST be submitted as digital files of at least 300 dpi, measuring 1,200 by 1,800 pixels at minimum, in color or black and white. Larger files of at least 2,200 pixels are encouraged.
4. All submissions become property of the IBEW Media Department.
5. Photo entries must have an IBEW theme of some sort, with IBEW members at work, engaged in a union-related activity or featuring subjects conveying images of the electrical industry or the union.
6. If members are featured in the photo, they should be identified. If large groups are pictured, the name of the group or the purpose of the gathering (e.g., a safety committee, a linemen's rodeo, a union meeting) can be submitted in place of individual names.
7. Photos previously published in IBEW publications or on the website are not eligible for submission.
8. **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.
9. Up to 15 finalists will be selected and posted on IBEW.org for final judging by the public. The winners will be featured in a future issue of the Electrical Worker.

NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

Federal Funding Enhances Training, Opens Doors to More Members

IBEW local unions in Canada received millions in funding as part of the federal government's Union Training Innovation Program to support union-based apprenticeship training.

The grants were awarded for programs judged to be innovative and that enhanced partnerships with Red Seal trades. Local unions receiving funds were Kingston, Ontario, Local 115; Victoria, British Columbia, Local 230; Toronto Local 353; Thunder Bay, Ontario, Local 402; Edmonton, Alberta, Local 424; Saint John, New Brunswick, Local 502; Ottawa Local 586; Halifax, Nova Scotia, Local 625; Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804; Kamloops, British Columbia, Local 993; and Regina, Saskatchewan, Local 2038.

In addition, all local unions in the western provinces jointly received funding to provide training for their construction electricians to receive endorsements for large generator motor winding.

Local 230 again received funding through the Western Joint Electrical Training Society for its Workplace Alternative Trades Training program, which has brought in traditionally underrepresented groups into the IBEW. The local received \$4.2 million in total.

Business Manager Phil Venoit said the program, known as WATT, had about 100 participants in a pre-apprenticeship program during its first year. Of those, 93 went on to full apprenticeships. The vast majority became Local 230 members, with some becoming members of Local 993 or Nelson, British Columbia, Local 1003.

Venoit, who was recently appointed to the International Executive Council, noted that WATT is an example of the IBEW meeting its commitments to diversity and inclusion expressed in resolutions passed at the 2016 International Convention.

"The government looks for programs that lead from training to direct hire and we provide that link," he said. "We are the answer to that. We can do all the training, then dispatch people to work."

All the local unions went through a thorough review process, many with the help of the National Electrical Trade Council, which also received funding as part of the UTIP program. First District International Vice President Thomas Reid is president of the council, which supports and protects the Red Seal trades and the entire electrical industry in Canada.

"The level of innovation achieved by all our local unions exceeded my expectations," Reid said. "I want to extend my personal gratitude to all our brothers and sisters who took part in the process. I also want to thank NETCO executive director Melissa Young, who was invaluable during the process, and to the federal government for the faith it showed in the IBEW and our track record of training highly skilled electrical workers across the country."

"Now the important work begins. The pandemic has reinforced the need for all of us to adapt quickly in the rapidly-changing electrical industry. A major piece of that is ensuring apprenticeship programs and continuing education for our electricians remain top notch."

Local 804 received \$5.5 million and used it to fund its pre-apprenticeship training. It allowed it to purchase smart boards, laptops and motors for motor training. Business Manager Brian Jacobs said UTIP funding in previous years allowed it to purchase two elevated work platforms.

"We explained that our pre-apprenticeship program allows new and under-represented workers into the workforce without any barriers," Jacobs said. "The funding covers all their training, tools and material. There is nothing a pre-apprentice has to pay for."

In Atlantic Canada, Local 625 shares

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government awarded millions in UTIP funding to IBEW local unions in Canada.

its training center with the Laborers, Painters and Iron Workers. It has worked in conjunction with those unions to receive UTIP funds in the past that allowed it to buy an \$81,000 boom lift and a \$21,000 scissor lift. This past year, Local 625 solely applied for \$55,000 worth of equipment to bend conduit up to 4 inches in diameter, Business Manager Thomas Griffiths said.

The conduit training will assist Local 625's signatory contractors as they begin work on hospital projects valued at about \$3 billion. Because of a rash of retirements, getting young workers trained quickly is crucial, Griffiths said.

This year's UTIP funding was announced with the specter of a national



election likely to be called. The IBEW has had a productive relationship with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government. IVP Reid has had several

meetings with Trudeau since the pandemic began, including two this year to discuss priorities important to IBEW members leading up to the federal budget. ■

Le financement fédéral améliore les formations permettant de donner accès à plus de membres

À l'occasion du Programme pour la formation et l'innovation en milieu syndical du gouvernement fédéral, les sections locales de la FIOE au Canada ont reçu des millions de dollars pour appuyer la formation d'apprentis en milieu syndical.

Les subventions ont été accordées à des programmes jugés innovants et qui renforcent les partenariats avec les métiers désignés Sceau rouge. Les sections locales qui ont reçu le soutien financier étaient : le local 115 à Kingston en Ontario; le local 230 à Victoria en Colombie-Britannique; le local 353 à Toronto, le local 402 à Thunder Bay en Ontario, le local 424 à Edmonton en Alberta, le local 502 à Saint-Jean au Nouveau-Brunswick; le local 586 à Ottawa; le local 625 à Halifax en Nouvelle-Écosse; le local 804 à Kitchener en Ontario; le local 993 à Kamloops en Colombie-Britannique et le local 2038 à Regina en Saskatchewan.

De plus, toutes les sections locales dans les provinces de l'Ouest ont reçu conjointement un soutien financier pour offrir une formation à leurs électriciens de la construction permettant d'être certifiés dans l'enroulement de moteur sur génératrice de grandes tailles.

La section locale 230 a de nouveau reçu un soutien financier du Western Joint Electrical Training Society pour son programme Workplace Alternative Trades Training (WATT). Ce programme a permis d'intégrer des groupes traditionnellement sous-représentés au sein de la FIOE. La section locale a reçu 4,2 millions de dol-

lars au total.

Le gérant d'affaires Phil Venoit mentionne que le programme, mieux connu sous WATT, comptait environ 100 participantes et participants au programme de préapprentissage au cours de sa première année, et 93 parmi ces participants ont suivi un apprentissage complet. La grande majorité est devenue membre du local 230, et certains sont devenus membres du local 993 ou du local 1003 situé à Nelson en Colombie-Britannique.

M. Venoit, récemment nommé pour siéger au sein du Comité exécutif international, fait remarquer que le programme WATT est un exemple du respect des engagements de la FIOE en matière de diversité et d'inclusion exprimés lors des résolutions adoptées à l'occasion du Congrès international de 2016.

« Le gouvernement cherche des programmes qui mènent de la formation à l'embauche directement, et nous assurons ce lien, » dit-il. « Nous sommes la réponse. On se charge de toute la formation et on aide au placement des travailleurs. »

Toutes les sections locales ont fait l'objet d'un examen approfondi, plusieurs ont eu de l'aide du Conseil national des métiers de l'industrie électrique — CNMIE (NETCO), qui a également reçu un soutien financier à l'occasion du Programme. Le vice-président international du premier district Thomas Reid est président du conseil. Le conseil appuie et protège les métiers désignés Sceau rouge et l'industrie électrique en entier au Canada.

« Le degré d'innovation atteint par

nos sections locales a dépassé toutes mes attentes, » déclare M. Reid. « Je voudrais remercier personnellement toutes les consœurs et tous les confrères qui ont participé au processus. Je voudrais aussi remercier la directrice exécutive Melissa Young du CNMIE qui a été une aide précieuse dans le processus, et remercier le gouvernement fédéral de la confiance qu'il a témoignée à la FIOE et à nos antécédents en matière de formation de travailleuses et de travailleurs hautement qualifiés dans le domaine électrique dans tout le pays. »

« Maintenant, le travail important commence. La pandémie nous a confirmé de la nécessité de s'adapter rapidement à la constante évolution de l'industrie électrique. Pour y arriver, il est essentiel de veiller à ce que nos programmes d'apprentissage et la formation continue pour nos électriciennes et nos électriciens demeurent supérieurs. »

La section locale 804 a reçu 5,5 millions de dollars et s'en est servi pour financer sa formation de préapprentissage. Ce montant a permis au local de s'acheter des tableaux interactifs, des ordinateurs portatifs et des moteurs pour la formation de moteur. Le gérant d'affaires Brian Jacobs mentionne que les fonds donnés dans les années précédentes avaient permis d'acheter deux plates-formes élévatrices.

« Nous avons expliqué que notre programme de préapprentissage permet aux nouveaux travailleurs sous-représentés de s'intégrer dans le marché du travail sans rencontrer d'obstacles, » déclare M. Jacobs.

« Le financement couvre tous les frais liés à leur formation, aux outils et aux matériaux. Le préapprenant n'a rien à payer. »

Le local 625 dans le Canada atlantique partage son centre de formation avec les locaux des manœuvres, des peintres et des monteuses d'acier. Il a travaillé de concert avec ces syndicats dans le passé pour recevoir un soutien financier du Programme. Ce montant avait permis d'acheter une nacelle d'une valeur de 81 000 \$ et une plate-forme élévatrice à ciseau d'une valeur de 21 000 \$. L'année dernière, la section locale 625 a présenté une demande de financement pour s'acheter une cintreuse d'une valeur de 55 000 \$ permettant de plier jusqu'à quatre pouces de conduit, mentionne le gérant d'affaires Thomas Griffiths.

La formation sur les conduits aidera les entrepreneurs signataires de la section locale 625 à commencer à travailler sur des projets relatifs aux hôpitaux évalués à environ 3 milliards de dollars. En raison de la vague de départ à la retraite, il est essentiel de former rapidement les travailleurs, déclare M. Griffiths.

Le financement du Programme de cette année a été annoncé avec la possibilité d'une élection nationale susceptible d'être déclenchée. La FIOE a entretenu un lien étroit avec le premier ministre Justin Trudeau et le gouvernement fédéral. Le VPI Reid a eu de multiples rencontres avec M. Trudeau depuis le début de la pandémie, y compris deux cette année pour discuter des priorités importantes aux membres de la FIOE à l'approche du budget fédéral. ■

THE FRONT LINE: POLITICS & JOBS

Walsh Sworn in at DOL; Pro-Union Deputy Awaits Senate Vote

Six weeks after soaring through his U.S. Senate hearing, Marty Walsh was sworn in as the nation's new labor secretary March 23, the first union member in 45 years to helm the agency charged with protecting workers' rights.

A day earlier, 18 Republicans joined all Democrats to confirm Walsh in a 68-29 vote, filling the 15th and final seat in President Biden's executive-level Cabinet.

"I spent my entire career fighting for working people, and I'm eager to continue that fight in Washington," Walsh said that evening in Boston as he stepped down as the city's two-term mayor.

The son of Irish immigrants, Walsh followed his father and uncle into Laborers Local 223 and its leadership. He went on to head the Greater Boston Building Trades coalition, while also serving 16 years in the Massachusetts Legislature.

Before the vote, Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown noted the importance of having a union member leading the Department of Labor.

"Too many people in this town don't know what it's like not to have a voice on the job," Brown said. "They don't understand collective bargaining and the power that a union card gives you over your career and your finances and your future."

"Marty Walsh does understand it. Like President Biden, he's not afraid to talk about the labor movement; he doesn't recoil from using the word 'union.'"

The last labor secretary with union roots was William Usery Jr., a Machinist who founded and led his own local. He was appointed in 1976 to serve the final year of Gerald Ford's presidency.

Walsh will have a dynamic, pro-union partner at the office if the Senate confirms Julie Su as his deputy labor secretary. Her confirmation was pending in early April.



Julie Su, nominated for the No. 2 post at DOL, is a career workers' rights champion.

Su has been California's labor secretary since 2019, the latest step in an activist career. Previously the state's labor commissioner, she set records for labor-law enforcement, cracking down on wage theft and other exploitation.

She caught the public's attention as a young lawyer in the 1990s, when she fought for 70 Thai garment workers enslaved near Los Angeles, winning them millions in back pay.

Her resume is the polar opposite of Patrick Pizzella's, deputy labor secretary in the last administration. While Su was



Vice President Kamala Harris swears in former Boston Mayor Marty Walsh as U.S. labor secretary, one day after the Senate confirmed him 68-29.

exposing sweatshops, Pizzella was working with disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff to help abusive factories in the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth, evade federal labor laws.

Foxes in the henhouse were common in the previous DOL, Brown said on the Senate floor, describing a "department full of people who made their careers fighting for corporate boards and CEOs trying to squeeze every last penny out of workers and skirting labor law."

International President Lonnie R. Stephenson said Walsh's selection is one more way Biden has kept his promises to workers.

"President Biden chose someone from the union movement, not just someone who supports us from the outside," he said. "As much as we greatly need and appreciate every ally we have, there's a difference when you understand something because you've lived it. All workers, union and nonunion, are better off now that Marty Walsh has their backs."

Terry O'Sullivan, the president of Walsh's own union, called him a "dues-paying, card-carrying, second-generation member of the Laborers' International Union of North America whose dedication and devotion to the cause, the purpose, and the mission of the labor movement is unwavering."

Walsh's advocates say it's a win for the economy as well as workers.

"We have a tremendous opportunity to rebuild our economy with workers at the center," Brown said, citing Biden's sweeping Build Back Better plan, which he rolled out March 31. "If you love your country, you fight for the people who make it work. As secretary of labor, that's what Marty Walsh will do."

Even a Republican sang Walsh's praises.

"Why is a guy from North Carolina here to encourage my colleagues to vote for the mayor of Boston, Massachusetts?" Sen. Richard Burr said before the vote. "It's quite simple: Mayor Walsh has the background, the skills and the awareness for the need of balance in conversations between labor and management."

At his hearing in February, Walsh talked about the origins of his blue-collar values.

"I thought about my uncle and my

father talking at the kitchen table on Sundays about fighting for the rights of workers," he said. "About making sure that jobs were there so that people wouldn't be unemployed, making sure that they didn't have to have benefit dances to support union brothers and sisters because their kids were sick or somebody died."

He invoked his improbable journey again as he bid farewell to Boston to start his new job. "My mother got a call about a month ago from a person who drove her to the airport when she was 17 years old in Ireland," Walsh said. "She didn't know this person was still alive."

"He called to tell her, 'Mary, I never would have expected the day I dropped you off at Shannon Airport that someday your son would be the secretary of labor.'"

2020 BLS Data Demonstrates the Difference a Union Makes

The Bureau of Labor Statistics report on unionization rates in 2020 shows how a union can make a real difference in a working person's life, even — or especially — during a once-in-a-lifetime global pandemic.

According to the numbers, which were released in January, the percentage of wage and salary workers who were members of unions in 2020, also known as the union membership rate, increased by 0.5 percentage points to 10.8%. This occurred despite historic unemployment numbers overall because union workers suffered fewer job losses than nonunion workers did during the pandemic.

"These numbers show just how critical the protections of a union are," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "Having a voice and being able to negotiate terms like furloughs, paid sick time and severance are incredibly important. And in a year like 2020, that was on full display."

In addition to the power of a collective voice and a contract, the Economic Policy Institute points out that another reason for the increased unionization rate is because of a "pandemic composition effect." This phenomenon is exemplified by certain industries, like hospitality and

leisure that have low unionization rates, experiencing more job loss than industries like the public sector, which have higher concentrations of union workers.

Yet, even within the same industry union members fared better. The wholesale and retail trade, one of the hardest-hit sectors, shed more than 700,000 positions but still gained 46,000 union members.

"One of the headlines from this is that union membership provides protections against the harshest layoffs at a time of economic crisis," Rebecca Givan, professor of labor studies and employment relations at Rutgers University, told the Washington Post.

In the construction industry, the BLS reported that the number of wage and salary construction workers with union membership declined from just over 1 million in 2019 to 993,000 in 2020, but the percentage increased slightly from 12.6% to 12.7%. Additionally, nonunion median weekly wages in 2019 were almost 29% less than the average union wage.

EPI also noted that while the unionization rate for public sector workers at the state and local levels increased, the opposite happened at the federal level, which they attribute to then-President Trump's anti-union actions including multiple executive orders aimed at weakening unions.

Government Employees Director Paul O'Connor also points to a lack of support in Congress, particularly in the Senate, then controlled by Kentucky Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell.

