

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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## IBEW News

### One Size Does Not Fit All

How IBEW Sisters Are Pushing for Proper PPE **3**

### Billions for Grid Resilience

Federal Funding Positions IBEW for Major Wins **6**

### 'Took My Time & Did It Right'

Oregon Wirewoman Makes History in Electrical Contest **6**

### Showing Off Solar

Training Center Tour Educates Ohio Energy Leaders **7**

## In This Issue

Editorials **2**

MyIBEW Story **2**

North of 49° **8**

Transitions **9**

Circuits **9**

Grounded in History **12**

Local Lines **13**

Retirees **16**

In Memoriam **18**

Organizing Wire **19**

Who We Are **20**

## BROTHERS AND SISTERS

# giving BACK

## In the IBEW, Every Season is a Season of Sharing

**F**or generous souls everywhere, the winter holidays are an extra-special time of giving. The brothers and sisters of the IBEW collect warm coats and clothes, run turkey and toy drives, stock food banks, prepare and serve hot meals, and make their communities festive and bright with magical lighting displays.

But those acts of kindness and so many others aren't limited to the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's. When the IBEW says, "Tis the season," it applies to all of them — winter, spring, summer and fall.

The pages of *The Electrical Worker* can only scratch the surface of the countless good deeds of locals, members and retirees throughout the year.

In 2023, that sampling included Alabama members building a Habitat for Humanity home; Oklahoma City Local 1141 volunteers packing thousands of meals for children; a bicycling couple out of South Bend, Ind., Local 153 and Phoenix Local 640 riding 4,000 miles to fight childhood cancer; a Pittsburgh Local 5 wireman mentoring a high school robotics team; IBEW sisters from Portland, Ore., Local 48 honoring real-life Rosie the Riveter centenarians; St. Louis Local 1 members wiring a shelter for senior dogs and cats; Syracuse, N.Y., Local 43 electricians upgrading a youth center; and, among the year-round hustle at the Hudson Unit of East Windsor, N.J., Local 827, delivering 7½ tons of groceries to a food pantry, delighting disadvantaged children with Santa and gifts, and raising money for causes near and far.

The local's most faraway cause this year was desperate IBEW families in Hawaii after August's wild fire, a call also answered by members attending the RENEW conference in New Orleans that week, along with Santa Rosa, Calif., Local 551. Doubtless, there are many others.

That's the best kind of problem to have: more stories of goodwill than we could ever tell. But this month, we inch a tiny fraction closer by presenting five stories about the efforts of IBEW volunteers from one side of the continent to the other.

From the staff of *The Electrical Worker*, Happy Holidays!

SEASON OF SHARING *continued on page 4*

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## FROM THE OFFICERS

# Celebrating Our Power



**Kenneth W. Cooper**  
International President

**T**his time of year is a season of celebration for nearly all of our members. And brothers and sisters, we have a lot to celebrate.

But before we get to that, I want to wish all of you peace and joy and encourage you to take time to really enjoy your friends, your family and the life you work so hard to create.

We are, as a group, profoundly blessed, and I wish you a safe and prosperous New Year.

Now to those celebrations.

This past month, the Department of Energy released \$3.5 billion to help fund 58 projects to rebuild the grid and protect it from extreme weather dangers. It's the first of \$10.5 billion earmarked for this purpose, which you can read more about on page 6 of this issue.

And when I saw that huge number, I thought to myself, that's ours. Most of the projects are with our employer partners. The overwhelming majority of this important grid-strengthening work will be done by IBEW members.

So, how did we organize this?

We helped write the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to finally answer our decades-long call to be serious about grid reliability.

We worked the halls of Congress to get bipartisan support for the largest investment in working people in nearly a century. The grid program is just one part of this more-than-\$1 trillion bill, which was written specifically to advantage union workers.

I'd love to enjoy the view, but the truth is we've got more to do to get ready for what's coming.

Union projects are getting the vast majority of this money because we don't just build the foundation that keeps our nation standing. Union jobs hold our communities together.

Now that the law is written and the money is coming, our work keeps going. We have a battalion of enforcers ensuring that the money is spent the way it was intended and gets to workers and critical infrastructure, not Wall Street.

And our best friend in getting that done is the man who signed the law, President Joe Biden.

This is what working-class power looks like. We get the right people elected to office with our time, support and resources.

Then we get in the rooms to write the rules for working people.

Now we go out and take advantage of the rules we've written to put you into a good job and money into your pocket.

And this is only the beginning.

By the time you read this, IBEW members won't just be anticipating this work. We will have boots on the ground.

The power to do this comes from our collective strength. Each and every one, pulling their weight, showing up to union meetings, spreading the word and doing the job.

Thank you for all you do for the IBEW, and happy holidays to you and your families. ■

# The Joys of Giving Back

**T**he holidays are a time for counting our blessings. And high on that list, after the people we cherish most, is the quality of life that IBEW wages, benefits and pensions provide for ourselves and our families, and the enduring bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood that are the core of our great union.

We're reminded of our good fortune often at this time of year, when the needs of others are so visible: Angel trees crowded with wishes from children who've never had their own brightly lit trees spilling over with gifts; lines around the block at food banks to feed people who won't be sitting down to festive dinners with all the trimmings and days of leftovers; coat, clothing and toy drives; and a bottomless list of other needs.

One of the greatest holiday joys is helping to meet those needs. And I couldn't be prouder to say that across the U.S. and Canada, IBEW locals, members and retirees give back to their communities on an epic scale.

During my years as business manager of West Frankfort Local 702 in my home state of Illinois, I remember how good it felt to adopt a family every Christmas. With members' donations, we filled gift lists that included the everyday necessities we take for granted — toothbrushes, socks and underwear, kitchen utensils, and so on. We also raised funds that were donated to schoolteachers to spend on coats and shoes for children in need. And the first week of December every year, we joined with fellow unions to make sure our communities' food pantries were well stocked for the holidays.

In fact, between Electrical Worker articles and the Local Lines section, you can read about big-heartedness in every issue — members wiring the homes of low-income families on a Saturday, fundraisers after natural disasters, Habitat for Humanity projects, supporting the United Way and its countless charities, even members traveling thousands of miles on their own dime to change lives, like the group of Canadian brothers and sisters who upgraded the electrical system at a Guatemalan orphanage this spring.

That's one of five wide-ranging stories of giving you'll find inside these pages, and I hope you feel as proud and inspired by them as I do.

The goodwill in our union is something to behold. It snowballs this time of year, but it is always abundant, just like the blessings of being part of the IBEW family. Sharing those blessings is a privilege, and I encourage all of you to do so, within your own means.

From my family to yours, I wish you happiness, joy and peace this special season and all seasons. ■



**Paul A. Noble**  
International Secretary-Treasurer

## My IBEW STORY

**Jeimeson Saudino**, Construction Organizer/  
Inside Journeyman Wireman  
Wichita, Kan., Local 271



“I emigrated from Brazil in March 2011 when I was 20 years old, originally to fight professionally on the mixed martial arts circuit, so I was literally fighting for my daily bread. It was a huge challenge to step on an airplane for the first time and go to a whole new world to pursue the American Dream. All that I had with me was \$100 in my pocket and a dream instilled by God. The dream was very simple: I wanted a higher standard of

life, to take care of my family and give peace of mind to my mom.

When I arrived in the U.S., I continued training with my coach and met my now-wife, Alicia, who is the daughter and granddaughter of proud IBEW members, Dennis McGinnis and his father, Bill McGinnis, who was the director of Local 271's apprenticeship program for many years. Dennis introduced me to the IBEW and the apprenticeship program, and he pointed me toward this career.

I was accepted into the apprenticeship program in 2015, and I was still fighting professionally. I topped out and graduated in 2019 to become a proud IBEW journeyman wireman.

There are some parallels between training for a fight and being an active IBEW member. We all have situations where we're under pressure, and a fighter is trained to be two steps ahead of any problem. We sharpen our skills and abilities, preparing to be our best. And we are the best at what we do.

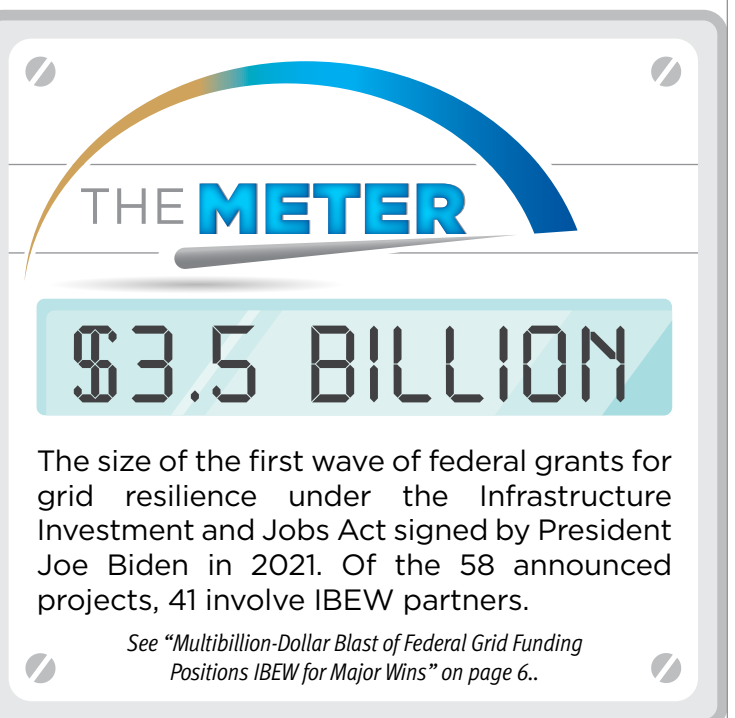
Being a part of the IBEW has benefited not just me and my family here — my wife and three children, Kaidance, Liam, and Emery — but also my family still in Brazil, my mom and brother. The opportunity to have a great career, with a future to look forward to along with a dignified wage and outstanding benefits, has allowed me to provide comfort and security for all of my loved ones.

The potential to grow within the industry was always a driving force for me, because as my dad — Silvano Saudino, a former machinist in Brazil, may he rest in peace — always told me and my brother, “It doesn't matter what job you have, what function you are to perform; you must strive to be the best in the world at it.” The IBEW allowed me to realize that message from my father, and it's brought me to where I am today as a proud Local 271 organizer. I don't intend to stop here.

In the IBEW, anybody who wants a better quality of life and a bright future has an opportunity to attain it — it depends only on you.

I was able to compete in a world championship while being a journeyman, and I firmly believe that I was able to get to that point due to the stability that the IBEW provides to me and my family. While working as an inside wireman, I was able to pursue my dream. I hope that one day I will be able to show my brother in Brazil the same path that was once shown to me.”

Share your story at [ibew.org/MyIBEWStory](https://ibew.org/MyIBEWStory)



### Editor's Note

Articles in the May (“Winning the Fight Against Right-to-Work”) and August (“Fighting Right-to-Work: 76 Years of Taft-Hartley's Aftermath”) issues of The Electrical Worker omitted Louisiana's repeal of that state's right-to-work law in 1956. Michigan earlier this year became the fourth, not third, state to repeal right-to-work. ■



# One Size Does Not Fit All: How IBEW Sisters Are Pushing for Proper PPE

For a long time, Phoenix Local 640 member Xan Folmer just dealt with the risks associated with ill-fitting fall harnesses and other personal protective equipment.

"I didn't know any better," said the journeyman wirewoman. "Nobody told me there were other options, so I just used the harnesses and prayed I wouldn't have to get a mastectomy."

The harnesses used on many job sites require the chest strap to be fit right at the bust line, leaving those with breasts with few options, none of which are truly safe. Wear it as designed and risk damaging breast tissue, or wear it above or below and run the risk of a strap snapping or sliding out altogether.

"Those things are just not designed with women in mind," said Folmer, who is also a steward.

Fortunately, Folmer was able to persuade her employer to invest in better-fitting harnesses. But she's far from alone when it comes to getting the right safety gear.

Roughly 4% of construction workers in the U.S. and Canada are women, but those numbers are growing. They'll have to if contractors want to keep up with the increasing demand for skilled tradespeople. But in order to keep everyone safe, they'll also need to take a look at their PPE supply.

According to a survey of 2,635 tradeswomen and nonbinary tradespeople by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, only 19% said they were always provided with gloves or safety equipment in sizes that fit. A survey by the Center for Construction Research and Training found that nearly 9 in 10 women said they'd experienced such a problem.

A Canadian study of roughly 3,000 women found similar results. It also noted that there's a "shrink it and pink it" mentality among manufacturers, where they take PPE designed for men, make it smaller and pink, then sell it as PPE for women, sidestepping any differences in body type.

"Despite scientific evidence that anthropometric differences exist between men and women, PPE continues to be designed for 'all workers' based almost entirely on male anthropometry. In reality, what this means is that most PPE standards are not gender neutral, but 'gender blind,'" the authors wrote.

Local 640 member Sierra English works in energized maintenance, where flame-retardant suits are a necessity. They also almost always come in sizes made for men. Wearing pants that are too big isn't just uncomfortable. In electrified environments, overly baggy PPE can just as easily create danger as protect a worker from it. When English brought this up to her general foreman and asked for better-fitting pants, his response was less than helpful.

Eventually, English got the right pants. And as the head of her local's Women's Committee, she's working with Folmer and others, including the Arizona chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association, to make sure other sisters have an easier time getting what they need.

"It's been very effective having a Women's Committee," she said. "It gives you an official channel."

Even when a foreman is on board, sourcing can be an obstacle.



Phoenix Local 640 member Xan Folmer wears the X-frame harness that she successfully lobbied her employer to provide for her and other women members.



Los Angeles Local 11 apprentice Dannielle Lewis said her local is incorporating proper-fitting safety gear into its outreach efforts. "My local has pushed to bring more women into the trade, starting with PPE," she said.

Martinez, Calif., Local 302 Recording Secretary Cheyenne Lucero has had contractors tell her they couldn't order gloves or safety vests in her correct size because they aren't made that small. Or when they did, the items took longer to arrive. Boots are another challenge.

"In one case, I needed to buy specific boots for a job, and when I went to the store and gave them my size, the associate replied, 'That's child-labor size,'" said Lucero, who sits on Local 302's safety committee.

In addition to the very real issues of protection, or being sent home because there isn't any proper-fitting PPE, are the harder-to-calculate concerns, like standing out even more than you already do.

"It can make us feel like we aren't being taken seriously," Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213 member Casey Aelbers said. "We experience imposter syndrome as it is. It doesn't help when you look like you're playing dress-up in men's clothing."

Tradeswomen often want to blend in and not be seen as "high maintenance," said Los Angeles Local 11 apprentice Dannielle Lewis about asking for something that others may see as frivolous.



Phoenix Local 640 Women's Committee head Sierra English is working with NECA and others on providing better-fitting PPE for the growing number of women in her local.

Committee has also surveyed its members, and our local is listening."

Like a lot of tradeswomen, Lewis said resolving PPE issues has been a mixed bag, but her employer has been responsive.

"Because I've struggled and communicated that to them, they better understand my issues," she said. "I now have a vest that fits perfectly, and it has a ton of pockets!"

A rule being considered by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration could also help. It would revise its PPE standard in construction to explicitly require that the equipment fit

properly. OSHA rules can take years to be implemented, but it's a step in the right direction, said Nashville, Tenn., Local 429 member Heather Tatum.

"It'll be a major milestone for women in the trades," said Tatum, who works as an OSHA instructor. "We deserve PPE that fits without feeling like we're asking for a special provision."