"Presidential executive orders do not require U.S. House or Senate concurrence, but our elected officials didn't stand with the IBEW or other federal labor unions to fight the rampant, widespread injustice of Trump's orders," O'Connor said. "This became a deflating reality for our federal sector brothers and sisters. Apathy rose as morale diminished."

O'Connor said that lack of support hampered the efforts of IBEW leaders and allies to fight back, which some members then misinterpreted as the unions not doing enough, so they took advantage of their open shop status and left.

"Our local union leaders tirelessly, day in and day out, displayed grit and determination, and the IBEW administration supported them every step of the way," O'Connor said. "The degree of their success was not a reflection of the intensity with which they defended their membership. Instead, it was more of a reflection of the values agencies placed on our federal workforce and the intrinsic nature of quality labor-management relationships."

The economic upheaval of 2020 may have laid bare the difference a union makes, but the desire to join one started before the coronavirus hit. A survey taken in 2017 by PBS and the National Opinion Research Corporation found that nearly half of workers would join a union if given the chance — a four-decade high for the question. As PBS reported, the scale of this shift indicates that 58 million American workers would vote for representation if they could, quadrupling the current union membership.

Union popularity was also found by Gallup in its 2020 poll that showed overall support at 65%, the highest in a decade.

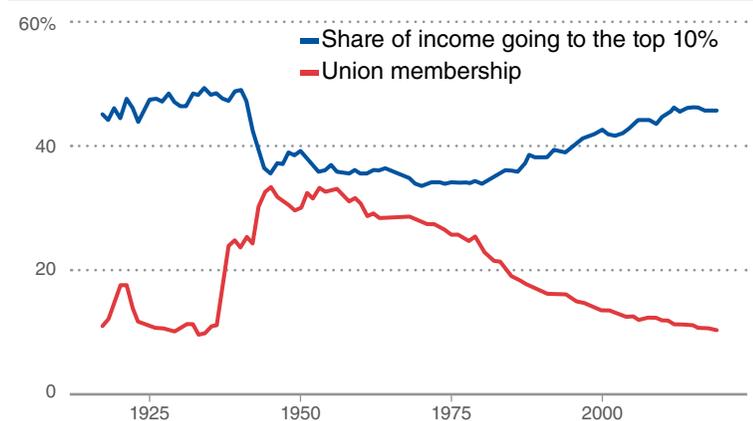
As EPI noted, the union coverage rate is less than half of what it was roughly 40 years ago and this has coincided with rampant inequality, the worst in U.S. history according to Census Bureau data. From 1979 to 2019, the wages of the top 1% grew nearly 160.3%, while the wages of the bottom 90% combined grew just 26%.

"It's no coincidence that things get worse for working people when unions are under attack," Stephenson said. "Unions are the best tool we have for leveling the playing field and giving everyone a real shot at the American Dream. And the best thing we can do right now to get more people organized is to pass the PRO Act."

The Protecting the Right to Organize, or PRO Act, is federal legislation that would make it easier for people to join a union while also keeping unscrupulous employers from meddling in the process. It's been called the most important piece of labor legislation in more than 70 years and it passed the House of Representatives in March. President Joe Biden has signaled his support, but it faces an uphill battle in the Senate. ■

As Union Membership Declines, Income Inequality Increases

Union membership and share of income going to the top 10%, 1917–2019



New BLS numbers show how union workers fared better than nonunion workers during the pandemic, but overall low union rates are still main factor in a decades-long inequality gap.

Source: Economic Policy Institute

CIRCUITS

Canadian Air Safety in a Flat Spin, Needs a Rescue

The pandemic has wreaked havoc across the economy, but few industries have done worse than aviation. In Canada, flights in 2020 were down almost 90% from 2019.

Nav Canada, the nonprofit that maintains the country's civilian aviation navigation system, is funded by the airlines through a fee-for-service agreement. When flights evaporated, Nav Canada went into free fall.

The 4,100 union workers at Nav Canada negotiated a pay and hiring freeze and watched an entire cohort of students be laid off.

Ottawa Local 2228 represented more than 650 air traffic safety electronics personnel across the country. It was already understaffed before the pandemic and an additional 15% have been laid off over the last year. Other trades were hit even worse.

If nothing is done, and soon, the loss of skilled workers, including the future of the industry, could be devastating for civil aviation in Canada.

Local 2228 Business Manager Paul Cameron and First District International Representative Matt Wayland launched a first of its kind, fully digital grassroots political action campaign to raise the alarm in Parliament and in the Labor and Transport ministries.

"We were testifying with the pilots, the flight attendants and the controllers, people with loud voices and really the faces of the industry's workforce. We need to raise our voices so we aren't forgotten anymore," said Wayland.

They also testified at a virtual parliamentary hearing on the state of the aviation industry.

Last spring, the Canadian government created an emergency response benefit for laid-off workers and a wage subsidy to help companies maintain their workforce. But it has fallen far short of Nav Canada's needs.

"They are a not-for-profit. They can only charge on a break-even basis and, look, it's not like the airlines are holding out on them," Wayland said. "They've done all they can to cut costs, but they have exhausted their reserves and I am genuinely worried about what happens next if the government doesn't step in soon."

Cameron said it takes new hires several years before they can work on equipment. If the company is forced to wait until the industry picks up — whenever that is — the existing workforce will be overworked and exhausted and the rehires and new hires won't be ready.

"These workers are in high demand. If you lay them off, they will go to work at utilities or telecoms," Cameron said. "Airlines can lay off pilots and they will come back. If you lay us off, they may not want to come back. It will take us almost a decade before we replace them and that will domino throughout the aviation system."

And equipment that is shut down can't simply be turned back on — there are safety procedures that must be run



Nav Canada air traffic safety electronics technicians Simon Premech and Andre Lenarcik and the other members of Ottawa, Ontario, Local 2228 are fighting to keep Canadian civil aviation safe and to save their jobs.

and serious questions about what happens if there aren't skilled professionals to do the work.

Cameron said that the safety of the system will never be threatened; the capacity of the aviation system will just shrink. Fewer safety technologists will translate into fewer flights and longer delays.

It also means the large number of international flights that pay fees to use Canadian air space might have to be diverted to other countries that maintain their civil aviation system better, Cameron said.

And it's entirely avoidable, he said.

Cameron and Wayland first spoke to lawmakers in April of last year. Since then, Nav Canada has been losing \$1.7 million per day.

Their new campaign urges Canadian residents to speak up and the website has a boilerplate letter that will automatically be sent to their MP (based on the post code they provide), the Ministers of Transport and Labour, as well as the shadow ministers from the Conservative Party, the critic from the NDP and the parliamentary secretary.

Wayland urges people to personalize the boilerplate language they have provided, but to keep the focus simple: The future safety of the Canadian civil aviation system is in the balance here.

"They need to know they have one chance to get it right and time is running out," he said.

The First District has supported digital letter writing campaigns in the past, but Wayland said they have never organized one entirely themselves, from drafting the letters, making it accessible from all major social media platforms and email, and sending it out to the entire Canadian membership.

The impact was immediate, he said. Within 24 hours of the notification going just to locals and on social media, 460 people had signed and sent letters. They have since contacted the entire membership.

The campaign calls for the passage of a wage grant to Nav Canada to maintain the existing workforce, rehire laid-off workers and bring back the trainees. The cost is substantial: \$750 million a year for

two years as a grant and not a loan that would simply be passed on to airlines that are already clinging to solvency.

The only way to get it done is to make as much noise as possible, Wayland said.

"We have been working on bringing attention to this since March and it just hasn't happened," Wayland said. "Our strength is in our size and unity as a brotherhood. Our hope is that we get this support we need and then we will happily — and literally — get back under the radar." ■

IBEW Steps in to Rescue Ohio Solar Project

When the developers of a large solar farm in Ohio needed help getting a nonunion project finished, they turned to IBEW members from Cincinnati, where Local 212 stood ready to pick up the slack.

"An abundance of residential and utility-scale solar work is coming to our entire area," said International Vice President Gina Cooper, whose Fourth District covers Ohio plus the District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. "Our business managers and international representatives are going all out to capture as much of it as they can, but it's always a compliment to our members when someone comes to us directly to do the work."



The IBEW recently saved the day for a utility-scale solar project in Ohio, just one of the scores of such projects being planned for rural communities throughout the state.

The IBEW worked with Open Road Renewables, which developed this project and then sold it to Innergex Renewable Energy for construction and operation. Despite ORR's support for the IBEW, Innergex chose a nonunion shop to build the project and, in March 2020, broke ground on a 1,350-acre, 200-megawatt solar farm called Hillcrest, near Mt. Orab, about an hour's drive east of Cincinnati.

Innergex is among the many solar energy development companies that have come to Ohio to take advantage of the state's skilled workforce and its "payment in lieu of taxes," or PILOT, program, a special taxing arrangement enacted more than 10 years ago by the state's Legislature. PILOT creates a steady stream of revenue from these projects that flows to local communities, requires a local workforce and brings certainty to developer and community alike.

"PILOT has helped spur this explosion in renewable energy interest," said Fourth District International Representative Steve Crum. The arrangement was developed with an eye toward granting localities stability and confidence when calculating tax revenues from solar and wind installations, he said.

"For projects like Hillcrest Solar, developers expect to contribute \$7,000 to \$9,000 per megawatt directly back into local communities," he said. PILOT also gives developers certainty as it provides an alternative to traditional, and often fluctuating, tax rates. Once Hillcrest is operational, it could send an estimated \$60 million into Brown County localities over the life of the facility, thanks to PILOT.

But developers and communities can't claim any of PILOT's financial advantages unless developers can first guarantee that at least 80% of workers on a given project officially reside in Ohio. This is where Deltro, the nonunion company Innergex contracted to work at Hillcrest, ran into trouble, said Local 212 Business Manager Rick Fischer.

"They weren't meeting their marks," said Fischer, whose jurisdiction includes the Hillcrest site. So, Deltro asked Innergex to seek a residency waiver from the state, he said. Innergex countered that Deltro should instead ask for help from Ohio-based IBEW signatory contractor ESI

Electrical, with whom Innergex had worked on other projects.

Naturally, ESI and its IBEW electricians from Local 212 were more than capable of assisting Innergex and Deltro to get the job done, Crum said. "Working together, we found a solution and helped them meet that 80% requirement," he said.

Not only was the IBEW asked to help get the project back on track, but the journeyman wiremen and apprentices on the job so impressed Innergex that Local 212 was able to carve out more pieces of the overall work, Fischer said.

"We've still got 30 members working 7-10 [shifts] on it," he said. "I'd say we've done pretty well with Hillcrest."

But the growing opportunities in this industry are at risk, with two bills pending before the Ohio Legislature that could halt such projects. If passed, these bills would allow for a local township referendum process, where a vocal opposition group could vote its disapproval of these projects, blocking their construction, even if the state's Power Siting Board had approved a permit.

"It sometimes takes 18 months for developers to do various site and environmental studies," Crum said, "spending millions of dollars per site to consider the effect these facilities could have on neighboring properties. It doesn't make sense to let townships wave all that away with a vote."

IBEW leaders agree with the Utility Scale Solar Energy Coalition of Ohio that energy generation is best regulated by the Ohio Power Siting Board. The union has supported efforts to keep these bills from becoming law, with Crum and other IBEW members testifying against them before Ohio House and Senate committees.

Now, Crum said, there's less than 1,000 megawatts of solar and wind energy being generated in the state. But he cited an Ohio University study that estimated renewable energy projects currently in the queue could require 18,000 to 54,000 electricians and other construction workers and, under PILOT, deliver \$3 billion to \$10 billion to Buckeye State localities.

"In Ohio, there are more than 30 major solar projects in the pipeline," Crum said — mostly utility-scale solar farms like Hillcrest that generate 50 megawatts or more, typically in rural areas hard hit by economic recessions and COVID-19. "A lot of construction work is expected to start in the next two years," he said.

These 30-plus projects total around 6.5 gigawatts of utility-scale solar power. "You can see the potential opportunities for our members," Crum said. "We fully expect to put battery storage under existing solar farms over the next few years, too."

Vice President Cooper said the IBEW welcomes such projects. "We have 21 locals throughout Ohio and nearby West Virginia that sponsor training centers for apprentices and journeymen to learn about power generation and transmission, energy efficiency, instrumentation and of course electrical construction," she said. "We're very well positioned to meet the manpower needs." ■

TRANSITIONS

DECEASED

Glenda G. Thomason



Retired Personnel Director Glenda Thomason, who began her IBEW career as a clerical worker at Nevada Power and became a valued member

of a close-knit team of Utility Department representatives, died Feb. 8.

"Glenda was a very strong asset to the Utility Department, and it was a loss for the branch when she went to Personnel," said former colleague Will Paul, who later served as director of Support Services.

On top of her intelligence and drive, Thomason was a delight to work with, Paul and another teammate said.

"She was such a nice person to be around," said Jim Hunter, who went on to serve as the Utility director. "She was always happy, positive and upbeat."

A New Mexico native, Thomason was initiated into Las Vegas Local 396 in 1978. Soon after starting her clerical job at what is now NV Energy, she began an apprenticeship to become a field metering electrician. She graduated as a journeyman in 1982, a rarity at that time for a woman.

She was active on the safety committee from the start, quickly became a steward, and helped bargain contracts at Nevada Power and Davey Tree Surgery during her nine years in the field.

Over those years, Thomason also acted as a spokesperson for the Las Vegas Stay in School program.

In 1994, by then the assistant business manager, she was hired as an international representative in the Utility Department, where she helped spearhead the union's policy response to the burgeoning electricity deregulation movement.

She also worked with Hunter on an early organizing drive at BG&E. But her primary duty was representing clerical and technical workers at IBEW utilities.

"It was a very well-balanced department and we blended well together," said Paul, who handled generation and environmental issues. "It was fun and challenging. We could really delve into some interesting topics, and Glenda was a vital part of that."

It was something of a surprise in 2002 when she was tapped to become personnel director, but it also made sense, both Paul and Hunter said.

"Handling grievances with management was a daily occurrence in Utility," Hunter said. "Glenda was very familiar with contract language, grievances, the whole process."

With her valuable experience and superb people skills, "I thought it was a good fit, and she did a really good job," Hunter said. "She was very kind-hearted. She really tried to work out issues and problems rather than the hard-handed, 'That's the way it is.'"

"She had the background to see both sides," Paul said. "She definitely had that union mind. But a smart union mind realizes that both sides have to win."

That applied to negotiating as well as hiring. Both men recalled her knack for finding the right person for the right job. "She understood that when they're happy, we're happy," Hunter said.

Thomason returned home to New Mexico when she retired, saying she looked forward to time with her family and enjoying her hobbies, including beach combing, sewing and rehabilitating houses. Her daughter, Dara Shook, said she also spent time at the local library helping people learn to read.

In addition to Shook, she is survived by a son, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

"It has been my privilege to serve the membership and officers of the IBEW," she said upon retiring. "I leave with the satisfaction of having done my best."

The IBEW is grateful for Sister Thomason's pioneering service to our union and sends its sincerest condolences to her family and friends. ■

RETIRED

Keenan Eagen



International Representative Keenan Eagen, a leader in the IBEW's organizing work in construction for nearly three decades and a mentor to many current organizers, retired April 1.

A native of Elmira, N.Y., Brother Eagen became interested in electrical work while serving as a helper on construction sites as a teenager. He joined Elmira Local 139 when he was accepted into its apprenticeship program in 1981, topping out four years later. He served on the local's Executive Committee and became good friends with then-business manager Charles Patton, who asked him to come on staff as a full-time organizer in 1992.

"I was actually apprehensive about taking it," Eagen said. "I liked working in the field. But there was a need and my business manager asked me to do it, so I certainly honored his request."

Eagen had no organizing experience but he thinks Patton asked him because, "Anything that the local was doing, I was there," he said. "Whether that was advanced education for journeymen, walking a picket line or volunteer work, I was involved. I was someone committed to the local."

It didn't take long to realize he loved his new role, especially the interaction with new members and signatory contractors. One of Eagen's favorite memories came when a Local 139 member visited him in his office several years after Eagen had brought him into the brotherhood. The grateful member was accompanied by his teenage daughter.

She thanked Eagen for helping her dad become a member because it allowed her to attend college.

"For the 10 years I was in that posi-

tion, I kept track of every person I organized," he said. "When they were going through any changes in their lives, any problems, I wanted to be a resource for anything they needed help with. That's all part of part of being in the people business."

His approach produced results.

"I'm very proud of the fact that our local grew market share so much they had to adjust [our year-to-year growth] calculations to more than 100%," Eagen said. "Charlie's motto was, 'When we have all the electricians, we win.'"

Following his local success, Eagen was named an international representative and moved to the Third District staff in 2002. He traveled throughout New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware assisting local organizers, including some on the Professional and Industrial side.

He returned to his construction roots full-time when he was assigned to the International Office in 2007 after the formation of the Membership Development Department. Eagen kept his home in the Elmira area and served as the Third District organizing coordinator, continuing in that role until his retirement. He also trained IBEW organizers from across North America.

"When we first met and I was a new organizer [for Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Local 163], one of the first things he said to me and has carried through to this day was, 'You're not in the construction business now, you're in the people business,'" said former Pennsylvania state organizing coordinator Jeremy Moderwell, who assumed Eagen's role as Third District organizing coordinator following his retirement.

"You can get caught up in things and forget that. But if you lose sight of it, you won't have much success. It risks becoming more of a job instead of a calling."

In retirement, Eagen plans to spend more time motorcycle riding, particularly in the Finger Lakes Region of New York. He decided to retire to spend more time with two grown daughters and three grandchildren, who all live in Charlotte, N.C., and because Moderwell was ready to step into his position.

"I'm proud of the career that I've had," Eagen said. "I feel blessed to be part of the IBEW. I've also been blessed to meet some of the best people and nicest people I've ever dealt with, from international presidents to union organizers to everyone in between. They really care about the IBEW."

The officers and staff thank Brother Eagen for his many years of service and wish him a long and happy retirement. ■

RETIRED

Rick Hite



Rick Hite, a Ninth District international representative and journeyman lineman whose skills, gusto and devotion won the hearts of his

Pacific Northwest locals, retired April 1 after 44 lively years with the IBEW.

Hite's career took him from adventures high in the sky above Washington state to the joys of training apprentices, running Tacoma Local 483 and ultimately serving a cross section of locals along a spectacular route stretching from Oregon to Alaska.

"I'm a people person and being able to service these eight locals is like being a people person on steroids," he said. "I love this job."

The feeling is mutual. "I can't put into words how much he's meant to us and to all the locals he services. He's an institution," said Dave Reaves, who was business manager at Anchorage-based Local 1547 until being appointed to take over for Hite.

"He's a tough act to follow," Reaves said. "I'm trying to pick his brain as much as possible."

It helps that one of Hite's trademarks is his accessibility, and he's told Reaves to "call me about anything, at any time."

"That is the Rick Hite work ethic," said Alice Phillips, Hite's successor as Local 483 business manager. "If you'd answer the phone for your blood brother, you answer the phone for your union brother."

Hite's path to the IBEW began with a nonunion job building transmission lines in Arizona. Lured by the promise of \$8 an hour, he took off with a friend from Tacoma in the mid-'70s before finishing school. Upon arrival, they were offered \$5 an hour.

"Safety was what you made of it. They didn't have rules," Hite said. "Wages were what you could barter for."

Meeting several IBEW members on a worksite opened his eyes. Hite returned home, earned his high school diploma in night school, and applied to be a Seattle Local 77 apprentice.

It was a thriller of an education that took him from the depths of Puget Sound pulling and replacing submarine cables to the heights of hanging above desert, mountains and old-growth forest in a spacing cart, gliding some 2,000 feet between towers supplying power to western Washington.

In 1980, after six months as a journeyman, and with a toddler and newborn at home, Hite hired on as a utility hand with Tacoma Power, represented by Local 483.

He took fewer risks "but it never got any duller," he said, describing the adrenalin rush of restoring storm-ravaged lines and towers toppled by giant evergreens.

He spent his weekends teaching at the NW Line JATC, training nearly 300 apprentices over 15 years. "I wanted to give back to where I came from," he said. "Of all my jobs, that was the most rewarding."

In classes and conferences, he jovially introduces himself as "Rick Hite, lineman extraordinaire," a nickname that's stuck. "Except for what we call bare-handing extra high-voltage wires," he says, "I've done it all."

He dove into union work early on at Tacoma Power. Frustrated by an aloof shop steward, Hite took his job and kept moving up the Local 483 ladder — chief steward, board member, president, and finally an eight-year run as business manager before joining the Ninth District staff in 2005.

A favorite memory is his successful 11th-hour stand as the clock ticked down

on a year-old expired contract at Tacoma Power. With management ready to leave, Hite bought pizza for the house and gave the mediator a message to pass on: "If they go home, they're going to like me even less tomorrow than they do today. We are here to get a deal done tonight."

Hite prepared ferociously for every round of bargaining. "If you're going to the dance, and you don't know how to dance, everyone's going to notice," he likes to say.

Those habits served him well when he began representing locals that included unfamiliar jobsites in telecom, nuclear power and an industrial shipyard. He dug deep, learning their languages and the intricacies of the jobs.

"Rick's work ethic as an I.O. rep was no different than when he was the president of the local and when he became business manager," Phillips said.

"He's one in a million," she says of her decades-long mentor and friend. "Big hearted, honest, dedicated, passionate and fun."

Hite also is as a champion of IBEW women, as Phillips knows firsthand. After years guiding her into leadership at Local 483, he hired her as his deputy and urged her to fight to succeed him as business manager in 2005.

"I didn't see myself in that role. But Rick did," said Phillips, now in her fifth term. "He took a risk. I know for a fact that he took a lot of grief. I had two strikes against me: One, I was a woman. And two, I was a journeyman tree trimmer in a lineman's local."

Hite is excited that his retirement is opening another door, with Marcie Obremski, formerly assistant business manager at Local 1547, stepping into Reaves' shoes.

At home on five acres in the shadow of Mt. Rainier, Hite has a list of projects to tackle — "moving plants and trees, building fences, and we're getting ready to remodel," he said.

Above all, he's savoring family time with his wife, Myla, a federal mediator, his son, two daughters and four grandchildren.

He's grateful for his IBEW career, as well as his enviable territory. "To go to Alaska is heaven-sent," he said. "Some of the warmest people I've ever met."

But the timing was right to retire. "It's been a pretty great ride. I'm a lucky man."

On behalf of officers, staff and members, the IBEW thanks Brother Hite for his decades of service and good will and wishes him a happy, healthy retirement. ■

RETIRED

John Lei



Eighth District International Representative John Lei, who was born on a Montana Indian reservation and went on to become a trust-

ed leader for utility and railroad local unions, retired on April 1.

A member of the Crow Tribe, Brother Lei grew up on a cattle ranch near Ash-

land, Mont., after his mother remarried when he was a young child. He wanted to become a lawyer and planned to attend the University of Montana for his undergraduate studies.

But he never made it there. Instead, Lei got a job working as a construction laborer and the money was so good, he stayed with it. Later, he took advantage of a tribal program that trained members to become heavy equipment operators and worked as a scrapper at a coal mine.

After that, Lei went through the apprenticeship program at the Pipefitters local in Billings, Mont., and became a member of the United Association. When work slowed, he landed a job as a general mechanic at Montana's Yellowtail Dam, working for the federal government's Bureau of Reclamation.

But in 1989, Lei moved on to a better-paying job at the legendary Colstrip Power Plant, which earned him IBEW membership in Colstrip Local 1638. That's when his career took an unexpected turn.

Lei's bargaining unit needed a steward and no one wanted to do it. So, some of the more veteran employees strongly encouraged the then-30-year-old Lei to accept.

"I was volun-told to do it," he said with a laugh.

Lei did so and found out he enjoyed the position. He also found out that while he enjoyed the benefits of IBEW membership, he wasn't particularly pleased with the direction of his local union. Colstrip was on the verge of being sold from Montana Power to PPL and morale at the plant was low.

He and other dissatisfied members discussed having someone run against the incumbent business manager but they had trouble reaching consensus on a candidate.

"Each time we looked for someone to run, that person had an excuse," Lei said. "It kept going down the line and it got to me. I was like, 'I don't know. Let's ask the person behind me.' But there wasn't a person behind me."

Lei ran and won a close election, which he attributed to his working as a crane operator and being part of the team that upgraded Colstrip's fire-prevention system. Those positions made it easy for him to meet members across the facility, he said.

"I basically had full run of the plant," Lei said. "I got to know a lot of people."

"For people to have faith in what I was going to do, it was kind of unreal," he added. "Here comes a Native American running in this time of turmoil and I got elected. It was self-gratifying because people voted for me because of who I was, not what I was."

As business manager, Lei led negotiations that allowed all IBEW members who had been laid off to return to work. He also negotiated contracts that guaranteed raises and improved benefits and maintained double-time pay for overtime. He was re-elected without opposition in 2002.

Two years later, then-Eighth District Vice President Jon Walters asked him to join the district staff, focusing on railroad and utility locals. System Councils U-13 and U-27 Chairman Perry Steig, who has known Lei for 17 years, said he brought a combination of deep knowledge and a

sense of humor to the role that often alleviated tension during contract negotiations.

"I can't tell you enough things that make John special," Steig said. "He's a very witty and entertaining individual. He always has a story and a joke to tell."

Eight District Vice President Jerry Bellah called Lei "one of the most approachable leaders" in the district.

"His ability to talk to anyone, anywhere and make them feel like a friend has been invaluable in his role," Bellah said. "The number of members he has had a positive influence on is too long to list. John has been an excellent representative of the IBEW and his community and I am so proud to be counted as a friend."

Lei inherited part of his parents' ranch in Custer National Forest and, along with daughter Eleece, formed an LLC and turned it into a campground for hunters and others exploring the outdoors.

He'll spend part of his retirement running that. He and his wife, Karla, also plan to do some traveling and spend time with their five children and numerous grandchildren.

Two of his sons served in the Army, including tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are members of the trades. John Jr. recently topped out at Billings Local 532. Robbie is a member of Operating Engineers Local 400 in Helena, Mont.

Lei takes pride in what he accomplished as a Native American.

"Hell yeah, I do," he said. "There were some people rattled when I first ran for business manager. There was some hesitation and I heard second-hand stories about, 'How is this Indian going to help us?' When we had successful negotiations and we enhanced their benefits or whatever, those were the first people to thank me."

The officers and staff thank Brother Lei for his years of service and wish him a happy retirement. ■

RETIRED

David E. Moran



David E. Moran, an international representative in the Fourth District who serviced central and northern Ohio locals and also served as political coordinator throughout the state, retired effective April 1.

Moran was born in the Akron suburb of Norton, Ohio, where he graduated from Norton High School. After that, friends of his father — an Akron Local 306 member who became disabled — encouraged him to apply to the inside apprenticeship.

The choice kicked off a 42-year career: Moran was initiated into Local 306 in 1979, and he topped out of his apprenticeship in 1983.

After working with the tools for a few years, Moran gradually got more active with his union, and it wasn't long before he was serving on Local 306's apprenticeship committee. He also chaired the

local's supplemental health fund committee and served as a trustee of its pension and 401(k) retirement funds.

"When it came time to roll up your sleeves and get the job done, Dave was at the front of the line," said Steve Crum, a fellow Fourth District international representative. "He's always worked for the betterment of the IBEW. He's a real class act."

In 1992, Moran's knack for managing finances helped propel him to become treasurer of Local 306. Soon after, he also was appointed as the local's organizer. Five years later, he was elected to what became a nine-year run as the local's business manager. Among his many accomplishments in that role, he directly worked getting a state-of-the-art training facility built.

Moran also served a stint as secretary-treasurer of the Ohio State IBEW Conference as well as on that body's executive board. And in 2006, when the international union held its 37th convention about an hour's drive up I-77 in Cleveland, Moran was tapped to serve as that gathering's treasurer, too.

"I liked what we could do to help people in Ohio better their lives," Moran said.

Additionally, Moran carved out some time to serve as president of the Tri-County Building and Construction Trades Council and on the executive board of the Tri-County Labor Council, both of which serve union locals in Akron's home county, Summit, as well as neighboring Medina and Portage counties.

His work with the Summit County United Way, including a stint on its board of directors, led to his being honored in 2006 with the Leo E. Dugan Labor Award for Outstanding Community Service.

Recognizing Moran's talents, then-International President Edwin D. Hill, on the recommendation of then-Fourth District International Vice President Paul Witte, appointed him in 2007 to serve as a Fourth District international representative, focusing on the needs of electrical workers throughout the Buckeye State.

"Dave was kind of known as the 'junkyard dog' of the Fourth District," Crum said. "Luck of the draw, I guess, but he seemed to get a lot of the tougher assignments."

Among some of the recent battles Moran fought on behalf of IBEW members were the successful efforts to keep open the state's two nuclear plants, continuing steady employment for hundreds of IBEW members.

He testified before state House and Senate committees about the need for reliable baseload generation as well about other subjects of importance to IBEW members. "We created some pretty strong alliances with both Republicans and Democrats along the way," he said.

Sources of clean energy generation, such as nuclear, solar and wind, represent a huge potential for IBEW members, Moran said, noting that the state has dozens of large solar installation and storage maintenance projects in the pipeline alone, all of which are helping to support commercial and residential customers alike. "I think that's really exciting for Ohio," he said.

In retirement, Moran and his wife,

Susanne, plan to remain part of the IBEW and the Fourth District family, and also to do many of the things they've been unable to do during the COVID-19 pandemic now that they're both fully vaccinated. "We want to travel more when we're able," he said. He also plans to spend generous amounts of his free time with his children, Stacy and Ryan; his stepchildren, Jeanne, Jason and Justin; and his 11 grandchildren.

"He may have come off sometimes as brash doing his job," said Crum, whose family has vacationed with Moran's, "but we had a lot of fun with Dave. He always gave us ample opportunities to poke some fun at him."

"He is passionate about his family and the IBEW," Crum said, "and the district is losing a valuable source of knowledge, passion and humor."

Please join the officers and staff of the IBEW in wishing Brother Moran a long and happy retirement. ■

RETIRED

Pasquale Gino



After a 63-year career spanning five IBEW presidencies, 13 conventions and the radical transformation of his industry, Third District International Representative Pasquale Gino is retiring on the eve of his 85th birthday.

When Gino was hired at the Reading Western Electric works in 1958 and joined Laureldale, Pa., Local 1898, American manufacturing was a juggernaut.

For the first 20 years of Gino's career, as he rose to steward, then business manager, then president of System Council EM-3 to lead Western Electric's 80,000 IBEW members, manufacturing in North America rose, too.

"I was there at the 1972 convention when then-International Secretary Joe Keenan announced we had 1 million members," Gino said. "You look at where we are now, and you look at how many manufacturing members we've lost, that's who's missing. We took a heck of a blow."

Gino was born and raised in Brooklyn, graduating from Erasmus Hall, one of the nation's oldest high schools. He came from a union family with one uncle a chief steward of the Longshoremen on the Brooklyn piers, another uncle a steward for the Sanitation Workers and another a track layer and repairman for the Long Island Railroad.

Gino joined the Navy after high school and from 1952 to 1956 he was a damage control petty officer, responsible for repairing the flight deck of an aircraft carrier and ensuring the safety of the pilots who landed on it.

"That's where I learned my trade: rigging," he said.

One time, he went on leave with another sailor back to his hometown of Reading, Pa.; Gino met a young woman, Charlotte, and when he got out of the Navy, he went back to her and the Lehigh

Valley and never left. They had three daughters, Jolene, Karen and Stephanie, who gave them five grandkids and 14 great-grandchildren.

He was hired as a millwright at Western Electric, a wholly owned subsidiary of telephone monopoly AT&T that had been Ma Bell's primary equipment supplier since 1881.

Gino found success quickly. He was steward within a few years, then vice president of the local in 1964, business manager in 1965 and then business manager and president of EM-3. In the late 1970s, Pasquale led one what he called one of the major achievements of a storied career.

"I had the pleasure and good fortune to negotiate the first national agreement with AT&T," he said. "They were splitting us off, pitting us against one another. After that we had a lot more bargaining power."

In 1983, then-International President Charles Pillard appointed Gino to be a Third District international representative, and he no longer primarily worked with Western Electric.

The world was about to change dramatically.

Within a year AT&T was split up. By 1985 the Indianapolis plant closed. Within a decade, Western Electric was dismantled, parts renamed Lucent, then Alcatel before finally being absorbed into Nokia five years ago.