Lewis and Lucero said they'd like to see vendors that cater to women at events like the Safety Conference and the Women's Conference. Just don't make everything pink, Lucero cautioned.

"Most women just want to work and be great at their trade," she said. "We don't need options that draw additional attention."

English noted that providing proper-fitting PPE is a way to demonstrate a company's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

"Better PPE can help women feel like they belong," she said.

The CPWR has compiled a list of female-friendly PPE on its website. Some women have found support and recommendations through different social

media channels, like the Safety Rack, which reviews PPE for women. Resources, while not as plentiful as they could be, are out there. Never forget that the IBEW is one of them, said Safety Director Mark MacNichol.

"Safety is what the IBEW was founded on. It goes all the way back to Henry Miller and why we were founded," he said. "The goal is always to go home from work the same way you got there."

Or, as Lewis put it: "Don't compromise on safety. Your life is worth more than the PPE will cost."

NECA, the IBEW and the Electrical Training Alliance are planning to launch a campaign that will address many of these issues, said Debra Margraf, who serves as executive director of NECA's Arizona chapter and is working with English, Folmer and others.

"NECA and IBEW have the power to get the manufacturers to listen and create more products," Margraf said. "That's important, especially as we try to include more women in the trades." ■



Martinez, Calif., Local 302 member Cheyenne Lucero proudly sports a proper-fitting flash suit. "With the first one I wore, the inseam was down to my knees," she recalled.

"Being called a 'princess' is annoying when all you want to do is be safe and efficient," she said. "It makes me not want to say anything because being the only African American woman on site can be hard enough. I don't want my crew and supervisors to see me as unprofessional or unrelatable."

Lewis said she also runs into difficulties around hard hats and hair.

"We're asked to tuck our hair into our hard hats at my site. If I have braids or my afro, that's a mission. I am constantly pulling my hair down so that it's flat," she said. "I'm pretty sure I'll be bald by the time I journey out. On the bright side, I'll be able to afford wigs by then."

On another bright side, Lewis has her local's support.

"My local has pushed to bring more women into the trade, starting with PPE. Our safety director makes it a point to go to sites and speak to women about their safety issues," Lewis said. "Our Women's



▼ *Continued from page 1*

# BROTHERS AND SISTERS *giving* BACK

LOCAL 804 KITCHENER, ONTARIO

## 'The Happiest Children You'll Ever Meet'

**H**op on a cruise ship or fly to a resort, and you won't find anyone having a better time than the Canadian electricians who each paid \$2,800 to spend 10 days working their hearts out at a Guatemalan orphanage.

They strung heavy triplex cable across the hilly site, overhauled the electrical systems at a special-needs dormitory and an offsite community center, and made critical repairs across the main compound, where smiling little faces looked on with awe.

"They all have a sad story, but they're the happiest children you'll ever meet," said Jerry Wilson, president of the Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804 Retirees' Club, whose members and spouses made up the lion's share of the 16 travelers, along with a journeywoman, two IBEW apprentices and an apprentice millwright.

They arrived with 23 stuffed hockey bags, filled by the generosity of IBEW members and their larger community: piles of clothes, shoes, bedsheets, towels, blankets, toothbrushes and other essentials, along with a sleigh's worth of toys and board games that made for laughter-filled game nights with youngsters and staff.

Warmth and gratitude flowed in every direction throughout their stay, while Google Translate helped everyone get to know each other.

"We forged the deepest connections with everybody that we came in contact with, and you can't put a price tag on that," said Wilson's wife, Terry.

For the Wilsons and Wendy and Neil Whittaker — who served in the taxing role of foreman on a project with scarce materials and no blueprints — it was a return trip.

Four years ago, after learning from Friends of the Orphans Canada about the home's dire needs, nine electricians tackled a massive first round of rewiring and repairs. On both trips, spouses assisted teachers and staff, embracing playtime, reading, meals and crafts with the children.

The 2019 group came home so



At right, IBEW Canada volunteers outside the Guatemalan orphanage, a trip led by the Local 804 Retirees' Club. Top left: Kathy Benninger and Wendy Whittaker help children get ready to water plants. Top right: Neil Whittaker and Jim McInnis string triplex cable.

joyful, energized and eager for an encore that apprentice Mikayla Franklin was determined to join them next time — a journey they'd have made sooner if not for the pandemic.

Pairing with journeywoman Virginia Pohler, a member of neighboring London, Ontario, Local 120, Franklin's chief duty was at a center for children with disabilities.

"I didn't know what I was getting into until I was there," she said, describing

"exposed wires in bathrooms, extension cords sketchily threaded together," and other shock and fire hazards.

Eliminating them brought instant gratification.

"It was so cool to be able to help



them and see the immediate difference it made," Franklin said. "All these kids and even adults were walking by something so dangerous and not knowing it's so dangerous. And we got the opportunity to fix it so that nobody gets hurt."

Outside, their IBEW brothers navigated steep terrain — a 268-step stairway runs between the visitors center and church — to connect seven buildings with triplex cable. Thankfully, Whittaker said, the poles were already installed. Even so, it was daunting.

"All the work was done on ladders," he said. "In Canada, we'd be using bucket trucks."

Franklin was struck by the many contrasts to their highly regulated jobs at home, noting how much she learned from Pohler, an electrical inspector.

"It gave me perspective on how good we have it and why we have certain rules," said Franklin, now a journeywoman. "I think every apprentice could benefit from this kind of experience. It really opens your eyes to the world."

It was life-changing for the children, too, especially the girls, as Terry Wilson and Wendy Whittaker observed. While the 2019 volunteers were all men, this time the skills of two IBEW sisters were on display.

"The young girls were astounded to see Mikayla and Virginia wearing tool pouches, dressed in the garb of a trades worker," Wilson said. "It was something beyond their wildest imaginations that an occupation like that could be available to a female — that they could grow up to be more than a weaver or cook or other traditional roles for Latin American women." ■

LOCAL 683 COLUMBUS, OHIO

## Sharing Holiday Blessings in Central Ohio

**W**ith the holiday rush in full swing by mid-December, it can be tough for most people to carve out even a little free time for themselves, let alone to help others in need.

"We're swamped with work," said Patrick Hook, business manager of Columbus, Ohio, Local 683. "We're really blessed."

Even so, dozens of apprentices, journeymen and retirees from the local have donated time and effort over the last several years in support of the Christmas Cares — Unions Share program.

"It's just a great way for our members to get involved with the community," Hook said.

Now in its 70th year, Christmas Cares — Unions Share has evolved from a modest Christmas basket program serving a relatively small portion of Franklin County.

Working with the Central Ohio Labor Council, the St. Stephen's Community House, the Mid-Ohio Food Collective and the United Way of Central Ohio, the Local 683 members now join nearly 1,000 other volunteers to prepare and distribute what's hoped will be enough food to help an estimated 3,000 feed their families through the winter holiday season.

"We have a good time doing it," Hook said. "IBEW members know how to find a way to make it fun."

Volunteers from Columbus, Ohio, Local 683 join other union members each December to prepare and distribute bags of food for families in need.



Over a week, the volunteers assemble at St. Stephen's to sort and prepare bags of purchased and donated canned food and fresh produce. Then, on the Saturday and Sunday before Christmas, they distribute the bags to the families that drive through the facility's parking lot.

Anywhere from 50 to 75 Local 683 members will typically help, Hook said, many bringing family members and friends to join in.

"This is always a great opportunity for our apprentices to put in community service hours and for our members to volunteer as well," he said.

Learn more at [saintstephensch.org](http://saintstephensch.org). ■



Kyran Godreau was one of three apprentices who made the trip, along with his Local 804 sister Mikayla Franklin, now a journeywoman, and her boyfriend, apprentice millwright Brady Dickie.



# In the IBEW, *Every Season* is a Season of Sharing

LOCAL 98 PHILADELPHIA

## Renewing a Civic Spirit and Restoring Light

The football field is a green valley surrounded by the red brick cliffs of rowhouses in the Olney section of Philadelphia.

But like many formerly middle-class neighborhoods in many formerly industrial cities, Olney has been struggling.

A few years ago, unknown thieves stole the copper wire out of the lights at the field, part of the Lauretha Vaird Boys & Girls Club, causing damage worth 10 to 20 times the value of the copper they scrapped.

It literally and spiritually left the neighborhood darker. Every year, as winter approached, 300 football players and 50 cheerleaders watched their time to practice and play grow dimmer each day.

After she won the Democratic nomination for mayor, Cherelle Parker — who would go on to win in November — called Mark Lynch, business manager of Local 98, to see if the local could help out the kids.

They knew each other from her campaign, and both sensed something different in the city since the local trades rallied after a truck fire collapsed a 500-ton section of Interstate 95 in June. Less than two weeks later, the road reopened. It made the whole city ask why people accept when things aren't how they should be.

"There's a spirit here. We call it



Philadelphia Eagles legend Ron Jaworski helped fund a Local 98 project to bring light back to a vandalized football field. Members of Local 98 volunteered to do the work. From left are Political Director Tom Lepera; Business Manager Mark Lynch; Business Agent Nemo Devine; Jaworski; Member Services Representative Elaine McGuire; and Trish Cuadrado, executive director of Jaws Youth Playbook.

'can-do Philadelphia,'" Lynch said. "We said we would look into it and our members would do the work free."

It was a nightmare. The thieves who stole the wire caused \$40,000 to \$50,000 of damage, not including labor.

Local 98 held a news conference and promised to do the job, do it right and do it fast if the city stepped up to join them.

"Local 98 builds coalitions, and then we do the work. We get things done," said Local 98 Political Director Tony Lepera.

In stepped Ron Jaworski, one of the greatest Eagles quarterbacks of all time, and still a local even decades after

retiring. His foundation stepped in with \$30,000, which helped secure \$50,000 courtesy of the City Council.

On Tuesday, Oct. 24, a platoon of Local 98 wiremen and apprentices poured into Olney and began to set things right. By Thursday, the kids were back in the glow.

"We don't have to accept that things don't work. We don't have to accept worse than our kids deserve. That's the union message: We're strong when we're together — better contracts, more work, better neighborhoods, healthier kids," Lepera said. "A better future for everybody." ■



LOCAL 332 SAN JOSE, CALIF.

## Working in the Community 'Brings Out Our Best'

San Jose, Calif., Local 332 has a unique tradition at its annual holiday party. Many members show up early and spend the day assembling bikes purchased for needy children in the area.

Local 332 splits the cost with NECA's Santa Clara Valley chapter. Once assembled, the bikes are donated to Sacred Heart Community Service, a San Jose-based organization working to address poverty in the city. Sacred Heart distributes them to children in need.

Business Manager Javier Casillas said members usually assemble 75 to 150 bikes. "They spend quite a few hours putting them together, but it's a really fun day," Casillas said. "Their kids are usually here having a good time, decorating cookies for the party and things like that. Mom and Dad are putting together bikes for the less-fortunate families."

That's one of several initiatives Local 332 takes part in to help improve the quality of life in San Jose, the 12th-largest city in the U.S., along with the surrounding area.

Another major one is the YWCA Walk a Mile, which is held every summer and raises money for the organization's work to aid women and their children affected by domestic or sexual abuse.

Local 332 raised \$15,000 this year, the second-largest total of any team taking part. It has been a regular participant since 2007, when now-retired Business Agent Sal Ventura got involved with the YMCA and encouraged others to join him. Ventura still takes part in the walk. Apprentice wirewoman Zahira Elmansoumi was the captain of this year's team.

"Walk a Mile is a fun and competitive event for a serious cause," said journeyman wireman and Local 332 member Lilliana Martinez, who is active in many of the charitable events, including the walk.

"There is a quiet but growing rivalry amongst teams. I think this event aligns with our sense of community and brings out our best. We are the community." ■



"They spend quite a few hours putting [the bikes] together, but it's a really fun day."

— Business Manager Javier Casillas on Local 332's holiday tradition

LOCAL 993 KAMLOOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

## B.C. Local's Women's Committee Brings Comfort Through Solidarity

Whether it's making comfort cases for sexual assault survivors or forming an all-female crew to upgrade a women's safe house, there may be nothing the Kamloops, British Columbia, Local 993 Women's Committee wouldn't do for its community — even if that community is 1,200 kilometers away.

"I feel fortunate to have such great support from our local, as well as our signatory contractors and the communities within our jurisdiction," Local 993 Assistant Business Manager Mollie Routledge said. "Without them, we would not be able to go out and assist in the forgotten areas where help is needed."

In 2019, the women's committee set out to collect 50 comfort cases, which include personal hygiene items and a new set of clothing, because a survivor's original clothes are often damaged or being used as evidence. But with help from signatories like Houle Electric, Vancouver Local 213, Victoria Local 230, the



Journey workers and apprentices from the Kamloops, British Columbia, Local 993 Women's Committee traveled roughly 14 hours to perform a much-needed electrical retrofit at a women's safe house in the northwest town of Kitimat.

Western Joint Electrical Training Society and others in the labor community, they ended up with about 100 cases, which they delivered to different northern Canada communities.

They haven't stopped helping since.

Committee members have been involved in a number of events, like the Shoe Memorial to honor the memory of women killed by violence; Red Dress Day, which raises awareness of the ongoing crisis of violence against Indigenous women, girls and

two-spirit people; and Coldest Night of the Year, which helps those who are homeless.

"We like to pick the stuff that's near and dear to us," said Tammy Schnieder, a member of Local 993's Women's Committee. "Our goal is to make a positive impact wherever we can."

Schnieder and others were recently part of an all-women crew that did electrical upgrades for a women's safe house in the northwest British Columbia town of Kitimat. The drive up took them about 14 hours.

"It is quite empowering to have an all-women electrical crew on a project like that," Routledge said.

The crew, made up of journey workers as well as apprentices, did an electrical retrofit, upgrading receptacles, switches and lights. Local contractor WSG Energy Services pitched in with equipment like ladders, emergency lighting and battery drills. They, along with fellow area contractors TLF and Flour, even made

sure the women had coffee and lunches, Routledge said.

"I think it's great that Local 993 was able to help make a safe environment for these women," Schnieder said. "It shows that women in the trades are powerful and we can accomplish a lot."

In addition to the upgrade, the women's committee sold T-shirts — so many, in fact, that they had to place a second order. Combined with the materials they were able to have donated, the sisters had enough funds left over to start on their next project of creating starter packages, which they plan to distribute next year. The packages will be given to women when they leave the safe house and include household items for the kitchen and bathroom and for cleaning, Routledge said.

"A lot of times these women have nothing. This will help make it a little easier as they venture out on their own again," she said. ■



# Multibillion-Dollar Blast of Federal Grid Funding Positions IBEW for Major Wins

The Department of Energy is making the largest direct investment ever in the U.S. grid, and most of the sponsored projects already have built-in partnerships with IBEW locals.

The grants are the first deployment of more than \$20 billion committed to grid improvements in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act signed by President Joe Biden in 2021.

These grants total \$3.5 billion, funding projects in 44 states. The projects will expand the grid, as well as harden it against extreme weather and wildfires that are becoming more common due to climate change.

Once the private utilities, rural electrical cooperatives, state power authorities and others add their share, the total value of the 58 funded projects is more than \$8.1 billion.

“For years, even before we started the clean energy transition in earnest, the IBEW was almost alone talking about the importance of grid reliability. Thanks to our members’ advocacy, there is \$8 billion more going into our industry,” said Utility Department Director Donnie Colston.