"When the Allentown works shut down, Local 1898 shut down and I transferred to Local 1522. Then I had to shut down 1522. I transferred to Local 375 [an inside construction local] because it is the only one left in the area," Gino said. "I didn't see it coming."

His job was to negotiate the best deal possible, but the closures were hard, he said.

"It was a job; if you had any emotions, that would really get to you," he said.

Watching plants close was, he said, like "the tombstone where you were carving the names of the deceased."

But even as manufacturing shrank and changed, Gino said the job really didn't change all that much. He serviced locals, doing audits and arbitrations, negotiating contracts, even as everything was computerized and transformed by technology.

Until this past year and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There was a monumental change of trying to handle grievances by Zoom," he said. "But prior to that it really hadn't changed."

Gino plans to stay in Reading to be with his family. His wife, Charlotte, died nearly two decades ago but he still cares for one of his daughters who lives at home and he will be surrounded by his extended family, most of whom live nearby.

"I leave the brotherhood with a heavy heart. I love this job; it became my whole life," he said. "I hope I helped a lot of people."

Please join the officers in wishing Brother Gino and his family a long, healthy and fulfilling retirement. ■

TRANSITIONS *continued on page 12*

TRANSITIONS *continued*

RETIRED

Ted Robison



After more than 40 years in the IBEW, International Representative Ted Robison retired, effective April 1.

Robison earned a reputa-

tion as an honest and knowledgeable colleague, a consummate professional. But what he always wanted to be was what he started out as: a lineman.

“Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to be a lineman,” he said. “And coming from a union household, I knew I wanted to get into the trade at a company where the workers had union representation. After six years of trying, I was able to realize my dream and got hired on at AEP.”

The Ohio native was initiated into Nework, Ohio, Local 981 in 1980. Twenty years later, his local merged with Columbus Local 1466. He served in multiple roles, including as shop steward, a position he was appointed to after the tragic death of a co-worker. He also served as treasurer, workers’ compensation representative and, starting in 2002, as assistant business manager. In 2004, he won election as business manager. Three years later, then-President Edwin D. Hill appointed him an international representative.

“Ted came from a utility local, but he could apply what he learned to any branch or profession. He was always open-minded,” said International Representative Chad Donathan. “He always said at the end of the day, workers’ issues are workers’ issues.”

Robison says he’s most proud of the opportunity to mentor new officers and members, and to instill in them the true meaning of being in a brotherhood, that it’s greater than any individual.

“When I was business manager, there were other managers in the area but we didn’t really know each other. Ted got us together, and working together,” Donathan said. “He showed us that there’s more than just your local, or even the IBEW. It’s about the movement. We’re all part of something bigger.”

A piece of advice that Robison has carried with him is that he never learned anything from someone who agreed with him.

“He’s a straight shooter,” Donathan said. “He didn’t always tell me what I wanted to hear, but he was always there for me, day or night. He’s a true brother.”

International Representative Chuck Tippie met Robison back when they were both at Local 1466. When Robison became business manager, he asked Tippie to serve as assistant manager.

“Ted was always prepared, whether it was conducting grievances, arbitrations, negotiations or representing the membership. And he maintained that same work ethic as an international representative,” Tippie said. “His efforts have left the IBEW in a better place.”

Cincinnati Local 1347 Business Manager Andrew Kirk, a mentee, credits Robi-

son with helping him win several negotiations soon after Kirk took office.

“Ted’s leadership really helped Local 1347 achieve two very good contracts that we hadn’t seen in a very long time,” Kirk said. “He really jumpstarted our local and inspired members like no other. He’s one of the best union brothers you could have around.”

The decision to retire wasn’t one Robison came to easily.

“I still love representing our members, helping to improve their lives and strengthening the IBEW,” Robison said. “But I realized it was time to step aside and give someone else the same opportunities I’ve been given.”

His retirement plans include, somewhat ironically, not having any.

“For the first time since I started working at the age of 17, I really don’t have to have a plan,” Robison said. “But I will fish a lot, and actually get to spend some time with my family.”

On behalf of the IBEW membership, the officers and staff wish Brother Robison a long and happy retirement. ■

RETIRED

Carmella Thomas



Capping a nearly 30-year career, International Representative Carmella Thomas has retired, effective April 1.

“She’s going to be missed,” said Lead Organizer Kathy Smith. “She’s a great person and a great organizer. She’s my family.”

Thomas, who was initiated into Topeka, Kan., Local 304 in 1994, says it wasn’t an easy decision to retire, but she ultimately decided it was time to pass the torch.

“Organizing is a part of me, it’s a part of everything I love. But I believe there’s a time for people to step down and let the next generation step up,” Thomas said. “So, this is my time to step aside.”

Thomas leaves behind an impressive organizing legacy, one she amassed in the field, in the Membership Development Department as director of professional and industrial organizing, and as an international representative in the Education Department.

“She has so many talents,” said Education Department International Representative Tracy Prezeau. “And one of the greatest things about her is she uses these gifts to help others. It’s never about ego with Carmella.”

“Carmella’s experience in both organizing and education has been an incredible asset to the IBEW,” said Education Director Amanda Pacheco. “Everything she did was a combination of these two things, and it made her an effective trainer. She saw organizing as education and education as organizing.”

From her early days as a customer service representative for utility company Westar Energy, the Kansas native was

active in her local, serving on various committees and as chief steward. But it wasn’t long before she was tapped to help organize her fellow co-workers, and in a right-to-work state. From there, she was appointed by then-International President Edwin D. Hill to the position of lead organizer with the International Office in 2004, and in 2006 as regional organizing coordinator for 10 states in the South.

“Everything I know about organizing, I learned from Carmella,” Smith said. “Plus, she made everything so fun.”

Smith and Thomas were part of a six-person team organizing employees of Mastec, a DirecTV contractor, into Tampa, Fla., Local 824 in 2006. Like all organizing, it wasn’t easy. They even worked through hurricanes. But in the end, they were successful, organizing roughly 160 people on their first try.

“That was a phenomenal win,” Thomas said. “I’ll never forget it. The employees cried.”

Thomas says that was also one of the first campaigns where there was an intentional effort to make sure the organizing team was diverse and made up of people of color to match the demographics of the employees.

“In order to win, you need the best people, and sometimes that includes having organizers who look like the people they’re trying to organize,” Thomas said.

For Thomas, as a woman of color, she says the power of a union is particularly important.

“For people of color, and for women, there’s no such thing as being equal. But with a union, it’s all about equality,” Thomas said. “It’s what makes you stand up and feel strong. You don’t have a voice until you have a union.”

Throughout her career Thomas has empowered others, making them believe they can do something like win an organizing drive or be a leader. It’s because she’s never forgotten what it was like to be new and unorganized herself, said Prezeau.

“She meets you where you are, and she draws you in,” Prezeau said. “She genuinely wants to find out who you are.”

That sincerity has served Thomas well in a career that’s spanned multiple districts and departments, and is in many ways all about relationships.

“You never see Carmella standing by herself, not for very long anyway,” Prezeau said. “She’s like a magnet. You can’t help wanting to be around her.”

Thomas says her plans for retirement are to take some time for herself and to be with her family.

“I missed out on a lot, as you do in these jobs. You put your work before your family,” she said.

While she says she’ll miss all the people she’s met along the way, Thomas is also optimistic about the future of the brotherhood.

“With the new Biden administration, this is the perfect time for the IBEW to spread its wings,” she said. “It will be exciting to see how far we’ll soar.”

On behalf of the membership, the officers and staff of the IBEW wish Sister Thomas a well-deserved and long retirement. ■

GROUNDING IN HISTORY

The Origins of May Day

For 137 years, May 1 has been celebrated around the world as International Workers’ Day. It is a day for honoring the immeasurable contributions of union labor to society. And although the holiday is more popular in European countries, being often overshadowed by Labor Day in the U.S., the roots of May Day are distinctly American. And it all began with the fight for an 8-hour workday.

In October 1884, a convention held by the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, which later became the AFL, resolved to lead a nationwide protest in demand of an 8-hour workday on May 1, 1886. As the day arrived, labor unions across the U.S. went on strike and hundreds of thousands of workers held parades chanting the anthem, “Eight Hours for Work, Eight hours for Rest, Eight hours for What We Will.” In Chicago, at the movement’s center, an estimated 40,000 workers struck. On May 3, strikers met outside the McCormick Machine plant as strikebreakers were leaving for the day. The police were called in to disperse the strikers and eventually fired shots into the crowd. Outraged by the assault, local anarchists quickly called for a rally to be held the following day at Haymarket Square. On the evening of May 4, a crowd gathered to listen to speeches from labor leaders. At 10:30 p.m., as the police began dispersing the crowd, a dynamite bomb was thrown into their path, killing seven officers. The police began firing into the crowd, killing four strikers and injuring dozens more.

The event became known as the Haymarket Affair and it galvanized the labor movement across the country and the globe. At the AFL convention of 1888, delegates voted for another general strike to be held May 1, 1890. AFL President Samuel Gompers sent a proposal to the International Socialist Congress, which was meeting in Paris, asking if it could join America’s efforts. The Europeans unanimously agreed and together, on May 1, 1890, Europe and America held demonstrations in demand of an 8-hour workday.

The first International Workers Day was a spectacular success. The front page of the New York World newspaper carried the headline, “Parade of Jubilant Workingmen in All Trade Centers of the Civilized World Demand a Normal Day.” There was even a small demonstration in St. Louis. Perhaps IBEW founders Henry Miller and J.T. Kelly were marching with them? It was only a month later that the two men would meet at the St. Louis Expo before founding the IBEW the next year.

In 1894, the U.S. officially declared the first Monday of September as “Labor Day.” This did not stop unions from holding May Day demonstrations, however, which now included the demand for a maximum 40-hour week. The efforts bore fruit in the early 1900’s, marked by hundreds of Local Line articles in The Electrical Worker celebrating new collective bargaining agreements with the 8-hour day provision. It was only a matter of time before this became the federal standard, and the IBEW helped lead the way.

In February 1929, IBEW Local 3 of New York secured a 5-day work week with the Electrical Contractors Association. This monumental success was due to the efforts of Vice President H.H. Broach. With the contract announced, it set off a chain reaction of other trades securing similar contracts. By April, in an effort to stop the tide, the Building Trades Employers Association threatened to lock out all union members from construction work. The AFL Building Trades Council, of which the IBEW was a member, stuck to its demands and called the bluff. As a result, in May of 1929, the Building Association signed the contract setting a 5-day, 40-hour work week for all 150,000 members of New York’s building trades, by far the largest bloc in America. Vice President Broach was elected IBEW president that fall.

The cover of the June 1929 issue of The Electrical Worker celebrated the achievement as “labor’s effort to secure a partial share in the leisure, wealth and culture created under new conditions in industry.” In the years that followed, the 40-hour work week swept across the country, eventually culminating in the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which set a minimum wage and overtime for a 40-hour week for all public contracts. The 8-hour day, the original rallying cry of May Day, was now codified into law.

On this May Day, our support of labor unions and workers’ rights here in North America and across the world honors the pioneers who blazed the trail for us to follow. As we take stock of their achievements, let it give us strength for the struggles that lie ahead. If history is to be any guide, it shows that the IBEW has and still leads the way. ■

Clarification

Clarification to the March 2021 “Grounded in History” column: Brother Keith Edwards was the first elected African-American business manager of a construction local. Brother Dalton Hooks served as business manager prior to Edwards but was not elected.

For more on how to support the IBEW’s preservation of its history, visit nbe-ibewmuseum.org. Have an idea for this feature? Send it to Curtis_Bateman@ibew.org.