The grants come out of the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships, or GRIP, program run by the Department of Energy.

“Today’s announcement represents the largest-ever direct investment in critical grid infrastructure, supporting projects that will harden systems, improve energy reliability and affordability — all while generating union jobs for highly skilled workers,” said Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm.

Among the largest beneficiaries of the grant program are the members of Portland, Ore., Local 125. Two utilities — Portland General Electric and PacifiCorp — with Local 125 members received four grants totaling more than \$450 million.

The money will support projects worth more than \$1 billion, and Local 125 Business Manager Travis Eri said work on these projects will start almost immediately.

“A billion dollars. That’s going to impact us,” Eri said.

Eri said the utilities all approached Local 125 before applying for the grants. They knew that the Biden appointees administering the grant program would favor union involvement.

“One of the most important things is that the utilities met with us and said there has to be union collaboration on the request. ‘We need your help. You need to sign on and send letters so we can get the grant money,’” Eri said. “We acted quickly and confirmed again with the utilities: ‘We will be behind you if it is 100% union work. There will be no nonunion contractors.’ And they agreed.”

The largest single grant is \$250 million toward a \$630 million partnership between Portland General and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. The project will convert a 100-mile 230-kilovolt transmission line to 500 kv.

When complete, the clean energy produced east of the Cascades on native lands could provide enough power for more than 1.7 million homes in the population centers near the coast.

“The utilities have had many attempts at adding transmission. Finally, one is going to cross the finish line,” Eri said.

“If we want to electrify everything — and we do — we need this, and now we will get it.”

The IBEW was integral in drafting and passing the federal law that funds these programs, said Leroy Chincio, Honolulu Local 1260’s business manager and the Seventh District representative on the International Executive Council.

New capacity to integrate increasing renewable energy generation is only one of the grant areas. Billions of dollars were also dedicated to smart grids, grid innovation and wildfire resilience.

Of the 58 projects that were announced, the IBEW found that at least 41 involve IBEW partner organizations. About half of the remaining 17 projects have union partnerships or agreements, according to the federal Grid Deployment Office, which manages GRIP, and every GRIP project is subject to the labor protections and guarantees baked into the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In early August, a nightmare combination of hot winds, drought and the valleys that define Maui unleashed a horrifying wildfire that destroyed the historic city of Lahaina and killed at least 997 people.

The only GRIP grants not given out in October were nearly \$115 million announced during President Joe Biden’s visit to Hawaii after the disaster.

The president took one meeting while in Maui, Chincio said — with the IBEW.

“It’s going to mean tons and tons of work,” Chincio said.

The program won’t just harden the grid infrastructure, including new poles, new undergrounding, hardened substation and control center equipment. It also will fund the creation of a new Hawaii-based line apprenticeship program.

“Until now, every certified lineman in the state works for the utility, and when we needed contractors, they came from the mainland,” Chincio said. “The utility is limited in how many people they could hire, so this will double the pipeline for new linemen in the state and grow our ranks.”

Similar to the utilities seeking out Local 125 in Oregon, Hawaiian Electric and the Hawaii State Energy Office approached Chincio before they applied for the grant.

“They wanted to partner with us in this application because they knew they needed union support and union engagement,” Chincio said. They signed a memorandum of agreement that all work on the projects will be done by IBEW members.

“I cannot overstate how important the IBEW is in the money coming in. International President Cooper and Secretary-Treasurer Noble and the whole Government Affairs department having a say in how the legislation was written has been huge,” Chincio said. “I cannot overstate that enough. The way the laws are written, the IBEW is set to grow enormously.”

After announcing the first round, the Grid Deployment Office held a webinar to offer advice to applicants for the rest of the nearly \$7 billion in GRIP projects yet to be awarded.

“The number of applications far outstripped what we have budgeted,” said Maria Robinson, the office’s director. “The quality of the [labor] part of the plan will be key.” ■

**\$8.1 BILLION**  
Total value of 58 projects selected for the first round of federal GRIP funding

**71%**  
The portion of those 58 projects that already have partnerships with IBEW locals

# Ore. Wirewoman Makes History at Electrical Contest

Molly Muller’s union brothers and sisters, training director, business manager, friends and family were thrilled and proud when she became the first woman to win the IBEW’s Western States Electrical Contest.

But they weren’t surprised.

“I expected her to win,” said Mike Ellison, training director at Salem, Ore., Local 280. “If anything surprised me, it was how much she exceeded my expectations.”

The annual day-long competition is open to first-year journey-level wiremen from 11 Western states, one entrant per local. Muller was one of two women among 18 members vying at this year’s event, hosted in late August by San Jose, Calif., Local 332.

She placed first in three rounds — a written exam, motor controls and residential wiring — and high up in everything else, taking home an \$800 cash prize and the contest’s bejeweled infinity gauntlet, the mythic glove of a superhero that passes from one winner to another.

Ellison and others marveled at Muller’s cool head as she tackled each challenge — careful attention to detail, betraying none of the butterflies she would later describe:

“Terrified, intimidated, nervous, anxious,” she said. “I mean, I wanted to win the whole thing. It was a big deal to me.”

A regional NECA manager sensed frustration in some competitors, but not Muller. “Nothing shook her confidence, at least not visibly,” said Monique de Boer, who serves Local 280 and sits on its JATC board. “It was so much fun to watch her.”

It was also inspiring. “I’m in awe of the women in our industry,” de Boer said. “Molly represents the women who came before her and who fought so hard to be

here, and all those who follow.”

Muller impressed Ellison during her apprenticeship as “incredibly strong, smart and competitive” and meticulous about her work. Between those qualities and her good nature and high spirits, he saw her as the ideal delegate when he and the 2022 apprentice class chose her to represent Local 280.

She hadn’t volunteered. “I was untold,” Muller said with laughter that is plentiful as she talks.

**“I expected her to win. If anything surprised me, it was how much she exceeded my expectations.”**

— Mike Ellison, Salem, Ore., Local 280 training director

Growing up in Oregon’s capital city of Salem, she didn’t aspire to be an electrician. She didn’t even know any. Her father, while now chief financial officer at a public utility, worked as an accountant; her mother teaches elementary school.

Muller started down a similar path after high school. She spent an adventurous gap year in Brooklyn through AmeriCorps’ City Year program, surviving on a small stipend and living with multiple roommates while assisting teachers in underfunded classrooms. She returned



Local 280’s Molly Muller, the first woman to win the IBEW’s Western States Contest, shows off the Infinity Gauntlet that passes each year from one winner to the next.





*Molly Muller bends conduit at the 2023 Western States Contest. The Salem, Ore., Local 280 member was the first woman to win the competition, a test of skills for first-year journeyman wiremen.*

**“Nothing shook her confidence, at least not visibly. It was so much fun to watch her.”**

– Monique de Boer, regional NECA manager in Oregon

when she got here, always smiling,” Chon said. “I didn’t detect any animosity at all when she won. Her victory was very celebratory. I think everyone understood the significance.”

The 2022 contest, hosted by Local 280 at its central Oregon training center, also broke barriers when Lisa Forsberg of Tacoma, Wash., Local 76 became the first woman to win second place.

The now-robust Western States contest grew out of an Oregon duel first held in 1963 between Local 280 and Portland Local 48.

Sixty years later, despite her nerves, Muller kept the intrastate battle alive. “It’s not like I wasn’t talking a good

game,” she said. “Me and the guy from Local 48 in Portland, we had a little rivalry going. But inside I’m, like, dying.”

Even as she handily completed one task after another, she figured she was doomed by her deliberative pace. She always beat the clock, but some competitors were faster.

“Like they said at the award ceremony, I took my time and did it right, I guess,” she said, still hedging on assessing talents that are obvious to everyone else.

“It was overwhelming,” Muller said of the moment she won and the days to come. “Congratulations from everyone. My phone was blowing up. Social media was blowing up. Oh my gosh, it’s still surreal.” ■

home and enrolled in pre-education at Oregon State University.

“I decided that wasn’t for me: ‘I thought, ‘I’m good at math, so I should be an engineer. They make a lot of money,’” she said. “That turned out to be too much math, and I switched to business. At that point, I realized that I was just wasting money for no reason.”

Unsure of what she wanted to do, she worked as a caregiver and considered nursing school. After ruling that out, she spotted a Craigslist ad for a job in residential carpentry at a mom-and-pop shop. She had no experience, but the owners were sold.

“They said: ‘You seem smart. You can learn on the job.’” So I did — concrete, finished carpentry, flooring. I learned a lot.”

A co-worker urged her to shoot higher. “He said, ‘You need to be an electrician or a plumber, a job with a union and benefits and where they pay you what you’re worth.’”

Before long, Muller was sitting across from a Local 280 panel being interviewed for a residential apprenticeship. She was also three months pregnant. Asked how that landed with her questioners, she laughed.

“Oh, I didn’t tell anyone,” she said. “I didn’t want it to affect my chances.” Halfway through her first year, she gave birth to her son, now 7.

Returning to the program as a single mom, she sailed through her training until butting heads with an employer after her second year.

“The shop where I was working wanted me to do a bunch of sketchy, unsafe things,” Muller said. “I thought, ‘This isn’t what I signed up for.’ I got laid off, and they gave me a bad review.

“I was going to quit the whole thing, and my dad says, ‘You’re part of a union, go down to the hall and talk to them.’”

She never dreamed she’d get so much support, recalling how incoming Business Manager Drew Lindsey had her back as the JATC board considered her case.

“Drew really went to bat for me, and he and Dave Baker, who was the training director, set me up with a solar job,” Muller said. “Because it was under 3 ½ megawatts, I was allowed even as a residential apprentice to go do that.”

She thrived working with inside wiremen who treated her with respect. “I found my people,” she said. “I knew this was what I wanted to do.”

She applied to be an inside

apprentice, submitting 12 letters of recommendation.

Lindsey watched her flourish, charting her growth from a young woman who stood up to a boss to a standout

apprentice and champion journeywoman. “Through the whole process, she was maturing at a level that most people don’t,” he said. “I am nothing but proud of her, and I tell her that all the time.”

Robert Chon, apprentice director at the Silicon Valley JATC, where the contest was held, noted Muller’s humility and rapport with fellow competitors.

“She was immediately well liked

## IBEW-Led Training Center Tour Educates Ohio’s Solar Energy Leaders

**B**usiness managers from more than two dozen IBEW locals in Ohio joined officials from 20 solar companies, six nonprofits, the Port of Cleveland and the city of Columbus at Local 683’s Electrical Trades Center in September to help these renewable energy stakeholders get a better sense of how seriously the union takes its role in their success.

“Our construction locals in Ohio have been doing an amazing job of capturing renewable energy installation and maintenance work all over the state,” said Fourth District International Vice President Gina Cooper, whose district includes Ohio. “But with so much more solar work still to be captured, this tour was a great opportunity to show how the IBEW’s highly trained workforce can be instrumental in gaining access to that work.”

The IBEW has helped foster the explosive growth of Ohio’s solar energy generation industry, noted Aaron Brown, the Fourth District’s international representative for renewable energy and government affairs.

“The tour gave us a chance to hype how we’re supporting solar work and the jobs it creates,” Brown said.

Through 2022, almost 1,400 megawatts of power generation in Ohio was coming from solar, enough to power about 176,000 homes. So far, the IBEW has captured about 70% of the state’s solar construction and maintenance work, and solar generation in the state is expected to jump to nearly 7,800 MW over the next five years.

“A lot of that has to do with engagement, business managers getting in front of this demand,” he said. “We’ve been pretty successful.”

Brown told tour participants that the IBEW fully supports the recent application by Ohio and eight other states for a share of a \$250 million Solar for All grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.

The \$27 billion fund was created by a provision of the Biden administration’s 2022 Inflation Reduction Act and intends to spur private investment in renewable energy alternatives across the U.S. The \$7 billion set aside for Solar for All is geared toward lowering clean energy costs and revitalizing historically underserved communities.

Ohio officials hope to use the grant to pay for residential rooftop solar construction in low- to moderate-income areas of Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus and Dayton. And because such work would be federally funded, Brown noted, the IRA’s prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements would fully apply.

Applicants should receive an answer to their applications in March, but Cooper is



*Andy Maciejewski, right, assistant training director of the Electrical Trades Center of Central Ohio, speaks to some business managers from IBEW locals in Ohio and other solar energy stakeholders during a recent meeting at Columbus, Ohio, Local 683’s training center.*

calling on the IBEW locals that cover those cities to start preparing now to bid for the work.

Also taking part in the tour were state Rep. Dick Stein, chairman of the Ohio House of Representatives’ Public Utilities Committee, along with committee members James Hoops and Sharon Ray. Hoops and Ray are sponsoring H.B. 197, a measure supported by the IBEW that calls for expanding Ohio’s utility laws to allow for community solar power.

A recent study by Ohio University concluded that community solar could generate at least \$5 billion for the state’s economy. That could mean hundreds more job opportunities for IBEW members. Community solar also can be good for customers, especially those in traditionally underserved communities, by giving them access to centralized and affordable solar generation while providing them with signup benefits and incentives such as billing credits.

On Sept. 20, Brown testified at a Public Utilities Committee hearing in support of H.B. 197. “The economic opportunity to partner with community groups and career centers to grow our membership ranks and provide them with a path to a decent living with great pay and benefits is critical to our communities and the great state of Ohio,” he said, adding that about 800 IBEW members are already working on solar in the state.

Other IBEW representatives who spoke at the hearing were Portsmouth Local 575 Business Manager Dan Shirey, who also represents the Third District on the International Executive Council; Canton Local 540 Executive Board members Greg Bambanek and Ron Berard; Newark Local 1105 Business Development Liaison Ashley Labaki; and Glenn Giffin, business manager of Wheeling, W.Va., Local 141, which has jurisdiction in Belmont County, Ohio. ■



# NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

## ‘We’re Going to Be Heard’: Pro-Union NDP Takes Power in Manitoba

The IBEW in Canada celebrated when the New Democratic Party — a longtime advocate for the nation’s working families — swept into power in the Manitoba provincial elections Oct. 3.

The NDP formed a majority government after winning 34 of 57 seats, ending seven years of control by the anti-union Conservatives, who won 22 seats. The Liberals won the remaining seat.

“As a business manager in the province, I tried to get several meetings with the Conservative government when I was there,” said First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk, who served as business manager at Winnipeg Local 2085 before being elected to his current position in May 2022. “They would never return a phone call.”

That is already changing with the NDP in charge. Premier Wab Kinew invited union leaders to play an active role in the government. Kinew is the first provincial premier of First Nations descent, which could help attract more citizens from traditionally underrepresented groups to the trades.

“It’s a really big win for our members and the province of Manitoba,” Winnipeg Local 2034 Business Manager Mike Espenell said.

Local 2034 members had a bigger reason to celebrate than most. The vast majority are employed by Crown-owned Manitoba Hydro, which reduced its workforce by about 900 employees in 2017, and then instituted a hiring freeze for two years. The result was more work sent to independent contractors instead of unionized employees who live and raise families in the province.

At about the same time, the Conservatives introduced legislation to freeze public employee salaries for two years. It never passed, but it served as a de-facto wage freeze. Contract negotiators for the province either stalled or wouldn’t agree to a wage increase, arguing that the legislation was pending.

“We’ve seen so much interference during these last seven years, with the government directing the utility how to run the business with no merit whatsoever,” Espenell said. “We’ve seen an erosion of service and a significant amount of inefficiencies as a result.”

Winnipeg Local 435 includes a bargaining unit of about 100 technicians employed by Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries. It was scheduled to begin negotiations on a new contract in late October, Business Manager Joe Breland said.

“The previous government was very anti-union and not supportive of middle-class workers’ needs at all,” Breland said. “Our members are optimistic that the NDP will be more receptive to addressing cost-of-living increases.”

Local 2085 Business Manager Dave McPhail called Kinew a friend — to him personally and to the entire labour movement.

“He has what we need,” McPhail said. “He listens to the people of Manitoba. Now we’re going to be heard, and I couldn’t be happier.”

With little input from the IBEW and other trades, the Conservatives passed legislation calling for two apprentices for one journeyman or Red Seal electrician on a jobsite. McPhail said the IBEW is asking NDP to change that to a one apprentice-two journeymen or Red Seal ratio. That will improve safety on the job and provide more instruction for those learning the electrical trade.

McPhail expects the new government to be more receptive to the IBEW’s request to start a training program for power line technicians, something Conservatives long resisted. The NDP also



Newly elected Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew, third from left, stands with Winnipeg Local 2034 Business Manager Mike Espenell, center, and other labour leaders in the province.

won’t pursue the elimination of a minimum wage for construction workers, something proposed by the Conservatives earlier this year.

“We’ve got a lot of good things to say,” McPhail said. “Now that we have the ear of the people in power, it will help us immensely.”

Brandon Dyck, an international

representative in government affairs and renewable energy who helped get out the vote in Manitoba, said voters were tired of the Conservatives’ austerity measures. Hospitals and other infrastructure were crumbling while the government sat on a budget surplus.

“It was awesome to watch,” Dyck said of campaigning. “The feeling on

the ground and knocking on doors was that everyone was ready for change.”

IBEW leaders in Manitoba said the Conservatives’ disdain for labour was fully apparent in 2019, the 100-year anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike.

Many Conservatives left the legislative chamber or openly mocked union members who visited the capital for ceremonies to commemorate it, Shewchuk said.

“That just summed up that government’s outlook on the working class,” he said.

Many of those same voters helped show them the exit door on Election Day. ■

## « Nous serons entendus » : le NPD qui est pro-syndicat prend le pouvoir au Manitoba

La FIOE au Canada a célébré la victoire du Nouveau Parti démocratique lors des élections provinciales du Manitoba le 3 octobre. Ce Parti défend depuis longtemps les intérêts des familles de travailleurs du pays.

Mettant fin à sept ans de contrôle par les conservateurs ayant remporté 22 sièges, le NPD a formé le gouvernement majoritaire après avoir remporté 34 des 57 sièges. Le siège restant a été remporté par les libéraux.

« Comme gérant d’affaires dans la province, j’ai essayé d’organiser plusieurs réunions avec le gouvernement conservateur », déclare Russ Shewchuk, vice-président international du premier district. Shewchuk a siégé à titre de gérant d’affaires au local 2085 à Winnipeg avant d’être élu à son poste actuel en mai 2022. « Ils ne rappelaient jamais. »

Maintenant que le NPD est au pouvoir, ce changement est déjà en cours. Le premier ministre Wab Kinew a invité les leaders syndicaux à prendre une part active au sein du gouvernement. Kinew est le premier élu premier ministre de descendance autochtone susceptible d’aider à attirer plus de citoyennes et citoyens appartenant à des groupes généralement sous-représentés dans les métiers spécialisés.

« C’est réellement une grande victoire pour nos membres et pour la province du Manitoba », mentionne Mike Espenell, gérant d’affaires de la section locale 2034 à Winnipeg.

La section locale 2034 a plus de raison de célébrer que la plupart. La grande majorité des membres sont à l’emploi de Manitoba Hydro, une société de la Couronne; elle a réduit sa main-d’œuvre à environ 900 personnes en 2017 et a instauré un gel d’embauche pendant deux ans. En conséquence, l’ouvrage étaient davantage confié aux entrepreneurs indépendants plutôt qu’à des salariés syndiqués, qui vivent et élèvent leurs familles dans la province.

Entre-temps, les conservateurs ont présenté un projet de loi pour geler le salaire des employés du secteur public pendant deux ans. Cette mesure n’a jamais été adoptée, mais elle a servi de facto à un gel des salaires. Les négociateurs des conventions collectives de la province ont ou joué à l’autruche ou n’arrivaient pas à s’entendre sur l’augmentation de salaire, prétendant que le projet de loi était en examen.

« Nous avons été témoins de tellement d’ingérence au cours de ces sept dernières années, le gouvernement qui donne des instructions aux services publics sur la manière de gérer leurs affaires sans aucun mérite », formule Espenell. « Par conséquent, nous avons constaté une détérioration de service et de grandes pertes d’efficacité. »

Le local 435 à Winnipeg comprend une unité de négociation qui compte environ 100 techniciens à l’emploi de Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries. L’unité prévoyait commencer les négociations d’une nouvelle convention collective à

la fin du mois d’octobre, mentionne le gérant d’affaires Joe Breland.

« Le gouvernement précédent était très antisyndical et n’appuyait pas les besoins des travailleuses et travailleurs de la classe moyenne », dit Breland. « Nos membres sont optimistes et pensent que le NPD sera plus réceptif à traiter les questions relatives aux augmentations du coût de la vie. »

Dave McPhail, gérant d’affaires du local 2085 considère Kinew comme un ami ainsi qu’un allié à l’ensemble du mouvement syndical. « Il a ce dont nous avons besoin », mentionne McPhail. « Il écoute les gens du Manitoba. Maintenant nous serons entendus et je ne saurais être plus heureux. »

Sans l’apport de la FIOE et des autres métiers, les conservateurs ont adopté une mesure qui va jumeler deux apprentis à un compagnon ou un à un compagnon certifié Sceau rouge sur un chantier. McPhail dit que la FIOE demande de jumeler un apprenti à deux compagnons ou à deux compagnons certifiés Sceau rouge. Ce jumelage contribuera à améliorer la sécurité sur le lieu de travail et fournira plus d’instruction à ceux en apprentissage.

McPhail s’attend à ce que le nouveau gouvernement soit plus ouvert aux demandes de la FIOE de lancer le programme de formation pour les monteurs de lignes, ce à quoi les conservateurs se sont longtemps opposés. Le NPD ne fera pas suite à l’élimination du salaire minimum pour les travailleurs de la

construction, une mesure proposée par les conservateurs plus tôt cette année.

« Nous avons beaucoup de bonnes choses à dire », formule McPhail. « Ça va beaucoup nous aider, maintenant que nous avons l’oreille des personnes en pouvoir. »

Brandon Dyck, un représentant international des relations gouvernementales et de l’énergie renouvelable qui a aidé à sortir le vote au Manitoba, fait remarquer que les électeurs en avaient assez des mesures d’austérité des conservateurs. Les hôpitaux et d’autres infrastructures s’effondraient alors que le gouvernement gardait l’excédent monétaire.

« C’était impressionnant », Dyck en faisant campagne. « Le sentiment d’être sur le terrain et de frapper aux portes, tout le monde était prêt pour le changement. » Les leaders de la FIOE au Manitoba disent que le dédain des conservateurs envers les syndicats était très évident en 2019, l’année du 100e anniversaire de la grève générale de Winnipeg.

Plusieurs conservateurs ont quitté la chambre législative ou ont ouvertement ridiculisé les syndicalistes qui se rendaient dans la capitale pour les cérémonies de commémoration, déclare Shewchuk.

« Voilà ce qui résume bien la vision de ce gouvernement sur la classe moyenne », dit-il.

Plusieurs de ces mêmes électeurs leur ont montré la porte de sortie le jour de l’élection. ■



# TRANSITIONS

DECEASED

## Clayton White



Retired Seventh District International Representative Clayton White, a leader and vocal advocate for the IBEW in Texas for more than four decades, died on Oct. 9. He was 71.

“He was a dedicated trade unionist,” current Seventh District international representative and longtime friend Todd Newkirk said. “He was definitely a believer in what we do.”

A third-generation IBEW member, Brother White was born and raised in Amarillo, Texas. He began his apprenticeship shortly after high school graduation and was initiated into Amarillo Local 602 upon becoming a journeyman wireman in 1974.

After serving in a variety of leadership roles, White became Local 602’s business manager in 1986 and remained in that position until 2000, when he joined the district staff.

“Great guy,” said Larry Chamberlain, now an international representative and Seventh District desk rep. “When I became a business manager in 1997, he was someone who came up and made me feel at home. He was the go-to guy when I was in a bind and looking for an answer to a question that I didn’t have.”

White’s roots were in inside construction, but Local 602 also has members in outside and utility and previously had members in manufacturing.

That helped during his time as an international representative, when he serviced local unions in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico, retired Seventh District International Representative Gary Buresh said.

White negotiated contracts for wiremen and utility and telecommunications members. He led contract negotiations at Pantex, a nuclear weapons and disassembly plant in the Texas Panhandle, and at an Asarco copper refinery.

“He understood the priorities and nuances of different parts of the membership,” said Buresh, another longtime friend.

Current Local 602 Business Manager Robert Melton said White kept all the files from his career in a cabinet at his home. That proved valuable when Melton called on his predecessor for background information on cases and issues the local is dealing with today, Melton said.

White also attended Local 602’s membership meetings and would drop in for a visit about every two weeks.

“He was the kind of guy who would walk in and you would instantly be giving a hard time to,” Melton said. “Just a great sense of humor and great camaraderie.”

Newkirk said the fact that White lived his entire life in West Texas — not known for friendliness to unions — likely had an impact on his work with the IBEW.

“He was always worried about how we are going to be able to organize and maintain our future,” Newkirk said. “The challenge is to organize. I think that gets back to Amarillo and how big an obstacle it is to organize there.

“He lived with that fear,” Newkirk added. “How are we going to thrive for the next 10 or 20 years?”

White retired in 2015. He had battled cancer in recent years but was doing well until contracting the West Nile virus. That led to a fatal case of meningitis.

His illness made meeting with some of his old friends in August especially poignant. Chamberlain, Buresh and Newkirk were part of a group that spent two days golfing and boating with White in eastern Oklahoma.

“It was great to see Clayton again,” Chamberlain said. “I know he enjoyed it.”

White was known for his sense of humor. He was often teased about being short of stature but gave it back as good as he got it, his friends said.

“He loved life, he loved his family, he loved the IBEW and wasn’t afraid to share it with you,” Chamberlain said. “He never shied away from anything he had to confront.”

In retirement, White continued to live in Amarillo. He is survived by his wife, Stephanie; daughters Danielle and Shay; two grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He was a fan of the Texas Rangers and sadly missed out on their recent exploits. Rangers won the World Series three weeks after he died.

The officers and staff send their condolences to Brother White’s family during this difficult time. ■

“He was the go-to guy when I was in a bind and looking for an answer to a question that I didn’t have.”

— Seventh District International Representative Larry Chamberlain

# CIRCUITS

## After His Sudden Death, a Beloved Foreman Trainer’s Legacy Lives On

The IBEW’s Tenth District lost one of its most colorful yet respected foreman trainers in January when Charlotte, N.C., Local 379 Assistant Manager Business Manager Edgar W. Brown died suddenly at 66.

“Edgar was deeply thoughtful, passionate and practical,” said Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hill, whose jurisdiction includes North Carolina. “His mission was seeing to the success of the IBEW and its members, and his considerable knowledge and charisma left a memorable impression on everyone he met.”

Brown had been a traveler for most of his four-decade IBEW career, said Rebecca Axford, an international representative in the IBEW’s Education Department.

“Along the way, he’d discovered the importance of programs like the Foreman’s Development Series and the

Code of Excellence,” she said.

FDS is a training curriculum that was launched in the union’s Seventh District in 2010 in an effort to develop new generations of highly trained foremen.

The IBEW’s Code of Excellence, developed in the Eighth District in 2006 and introduced union-wide the following year, helps build positive attitudes about the union’s members and their work by ensuring high worker and workplace standards.

“Edgar had a passion for FDS and the Code of Excellence,” said Tenth District International Representative Tommy Hill. “Both of these programs fit hand in glove.”

Axford agreed. “Edgar became a huge advocate of both programs, seeing them as instrumental to the success of local unions and the IBEW,” she said. “He was like the IBEW’s version of Johnny Appleseed, going place to place to promote them.”

Several years ago, Brown stopped traveling and went to work at Local 379, the same local where his father and two brothers had been members. He quickly

became renowned throughout the district for his unique instruction style, particularly when it came to his enthusiasm for the Foreman’s Development Series.

“[Edgar] constantly surprised you with his perspective. He was such a character.”

— Education Department International Representative Rebecca Axford

Before FDS, there had been almost no professional or in-house foreman training anywhere in the IBEW. Foremen, who essentially have one foot in labor and one in management, were largely tasked to learn the job on the job.

In the late 2000s, then-Seventh District International Vice President Jonathon Gardner decided that an IBEW-led best-practices program would solve these supervisory issues and help locals successfully bid for work.

Gardner worked with IBEW members like Seventh District International Representative Gary Buresh and Albuquerque, N.M., Local 611’s Tom Ross, along with other training and development experts, to devise a modular program to help prepare foreman candidates to face a variety of real-world construction job scenarios.

Hill, who was Local 379’s business manager when Brown was hired, said a scarcity of supervisors had occasionally plagued his local, too.



After the sudden death in January of Edgar Brown (left), a popular educator and member of Charlotte, N.C., Local 379, Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hill authorized production of a challenge coin to honor Brown’s memory.

CIRCUITS continued on page 10



# IBEW MERCHANDISE

www.ibewmerchandise.com

### TRAILER HITCH COVER \$3.00

Trailer hitch cover made of black plastic – 3” x 6” oval design – with white raised IBEW initials. Fits 2” receiver.

### QUILT LINED CARHARTT RAILROAD JACKET \$115.00

12-ounce, 100% ring-spun cotton brown duck with quilted flannel lining. Attached hood with adjustable drawstring. Two large front pockets and two inside pockets. IBEW Railroad logo embroidered on left chest.

### PROUD TO BE AN IBEW ELECTRICIAN BUMPER STICKER \$1.00

3” x 11.5” weather-proof, ultra removable vinyl bumper sticker. “Proud to be an IBEW Electrician” with IBEW logo.

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



## CIRCUITS *continued*

“Our E-board had been talking with one of our contractors,” Hill said. “They were complaining about not having enough trained foremen.”

Around the same time, then-Business Manager Hill ran into Buresh at an IBEW Construction and Maintenance Conference in Washington, D.C. They talked about FDS as they shared a taxi ride.

It wasn't long after Hill became international vice president in 2015 and Hill was appointed as an international representative that the Tenth District adopted FDS.

“We've got all this work coming,” Hill recalled Hill saying. “We can't let it go just because we don't have qualified supervisors.”

Axford praised Hill's willingness to try something different with FDS. “He is someone who makes sure everyone has the tools and training they need,” she said.

Hired in 2016 as Raleigh-Durham, N.C., Local 553's training director, Axford was soon introduced to Brown.

“Because of our experience and shared passion for FDS, I was selected to instruct with Edgar,” she said. “I deeply respected his desire to grow the IBEW. And I loved that you could not put Edgar in a box. He had such a rich history, and he constantly surprised you with his perspective. He was such a character.”

Hill recalled one example of Brown's distinctiveness. “We were in an airport, just talking,” he said. Brown's booming voice, though, carried over to a nearby passenger, who asked Brown to keep it down.

“We don't want to hear you,” she said.