Vice President
H.H. Broach

In Memoriam

Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in March 2021

Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death									
1	Alfermann, F. J.	10/8/20	26	Haines, J. R.	5/23/18	126	Gerhart, R. E.	1/30/21	280	Mason, V. T.	4/12/20	490	Carlisle, K.	11/17/20	816	Ferguson, W. A.	12/29/20
1	Banaszek, F. N.	7/15/20	26	Moats, R. L.	12/11/20	126	Smith, W. L.	12/1/20	288	Vlasak, R. W.	11/28/20	494	Arthur, G. L.	7/24/20	833	Cornelius, J. H.	12/9/20
1	Eye, C. R.	12/19/20	26	Rohrbaugh, R. L.	12/24/20	129	Koepke, R. L.	11/3/20	291	Bish, J. C.	6/14/20	494	Casper, L. H.	12/14/20	852	Adams, U. E.	12/29/19
3	Andre, A. J.	12/22/20	26	Widener, J. P.	11/21/20	130	Gardner, G.	11/25/20	291	Grose, D. C.	6/26/20	494	Feltz, J. F.	1/24/21	906	Groleau, E. J.	10/30/20
3	Benjamin, E. G.	4/10/20	32	Vance, H.	10/21/20	130	St. Philip, J. P.	11/26/20	292	Agrimson, R. P.	12/10/20	494	Gauthier, G. C.	1/25/21	910	Mott, R. H.	11/26/20
3	Cohen, B. J.	12/3/19	34	Carrigan, K. F.	12/2/20	131	Cook, W. R.	9/24/20	292	Evans, M. J.	4/29/20	494	Hilgendorf, K. R.	1/28/21	910	Trombly, R. R.	12/9/20
3	Colon, N.	12/21/20	34	McGann, W. F.	11/28/20	131	Root, D. J.	10/24/20	292	Gerritsen, R. C.	10/30/20	494	Kidd, A. C.	12/29/20	915	Dowdell, J. V.	8/13/20
3	Congolosi, F.	1/14/21	34	Miller, F. O.	12/13/20	134	Adamowski, T. B.	1/26/21	292	Kilian, M. N.	11/9/20	494	Radomski, J. F.	11/11/20	948	Sack, C. R.	11/7/20
3	Criscuolo, S. N.	6/6/20	34	Seiler, K. A.	11/19/20	134	Bochucinski, E. J.	6/25/20	292	Norby, D. P.	10/9/20	502	Soucy, J. J.	10/1/20	968	Tingler, R. L.	12/17/20
3	David, M. A.	3/30/20	35	Clymer, D.	10/16/20	134	Brod, J. G.	2/13/21	295	Doughty, L. D.	11/5/20	530	Kohut, B. D.	10/15/20	993	De Delley, W.	12/11/20
3	DeNichilo, S.	5/21/20	35	Haddad, M.	2/20/21	134	Brown, N. C.	12/13/20	300	Blaisdell, G. D.	8/12/20	532	Ploehn, R. A.	11/1/20	995	Fagot, E. H.	11/10/20
3	Devito, N.	1/25/21	38	Mohney, D. J.	10/9/20	134	Dougherty, D. J.	10/18/20	302	Martinez, J. T.	10/23/20	540	Geer, O. M.	9/16/20	1049	Dieckert, R. A.	7/17/20
3	Dingaro, C. R.	5/30/20	38	Poplar, D.	2/16/21	134	Keating, J.	9/17/20	302	Wise, W. W.	11/8/20	553	Myrick, J. A.	1/16/21	1141	Turner, B. J.	12/19/20
3	Farrelly, T. A.	11/6/20	38	Sic, J.	3/27/20	134	Maloney, T. F.	10/23/20	304	Diehm, C. C.	10/11/20	558	Allen, J. R.	1/13/21	1181	Walsh, C. S.	10/29/20
3	Ficalora, J. J.	12/8/20	38	Vassel, D. G.	11/13/20	134	Mudra, R. J.	12/15/20	304	Heffernon, S. L.	11/20/20	558	Benford, J. L.	12/16/20	1186	Higashi, M.	10/26/20
3	Ghiotti, F.	11/22/20	41	Andrews, D. R.	11/15/20	134	Nutter, V. W.	11/2/20	305	Tilbury, J. R.	8/31/20	558	Berkey, R. C.	11/6/20	1205	Crosby, J.	1/22/21
3	Grande, P.	1/2/21	41	Brudz, D. J.	11/21/20	134	Obrock, K. E.	11/22/20	306	Martz, R. C.	12/17/20	558	Cassels, V. S.	11/22/20	1260	Ramon, J.	12/6/20
3	Grueninger, C. M.	9/27/20	41	Mohr, R. A.	9/13/20	134	Squilliaciotti, R.	11/26/20	306	Schultz, G. J.	1/2/21	558	Cossey, J. P.	1/25/21	1340	Barbour, L. F.	12/23/20
3	Klepachki, H. J.	8/15/20	41	Scherer, F. R.	10/26/20	134	Steppek, R. J.	10/25/20	306	Sutter, M. E.	12/27/20	558	Cox, J. A.	1/3/21	1377	Nestorovic, D.	10/4/20
3	Knudsen, W. O.	1/12/21	41	Wildman, H. B.	11/13/20	134	Swain, P. L.	10/9/20	306	Tasker, A. R.	12/16/20	558	Wright, B. R.	1/19/21	1393	Elliott, H. C.	10/16/20
3	Lennon, R. M.	11/12/20	46	Benoff, W.	11/6/20	134	Vanwormer, P. A.	10/29/20	306	Zack, S. E.	10/11/20	567	Lucarelli, B. F.	11/27/20	1393	Martin, R. L.	8/24/20
3	Lopez, S.	1/11/21	46	McKelvey, E. B.	9/28/20	134	Walters, C. S.	10/26/20	309	King, K. P.	2/9/21	567	Smith, R. E.	11/17/20	1393	Sartain, D. E.	11/20/20
3	Luisi, V. C.	12/26/20	46	Pettit, J. D.	3/17/20	134	Wegner, T. W.	12/19/20	309	Schroeder, D. F.	11/17/20	570	Roussard, D. L.	12/10/20	1531	Sampson, R. L.	9/20/20
3	Mahon, R. J.	11/24/20	48	Drury, W. D.	9/2/20	134	Whitehead, B. D.	11/26/20	340	Henderson, D. D.	11/23/20	570	Wood, R. D.	8/21/20	1547	Long, J. D.	10/24/20
3	McCullough, L. P.	4/4/20	48	Jensen, L. B.	10/12/20	143	Perry, M. J.	9/21/20	340	Schooler, J. R.	1/28/21	577	Mason, R. P.	12/9/20	1555	Welling, R. C.	10/25/20
3	McCormick, J. J.	5/20/20	48	Pine, E. D.	9/5/20	143	Wogan, F. L.	10/15/20	340	Tolson, E. A.	10/1/20	596	Cormier, J. K.	9/9/20	1579	Ansley, J. F.	10/26/20
3	McLaren, R.	4/23/20	51	Ruppert, C. W.	10/25/20	145	Strand, R. E.	12/13/20	343	Laughter, S. A.	9/11/20	601	Bisch, J. C.	12/25/20	1579	Cromer, S. H.	1/11/21
3	Medaglia, F. C.	11/23/20	51	Von Arx, L. A.	11/24/20	146	Barnes, R. G.	11/14/20	349	Keukelaar, P. C.	10/26/20	602	Aalders, L. C.	10/30/20	1579	Lamb, L. T.	12/22/20
3	Montovio, C.	11/15/20	55	Brown, D. D.	11/17/20	146	McElravy, W. R.	12/17/20	349	Sharpe, B.	10/1/20	602	Callison, T. H.	10/9/20	1687	Layton, W. F.	5/14/20
3	Namovitz, M.	12/3/20	57	Montoya, E.	11/24/20	150	Templeton, M. D.	11/18/20	349	Wentworth, G. R.	10/15/20	611	Duran, T. E.	12/30/20	1687	Vanderloo, D. A.	3/13/19
3	O'Brien, E. E.	2/5/20	58	Dye, T. M.	11/12/20	158	Ruf, M. W.	12/19/20	351	Heck, K. W.	12/13/20	611	Johnson, R. E.	11/9/20	1852	MacLeod, A. K.	6/22/19
3	Ray, W.	3/2/20	58	Garbinski, F. C.	10/16/20	159	Haefler, D. D.	12/9/20	351	Scarpa, C. J.	1/10/21	611	Richter, P. G.	10/9/20	1852	Nicoletti, L.	8/28/20
3	Ruggeri, R.	12/15/20	58	Garrett, W. O.	10/25/20	163	Steltz, D. G.	11/27/20	351	Toner, T. D.	12/29/20	613	Chambers, F. W.	7/18/20	2077	Sumners, J. C.	1/12/21
3	Saldana, C.	11/24/20	58	Kranich, F. P.	11/4/20	164	Jantzen, R. H.	8/1/20	353	Leonard, T. G.	12/5/20	613	Hightower, A. L.	10/15/20	2085	Dromereski, R.	10/5/20
3	Schaffer, E. H.	12/14/20	58	Lents, J. P.	11/5/20	164	Pannenberg, L. H.	9/14/20	353	Murray, J. F.	2/8/20	613	Mobley, D. L.	12/30/20	2085	Holigroski, L. N.	10/17/20
3	Telmer, B. S.	11/20/20	58	Maynard, R. R.	11/8/20	175	Edwards, T. L.	12/2/20	353	O'Brien, T. H.	11/11/20	617	Gatchel, S. L.	2/24/20	2150	Corrigan, T. J.	10/11/20
3	Trombino, T. J.	1/30/21	58	Parkkila, L. D.	12/8/20	175	Housley, J. D.	11/23/20	353	Pascoa, A. F.	9/4/20	625	Bobbitt, J.	10/22/20	2150	Schaefer, W. F.	10/11/20
3	Ventura, J. J.	12/3/20	58	Sikoski, D.	12/13/20	175	Pryor, G. M.	12/18/20	353	Sergenchuk, Y.	12/4/20	636	Paulton, D.	1/28/21	2295	Mundt, W. R.	10/18/20
3	Walker, B. J.	11/20/20	58	Young, W. J.	11/6/20	175	Smith, T. V.	10/9/20	353	Soukup, S. Z.	1/18/21	640	Greenley, D. A.	11/27/20	2304	Beean, J. K.	1/10/21
3	Wallace, C. O.	7/11/20	60	Griffin, E. L.	11/19/20	176	Breen, L. F.	12/23/20	353	Wynter, B. G.	11/17/20	640	Moore, R. S.	11/24/20	2330	Jesso, L.	9/17/20
3	Witte, W. B.	5/22/20	66	Abarca, J. A.	11/26/20	176	Hartley, R. E.	11/23/20	354	Chaplin, W. E.	11/30/20	640	Mull, R. A.	12/16/20	2355	Richmond, J. S.	8/28/20
3	Wolliaaston, E. A.	4/8/20	66	Denman, B. L.	9/16/20	176	Lewandowski, W. M.	1/11/21	354	Josephs, W. H.	1/23/21	659	Hamilton, M. J.	1/21/21	I.O. (3)	Howley, J. P.	11/9/20
5	Anderson, A. W.	10/22/20	68	Carey, E. L.	1/19/20	176	Perry, G. J.	1/27/21	357	Credico, A. J.	7/25/19	659	Ihrig, H. W.	11/17/20	I.O. (15)	Mikulich, L. A.	11/13/20
5	Coll, W. J.	11/30/20	68	Eining, S. L.	3/14/20	176	Vela, J. C.	11/19/20	357	Moore, J. T.	3/29/19	659	Jackson, J. S.	11/1/20	I.O. (25)	Haines, E. H.	7/22/20
5	Hollis, T. W.	10/25/20	68	Hartmann, R. M.	10/30/20	177	Truglia, R. B.	12/10/20	357	Prentice, D. C.	12/3/20	659	Parr, Z. A.	1/3/21	I.O. (115)	Obress, J.	12/17/20
5	Sedor, P. J.	10/29/20	68	Wiest, R. L.	4/30/20	177	Williams, O. L.	12/24/20	357	Tinney, R. M.	11/9/20	659	Smith, R. A.	2/11/21	I.O. (134)	Baker, J. J.	11/12/20
6	Reggiardo, J. J.	5/27/20	70	Rogers, J. F.	11/16/20	180	Sandau, T. C.	7/17/20	363	Lombardi, R. A.	11/9/20	665	Taylor, G. A.	1/22/21	I.O. (134)	Harrity, D. A.	12/13/20
6	Rudder, P. W.	11/24/20	71	Howard, W. D.	4/30/20	191	Blackmore, R. W.	11/17/20	363	Wright, T. J.	10/4/20	666	Price, B. R.	11/21/20	I.O. (134)	Holcomb, D. S.	11/17/20
7	Appleton, R.	10/19/20	71	Swank, J. R.	8/31/20	191	Kayton, G. L.	11/1/20	365	Holland, C.	12/22/20	666	Stroud, B. B.	10/25/20	I.O. (134)	Innes, R. J.	10/9/20
8	Kaseman, P. H.	11/10/20	73	Mathena, C. L.	10/31/20	191	Mork, R. C.	11/29/20	369	Harnett, S. R.	11/24/20	666	Tawney, D. W.	1/24/21	I.O. (134)	Leonard, M. E.	11/20/20
8	Lauderman, B. A.	9/15/20	76	Whalen, B. V.	11/11/20	193	Cantrall, H. W.	11/12/20	369	Kinney, R. C.	2/19/20	681	Anderle, J. L.	1/16/21	I.O. (134)	Ostowicz, W. J.	10/6/19
9	Mohalick, R. E.	2/7/21	77	Trudeau, L. T.	1/15/20	193	Stein, S. R.	10/15/20	369	Tatum, H. E.	11/2/20	682	Burns, C. H.	11/24/20	I.O. (134)	Zizzo, A. A.	11/17/20
9	Prince, D. R.	11/23/20	82	Huff, C. L.	12/12/20	194	Babb, R. A.	9/6/20	387	Banning, C. L.	11/18/20	683	Fast, H. W.	11/18/20	I.O. (210)	Johnsen, D. C.	12/17/20
9	Streseman, N.	12/9/20	98	Keevill, R. L.	10/14/20	194	Stephenson, J. D.	10/2/20	401	Brown, R. D.	12/22/20	683	Hall, C. E.	12/13/20	I.O. (342)	Boudreau, D. A.	12/18/20
9	Tignor, D. A.	12/13/20	98	Kostik, J. A.	7/14/20	196	Chapman, R. I.	10/30/20	401	Postel, N. A.	8/18/17	688	Smith, P. A.	11/18/20	I.O. (760)	Campbell, D. W.	1/1/21
11	Baxter, R. L.	11/16/20	98	Whalen, J. J.	4/30/20	196	Fromm, E. L.	12/11/20	401	Van Dyke, D. E.	9/12/20	697	Waymire, R. E.	12/4/20	I.O. (1253)	Wallace, F. B.	11/29/20
11	Benter, R. J.	10/17/20	99	Grant, H. J.	12/16/20	197	Roberts, J. G.	11/10/20	405	Sundermeyer, R. M.	11/18/20	700	Huber, T. E.	1/14/21	I.O. (1489)	Higgins, M. J.	8/25/20
11	Feichtinger, J. F.	12/25/20	99	Imondi, E. A.	12/12/20	212	Gardner, P. G.	11/5/20	424	Dowling, A. R.	3/25/20	702	Barger, L. D.	12/2/20	Pens. (637)	Martin, H. W.	11/22/20
11	Flores, J. L.	11/6/20	99	Tierney, W. J.	10/7/20	213	Bell, I. C.	8/1/20	424	Thomas, D. E.	10/6/20	702	Wilkins, D. E.	12/26/20	Pens. (686)	Bremmer, R.	10/7/20
11	Poliseno, G.	6/14/19	102	Costantin, R. V.	9/14/20	213	Fulton, J. H.	9/14/20	426	Larson, H. L.	10/20/20	716	Buckalew, P. S.	10/22/20	Pens. (760)	Smith, C. F.	10/30/20
11	Roark, W. A.	12/9/20	102	Fleischmann, V. J.	8/30/20	213	Kuhn, R.	11/14/20	429	Anderson, B. J.	11/28/20	716	Odum, W. S.	7/23/20	Pens. (1788)	Bolton, J. H.	10/28/20
16	Pritchett, M. A.	1/23/21	102	Morris, M. C.	10/7/19	226	Beiter, J. L.	9/9/20	429	Johnson, T. L.	1/20/21	716	Richardson, K. D.	10/11/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Beemer, D. C.	11/15/20
17	Jacot, D. L.	11/8/20	102	Tornillo, M. T.	8/9/20	229	Chronister, W. J.	12/29/20	429	Petty, P. E.	1/21/21	716	Watson, W. H.	10/19/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Fontaine, R. J.	8/13/20
17	Mick, A. E.	11/4/20	103	Chester, J. J.	11/3/20</												

LOCAL LINES

Paying It Forward

L.U. 1 (as,c,ees,ei,em,es,et,fm,i,mt,rt,s,s,se,spa,st&ws), ST. LOUIS, MO — Journeyman wireman Matt Kahrhoff is a proud third-generation, 33-year member of IBEW Local 1. He is the director of construction at VISION Electric & Systems.

Brother Kahrhoff is also the proud father of four sons. In 2014, he and his wife Gwynne received news that parents dread: Their son, Luke, was diagnosed with lymphoma. Thanks to the great care Luke received at St. Louis Children's Hospital, he is a healthy, 16-year old, high-school sophomore.

Matt expressed, "I'm blessed with the health insurance through Local 1. I don't know how other people do it. That pushed me to want to help others." Volunteering since 2015, he is on the hospital's Foundation Board and the KIDstruction Week committee.

"In its 10th year, KIDstruction Week is an innovative fundraising program from St. Louis Children's Hospital enlisting participation from tradespersons within the local construction industry to help kids. Last year's effort raised \$410,000," he said.

Kahrhoff explained, "Participating companies offer their tradespersons the opportunity to donate \$1, or more, via payroll deduction for each hour they work during the first full payroll week of August, designated as St. Louis Children's Hospital's KIDstruction Week. Companies are encouraged to match their employees' gifts at a percent of their choosing, or to make a lump-sum donation to demonstrate their commitment."

For more info, go to kidstructionweek.com.

Jan Bresnan, P.S.



KIDstruction Week, an innovative fundraising program from St. Louis Children's Hospital, enlists participation from tradespersons within the local construction industry. (Logo courtesy of St. Louis Children's Hospital.)

Coalition Works to Keep Plants Operational in Illinois

L.U. 15 (u), DOWNERS GROVE, IL — On Feb. 24, 2021, Exelon announced that it will separate its generation company (Exelon Generation) and its energy delivery business (ComEd), forming two separate companies. Local 15 plans to have discussions with the compa-

nies to understand the effects of this separation on our members.

Exelon Generation announced that they would be closing the Byron and Dresden Nuclear Generating stations in 2021. This is a result of financial challenges due to market rules. These plant closures would result in the loss of thousands of jobs. A coalition of IBEW and other labor leaders and the AFL-CIO have worked with state legislators to push for energy legislation that could save these plants. Local 15 President Terry McGoldrick and Vice President Billy Phillips accompanied legislators on tours of the plants. There will be efforts this spring to pass favorable legislation to keep the plants operational.

The work forecast in 2021 for our construction departments remains strong as they continue work on grid modernization.

Local 15 sends condolences to the families of deceased retired members Stephen J. Kenesie (Local 1461) and James F. Heffernan (Local 1366). Both served as presidents of their locals.

Sam Studer, P.S.

Progress in a Pandemic

L.U. 37 (c,o,ptc,rtb&u), FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA — COVID-19 has been with us for over a year now, and although it's forced a lot of change and challenges, it hasn't stopped our local from serving and supporting our membership.

The biggest challenge has been finding effective ways to connect with each other when we can't



To help keep its membership safe, Local 37 sent all members two union-made face masks, like the one worn here by Business Manager and IEC member Ross Galbraith.

be together in person. The pandemic has had an undeniable effect on how members work and on how we have meetings, socialize, network, negotiate, attend conferences, hold training workshops and celebrate milestones.

And through it all, we've found ways to stay connected and still make great progress. We've successfully negotiated and ratified an excellent collective agreement for our largest bargaining unit, and we're already preparing to negotiate two more agreements. Our Training Trust Fund programs have all moved to virtual platforms, which have led to greater participation rates than expected. We recently launched a new website that is more user-friendly and much easier to navigate. And to help keep our membership safe, we provided every member with two Local 37-branded, union-made masks.

Most important is the pride we have for our members. Throughout this pandemic, they have demonstrated continued patience, resiliency, flexibility and support for one another as they work together to maintain vital public services in our communities.

Mary Williamson, A.B.M.