An unfazed Brown replied, “Ma'am, that's just the way I talk!”

Scott Thrower, who succeeded Hill as business manager of Local 379 in 2019, noted how Brown enjoyed talking about the Code and FDS. “To him, they were a little bit of common sense in a world of craziness.”

Thrower said that Brown also would distribute business-size cards that he'd had printed at his own expense containing motivational reminders. On one side, the card read, “OWN IT — Own who you are! Own what you do! Own your responsibility! Own YOU.” Printed on the other side: “Let go of who's right and focus on what's right.”

“He was a good guy,” Thrower said. “We were as close as colleagues can be. I truly miss him.”

To honor Brown's memory and legacy, Hill recently authorized the production of a Tenth District FDS challenge coin featuring Brown's face minted on one side.

“Edgar wanted FDS to go to the next level, to be embraced by all the districts. He wanted to leave the union better than he found it,” Axford said. “He was passionate about the work without wanting to tie it to himself personally.

“He would be so proud of the work we're continuing,” she said.

Read more about FDS's origins in the March 2023 Electrical Worker. ■

## IBEW Members Win Big in Union Plus Contests

Teresa Baranowski was an excellent student and standout soccer player at Lake Central High School in northwest Indiana near Chicago.

She was accepted into St. Mary's, a women's liberal arts college affiliated with Notre Dame, with plans to study forensic science.

“But I went to this apprenticeship school for electricians, and I found that it was far more fascinating and \$100,000 cheaper,” she told the Lake Central school newspaper during her senior year in 2014, referring to a visit she made to the IBEW local in her area.

“With this, I will be working hands on and learning at the same time. I want to get ahead of life rather than be set back in debt.”

Nearly a decade later, Baranowski is a journeyman wireman and member of Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697 and the winner of the Unions Power America People's Choice Award by Union Plus, along with the \$10,000 prize that goes with it. She is one of four IBEW members who were winners in Union Plus' annual contests, including Chester, Pa., Local 654 member Steven Tyson, the \$40,000 grand prize winner of the Unions Power America Sweepstakes.

Baranowski already has worked as a general foreman. She recently became an instructor in Local 697's night classes after attending the National Training Institute in Ann Arbor, Mich.

She also is a leader in RENEW and the Women's Committee, helping to attract more women to the trades. She's involved in several projects in the community with her IBEW brothers and sisters, making a concerted effort to get younger apprentices more involved in Local 697.

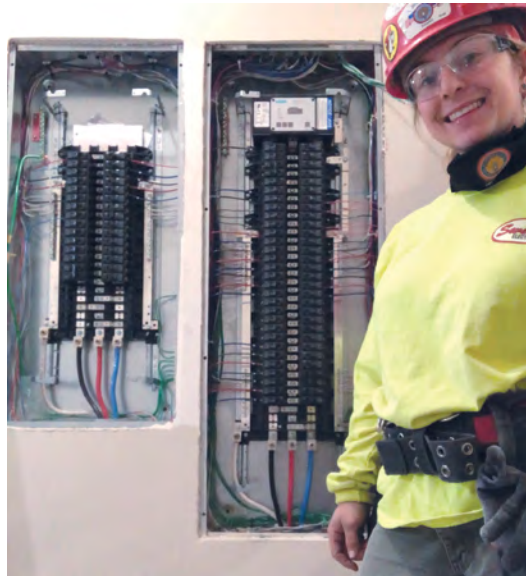
**“She thrives on the job. People have nothing but praise for her work ethic.”**

— Local 697 Business Manager Phil Hernandez on Teresa Baranowski

All that good work was recognized with the Union Plus Award. Baranowski was one of four finalists for the honor, based on having an inspiring story of compassion and community service. She was chosen in a vote of union members across the country.

“She's kind of the ideal member,” Local 697 Business Manager Phil Hernandez said. “Even when she was an apprentice, she showed an interest in volunteering. She thrives on the job. People have nothing but praise for her work ethic. There's not enough positive things you can say about her.”

Baranowski grew up in a union



Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697 member and Union Plus winner Teresa Baranowski on the job, top left, and in the middle with fellow Sisters of 697 members, bottom left.



Chester, Pa., Local 654 member Steven Tyson, top right, won the \$40,000 grand prize in the Unions Power America Sweepstakes.

Tyson, a 20-year member of Local 654, saw an email promoting the contest. He figured: “What the heck. It doesn't hurt to enter.”

He got one of the biggest surprises of his life when he drove up to his home in Pottstown, Pa., one day in late August and was greeted by a Union Plus film crew with a giant check for \$40,000.

“It wasn't my birthday, and I see all these party favors,” he said. “Then this lady started walking toward me.”

The moment was shown during a Union Plus webcast on Labor Day. Just a few seconds after learning he had won the award and giving the presenter a hug, Tyson turned his back to the camera and showed off his Local 654 shirt.

“I want to represent,” he said.

Tyson said Union Plus officials told his wife, Bonni, that they would be coming by the home because he had won \$5,000. She did her part by keeping it a secret — then got a stunner herself when she saw that her husband won the grand prize.

“We were both very, very surprised,” he said. “The people doing [the check presentation], the people from Union Plus, they were great. I felt they were genuinely happy for me. Just a great experience.”

Tyson and his wife have two daughters. They used part of the money to pay off debts, including those left over from the wedding of one of the daughters last summer. They also used it to pay for a cruise they took the following week and for an Alaskan cruise they are taking next April.

“My wife is a cancer survivor,” he said. “We know the deal. Nothing is guaranteed. If there is something we want to do, we do it.”

It's another chapter in a satisfying IBEW career for Tyson. After high school, he attended community college and worked nonunion when his girlfriend at the time directed him to someone look-

family. Her father is a Bricklayers member, and her mother works for an accounting firm used by unions in northwest Indiana.

When she was 16, she tagged along when her mom took her younger brother for a visit to Local 697's hall, thinking it might spark an interest in him becoming an electrician.

Instead, the brother went to college and earned an engineering degree. The older sister had a blast and knew what she wanted to do.

“I really liked working on cars in high school,” Baranowski said. “When I went on that tour, I knew this was the place for me.

“Then, when they told me I could get an associate degree in applied science and get certified in welding so I could work in the mills and the refineries around here, it was like getting a double degree. That was awesome.”

Baranowski was a founder of the local's Women's Committee, which is called the Sisters of 697. Local 697 has doubled its number of women members during the committee's four years of existence, she said.

“When I got in, I was the only female in my [apprenticeship] class,” Baranowski said. “Now, it seems like there are two or three in every class. We want to keep that going.”

The committee members sponsor an annual fishing outing, with proceeds

going to a Local 697 member in need. They put up a pallet in the union hall for members to donate items to an emergency facility for abused women and their children, then loaded the goods into trucks and delivered them. They brought Halloween bags to children staying there during the COVID-19 pandemic.

They have collected clothes for a nearby homeless shelter. They brought gifts and gift cards for children staying at another shelter that burned to the ground. They volunteer their time to upgrade electrical work at public parks, veterans' homes and citizens in need.

“If there is someone who reaches out to us and they need us, we try to do the best we can to help them,” she said.

Former Local 697 Business Manager Ryan Reithel, who now serves as senior executive assistant to the international secretary-treasurer, said Baranowski is an ideal member to emulate.

“It's almost impossible to duplicate Teresa's loyalty and dedication,” Reithel said. “I've known her since she applied for our apprenticeship. She graduated at the top of her class. She volunteered for every single event and fundraiser. She went to every single union meeting. She worked industrial and commercial and worked her way up to foreman and general foreman.”

Baranowski wasn't the only inside journeyman wireman to win big with Union Plus.



ing to hire an electrician.

That person told him about the IBEW and put him in touch with an organizer. He got into the Local 654 apprenticeship and saw the benefits of union membership.

“Best thing I ever did,” he said.

Washington, D.C., Local 26 member Dylan Kelliher and St. Louis Local 1455 retiree Jeanne Johnson won \$2,000 and \$1,000, respectively, in the same contest.

Union Plus is a nonprofit organization that offers a variety of programs to U.S. and Canadian union members. Those include car loans, mortgages, discounts for vacations and cellphone plans, and a no-fee credit card with a cash-back option. It also offers legal services to members at a discounted rate. Visit [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org) for more information. ■

### Indiana Wireman Is a Full-Time Foreman, Free-Time MMA Fighter

After working all day, many IBEW members look forward to going home, having dinner and relaxing. But not Laporte, Ind., Local 531 member Jonathon Appelman.

“I might work 12 hours a day and still go to the gym after,” said the journeyman inside wireman, who has kept such a brutal schedule for his side gig as a professional mixed martial arts fighter.

The “mixed” refers to the range of self-defense and combat techniques that the sport draws from, such as boxing, wrestling, judo and karate.

Appelman credits his friend and fellow MMA fighter Henry Huff for sparking his interest in the sport. “I was like, if this guy can do it, I can, too,” Appelman said.

The challenge was that the experienced Huff had made MMA look easy, while Appelman was coming into the sport with zero fighting experience.

In high school, Appelman had learned welding, but after his brother-in-law helped him get an electrical job, Appelman found his way toward an apprenticeship with Local 531 and, eventually, a solid union career.

Once he was in the apprenticeship a couple of years later, Appelman would work during the day and take evening classes — and then still go to a

gym for MMA training and conditioning afterward. But because he was getting into the sport in his 20s — much later than most MMA fighters do — it took almost two years for Appelman to get to where he felt ready to compete, he said, and to lose enough body fat to reach his goal of 135 pounds to fight in the bantamweight class.

“For the first few months, [Huff and I would] go to the gym every night after I would get off work,” Appelman told Northwest Indiana Business Magazine. “He told me that if I wanted to do this, I had to have the determination to want to do it. And I had to do something every single day, no matter how tired I was from work.”

Appelman topped out of the apprenticeship in 2015 and had his first MMA fight as a bantamweight amateur that December. His hard work and commitment paid off: He won that bout in the second round, using a judo and jiu-jitsu choke maneuver that can render an opponent unconscious within 10 seconds.

Over the next six years, Appelman’s day job as an IBEW wireman would put him on a variety of projects at places like schools and hospitals. In his free time, he continued to train and occasionally to fight, racking up an impressive record of seven wins — including two competition titles — and just three losses.

Since he turned professional last year, Appelman has fought in three more MMA bouts, winning two of them, including his last fight March 18. In that match, he claimed victory in just over a minute after employing a “Von Flue choke,” driving his opponent’s shoulder into the floor of the caged ring while putting pressure on a carotid artery.

The wireman remains grateful to have the kind of union job that allows him to pursue his interest. “I wouldn’t be able to be where I’m at if it wasn’t for the help of all the people that were my journeymen when I was an apprentice,” he said in the magazine article.

One of those journeymen was Jim Clarida, who is now Local 531’s business manager. “Jonathon is a great worker. What a success story,” said Clarida, who, along with several others from the 450-member local, has been spotted proudly cheering on Appelman from ringside.

These days, Appelman is a

traveler, working as a general foreman with Cupertino Electric on a solar farm job outside Cedar Rapids, Iowa. “This job has really let me learn a lot and broaden my experience,” he said.

As this article was being prepared, Appelman wasn’t sure when his next fight would take place.

“My days are full and I’m still trying to work out, but it’s been hard to find a gym,” he said. “I can still work on my grip strength and do some flexibility drills.”

Appelman said he feels healthy, but he admits that he’s picked up a few knee injuries along the way. “Nothing I can’t get fixed,” he said. “I’m going to take it as far as I can and as far as my body will let me.” ■



Laporte, Ind., Local 531 wireman and professional mixed martial arts fighter Jonathon Appelman (center, with fists raised), poses with some fellow members attending one of his bouts.

## Building Trades National Medical Screening Program (BTMed)

### Did you work construction on a Department of Energy (DOE) site?

You may be eligible for a free medical screening exam to test for health conditions that may be work related.

“The Building Trades National Medical Screening Program’s concerns and diligence are appreciated for the future well-being of our members and retirees.”

Dennis Stoltz  
IBEW Local 68 (Rocky Flats)  
Former Business Manager

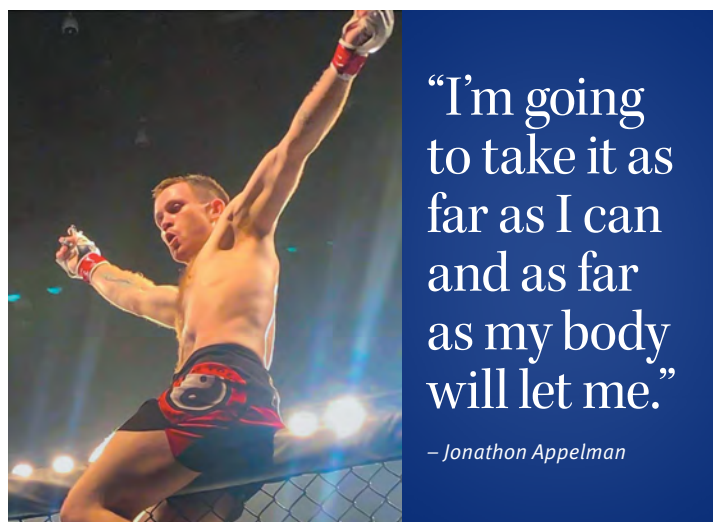
“This program saved my life. If it hadn’t been in place and I hadn’t taken the initiative to participate, I wouldn’t be here today. My advice to any worker is: Don’t Wait.”

Guy Sands  
IBEW Local 575  
Former Portsmouth GDP Worker  
BTMed Participant

Photo Courtesy of DOE.

TO ENROLL, CALL 1-800-866-9663 OR VISIT [www.btmed.org](http://www.btmed.org).

BTMed is part of the Department of Energy’s Former Worker Program and is administered by CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training, the health and safety research center of North America’s Building Trades Unions, with support from state and local Building and Construction Trades Councils. Funding from the Department of Energy (DE-FC01-06EH06004).





## IBEW MEDIA WORLD

In addition to your monthly issue of The Electrical Worker, check out lots of other IBEW-related content online.

### www.ibew.org

Get the latest IBEW news, including an electronic version of this and previous newspapers, at [ibew.org](http://ibew.org).

### YouTube

Local 305's Larry Burrow tells how he found a better life when he left a nonunion job to join the IBEW. Watch at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](http://YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker).

### Vimeo

Local 213 used a little-known section of the Canadian law to get a favorable first contract with an anti-union company. Check it out at [Vimeo.com/IBEW](http://Vimeo.com/IBEW).

### HourPower

Phoenix Local 769 now represents about 45 employees at CS Construction, a manufacturer of traffic signals and highway lighting. Watch the video at [IBEWHourPower.com](http://IBEWHourPower.com).

### ElectricTV

The Fourth District Progress Meeting was an ideal venue for the IBEW and the district's locals to strengthen relationships with signatory contractors. Visit [ElectricTV.net](http://ElectricTV.net).

# GROUNDING IN HISTORY

## 'A Higher Standard of Citizenship'

Since its founding, the IBEW has firmly believed that improvements in the workplace and one's service to the community go hand in hand.

The first Constitution in 1891 contained a lengthy Preamble outlining the goals of the new organization that included this passage: "We formed this brotherhood, having for its object the elevation of our social and moral standing, not only among other branches of industry, but in the community at large."

In 1929, the Preamble was replaced by the Objects, but the belief in community empowerment remained. To this day, the last of the Objects reads: "to elevate the moral, intellectual and social conditions of our members, their families and dependents, in the interest of a higher standard of citizenship."

Here are a few examples from the IBEW's history that show that principle of community service at work:

### 1937 IBEW Radio Joins the Red Cross

In January 1937, a massive rain and ice storm struck Cairo, Ill., which sits at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. When the levees holding back the Ohio River broke, it unleashed a devastating flood displacing tens of thousands of people in an instant. The Red Cross was first to the scene, setting up headquarters at the courthouse in nearby Charleston, Mo.

On Jan. 23, the radio crews of several St. Louis stations — Local 1 members — took up shop at the courthouse, assisting the Red Cross 24 hours a day for the next 13 days. "The engineers were doing their best to provide firsthand and up-to-the-minute conditions in the danger zone," wrote W.J. Keller of Local 1 in the March 1937 Electrical Worker. "These men did great work relaying messages for the disaster administrator and the Red Cross over our lines."

Eventually, a 36-ton barge named the Sara McDonald helped ferry flood victims to safety, and on board were Local 1 members who had installed two 100-watt shortwave transmitters to coordinate the rescue.

### 1940 Local 40 and the March of Dimes

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt founded what we now call the March of Dimes in 1938 with the goal of developing a vaccine to polio, a disease that could lead to paralysis and that afflicted the president himself.

The call was heard by unions across the country. By the end of 1939, Hollywood, Calif., Local 40 had raised \$16,000, the most of any local. Leading the effort were Business Manager Al Speede and office secretary Lucille Lynch, and in recognition of this achievement, Speede was appointed to the executive committee of the AFL in California.

Drawing on the enthusiasm of IBEW members, the committee brought in \$30,000 the next year. "Here is a chance to show everybody that unionism is doing all in its power to ameliorate conditions for all mankind," Speede said in the May 1940 issue of The Electrical Worker. His slogan of "Today it hits the other fellow; tomorrow it may be you,"

*Brother Donald Fancey (second from left at a 1964 United Way directors meeting) was appointed by International Secretary Joseph Keenan to lead the union's community service outreach.*

applied directly to Local 40. Thanks to Speede's fundraising efforts, the son of a fellow Local 40 brother, M.E. Donegan, was able to receive life-saving treatment for his battle against polio.

### 1959 Teaming Up With the United Way

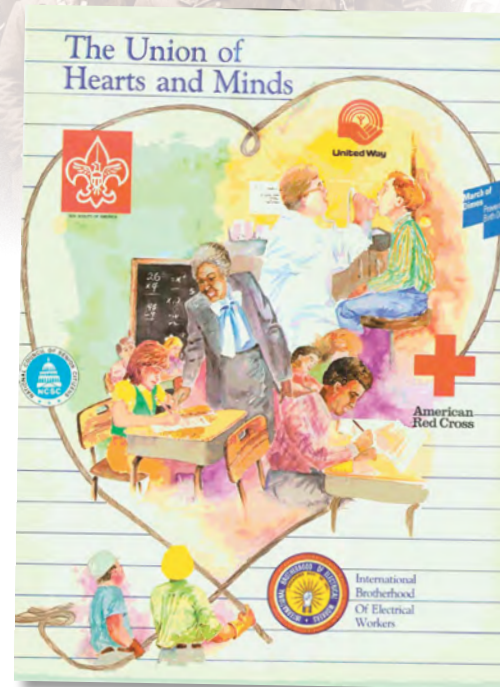
"IBEW members and locals have always responded spontaneously and wholeheartedly when community emergencies arose," International Secretary Joseph Keenan said in 1962 at the 27th Convention. "Which is why in 1959, I appointed a member of my staff, Donald H. Fancey, as coordinator of community service activities."

Fancey's mission was to bring to members' attention the needs of the nation and available services that addressed them. One of his efforts bore fruit in 1962, when the IBEW and the United Way joined forces to offer training seminars to local unions so members could find and help service programs in their communities. Fancey led several of these initial seminars, including a joint conference of United Way directors as seen in the photo below.

### 1987 The Union of Hearts and Minds

Shortly after his appointment as international president in 1987, J.J. Barry launched an initiative called The Union of Hearts and Minds that encouraged locals and industry partners to work together to strengthen their communities.

"IBEW members go beyond providing heat and



*The Union of Hearts and Minds initiative, started by International President J.J. Barry in 1987, included a program to make utility trucks safe spaces for children in distress or danger. The slogan was "Kids have friends in high places."*

power for the public," Barry said. "We have a heart. Our members volunteer their skills to renovate schools, hospitals, and buildings for the homeless; we donate to blood banks and food banks; we light up cities for the holiday season. Hearts and Minds is a salute to the brothers and sisters throughout North America who are always ready to lend a hand."

An example of a successful collaboration was the creation of Kid Kare in the U.S. and Smart Fox in Canada, two community-watch programs for children in need. The goal of each program was to teach children that utility trucks were safe places to go if they needed help, especially when police or other public authorities weren't nearby.

The program consisted of a training course taken by utility employees and IBEW truck crews. Once completed, these members partnered with elementary and middle schools to present the program to students and offer educational materials for teachers and parents. If a child needed help, the union workers would use their radio to contact emergency services. The slogan for the program was "Kids have friends in high places." Local 602 in Amarillo, Texas, was one of the first to adopt Kid Kare in 1989, partnering with Southwestern Public Service Co. In 1991, Smart Fox was launched in Canada at Local 339 in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

### 1991 Convention Proceeds

At the Centennial Convention in 1991, delegates passed a resolution recognizing the Hearts and Minds campaign and its legacy of service. "The IBEW has always contributed to organizations that enhance the general well-being of the community," stated Resolution No. 32. "And we urge our local unions to appoint a community service committee to ... assist members and their families in the communities in which they reside." Hundreds of local unions have since formed these committees, solidifying the IBEW's commitment to service at every level of the organization. ■

**GIVE... the United way**

**IBEW Aids United Fund Drives**

United Fund Drives, International Representative Donald H. Fancey, coordinator of Community Service Activities for the IBEW, has visited several communities and delivered a "How to Do It" type of speech. Here he is shown with other participants at a joint conference of United Fund directors and business agents from Building Trades groups, held at the Shenango Inn, Sharon, Pennsylvania, recently. Shown in the photo, left to right, are: Robert W. Schunke, executive director, Erie United Fund; Donald H. Fancey, Washington, D.C., international coordinator for IBEW Community Service Activities; Joseph Nemetz, program chairman; George S. Warren, Jr., first president of the United Fund of Shenango Valley Area, and Louis Puskar, Jr., president of the Mercer County Central Labor Council. Chart shows fund-raising efforts achieved by Building Trades Division in the United Fund's valley campaigns.

Years	Quotas	Raised
1959-60	\$5,060	\$4,603
1960-61	\$7,500	\$6,985
1961-62	\$8,000	\$7,272
1962-63	\$8,500	\$6,999
1963-64	\$8,500	\$11,784

Visit [nbew-ibewmuseum.org](http://nbew-ibewmuseum.org) for more on how to support the IBEW's preservation of its history. Have an idea for this feature? Send it to [Curtis\\_Bateman@ibew.org](mailto:Curtis_Bateman@ibew.org).



# LOCAL LINES

## Labor Day Celebration, Organizing and Softball

L.U. 16 (i), EVANSVILLE, IN — Electricians were well represented at the 137th annual Labor Day celebration. One of the oldest events of its kind in the country, it is sponsored by the area Labor Day Association, which has consistently honored working men and women since before Labor Day was officially designated a national holiday.

Celebration activities included free carnival rides, meals and a parade where Local 16 was honored with the Roy H. Mabrey Award. Not only did our local have the best dressed, tie-dye-clad participants, but Randy, faithful canine companion of Local 16's own Scott "Jiggity" Johann, also won the cutest pet award!

Thanks to parade chairman Brian Partridge and all who made this possible.

Organizer Ben Ipock has successfully brought 23 highly qualified nonunion journeymen and apprentices into the Brotherhood. Each now has the opportunity to enjoy the many benefits of the organized industry while strengthening the hall's competitive position in the electrical market.

Earlier this year, Local 16 hosted the 51st Midwest regional softball tournament. Thirty-two teams were fielded, with more than 500 IBEW members playing. Thanks to coach Joe Brooks and everyone who made it successful!

*Donald P. Beavin, P.S.*

## Brother Kang Speaks at White House

L.U. 24 (es,i&spa), BALTIMORE, MD — Greetings from Charm City. In August, our apprentice June Kang introduced President Joe Biden at a White



Local 24 apprentice June Kang speaking at the Inflation Reduction Act celebration at the White House.

House press conference celebrating the one-year anniversary of the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. Brother Kang spoke about the impact the IRA has had on our economy and the environment, emphasizing how the act will continue to deliver clean energy projects, creating good union jobs across America well into the future. I'd like to thank Brother Kang for his words, which help demonstrate how important having a pro-union administration is to our way of life.

The new school year has started at our JATC. At this year's student orientation, we welcomed 98 new first-year apprentices who are beginning their careers in the unionized electrical industry. Promoting the apprenticeship is a duty our membership, officers and staff take seriously, and it shows. We wish all our apprentices a successful school year.

2023 has flown by! The membership, officers and staff wish you and yours a joyful holiday season and a happy new year.

Live Better/Work Union.

*Mike McHale, B.M.*

## Holiday Shopping? Buy Made in the USA!

L.U. 26 (ees,em,es,govt,i&mt), WASHINGTON, DC — Happy holidays! We hope everyone had a blessed and safe Thanksgiving. As 2023 comes to an end and you do your holiday shopping, we would like to remind everyone to purchase gifts that were made in the USA. This helps keep Americans working and strengthens our economy. It also ensures that what you are buying is safe and well made.

Best wishes to the following new retirees: Phillip A. Auth, Todd A. Bears, James M. Blaine, Larry N. Burnett, Richard L. Compton Jr., James J. Corbett, William P. Dailey, John R. Daily, Dwayne Dease, John M. DeMar, Michael E. Fann, Richard E. Henry Jr., Dent T. Herndon, Roger V. Jacobus Jr., John W. Jones, Julian C. Jones, Samuel Kamdem, Gene F. Lutz, William E. Matthews, Thomas J. McCawley IV, Roy L. Simmons Jr., Donald E. Smolinski, Ford G. Tayne and Edward A. Weyant.

The following members have passed away since our last article: Wilson P. Collins, George R. Edmonston, Donald Fields, Gerald J. Harrington, Albert S. Orrison Jr., Joseph M. Parkinson, Walter A. Puga, Stephen Raddie, Kenneth W. Randall, Donald C. Reed, Mark A. Stancil, Daryl R. Sutton, Maria E. Thomas, James C. Unger and Steven A. Walker.

*Joseph F. Dabbs, B.M.*

## Local 38 Scroll Party

L.U. 38 (i), CLEVELAND, OH — Our local honored members with 50 to 70 years of service with the



Local 38 welcomes the graduating Inside class of 2023!

IBEW at this year's scroll party. Honored members and their families, along with graduating apprentices from the inside and VDV branches gathered to honor our past and congratulate our future. Several members received their 70-year pins, and two of these members, Don Azzolina and Richard Seelbach, were in attendance.

Top apprentice awards went to Harlan King from the inside branch and Adam Ady from the telecommunications branch. Dave Gelo (inside) and Darren Black (VDV) won the instructor awards. The Albert "Duke" Benevento Award went to Harlan King from the inside branch, and Adam Ady won the Michael B. Joyce Award from the VDV branch. Congratulations, all!

*Dan Gallagher, B.M.*

## Local 46 Organizing Efforts and Holiday Extravaganza

L.U. 46 (as,c,cs,em,es,et,i,mar,mo,mt,rtb,rts&st), SEATTLE, WA — Hello, IBEW family! Our membership came together to build an amazing float for the Seattle Pride Parade and marched in the parade, even bringing instruments to provide music for all in attendance.

Brother Sean Cavanagh helped organize a



Local 46's holiday extravaganza volunteers show their abundant Christmas spirit.

member-to-member blitz to check in on our members who are out of work. We were fortunate to send members and staff to our sister locals around the Ninth District, who joined in and helped with the blitzes.

Our political action committee met on the steps of Seattle City Hall in support of city workers. Alongside thousands of other union members, they took to the streets and marched in solidarity.

Local 46's Women's Committee has put together some "FUNraisers" to help build solidarity at our hall, in our communities and with other trades. We ended the summer with a lake day, started the fall with a paint and sip, and we welcomed the holidays with a bazaar.

Our Unity Committee rounds out our year with a holiday extravaganza. We convert our auditorium into a stocking-stuffer holiday maze that leads kids to meet Union Clause and receive a gift and photo with Super Santa! Watch out for the Grinch!

*Megan Kirby, P.S.*

## Happy Holidays

L.U. 124 (ees,em,i,mar,rts,se,spa,t&ptc), KANSAS CITY, MO — Brothers and sisters, we hope everyone is staying warm and busy out there! As many of

you know, the Meta data center complex at the Golden Plains Technology Park is in full swing. Work is being performed on Buildings 1 and 2. The Panasonic battery plant in DeSoto, Kan., has been putting calls in and will continue to do so into the new year. We are expecting to have nearly 1,000 electricians on site. Coca-Cola Bottling Co. in Olathe, Kan., will be building a new 1 million-square-foot facility and could be manning up at the beginning of the year, as well.

## Submitting Local Lines Articles

Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd local number schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officers via our online form. For deadlines and questions, please visit [ibew.org/media-center/submitting-local-lines](http://ibew.org/media-center/submitting-local-lines) or email [locallines@ibew.org](mailto:locallines@ibew.org).

We make every effort to assist local unions in publishing useful and relevant local union news; however, all final content decisions are made by our editorial team. Please adhere to a 200-word limit.

If you have an idea for an Electrical Worker story, please contact the Media Department at (202) 728-6219 or [media@ibew.org](mailto:media@ibew.org).

## 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	(u) Utility	(tm) Transportation Manufacturing
(ei) Electrical Inspection	(mo) Maintenance & Operation	(uow) Utility Office Workers	(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.



## LOCAL LINES

There is talk of more data centers coming to the Kansas City area in the future, but it is still too early to say when, or how many JWs it will take to complete the job.

All in all, we at the hall want to wish all of you wonderful and safe holidays this season!

*Bo Moreno, B.M.*

## Gilbert J. Artery Celebrates 75 Years in IBEW

L.U. 134 (catv,em,govt,i,mt,rtb,rts,spa&t), CHICAGO, IL — As we near the end of 2023, our local would like to take a moment and recognize a special member, Gilbert Artery, who celebrated a milestone of 75 years as a member. Brother Artery's father Michael and son Marc are also Local 134 members, and there has been an Artery family member working for our local for 102 years and counting.

Brother Artery reflected on his career, which began as an apprentice making 80 cents an hour with a tool bag that included a soldering iron. His career included work on the construction of iconic landmarks such as Marina City, Sears Tower (Willis Tower) and the Chicago Civic Center (Daley Center). His father's picture is proudly displayed in the Local 134 union hall archives, taken when Michael was working at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933. When asked what he values most from the time spent as an IBEW electrician, Gilbert replied, "God bless the pensions!"

Gilbert Artery turns 95 on Dec. 19.

Local 134 wishes you and yours a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.

*Donald Finn, B.M./F.S.*



*Gilbert Artery recently celebrated 75 years with the IBEW and Local 134.*

## Solidarity Matters in Local 150

L.U. 150 (es,i,rts&spa), WAUKEGAN, IL — Our local had many successful outings over the summer. The family picnic was organized by our fourth-year apprentices, who did a fantastic job. Face painting and clowns for the kids, karaoke, and a bags tournament were some of the activities of the day. There was good food, and a great time was had by all.