A Good Summer and a Fall Full of Work

L.U. 41 (i,se,es,em&spa), BUFFALO, NY — Greetings all! I know it has been a while since we last saw each other, and I hope all is well. For those who do not know, our local lobby has been open since November to complete any necessary transactions. Stop in and pay your dues, purchase merchandise or see the funds office. Masks are required.

We look to a good summer and fall full of work. We are lucky to have plenty of suburban-school and university work, an addition and renovation at the Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center in West Seneca and other smaller projects to look forward to.

This past year has been mentally and financially tough on many of us, especially if your children are having a hard time. If you need help, do not be afraid to reach out: There are many resources available for those who are looking to talk or seeking advice. Hopefully, we will be able to have one or two events this year so we can get together, share some stories, have a few laughs and enjoy our brotherhood.

Gregory R. Inglut, P.S.

Honoring Those Lost

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uow), DIAMOND BAR, CA — Our sentiments go out to anyone who has suffered or had loved ones suffer from COVID-19; and our condolences to those who have lost family members to this terrible pandemic.

In the city of Anaheim, general group negotiations continue. In the city of Colton, negotiations are scheduled.

All of Local 47's events are canceled until further notice.

We have two retirements: Alan Pillado, line crew foreman, and Bill Innes, mapping tech. Congratulations!

We're sad to report the deaths of Art "Bubba" Satterfield, who passed away from COVID-19; Ruben Aponte; Richard Castillo; Mark Garcia; Rudy Habner; Robert (Carl) Hendry; Darrell Jackson; Dave Kolk; Richard Lua; Kelley Marvin, working in our jurisdiction from Local 659; Evan Pipolo; and Brian (Ralph) Willis. Our condolences and prayers are with their loved ones.

Work safe and buy union.

Mitch Smith, P.S.



Local 47 members support their community through service at the Long Beach Food Drive.

Bringing IBEW Know-How to Camp Stevenson, Afghanistan

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL — On July 2, 2020, a total power system failure occurred at Camp Stevenson, Afghanistan. The base was completely mission ineffective and at risk of losing critical base defense systems and medical supplies. Guardsmen JTACs/Special Forces Group (Airborne) of the U.S. Air Force Sgt. Tim Burkhart and Lt. Matt Denault had experience with electrical wiring and circuitry, which enabled them to act decisively. Their action led the generator mechanic to trace down the electrical short-age and make needed repairs, preventing the extend-

Submitting Local Lines Articles

Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officers via email (locallines@ibew.org) or U.S. Mail. We have a 200-word limit. We make every effort to assist local unions in publishing useful and relevant local union news; however, all final content decisions are based on the editor's judgment. Our guidelines and deadlines are available at IBEW.org/LocalLines. Please email or call the Media Department at (202) 728-6291 with any questions.

Trade Classifications

(as) Alarm & Signal	(et) Electronic Technicians	(mps) Motion Picture Studios	(rts) Radio-Television Service
(ars) Atomic Research Service	(fm) Fixture Manufacturing	(nst) Nuclear Service Technicians	(so) Service Occupations
(bo) Bridge Operators	(govt) Government	(o) Outside	(s) Shopmen
(cs) Cable Splicers	(i) Inside	(p) Powerhouse	(se) Sign Erector
(catv) Cable Television	(it) Instrument Technicians	(pet) Professional, Engineers & Technicians	(spa) Sound & Public Address
(c) Communications	(lctt) Line Clearance Tree Trimming	(ptc) Professional, Technical & Clerical	(st) Sound Technicians
(cr) Cranemen	(lpt) Lightning Protection Technicians	(rr) Railroad	(t) Telephone
(ees) Electrical Equipment Service	(mt) Maintenance	(uow) Utility Office Workers	(tm) Transportation Manufacturing
(ei) Electrical Inspection	(mo) Maintenance & Operation	(ws) Warehouse and Supply	
(em) Electrical Manufacturing	(mow) Manufacturing Office Workers		
(es) Electric Signs	(mar) Marine		

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

ed degradation of the base's operating capacity. Brother Tim Burkhart is a journeyman lineman in Peoria, Ill.; the generators and power distribution systems were all made by Caterpillar Inc. in Peoria.

Brother Jason Carl, former business representative, retired in March after 36 years of dedicated service to the IBEW as a journeyman lineman and the local union's construction representative. Brother Carl represented the true meaning of what the IBEW stands for, and his knowledge and experience will definitely be missed. We raise our Busch Light to you, Jason!

Karlene Knisley, B.R.



Local 51 journeyman lineman Sgt. Tim Burkhart brings IBEW expertise to Camp Stevenson, Afghanistan.

Work Starts Back Up

L.U. 55 (c,lctt,o&u), DES MOINES, IA — Brothers and sisters, I would like to remember three of our brothers who passed away recently. Butch Mahon, a 54-year member, passed away on Jan. 1, 2021. Jerry Spieker passed away on Jan. 22, 2021; he was a member for 59 years and our recording secretary for many years. Manuel Garcia passed away on Feb. 6, 2021. He was a member for six years. Each of these brothers brought something special to our local, and they will be missed.

It looks like the work in our local is starting to pick back up, and we're going to need some travelers to help out, so give us a call if you're needing a job. It's also looking like we're going to start to have our local union meetings again!

We want to thank all the contractors and line crews who went to Texas to help with the big ice storm during one of the coldest cold spells on record! I'm sure your help was greatly appreciated. Thanks!

I also have some news for the retirees: I think we will be starting our monthly breakfasts in May or June at the latest. I expect it will be at Prairie Meadows at 9 a.m. on the first Monday of the month. Give the hall a call the last week of the month if you're interested in coming, just to make sure of the time and place.

Work safe and watch each other's backs. I'm ready to go boating! See you in a couple months!

Myron Green, P.S.

Fighting the Good Fight

L.U. 77 (lctt,mt,o,t&u), SEATTLE, WA — In a small town in Eastern Washington, six brothers are currently fighting for their jobs against the city of Ellensburg (population 20,000). The city is exploiting the pandemic to undercut fair wages and safe working conditions.

Both parties at the negotiating table couldn't be further apart. On Feb. 16, over 700 IBEW members from multiple locals banded together, showing up in force at the virtual city council meeting to back their brothers.

Assistant Business Manager Brian Gray said, "The actions of Local 77 and all of the affiliated locals that were involved in this grassroots movement delivered a huge message to the city of Ellensburg."

Our members have stayed strong and positive during this fight, knowing that they have the force of their brothers and sisters behind them. The fight continues with a letter campaign directed at city officials and boots on the ground with an informational picket on March 5 in Ellensburg.

Local 77 wants to especially thank Executive Board members Sara Langus and Larry Becht, Assistant Business Manager Brian Gray and about 1,000 more members for their selflessness and hard work fighting the good fight as we continue to negotiate with the city of Ellensburg.

Brandon Arkle, R.S.

Dayton Food Drive Helps Those In Need

L.U. 82 (em,i,mt&rtb), DAYTON, OH — On Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021, our Brother Randy Chestnut helped to organize volunteer work for the USDA Farmers To Families Food Drive, located at the Old North Dayton Baptist Church. Thanks to Brother Chestnut and to all those who helped.

Ryan Brown, P.S.



Left to right, Journeyman wireman John Thompson, Assistant Business Agent Dave Bruce, Organizer Ray Camp and journeyman wireman Randy Chestnut work for the USDA Farmers to Families Food Drive at Old North Dayton Baptist Church.

Glimmers of Light

L.U. 103 (cs&i), Boston, MA — We're starting to see a glimmer of light after a long year dealing with the darkness of COVID-19. Through our prescription partnership with CVS Caremark, we've been able to open a COVID-testing site at Local 103, exclusively for our members and their families. To date, we have given 1,000 individual tests.

We are looking forward to hosting monthly union meetings starting in April, continuing through the summer, into the fall and eventually back inside for all our meetings, events and functions.

Please hang in there a little longer. COVID rates are declining, vaccination rates are increasing and along with better weather comes another step towards normal gatherings and functions. There is work on the horizon, there are construction cranes in the air and Local 103 is hard at work securing your next project. Stay safe, brothers and sisters — better days are ahead.

Jimmy Fleming, P.S.

Handling Restoration Through Challenges

L.U. 125 (lctt,o&u), PORTLAND, OR — The year has started off a bit rough. Storms have pounded the Pacific Northwest, and our members have been out there handling restoration under challenging condi-



Local 125 mourns the loss of former Business Manager William (Bill) D. Miller Jr.

tions with ever-increasing customer expectations. Thank you for your work and thanks to your families.

In January, we lost Sister Brenda Stader in a tragic worksite accident while she worked as a flagger. Brenda spent nearly 10 years working for Northwest Traffic Control. "Any loss like this is very upsetting," said Business Manager Travis Eri. "Our hearts go out to her family and coworkers."

William (Bill) D. Miller Jr., former Local 125 business manager, passed on Feb. 7, 2021. For 22 years, we had a great leader who was strong in his conviction and even stronger in his work ethic. "Even those who disagreed with Bill, they respected him. He was a straight shooter who never lost sight of fighting for our membership," said Eri. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bill's family and friends as they mourn his loss.

Spring is approaching, so don't lose hope that change is coming. One thing won't change — our commitment and service to our membership! Stay safe.

Marcy Grail, A.B.M.

Work Delays Continue

L.U. 141 (ees,i,o&u), WHEELING, WV — As of this writing, the work picture remains slow, with 83 members on Book 1. COVID-19 is still a major factor, with monthly union meetings canceled, projects in the area put on hold and cancellations of the local's social activities.

Local 141 is very grateful to our sister locals for providing much needed work to our members. Locals 712, 246 and 972 have been keeping our members busy for several months.

The long-awaited ethane cracker project in our jurisdiction has been delayed due to the pandemic, but the developers remain hopeful that the project will be officially announced as we get control over the pandemic later this year. To date, \$300 million has been invested in property acquisition, engineering, etc.

Local 141 is sad to report the passing of Brother Charles "Charlie" Smith. He will be deeply missed.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Kurt "Bug" Reed, P.S.

Young Members Take 'Plunge' for Special Olympics

L.U. 159 (i), MADISON, WI — In the midst of frigid February weather, members of RENEW Local 159 bravely plunged down a snowy ski hill on inner tubes for this year's socially distanced terrestrial version of the Polar Plunge. [See photo, Pg. 16, top left.] This year, their efforts netted nearly \$1,000 to benefit Special Olympics Wisconsin.

Due to the pandemic, our work situation was slow this winter, with more members out of work than we want to see. Fortunately, in March we started to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We have sent a number of members back to work, and we look forward to seeing work continue to pick up as we move into spring. Many of our contractors see a good deal of work coming up, and as Wisconsin continues its strong vaccination program, we hope soon to return to a healthy work situation.

We welcomed new Business Agent Lisa Goodman in January. In February, Josh Stern was appointed as our new president. We congratulate them both on their new positions.

IBEW MERCHANDISE



LADIES CAMOUFLAGE HAT \$14.00

Pink and green twill camouflage hat with custom IBEW lettering. Adjustable size to fit all.

BLACK LONG SLEEVE SHIRT \$11.00

100% preshrunk cotton long sleeve t-shirt, with white IBEW initials printed on the left chest.

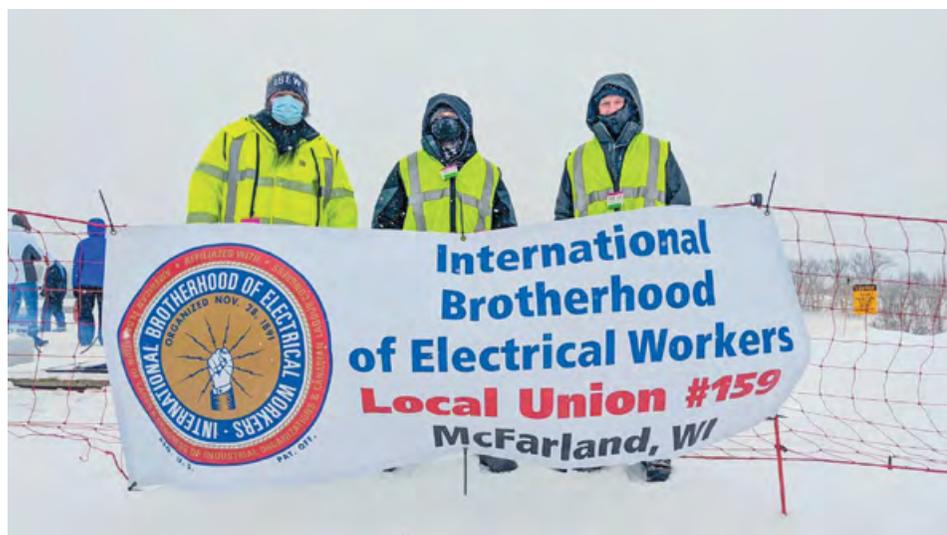
UNION YES LAPEL PIN \$1.50

Rectangular pin with gold-tone edge. Measures 7/8" x 1" with IBEW initials and military grade clutch.

These items and more are now available at your IBEW Online store.

www.ibewmerchandise.com

LOCAL LINES



RENEW Local 159 members Pablo Baxter, Mitch Johnson and Josh Stern represent at Special Olympics Wisconsin Polar Plunge.

We support our members every day, and we value opportunities like Black History Month, Women in Construction Week and Women's History Month to amplify the voices of our underrepresented members.

Sue Blue, B.M.

A Beautiful New Union Hall

L.U. 191 (c,i,mo,rtb&st), EVERETT, WA — Hello brothers, sisters and siblings! We have a lot of updates to share with you. We have moved our Everett hall into a beautiful new building located at 3100 164th Street NE in Marysville, Wash. For pictures of our new facility please visit the photo gallery section of our website, ibew191.com!

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we have not been able to do an open house for our members. In the beginning of March, we opened our new hall and Wenatchee hall by appointment only. Until recently, we have done most everything electronically through the website and via our phones. This will continue until we are able to open completely.

Through COVID-19 our work picture slowed, but it is looking to pick up especially on the east side, Zone 3, of our jurisdiction. We are currently getting into Book 2 regularly and will need plenty of help! If you are thinking about heading this way, you need a Washington state electrical license, and more information can be found on our website.

We hope you all are staying safe and healthy!

Randy Curry, Pres.

Negotiation Update & Work Picking Up

L.U. 245 (govt,lctt,o,rtb&u), TOLEDO, OH — It's spring, and I hope that you're enjoying some sun and warm weather after that brutal winter. As of this writing we still have COVID-19 protocols in place; therefore, there was no union meeting for March. Going forward we will be looking at scheduling on a month-by-month basis. Any changes will be on the local's website and Facebook page.

On the negotiation front, I'm happy to report negotiations with Hancock Wood and Lake Township have concluded with both ratifying new contracts. Contract negotiations at Davis-Besse are ongoing, and negotiations with Channel 24/WNWO should be starting soon.

Work on the outside is good and should be picking up this spring. We currently have 38 apprentices, and they are all working. At this time we have multiple crews scattered throughout the states on storm work.

We still have an opening to fill at the recording secretary position. Those interested should send a letter to the union hall.

That's it for now — enjoy your summer and stay safe!

Ray Zychowicz, P.S.

Member's Talents on Proud Display at Union Hall

L.U. 305 (i&spa), FORT WAYNE, IN — After a long winter of social distancing and meeting cancellations due to state and local COVID-19 guidelines, we were finally able to hold our March meeting in person; albeit a small one, it was great to be in front of the membership again. Local 305 would like to thank retired Brother Brian "Beaver" Frye for the artwork he donated to the local. Brother Beav, who retired after 35 years of faithful service to the IBEW, took a dying tree and turned it into a one-of-a-kind piece of art, now proudly on display at the hall.

While work was slow over the winter, with a few large projects slated to go in our jurisdiction, we are hopeful that we will be very busy for the rest of the year.

Kip Howard, B.M./F.S.



Retired Brother Brian Frye stands by his chainsaw carving that he donated to L.U. 305.

Celebrating a Local Leader's Absolute Commitment

L.U. 309 (i,lctt,mo,mt,o,rts,spa&u), COLLINSVILLE, IL — The labor movement is not a self-sustaining phenomenon. Its power and forward momentum are continuously replenished from the members who believe in it. Those who feel strongly enough about it choose to get involved and become leaders.