The softball team made some memories representing Local 150 at the IBEW softball invitational hosted by Champaign-Urbana Local 601. Our golf outing was well attended, and we would like to thank those IBEW locals and companies that donated prizes and hole sponsorships.

Members and retirees represented Local 150 at the Zion, Ill., Labor Day Parade. Our float's theme was "Love For Union Workers," and it was adorned with American flags; a heart; and red, white and blue stars. Our float won the mayor's trophy for the overall best! The weather was good,



*Local 150 members with their Labor Day parade float, winner of the mayor's "Overall Best" trophy.*

and it was a great day to walk in the parade.

To wrap up our summer, we had the annual car show and rib cookout. The food was excellent! Retirees and members showed off their favorite vehicles, and it was a terrific day.

These events could not have been so memorable without the help of volunteers. A big thank you to those members who chaired, volunteered, contributed and participated in these events! As always, sisters and brothers, look out for one another and please be safe out there.

Solidarity Forever!

*Aaron M. Rendon, R.S.*

## Local 164 Class of 2023

L.U. 164 (c,em,i,o&t), JERSEY CITY, NJ — On Sept. 7, our local held a graduation ceremony for the inside apprentice class of 2023. They are all set to top out and change their classification to journeyman wiremen. It has been a long road, but the trip went quickly.

Each of the apprentices put in significant effort to learn their trade, and they are excited to embark on the next phase of their careers in the electrical industry. Special congratulations go to Michael Mar-sico, who scored the highest grade of the 2023 semester, and also to Scott Bender in second place and Kevin Dungan in third. Additional congratulations to Matthew Muller, who carried the highest GPA across the five years of related instruction.

Business Manager Dan Gumble, President Tom Sullivan, Training Director Warren Becker, JATC instructors, and the staff and membership of Local 164 congratulate this class of eager and talented apprentices as they complete their apprenticeship and go forward to proudly represent the IBEW and NECA on the projects of the future.

*Warren M. Becker, P.S.*

## Work Amping Up at Local 292

L.U. 292 (em,govt,i,rtb,rts&spa), MINNEAPOLIS, MN — The 460-megawatt Sherco Solar project is up and running. There are more than 30 electrical workers on the project, and it's expected to peak in late spring at 175 or more. Data centers, EV charging infrastructure, and pro-union



*Local 164's class of 2023.*

requirements for state and federally funded projects are on the way. We have full employment and expect the work picture to stay that way into 2024.

Congratulations to all the officers who were elected to serve our great local for three years. A list of officers can be found on our website, [ibew292.org](http://ibew292.org).

We will have our children's holiday open house Dec. 2 and the members' holiday party Dec. 8.

As we continue into the holiday season, please remember to treat those you're working around with patience and grace. The holidays can be a stressful time for many, but especially hard for some.

*Andy Snope, Bus. Rep.*



*From left, Local 300 members Chad Beauvais and Larry Thurber, Vermont Gas CEO Neale Lunderville and Business Manager Jeffrey Wimette.*

## Wages, Benefits and Diversification

L.U. 300 (govt,i,u,mo&lctt), MONTPELIER, VT — Employees at Vermont Gas Services secured another successful two-year agreement with increased wages and benefits. This will help the company and the union attract and retain the necessary workers for the continued growth and diversification of the natural gas company.

As natural gas companies like Vermont Gas continue to find ways to be more diverse outside the natural gas world, union employees have found opportunities to learn new skills and venture down new career paths. This will help the company in its continued growth, meaning more employees for

the company and more members for the IBEW.

Congratulations to the negotiating committee, the members of the bargaining unit and the company for their diligence and creative problem-solving during the negotiating process.

Local 300 wishes all members of the local and the IBEW a safe and happy holiday season. Be well and be safe.

*Jeffrey Wimette, B.M.*

## Celebrating a Decade, Thankful for Another Year

L.U. 340 (i,rts&spa), SACRAMENTO, CA — As we come to the close of another year, I would like to thank my staff, officers and the members of the local for trusting me and assisting in making it a great year for us all. We had another successful year with events like our highly attended annual membership picnic, the Get Ready to Retire seminar and numerous in-person new-member orientation classes. It was quite a busy year!

This year, I celebrated 10 years in office. I was first elected to office under former Business Manager Thomas Okumura as an organizer. I have seen different team members come through, and I have experienced the emotions of running for another term both unopposed and against someone. The biggest thing I have learned thus far: What matters most is who is behind you, supporting you, in both the easy and tough decisions.

Although I had to say goodbye to a few staff members recently, I am deeply satisfied and grateful for those who have stayed and helped me run an office with near smooth sailing so far. I value the members who have believed in me, and although we may not all agree on certain decisions made, I know members understand that I have their best interests in moving this local forward and securing a stable future for generations of electrical workers to come.

Thanks to all staff, officers, board members and union members for making these past 10 years a decade to celebrate.

Our local would not be as successful without the help of many. One event that we are happy to participate in and co-host is Operation Christmas Basket, where we support local union families who need a little extra help. It is such a sight to see how giving our members and affiliates are during this time. We hope everyone has a great holiday season as well as a happy new year.

*Robert D. Ward, B.M.*

## What a Year!

L.U. 364 (catv,ees,em,es,i,mt,rts&spa), ROCKFORD, IL — Our local knew 2023 was going to be busy, but you never know for sure until the work gets rolling — and man, has it been rolling!

We continue to set the gold standard at our Meta data center project in DeKalb, Ill., with timelines consistently and repeatedly on time or ahead of schedule. As of this writing, there are 880 members on site. With work scheduled through 2025, this project has met and exceeded expectations. This is possible due to the hard work of all parties involved in this project, especially our traveling brothers and sisters from all across this great country. Without their hard work, we would simply not be able to enjoy all the success this project has provided.

The new Hard Rock Rockford Casino project is



moving along with 17 members on site. There have been some changes to this project that have slowed the fast pace anticipated. Early indications are that the Hard Rock is looking toward an August 2024 opening, but nothing is concrete at this time and there is still quite a bit of work to do.

In late September, there was a groundbreaking for the new Walmart cold storage distribution center in Belvidere, Ill. This project is across Highway 20 from the idled Stellantis/Chrysler auto plant and is 1.3 million square feet with an estimated price tag of \$1.2 billion.

At September's union meeting, Local 364 swore in our new apprentices. We had 55 new apprentices across our inside and VDV/low-voltage classifications, the largest class we have had in a very long time.

*Brad F. Williams, P.S.*

## Local 424 Labour Day Rematch

L.U. 424 (as,ees,em,es,i,mo,o,ptc,rtb,rts,spa,u), EDMONTON, AB — Our local had a great turnout at the annual Labour Day rematch between Edmonton and Calgary at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton. Over 200 members attended with their friends and family. This year, other affiliates in the Alberta Federation of Labour attended, bringing the total number of Labour representatives to just over 2,000. Union members came on the field with the Canadian flag during the singing of the national anthem, and a table was set up in the concourse to share information about Local 424 and the pre-apprenticeship candidate training program.

*Scott Crichton, P.S.*



*Jorden Bergeron and Scott Crichton hold the Local 424 banner at the Labour Day rematch game in Edmonton, Alberta.*

## AST2 Project Comes to a Close

L.U. 530 (i,o&rtb), SARNIA, ON — With the completion of AST2 (Nova Chemicals) project in August, most of our work for the near future will be out of town. Many thanks to the more than 800 travelers who came from 25 locals across Canada to help us out. We had members represented from coast to coast, so it was quite a learning experience for everyone. Thanks again to everyone who travelled far and near, and we will see you again soon.

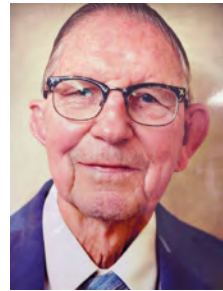
*Keith Winsor, P.S.*

## Remembering Brother Don Daughtrey

L.U. 602 (i,o&u), AMARILLO, TX — Don Daughtrey was initiated into our local Dec. 1, 1955, at age 22. In 1955, the average cost of a new house was \$10,950; average wages per year were \$4,130; the

minimum hourly rate was \$1; the average cost of a new car was \$1,900; and a gallon of gas was 23 cents. These details are pertinent when you consider that Don Daughtrey worked from 1955 to 2022!

Don didn't retire but enjoyed going to work each day, as an electrician doing what he loves best, for 67 years. When I asked Don what he would tell a young person entering the workplace as an electrician, he said: "If you really enjoy what you're doing, you'll be a good electrician. If not, you need to find another job." Pretty straightforward, and that is just the way Don was.



*Local 602's Don Daughtrey is dearly missed.*

In Don's 67 years as an electrician, he only worked for one contractor, Duke Electric Co. Don worked on most of the high-profile buildings in this area, including Chase Tower (the tallest building in Amarillo), the largest central post office in Amarillo and the Amarillo Petroleum Building. He was then assigned to the Pantex Nuclear Weapons Facility as Duke Electric's main general foreman.

Don also taught classes at the local JATC for 20 years (and was my first-year instructor). He served on the local's executive board several times and earned just about every award in our area from the IBEW, NECA, West Texas Building and Construction Trades, and many other building associations. You would think earning so many accolades would go to his head. But Don stayed just as humble as the day he started.

I was asked to give Don an award from the IBEW at Duke's annual recognition dinner. I decided to give Don one of the special retirement watches given to all retirees. Knowing that Don would never retire, I decided to put his date of initiation followed by an infinity symbol. During my speech, I quoted the movie "Toy Story": "To infinity and beyond!" Don lived his life that way.

God in his infinite wisdom called our Brother Don Daughtrey home Dec. 20, 2022. Don lived a very simple life, not ever bringing light to himself but always working for others. Don will always be remembered as a cornerstone for Local 602.

*Robert Melton, B.M.*

## Temps Cool While Local 640 Job Market Is on Fire

L.U. 640 (em,govt,i,mo,mt,ptc,rts,spa&u), PHOENIX, AZ — We continue to have lots of work around the valley. A special thanks to our local and traveling brothers and sisters for manning the work in our jurisdiction. If you want to enjoy some great weather for the winter, grab a travel letter and a paid dues receipt and come out to the desert.

Congratulations to new Business Manager James Crutchfield; President Benjamin Solem; Vice President Thomas Boydston; Recording Secretary Carmen Eaves; Treasurer Richard Stewart; executive board members Fred Cooke, Oliver Emms, Sierra English, Robert Lopez and Chris Ward; and examining board members Roman Amaya-Molina, Amber Armour, Christina McCafferty, Jake Phillips and Brandon Wheelen. Thanks for your willingness to step up and serve the membership.

I hope everyone is looking out for each other and working safely on your jobsite.

*Dan Anderson, B.A.*



*Local 702 staff and executive board members at the Sixth District Progress Meeting.*

## Congratulations to Solidarity Raffle Winners

L.U. 702 (as,c,catv,cs,em,es,et,govt,i,it,lctt,mo,mt,o,p,pet,ptc,rtb,rts,se,spa,st,t,u,uow&ws), WEST FRANKFORT, IL — We would like to congratulate the winners of the 2023 solidarity raffle and thank everyone for their support again this year.

We had a great turnout for our Labor Day celebration in Du Quoin, Ill., where members enjoyed a good meal. We handed out 620 arm bands for free carnival rides for the kids, and a great time was had by all as we celebrated labor.

Work for the Local 702's inside branch is promising, with several large solar projects in the works. We look forward to these opportunities for our members and our traveling brothers and sisters who will help man this coming work.

*Jamie Hatfield, A.B.M.*

## Solidarity in Softball

L.U. 760 (i,lctt,o,rts,spa&u), KNOXVILLE, TN — On a hot summer Saturday, our local and Local 270 squared off in the inaugural softball game. The event was organized by both locals' RENEW committees. The game was set on neutral ground in Clinton, Tenn., on July 29 and had a good showing of both locals' members and families and a few friends from visiting locals.

When the game was all said and done, Local 760 pulled away with the win, 28-8. This was a tremendous victory for both locals, in victory in solidarity, brotherhood and sisterhood.

*Glenn S. Clevenger II, R.S.*



*Local 876 members volunteer at the teddy bear donation for the Covenant Healthcare Pediatric Unit in Saginaw, Michigan.*



*Locals 760 and 270 played the inaugural softball game arranged by both locals' RENEW committees.*

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## LOCAL LINES

## Local 1340 Graduating Apprentices Honored

L.U. 1340 (i&o), NEWPORT NEWS, VA — The Hampton Roads Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee held its graduation banquet Oct. 6 at the Landing at Hampton Marina. The following were awarded certificates of completion: Joseph Anderson, Trenton Artis, Amir Devine, Casey Forrest, Blake Geiger, Ryan Holloway, Kenyon Johnson, Jake Malcolm, Talon Manibusan, Jaysen McDade and Adam Taylor. Casey Forrest won the award for top grade in his class and was cited for perfect attendance for all four years. Also receiving awards for top grade were Nicholas Bowman (first year), Lammar Burnett (second year) and Jacob Vera (third year). The Brotherhood welcomes these new journeymen and wishes them

long and successful careers in the trade.

Also at this event, service pins were presented to Local 1340 members in recognition of years of membership. Sixty-year pins went to Raymond Ford and Jerry Stratton; 50 years to James Bevilacqua, Russell Mattox, Lanny Smith and Gary Sowers; 40 years to Steven Slowikowski; 30 years to Harry Edelstein, Jerome (Tony) Hicks and Steve Murabito; 20 years to Gary Boyd, Augusta Carter, Dwayne Jones, Darrell Lane, Stacie Larson, William Price, David Roby, Lee Sateren, Daniel Smook and Lee Zilkie; and 10 years to Keith Banks, LaTrisha Bright, Joshua Gregston, Joel Henry, Patrick Jackson, Marion James, Daniel Jutras, Kevin Kahikina, Dylan Kim, Roland Ruth, Steven Smith, William Sweatt and Robert Turner.

Jim Avery, P.S.



Local 1340 second-year apprentices at the September meeting. From left: Brian Bielenberg, Erin Murphy, Conner McCrory, Dillon Kilgore, Neil Reutter, Izzie Redmond, Isaiah Earls, Donte Brown, Gavin Wells, Jeremiah Thornton and Nicholas Bow.

## RETIRES

### Local 1 Retirees Enjoy Labor Day Celebration

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 1, ST. LOUIS, MO — Many retirees enjoyed getting together with family and friends for a Labor Day celebration at our union hall, savoring great barbecue and refreshments with live music. This year's annual golf tournament was at Forest Park and was attended by a record number of retirees, with 48 golfers. We would like to give a big thank you to Business Manager Frank Jacobs and all the officers for their donations and for making our annual luncheon a big success.

Our November meeting marked the last of the year for our retirees. This holiday season, we would like to remind everyone about the annual coat drive underway at the union hall. On behalf of the Retirees' Club officers, we wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Jim Schario, P.S.



Local 35 retirees turned out for the annual outing Sept. 30.

Inn in San Gabriel, Calif. If you wish to attend and would like further details, please contact us at [RetireesClubIBEW11@gmail.com](mailto:RetireesClubIBEW11@gmail.com).

Robert Corona, Comm. Dir.

Wishing a safe and happy holidays to all!

Kenneth White, P.S.

Pat Nuznov, P.S.