Local 309 would like to recognize Brother Chris Weir for his leadership and the absolute commitment that he has given to our cause. From journeyman wire-

man to assistant business manager, from numerous committees to RENEW advocate and from fundraising to organizing social gatherings, Chris's guidance has been significant. As we celebrate his retirement, we focus our attention to the example that he given to us. Thank you, Brother Weir, for your unwavering support, friendship and brotherhood.

Carlos S. Perez, R.S.

Go Big or Go Home!

L.U. 313 (i&spa), WILMINGTON, DE — Delaware might be small, but we are home to something big now.

President Biden didn't take long to call on his 42 years of experience in Washington and shake things up. He pulled out of Biden Station in Wilmington and refused to hold the train up so Republicans could negotiate a ticket price. Because of his oversight of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, he had firsthand knowledge of the Republicans' tactics of stalling and then bluffing to come along for the ride. After inheriting the greatest financial collapse since the Great Depression, then-Vice President Biden saw firsthand the downside of going too small and fought not to repeat that mistake this time.

The COVID-19 relief bill calls for a universal benefit for American families and is a positive move in restoring self-respect and dignity to so many who live in need. Economic inequality has flourished and even worsened during the pandemic. In the richest country in the world, we should not have so many people still living in poverty. Broad sections of America have lost faith in believing that upward mobility is obtainable, and the idea that anyone can work their way out of poverty has become a harder sell.

For people who cannot keep work or find it, safety nets are a game changer. This year, a consulting firm readjusted their estimate for jobs lost in the United States by 2030 from 37 to 45 million due to "robotic process automation." Within three miles of our hall there's a prime example of this coming reality: Our members are now working with Hatzel & Buehler and Sachs on a big Amazon site where automation for dispensing orders will be on full display.

Work looks to remain steady for the rest of the year. Stay well — we're getting closer.

Bruce W. Esper, P.S.

May Day or Labor Day?

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LESUEUR, MN — Happy Labor Day, brothers and sisters. May 1 is recognized globally as International Workers' Day. In 1889, a collection of international socialist groups and trade unions designated the day to commemorate the Chicago Haymarket riot. The incident took place in May 1886. Chicago workers had led a city-wide strike to demand an eight-hour workday. The demonstration turned into a deadly riot between police and the strikers. Due to fears of growing socialism and communism in the U.S. and the rising power of labor organizations, national campaigns were made over the decades to remove the relationship between May Day and workers' rights.

In 1921, May 1 was promoted throughout the country as "Americanism Day." In 1929, President Hoover proclaimed May 1 as "Child Health Day." In 1955, President Eisenhower proclaimed May 1 as "Loyalty Day." The American labor movement must wait until September to celebrate its accomplishments.

Deadlines for both adult and youth scholarship applications are this month. Information is on ibewlocal343.org. The \$2.90 wage allocation will again be conducted by mail. Responses last year were 10 times better than previous in-person voting. Take the time to fill out and return the ballot. It won't even cost you a stamp.

Build, Buy, Shop "Union Made."

Tom Small, P.S.

Not Your Grandfather's Apprenticeship Program

L.U. 347 (em,i,mt,rtb,rts&spa), DES MOINES, IA — Our JATC isn't sitting still waiting for COVID-19 to pass. Apprentices are back to in-person classes at the Des Moines Electrical Apprenticeship Training center. The staff at the center is also preparing to resume journeyman training with plans to have classes of up to 50 participants. This is a top-shelf operation we've got going in Urbandale.

I would like to take a moment to offer kudos to the entire staff. Believe me, this is not your grandfather's apprenticeship program. We've come a long way since I attended my apprenticeship classes at Tech High School in Des Moines. A big "Way to go" to the entire JATC Committee!

The hall has returned to general membership meetings and unit meetings in person with COVID-19 protocols in place. The building and facilities committee members, Terry Pohlman, Scott Gardner and Aaron Haug are busy with efforts focused on details of getting the site work complete for a planned ground-breaking ceremony in April for the new hall. A full set of prints is on display at the current hall.

Apple has selected a general contractor for their data center project in Waukee: and the winner is ... Turner Construction.

Labor agreement negotiations are currently underway. The current work picture for our area looks strong in this volatile economy.

Mike Schweiger, P.S.

Steady On Through the Pandemic

L.U. 405 (em,i,rtb&spa), CEDAR RAPIDS, IA — Work continues to be steady in our local as it has been throughout the pandemic. Ongoing projects include the new University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art, which will house much of the university's collection; most well-known is the Jackson Pollock painting "Mural," which has been valued at over \$160 million.

We're also excited to see work underway in Cedar Rapids on a new building to house BAE Systems' new endeavor into our area. The company is building a \$139-million facility for research and development, along with the manufacture of GPS equipment for the military.

We also look forward to a mixed blessing of sorts, as work begins on the decommissioning of our local nuclear generation facility, Duane Arnold Energy Center, near Palo. Since coming online in 1975, the plant has provided Local 405 with much prosperity over the years. We are proud to have had her while we did.

Local 405 wishes everyone a healthy and prosperous year, with best wishes for all our brothers and sisters throughout the IBEW.

Junior Luensman, B.M./F.S.

Congratulations to New Wiremen

L.U. 449 (i,o,u,rtb,rts&spa), POCATELLO, ID — Our local has turned out 10 new inside journeymen wiremen: Ricky Akridge, Zackery Climer, Jordan Crane, Victor Luis, Dwyte Miller, Jesse Miller, Cody Reed, Scott Rockwood, Nicolas Small and Seth Stoor. We wish each of you a long and prosperous career.

I would like to express Local 449's appreciation to our long-time office coordinator, LaDawn Peterson, who has retired after 30 years with Local 449. She will be missed.

Congratulations to our recently retired brothers Manuel Avila, Danilo DeGiuli, Mike Ruffridge and James Stumph. You have earned it, and best wishes to all of you!

In memoriam: Brothers LeRoy Robert Collins, Gerald Hargraves Jr., Robert Jenkins, Michael Vondall and Jeffery Webb; they will be truly missed. Our heartfelt condolences go out to their families and friends.

Clay Hirning, A.B.M.

Bargaining for NEAT Training

L.U. 455 (em&u), SPRINGFIELD, MA — In recent contract negotiations, we entered into an agreement with Eversource to adopt the NEAT training program for all of our trainees entering the line program. We also negotiated a new training leader position to facilitate training of the many trainees that Eversource is hiring to replace an increasing number of retirees. Congratulations to Rudder and Big Boy, and stay safe!

Dan Hamel, Pres.



Ryan "Rudder" Rudd and Devin "Big Boy" Gale recently completed their apprenticeships and now are journeymen linemen.

Welcome, New Members!

L.U. 481 (ees,em,i,mt,rts,s&spa), INDIANAPOLIS, IN — As with many locals, the current pandemic and social-distancing requirements have forced us to adjust our usual business routine; however, it has not slowed down our pursuit of holding true to the Objects of the IBEW. In March, we initiated over 90 new members into Local 481, which just goes to show that we are growing in the industry.

Men and women want to be a part of who we are and what we are about. It is our duty to promote and tell our stories. It is our responsibility to train the next generation of electrical workers and to teach them what the IBEW is all about. It's up to each one of us to hold true to the objects and the oath we took when we were sworn in as members of the IBEW. Let's make sure we are doing our part.

All of us are organizers and should be willing to discuss the benefits of being in the IBEW. Welcome to the new members! Please stay involved. Remember, we are only as strong as our members.

Blake A. Andrews, B.R.

IBEW 569 Kicks Off Contract Negotiations

L.U. 569 (i,mar,mt,rts&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA — Our new inside contract negotiations kicked off on March 1, and we look forward to negotiating the best contract for IBEW 569 members. Meet your 2021 negotiating committee: William Stedham, business agent; Alex Hernandez, journeyman wireman/steward; Jose Martinez,



L.U. 569's Inside Contract Negotiation committee.

journeyman wireman; Joe Page, assistant business manager; Chad Barclay, vice president; Joe Heisler, president; and Jeremy Abrams, business manager.

The committee is made up of members from both San Diego and Imperial Valley, and these members bring excellent ideas and experience to the table.

San Diego Building Trades and IBEW 569 are finalizing a project labor agreement on the California Theater project, a 46-story high-rise downtown, which includes construction of a 190-room full-service hotel; 336 condominiums; 4,000-square feet of retail; a 194-stall parking facility; and associated infrastructure and related improvements.

Also, IBEW Local 569 recently finalized signatures on an agreement for the 2,000-MW Westside Canal Battery Storage energy project. This is the largest project of its kind ever proposed in our jurisdiction and an exciting opportunity to put our members to work while building the cutting-edge energy technologies of the future.

Gretchen Newsom, Political Dir./Organizer

Life-Saving Service

L.U. 611 (catv,es,govt,i,lctt,o,spa,t&u), ALBUQUERQUE, NM — In December, Brother Luis Apodaca, a meter reader with PNM, was given a Life Saving award from the IBEW. Luis was one woman's hero when he happened to be in the right place at the right time. Apodaca, a Local 611 member, was on his route on Dec. 4 in Silver City. Normally, the woman whose meter he was reading would put both dogs in the house while he worked; but on this particular day, the aggressive dog was still outside. Apodaca thought it was strange but figured he would continue on and return later. As he was leaving, he heard cries for help: The woman had fallen and was bleeding badly from her face. Apodaca grabbed his first-aid kit and called 911, and the woman had to be airlifted to El Paso due to a brain bleed. She is now recovering at home. Great job, Luis — you have made IBEW 611 proud.

Due to the hall being closed because of COVID-19, we started having informational meetings online on the third Saturday of the month. If the hall still isn't open by the time you read this and you want up-to-date information, then go to ibew611.org and sign on at 10 a.m.

Work is still plentiful in our local and negotiations have begun. I'm not quite sure how we will vote to ratify the contract if COVID-19 is still an issue at that time. Facebook is still putting in calls daily, and there

Wayne Manuel (Jan. 21, 2021).

Congratulations to Jordan Fraser, Jack Fraughton, Iain Gilles, Tim Gregan, Kyle Thompson and Chase Thompsen on completing their certificates of qualification and becoming Red Seal electricians.

Local 625 would like to welcome newly organized contractors City Light Electric, Rod's Electrical Services, Carvery's Construction, Enerca Electric, JBI Group and Headway Electric.

Brad Wood, B.R./Organizer

'Building a Healthy and Hopeful Community'

L.U. 639 (i&rts), SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA — During these unprecedented times, with unemployment and hunger at historic levels, San Luis Obispo City Mayor Heidi Harmon and Local 639 Business Manager Mark Simonin together organized a matching gift fund to benefit the San Luis Obispo (SLO) Food Bank.

Participating in these efforts along with Local 639 were Ventura, Calif., Local 952; UA Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 403 (San Luis Obispo); Operating Engineers Local 12 (Arroyo Grande); Sheet Metal Workers Local 104 (Northern Calif.); International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers Local 5 (Ontario); Tri-Counties Building Trades; Central Coast Labor Council; and the local chapter of the National Electrical



Local 611 member Luis Apodaca receives an IBEW Life Saving award from Business Manager Pete Trujillo and President Alfonso Martinez.

Contractors Association.

On behalf of the local, I would like to send condolences to the families and friends of Tom E. Duran, Melavan C. Foley Jr., Jack A. Gonzales, Mark Porter, Dallas Priest, Donald A. Sanchez, Kenneth Walker and William Williams.

Darrell J. Blair, P.S.

Welcome, New Contractors

Local 625 (c,ees,em,i,it,mar&mt), HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA & PEI, CANADA — We have recently lost the following members: Kevin Myette (Nov. 3, 2020) and

Contractors Association.

Together with matching funds, the partners were able to raise \$71,000. A donation of this size will enable the food bank to feed 114 families for one year. For every dollar donated, the food bank can create seven nutritious meals. An average of 4 million pounds of food per year is distributed throughout the community to those struggling with hunger.

SLO Food Bank CEO Garret Olson said, "These amazing trades professionals are not only building a beautiful and safe community with their skill; they are also building a healthy and hopeful community with their heart."



Left to right, SLO Food Bank CEO Garrett Olson; IBEW 639 Membership Development Coordinator Sean Perry; NECA Contractor Wes Treder of Electricraft Inc.; San Luis Obispo Mayor Heidi Harmon; IBEW 639 Training Director Joe Fitzer; IBEW 639 Business Manager Mark Simonin; and SLO Food Bank Development Director Branna Still.

HAVE YOU MOVED?
 Notify us of an address change
www.ibew.org/ChangeMyAddress
 or call 202-728-6263

LOCAL LINES

Mayor Heidi Harmon said, "I am so grateful to the working men and women of the central coast who have shared so generously with those who need it most. And thank you to the larger community who stepped up and matched the unions' generosity to ensure that no one will go hungry during this challenging time."

Kurt McClave, P.S.

Local 1049 Appoints Political Director

L.U. 1049 (lctt, o, u&uow), LONG ISLAND, NY — Our local announces the appointment of Kasey Scheid as political director. In this new position for our local, Kasey heads up the union's political action committee, working closely with congressional leaders



Local 1049 appointed Kasey Scheid as political director.

on legislation that benefits members employed by National Grid and PSEG Long Island. Her role also entails handling community outreach for Local 1049, working hand in hand with area nonprofits and communication organizations to support important Long Island issues and concerns.

"We are very pleased to bring Kasey on board as a valuable team member of Local 1049," said Business Manager Pat Guidice. "I have known and worked with Kasey for over six years while she was employed by National Grid. She is a dedicated union member who passionately believes in the labor movement to help improve the lives of working families on Long Island."

Prior to joining Local 1049, Kasey served as a services representative for National Grid in Brentwood, N.Y. She has been a member of IBEW Local 1049 for six years. In addition to her role as political director, Kasey holds the title of press secretary and acts as the press liaison to the IBEW.

Kasey Scheid, P.S.

Reaching Clean Energy Goals

L.U. 1245 (o,u,t,em,catv,govt,&pet), VACAVILLE, CA — Our local is proud to play a key role in helping state and local governments reach their clean energy goals. Our members are currently working on a number of landmark solar and battery storage projects, including:

- The largest floating solar array in the U.S., maintained by Local 1245 members in the city of Healdsburg;
- The nation's largest DC-coupled combined solar and battery storage system, which is being constructed at Battle Mountain by Local 1245 Outside Construction members in partnership with Local 1245 members at NV Energy; and
- The world's largest utility-scale battery energy storage system, which is maintained by Local 1245 members at Moss Landing Power Plant.

The work outlook for Outside Line Construction in Northern California this year remains very strong. By all indications, 2021 is set to be busier than last year. Fire hardening work will be an important part of the 2021 work picture, along with all the other routine maintenance and tag work that needs to be performed. Nevada work remains strong as well.

Local 1245 is proud to congratulate the first two recipients of the Jairus Ayeta Line School Scholarship, a new award established in 2020 for first-generation utility workers. The Ayeta scholarship is named in honor of a Local 1245 apprentice who was the victim of



Local 1245 Lineman Dennis Scroggins works on the nation's largest DC-coupled combined solar and battery storage system, located in Battle Mountain, NV.

a fatal workplace tragedy on Aug. 4, 2018, while restoring power at the Carr Fire outside Redding, Calif. The two Ayeta Scholarship awardees, Estevan Salazar and Matthew Carrier, will be attending the Northwest IBEW JATC-sanctioned VOLTA Line School in Oregon this spring, with all expenses paid by Local 1245. Our local is currently accepting Ayeta Scholarship applications for the next VOLTA line school class in August, and details can be found at bit.ly/ayetascholarship.

Local 1245 is mourning the loss of two members, Denise Cox and Ricardo Perez, who passed away from COVID-19 in January.

Rebecca Band, Communications Dir.

Delivering Sweetness to the Community

L.U. 1347 (ees,em,ptc&u), CINCINNATI, OH — On Feb. 26, 2021, our Local 1347 donated 80 pounds of Yummy Pops candy to St. Joseph's Orphanage here in Cincinnati. Because we are still in the midst of this pandemic, we wanted to find a way to continue our monthly community outreach in the safest way possible. Although we are currently unable to donate our time in person or meet in large groups as we once have, delivering these treats to the children at St. Joe's seemed to be the best route for all of those involved. We are so happy to have had the opportunity to donate to the much deserving children at St. Joe's and plan to return with more donations in the future!

Andrew A. Kirk, B.M.



Local 1347 member Andrew Reis, Office Coordinator Rachel Glover, Executive Board member Don Scott Smith, Business Manager Andrew Kirk and member Bob Allen.

Congratulations AJEATT Graduates!

L.U. 1547 (c,em,i,lctt,o,t&u), ANCHORAGE, AK — Congratulations to the graduating third-year line class of the Alaska Joint Electrical Apprenticeship & Training Trust (AJEATT)! Pictured are NECA Alaska Chapter Manager Larry Bell; IBEW Business Manager Dave Reaves; Instructor Cecil Colley; Apprentice Trevor Pempek from Unit 101; Curtis Stickler and Zachary Beck from Unit 103 (Juneau); Brian Pearce from Unit 104; Dahlen Staskywicz; Jordan Ballard and Adam Wentworth from Unit 101; Samuel Caulum from Unit 104 (Petersburg); Ben Simpler from Unit 101 (Cordova); James Hagen; Sean Herring from Unit 102; and AJEATT Statewide Training Director Deborah Kelly.

Melinda Taylor, Communications Dir.



AJEATT instructors and apprentices from Local 1547 train at the Tom Cashen facility in Anchorage, Alaska.

Prosperity and Gratitude

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA — Over the past several years, our local's members have been blessed with the largest construction job in the country, the Vogtle project. This project has helped Local 1579 members and traveling brothers and sisters from around the country to earn a very good living.

This project has started decreasing in manpower as the Unit 3 reactor is getting closer to completion. This trend will continue throughout the year; however, there is still a lot of work to do over the next couple of years on the Unit 4 reactor as well as check-out work on the Unit 3.

As our traveling brothers and sisters start finding another home and making room for Local 1579 members to finish the project, I thank you for all the help that you gave us.

We should all be proud of the job that we did on the Vogtle project despite the ups and downs of the job. This project has seen three main contractors fired by the customer and is currently on its fourth contractor. The project has survived engineering issues and threats of being shut down by the Public Service Commission and COVID-19, just to name a few. Throughout all of this, the IBEW stood strong and did their job — and what a great job we did.

Our work situation will continue to be strong with many new projects in the future. Our largest project will be the pit production facility at the Savannah River National Laboratory, which will keep us busy for the next few years. There are also many other projects that are being targeted, and these projects will be bid by union contractors and will benefit us all.

As we approach the midpoint of 2021, let us continue to remember the "B" in IBEW. Treat each other with respect, help each other when in need and guide each other in a positive way.

Until next time, be safe.

Will Salters, B.M./F.S.

Go
Green

Get your
**ELECTRICAL
WORKER** delivered
each month *via email*.

It's convenient & helps cut down
on paper waste. Go to
www.ibew.org/gogreen
and sign up today!

Scan with a QR reader



SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

New York's HERO Act Aims to Protect Workers From COVID-19

A bill in New York's state Senate would provide much-needed workplace protections from the coronavirus and future airborne pathogens, filling a void left by inaction at the federal level during the previous administration.

"Too many workers have already sacrificed their health for our community's benefit," said state Senator Michael Gianaris, a co-sponsor of the bill. "The New York HERO Act will honor their efforts by giving the workers the tools to protect themselves while on the job."

The New York Health and Essential Rights Act, or HERO Act, would direct the state's labor and health departments to issue airborne infectious disease standards for businesses including protocols on testing, staffing, personal protective equipment, social distancing and other issues. The standards would be permanent and crafted by industry-specific worker committees that would also provide training and input for implementation.

"Passing a permanent airborne pathogens standard will not just make New York workers safer during this pandemic, but for the next one as well. It will improve working conditions for New York workers, while removing uncertainty for many small businesses in responding to this crisis," the Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health said in a statement.



New York's state Legislature is considering a bill that would provide workplace protections against COVID-19 and other airborne pathogens, a welcome source of safety for Syracuse Local 2213's call center members.

would making going back into the offices, our ultimate goal, much safer," said Local 2213 Business Manager Barb Carson. "I'm definitely in favor of it."

Unlike members who work outside and may be able to keep a distance between themselves and other workers, Local 2213 members work indoors in a large room with 50 people, if not more.

count on corporate America to do the right thing. They need a strong nudge. Accountability is essential."

The HERO Act's protections fill a gap left by the previous Trump administration. Despite calls for federal-level standards, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration chose to only issue guidelines with no meaningful penalties for failure to comply.

According to a report by the U.S. Labor Department's Office of the Inspector General, OSHA inspections dropped by half last year — despite a 15% increase in complaints.

Debbie Berkowitz, a workplace safety expert at the National Employment Law Project, told the Huffington Post that the number of inspections carried out in fiscal year 2020 was the lowest on record going back at least two decades.

"OSHA decided to shut down most enforcement for COVID-19," Berkowitz said. "The agency truly disappeared. They should have done at least 12,000 more inspections."

The Biden administration, by contrast, has so far taken a more proactive and pro-worker approach. Jim Frederick, a former safety official with the United Steelworkers, was appointed to lead OSHA in an acting capacity and the agency has already issued new guidelines for employers and is considering an emergency standard.

Frederick said OSHA is addressing the concerns raised in the IG's report, including hiring more inspectors.

"An OSHA inspection is all a worker has when the workplace is unsafe," Berkowitz said. "The last administration tried hard to hollow out the agency, which means the Biden-Harris administration and Congress have a huge job to build the agency back."

If the HERO Act becomes law, New York would join a handful of other states, including California, Michigan, Oregon and Virginia, that have implemented similar measures to keep workers safe. ■

"All of my members work in call centers. Legislation such as the HERO act would make going back into the offices much safer."

— Syracuse, N.Y., Local 2213 Business Manager Barb Carson

The bill also includes anti-retaliation measures that allow workers to call out employers without fear of reprisal, and includes fines for employers who don't adopt a standard, as well as for those who violate their plan once it's been adopted.

"Right now, unlike public sector workers who have protections, there are no statutory protocols for private sector workers in terms of how to respond to infectious diseases," said Mario Cilento, president of the New York State AFL-CIO. "If this pandemic has taught us anything, with tens of thousands of workers succumbing to this virus, it's that we need to make the health and safety of workers a priority."

The bill passed the Senate in early March and was awaiting action in the Assembly when *The Electrical Worker* went to press.

The HERO Act's impact on IBEW members will vary based on the industry and their collective bargaining agreements, said International Representative Jenn Schneider. For members of Syracuse Local 2213, the benefits would be substantial.

"All of my members work in call centers. Legislation such as the HERO act

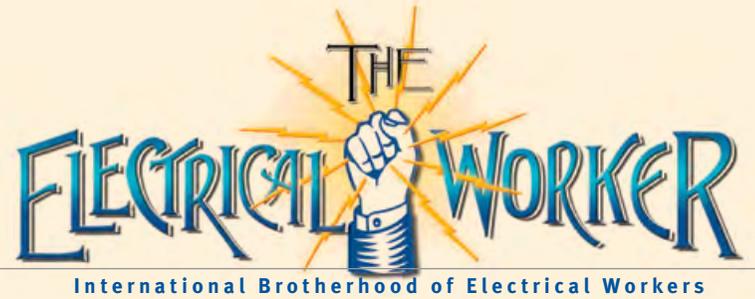
"When we first started to hear about the coronavirus last year, everyone's anxiety went through the roof," Carson said. "The fear was that it would spread like wildfire if even one of us got sick."

The roughly 300 members work for Verizon, in consumer and business operations at seven different offices throughout upstate New York.

"Eventually, we are going to be back in our offices, but I don't think it will ever feel 'normal' again," Carson said. "Our members feel a great deal of apprehension about returning. There has to be an obligation on the employer to make sure we're safe. It's imperative that we have some sort of peace of mind that there will be protections in place and a responsibility to continuously uphold safety standards."

Carson says her members have concerns about the aging buildings they work in, like the ventilation systems and processes for things like cleaning and wearing masks.

"It's been a long time since we've all been in the same place and although we miss our coworkers, it's scary," Carson said. "Legislation like the HERO Act will make the transition smoother and put our minds at ease. Unfortunately, we can't



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.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

Kenneth W. Cooper
International Secretary-Treasurer

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Chairman
Christopher Erikson

First District
Joseph P. Calabro

Second District
Myles J. Calvey

Third District
James Burgham

Fourth District
William W. Riley

Fifth District
Frank Furco

Sixth District
Dean E. Wine

Seventh District
Leroy J. Chincio

Eighth District
Philip J. Venoit

INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

First District
Thomas Reid

Second District
Michael P. Monahan

Third District
Michael D. Welsh

Fourth District
Gina P. Cooper

Fifth District
Brian K. Thompson

Sixth District
David J. Ruhmkorff

Seventh District
Steven Speer

Eighth District
Jerry Bellah

Ninth District
John J. O'Rourke

Tenth District
Brent E. Hall

Eleventh District
Mark D. Hager

THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

Editor
Lonnie R. Stephenson

Mark
Brueggenjohann

Matt Spence

Alex Hogan

Curtis D. Bateman

John Sellman

Erin Sutherland

Asifa Haniff

Ben Temchine

Sean Bartel

Colin Kelly

Rix Oakland

Colleen Crinion

Michael Pointer

Janelle Hartman

Joe Conway

Emily Welsh



HOW TO REACH US

We welcome letters from our readers. The writer should include his or her name, address and, if applicable, IBEW local union number and card number. Family members should include the local union number of the IBEW member to whom *The Electrical Worker* is mailed. Please keep letters as brief as possible. *The Electrical Worker* reserves the right to select letters for publication and edit all submissions for length.

Send letters to:

Letters to the Editor, *The Electrical Worker*, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

Or send by email to: media@ibew.org

©2021 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The Electrical Worker (print)
ISSN 2332-113X

The Electrical Worker (online)
ISSN 2332-1148

All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. on Union-made paper.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Electrical Worker*, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

The Electrical Worker will not be held responsible for views expressed by correspondents.

Paid advertising is not accepted.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40011756.
Canada Post: Return undeliverables to P.O. Box 2601,
6915 Dixie Rd, Mississauga, ON L4T 0A9.

WHO WE ARE

How One Local 48 Member is Creating a Chorus of Allies

Trailblazing Member Seeks to Teach, Not Punish

When Donna Hammond was assigned a young apprentice who made a racist comment, she could have joined the calls for him to be punished, but she didn't. Instead, she did what she's always done in these circumstances. She educated him and she changed his mind.

"When I talked to him, I could tell that he wasn't a Proud Boy-type, he was just unaware," said Hammond, a business representative with Portland, Ore., Local 48 and one of its first Black female members.

Hammond chose a course of action that would require a lot more work on her part, but it's one that's been working for her for her entire life. She chose the path of compassion and sharing her lived experiences to shift his perception.

"This was a good kid, he just did something careless," Hammond said. "And it's not like he's the only one. He just got caught."

Hammond offered to work with the apprentice, sharing resources that included movies and podcasts on racism and how it impacts different people. It was information he'd never gotten before. But he did his homework and it opened his eyes — as well as his heart and his mind.

"I want him to want to be an ally," Hammond said, "And I want him to be the loudest voice in the choir."

Hammond's approach to dealing with racism and oppression goes back to lessons she learned from her parents and as a child of the civil rights movement, including the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. These lessons also taught her about the value of a union.

"It's like Dr. King said, 'What good is having the right to sit at a lunch counter if you can't afford to buy the meal?'" Hammond said. "He understood the connection between civil rights and labor rights, their parallel paths."

Hammond was one of the first Black students to attend a desegregated school in Oregon. It wasn't easy. She encountered a lot of racism and cruelty, and it continued into her days as an electrical apprentice in the 1970s.

"They tried to kill me. Twice, that I know of," Hammond said of her early years in the trade where she was one of very few women of color.

Fortunately, Hammond also had support, and allies.

"This is where I find the value of being bused. I don't think that I could have survived a four-year apprenticeship in



"We have a lot of work to do in terms of real human behavior. But I have faith in humans. And I have faith in the power of love."

— Portland, Ore.,
Local 48 member
Donna Hammond

Portland, Ore., or anywhere in a white male dominated profession had I not experienced the racism and the torture that I went through as a kid," Hammond told local news station KGW last year.

"Just like what happened at the elementary school — there were people that supported me," she said. "On the job there were white men, my brothers who stepped up and welcomed me as their true IBEW sibling, who said, 'We're going to make you the best electrician that you can be. You were admitted into the IBEW, into the brotherhood and so you're our sister.' And so, I always had allies. I feel extremely blessed that there were always more allies than there were adversaries."

But allies don't just happen. Sometimes they need to be created and educated on how to truly be an ally. Hammond has seen firsthand how minds can be changed. She's done it. But it takes work. And she stands behind her philosophy that it's worth it.

"I've had men dislike me — until they got to know me and saw that I worked my ass off," Hammond said. "One guy made me walk ten paces behind him — until he finally came around. Then he would invite me to dinner with his family."

That work ethic doesn't just apply to her tradeswoman skills of pulling wire and bending conduit. It's also on display in her work to help her local, undereducated members included, who sometimes take a little longer coming around the race curve, to learn to live and work in a multiracial society. The apprentice who made the racist comment has since become the ally Hammond knew he could be, even attend-

ing a Black Lives Matter rally last summer to support his Black brothers and sisters.

"On my walk, at the journey on the intersection of race and gender in the labor movement, I've been able to have people be uncomfortable with me. However, with love and grace and seizing the opportunity to share my experience with them, I've been able to shift the mindset of a lot of different people. And it has transformed our local union," Hammond said.

Hammond is also working with Local 48 and others on an inclusivity training for incoming apprentices that would be taught over the entire course of the five-year program. They're also working on an industry-wide version. And while much of the impetus for the training has been spurred by racist incidents, Hammond is quick to point out that the training aims to go deeper than any one social construct, to the core basics of how we treat fellow human beings.

"We've been raised in a racialized society, but most people don't really understand systemic racism," Hammond said. "It's about debunking, analyzing and elevating your thought process. It's asking yourself what do you know, when did you know it, and who did you trust to tell you."

Local 48 is working with the Commonway Institute, a nonprofit that does work on inclusivity training, to create the curriculum.

"A lot of it is about unpacking common sense," Hammond said. "We all have implicit bias, so we need to create a safe space where it's OK to make a mistake."

Hammond credits Local 48 Business Manager Garth Bachman for his leadership, and for being an ally. In addition to the forthcoming inclusivity curriculum, Local 48 has

created a cultural awareness committee, held discussions on race and distributed "Stand Against Racism" stickers that were popular with the membership.

"Garth has been amazing. He's caught some heat for it, but it's been a minority of voices," Hammond said. "He understands what it means to be an anti-racist. He's the right person for this time. He understands that as electricians we get paid to do a job and when race gets in the way, it's ultimately the customer who suffers. And most importantly, it creates an unsafe work atmosphere where everyone's safety is at risk. We want everyone to be able to come home to their families at the end of the day. There are many dangers on a jobsite. Our fellow colleagues shouldn't be one of them."

Not everyone who has dealt with the racism that Hammond has would come out of it believing in the power of people to change, much less for the better. But as Dr. King said, "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." From her days of winning over hostile tradesmen to educating the next generation of Local 48 members, Hammond has figured out a way to be truly inclusive. Not because it's easy, or nice, but because it's necessary — and because it works.

"We have a lot of work to do in terms of real human behavior," Hammond said. "But I have faith in humans. And I have faith in the power of love."

There's one other intersection where Hammond can be found. She has a historical marker at 17th Avenue and Alberta Street in Portland, part of an arts project commemorating the city's Black heritage. ■

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 web and PDF versions of *The Electrical Worker*, at IBEW.org.

YouTube & Vimeo

Our expanding library of social media-friendly short- and long-form video clips provide a great way to help bring more men and women into the IBEW by showing prospective members the valuable and important work being performed every day by highly-trained, union electricians across North America. Browse the selections at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker) or [Vimeo.com/IBEW](https://www.vimeo.com/IBEW).

HourPower

Upgrading a water reclamation facility —



while it's running — was a challenge that the members of Salt Lake City Local 354 were more than capable of handling. Check out IBEWHourPower.com to find out how they did it.

ElectricTV

Thanks to the members of Niagara Falls, N.Y., Local 237, for the first time in 175 years, the "Maid of the Mist" boat fleet is now taking tourists under the world-famous waterfalls using vessels powered by electricity instead of fossil fuels. Watch the mesmerizing video at ElectricTV.net.