### Local 3 Retirees' Successful Summer

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY — We're still not back to normal, but we did have an eventful summer. Our annual fishing trip on July 13 was the best we've had in years. The weather was great, the water was calm and the 40 members on board caught plenty of fish.

In early August, we enjoyed a four-day stay at the Long Island Educational Center, the Local 3 educational and recreational facility, in Cutchogue, Long Island.

And most recently, we were able to hold a golf outing for over 30 members at Somers National Golf Club in Somers, N.Y. The weather on that day was picture perfect. Proceeds from the outing, as always, are donated to the Fisher House Foundation to benefit our wounded men and women in uniform.

It seems that we're seeing better participation in chapter events, but attendance at our monthly meetings is still not as it should be. We are hopeful that attendance will improve in the new year.

Dick Mills, Treas.

### Local 11 Retirees' Club Holiday Luncheon

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 11, LOS ANGELES, CA — We would like to invite the retirees of our local to our Retirees' Club's annual holiday luncheon, Dec. 13 at 11:30 a.m. at Clearman's North Woods

### Local 35 Retirees' Club Attends Annual Outing

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 35, HARTFORD, CT — This year's annual outing brought an amazing turnout of our local's retirees. Everyone had a great time, and various raffle prizes were won. Thank you to the contractors for their donations for the raffle prizes. The wide variety of food and desserts, catered by The Butchery, was delicious. Thanks to John from Oh Shucks for the fresh clams.

It was good to see everyone who attended. We would like to thank Michelle Cleveland, Local 35 office manager, and Sharon Landolina, JATC office manager, for an outstanding job organizing the event.

The Retirees' Club would like to thank the local for the Hartford Yard Goats baseball tickets donated to retirees this summer. It's great to attend games at the field that was built in part by Local 35.

President Dennis Machol and Press Secretary Kenneth White attended the JATC first-year class to welcome new students to the local. There are 40 students who started in 2023 as first-year apprentices. They also took time to meet with the returning students.

The Retirees' Club monthly meeting has a new home. Effective August, the new location for the meeting is the Knights of Columbus, 171 Pascone Place, Newington, Conn. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at noon, with lunch served. We hope to see new faces this year.

We are looking forward to the Christmas luncheon. Please contact Dennis Machol if you have any questions.

### Local Happenings

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 53, KANSAS CITY, MO — Hello, brothers and sisters. It's me, Duane, writing another article.

We hope all of you are well and that you had a great summer and fall, with good health, fun and prosperity.

The union hall put on another luncheon for the retirees Oct. 27. It is always fun and a good time. We got to see and visit one another, talk about ourselves and revisit the past. It was a good chance to take photos and see how much we have aged over the years. Ha!

We are still having our luncheons in Urich, Mo., on the second Thursday of each month. We usually get there about 11:30 a.m. We visit and talk, reminisce about the past, talk about the present, and discuss our future plans. It's a good time, so come on out and join us at the Lumberyard Bar and Grill.

I have one death to report. This member wasn't a retiree but an active member regardless. He was a journeyman, and his name was Adam Wood. He passed away Sept. 18. May he rest in peace. Our prayers go out to his family.

Duane Pearce, P.S.

### Local 58 Retirees Tour Charleston, S.C.

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 58, DETROIT, MI — In September, our annual bus trip took us to Charleston, S.C., where we had hot, steamy weather and four days of sight-seeing. We visited the McLeod Plantation

Historic Site and Middleton Place, 125 acres of gardens that were created beginning in 1741. We enjoyed a boat tour of the Charleston Harbor and a guided tour of the city. We also toured the Charleston Tea Garden, the only of its kind in North America, and learned all the ins and outs of tea. Thanks to Rick Koerber for putting this trip together. A great time was had by all.

Our annual Christmas party is Dec. 6 at the local union hall. Food, drink and camaraderie abound. Our group supports five local charities, all of which help children. Donation baskets will be available for all to add a bit of holiday cheer and support these worthy organizations.

2024 is right around the corner, and in the fall we will be having a very important election. It's not too early to reach out to those candidates you support and get involved. Remember, many hands make small work of a big job. Happy new year!

### Don't Miss the Fun

RETIRES' CLUB OF L.U. 105, HAMILTON, ON — Merry Christmas! Wishing all of you the very best for 2024.

At the time of this writing, I am happy to note that our local's retirees have been able to enjoy the many events noted below:

- Euchre (every Monday afternoon)
- Grand River cruise, Sept. 14
- Lunch at the Mandarin Restaurant, Sept. 28
- Oktoberfest, hosted by Kitchener Local 804 Retirees' Club, Oct. 12



The Local 105 Retirees' Club attended Oktoberfest hosted by Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804.



- Fish fry, Oct. 19
- Cairn Croft Niagara Falls, Nov. 7-10
- Toronto Christmas party hosted by Local 353 Retirees' Club, Nov. 26
- Lunch and "Fiddler on the Roof" at St. Jacob's, Dec. 7
- Hamilton Local 105 Christmas dinner and dance, Michelangelo Banquet Centre, Dec. 10

For those Local 105 retirees who have not yet joined the Retirees' Club, jump on board! Look at all the fun you're missing!

Please remember that all the events we enjoy, past and present, are all made possible by our amazing, hard-working local members and executive board, past and present. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you!

Eden McLean, P.S.

## A Year Filled With Local 134 Retiree Fun

RETIREES' CLUB OF L.U. 134, CHICAGO, IL — As another year comes to an end, I would like to mention some of our special events from this past year.

In April, a group of our retirees, led by President Keith Berls and Vice President Hale Landes, arranged a motor coach trip from Chicago to St. Louis to visit the Henry Miller Museum. Henry Miller sparked a movement at a time of terrifyingly high mortality rates and paltry pay in the new field of electrical work. Henry knew what had to be done, and he dedicated his life to making it happen. From the boarding house where he lived 125 years ago, Miller founded the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which later became the IBEW. Thanks to flagship St. Louis Local 1, the modest brick house was turned into an amazing museum to honor Henry Miller.

Different groupings of our retirees attended five luncheon plays at Drury Lane Theatre in Oakbrook, Ill. We saw "A Chorus Line" in February, "Grease" in April, "39 Steps" in July and "Ring of Fire" featuring the life and music of Johnny Cash in October. Coming in December is "Cinderella."

In August, a group of our retirees, organized by Jim Jennings (program committee), took a Lake Michigan/Chicago River boat cruise to learn about Chicago's architectural history.

In September, Hale Landes and I, representing Local 134, joined the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans for its 2023 convention. People representing different unions in Illinois were in attendance. There were many speakers, but a woman sitting at our table representing the Chicago Teachers Union got up, walked to the podium, gave a speech and walked back to our table. Her name was Beatrice Lumpkin, and she is 105 years old! I can't find the words to describe the incredible impression she left on me.

The annual John Cummins memorial golf outing on Sept. 20 was a beautiful, warm sunny day for 42 golfers. When they returned from golf, they were treat-



Local 257 Retirees' Club members attending the annual union picnic at Jefferson City Memorial Park.

ed to a buffet lunch and a raffle of many prizes.

We look forward to our holiday party Dec. 13 at our IBEW memorial hall and wish you all a happy, safe holiday.

Susan Kleczka, P.S.

## Labor Day Pride

RETIREES' CLUB OF L.U. 257, JEFFERSON CITY, MO — Our local's retirees enjoyed the Labor Day celebrations. On Sept. 9, retirees participated in the 45th Labor Day parade, sponsored by the Jefferson City Labor Council, where they distributed candy and goodwill on the parade route. Thanks to Dave Loazia for providing the float for the retirees.

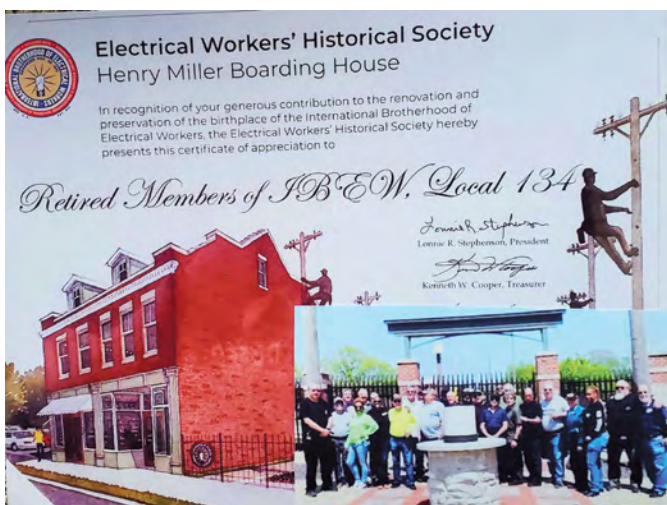
The annual union picnic followed Sept. 16 at Memorial Park. Local 257 members, retirees and their families were treated to a day at the park with a barbecue, bounce house, bingo and social time. A great time was had by all.

Service awards were also presented by Mike Fanning, business agent. Ninety-six service awards were presented, with 37 retirees receiving awards. Forty-year pins went to Kenneth Bushjost, Donald Hurst, Lonnie Jordan, Henry Lamm, Allen McGee, Larry Pierce, Charles Russell, Gregory Schrock and Gerrit Vanvraken. Forty-five-year pins went to Carl Anthony, Mark Gallatin, Rodney Henry, Dennis Kiral, John Loazia, Leland Long, Brett Miller, Lex Murphy, Dale Rackers, Rolfe Rankin, Joseph Rowles, Melvin Schepeler, James Schilpp, Richard Schremp, Herschel Schulte, Ross Sewell, Clayton Smith and Billy Tennyson. Fifty-five-year pins went to Harvey Baysinger, Robert Evans, Ronald Holzhauser, Larry Jones, Raymond Jordan, Leon Keller, Donald Mattingley and Jerry Tiffany. A 60-year pin went to John Leinberger, and a 65-year pin went to Robert Long. Congratulations to all retirees receiving service awards.

Condolences are sent to the family of Jerry Rehagen, 85, who passed Sept. 26. After serving in the U.S. Army, he was a member of Local 257 beginning in 1964, and he acted as the Retirees' Club president for 11 years.

Connie Hamacher, P.S.

The Local 134 Retirees' Club took a motor coach trip from Chicago to St. Louis Local 1 and the Henry Miller Museum.



## Local 317's Roy Gibson Celebrated for Service

RETIREES' CLUB OF L.U. 317, HUNTINGTON, WV — West Virginia Delegate Sean Hornbuckle, along with Business Manager Shane Wolfe and retired member Jerry Booth, presented a certificate of appreciation to Roy "Hoot" Gibson on Oct. 3 for his 72 years of membership in the IBEW.

Brother Gibson, who turned 100 on Oct. 15, began his career as an apprentice lineman with Local 317 in 1951, later becoming a journeyman lineman and journeyman wireman. Throughout his career, Brother Gibson worked on many major projects throughout the tri-state area, including construction of the General James M. Gavin power plant in Gallia County, Ohio.

He officially retired in 1985 after 34 years of service and has remained an active member in the IBEW and his community ever since, showing what it truly means to be part of America's greatest generation.

Shane Wolfe, B.M.



From left, Local 317 Business Manager Shane Wolfe, Brother Roy "Hoot" Gibson, Retirees' Club President Jerry Booth and West Virginia Delegate Sean Hornbuckle.

## In Loving Memory of Candy Nelson

RETIREES' CLUB OF L.U. 349, MIAMI, FL — It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved entertainment chair, Candy Nelson. For many years, Candy planned exciting field trips for us, including several cruises, day trips, holiday parties and dinner dates. She loved her Retirees' Club family and was a special person in our lives who will live on in our memories and our hearts.

Our deepest sympathies are extended to Candy's husband, Brother Whitey Nelson, and her extended family.

Local 349 held its 64th annual picnic and reported a good turnout. The kitty canteen and rides kept the children happy and busy. The barbecue offered pork, chicken, hamburgers, ribs, hot dogs and a beer tent. A competitive game of horseshoes and other games were enjoyed by the adults. Several retirees attended the picnic and enjoyed the barbecue and visiting with one another.

The new entertainment chair is Marilyn Steele, and she has arranged our holiday party in December to be held at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant in Miami.

Treasurer Whitey Nelson stepped down after the passing of his wife, Candy. Mike Steele will follow in Whitey's shoes as our treasurer.

Brenda Auer, P.S.



In loving memory of Candy Nelson, Local 349 Retirees' Club entertainment chair for many years.

## Traveling Retirees

RETIREES' CLUB OF L.U. 530, SARNIA, ON — Greetings, everyone. It was a busy summer for our group of retirees. We enjoyed a variety show at the Walters Theatre; a day trip to Medieval Times; a play at Victoria Playhouse Petrolia; and a three-day trip to Kingston, Ontario.

We all enjoyed the informative tour of the Kingston Penitentiary followed by a guided tour of the city. We ended the evening with a relaxing dinner cruise through the Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River.

At the time of this writing, we are looking forward to a three-day trip to Sault Sainte Marie to enjoy a lovely train ride through the Agawa Canyon in October. Hopefully we will see beautiful color in the changing of the leaves.

We also have enjoyed volunteering at our local food bank by cooking and serving our less fortunate.

All retirees and their spouses are welcome to join us, as are the widows of our members who have passed on.

We meet every second Friday of the month at 10:30 a.m. at the hall. Please join us — the more the merrier!

Cathy Coates, P.S.

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# ORGANIZING WIRE



## 'Now I Can Repay Her' President of Ambitious Texas Local Organizes His Mom

As the president of El Paso, Texas, Local 960, Rene Ortega has been ushering in a lot of changes. The union is more active in the community, and it even won a ballot initiative last year that was crucial to its members. But the one thing he might be most proud of is organizing his mom.

"None of this would have been possible without her," said Ortega, who's been a lineman with El Paso Electric for nine years and also got his nephew to join the trade. "She's the reason I'm in the company. She put me on the right path, and now I can repay her with representation."

Ortega's mother, Norah Jedderly, works as a streetlight analyst. She and the others in her unit — all women — are responsible for acting as liaisons between the company and residential customers, government agencies, contractors and engineers. The unit works on securing contracts, preparing design work, and coordinating the construction and installation or removal of security and street lights.

"They go above and beyond with the customers," Ortega said. "They're the ones with their hands in the communities."

Despite the importance of their work, management wasn't always on their side. Job duties and descriptions were changed without their input, there was no grievance process, and wage increases seemed to be arbitrarily doled out. One woman even had to write a letter justifying why she should get a promotion, said Business Manager Eddie Trevizo.

"They were bullied instead of being taken seriously," he said. "I know we've come a long way, but there are still a lot of hurdles that women encounter. It broke my heart when I heard their stories."

This spring, it wasn't just the streetlight analysts looking for representation. Employees from other departments were interested, too. But like a lot of workers in an organizing campaign, things got in the way. Some couldn't commit the time. A lot more



At left, El Paso, Texas, Local 960 President Rene Ortega swore in new members on Nov. 2, including his mom Norah, also pictured above center with Ortega, left, and nephew Chris Medina, a Local 960 apprentice.

were scared of losing their jobs. But Jedderly and her fellow analysts stuck with it, even though they harbored doubts as well.

"It was stressful for all of us," Jedderly said. "At times we asked ourselves if we were doing the right thing. But through it all, we remained strong and united, and we just kept going."

By all accounts, it was that solidarity, that strength of sisterhood, that assured Trevizo, Ortega, and organizers Letty Marcum and Robert Sample that these women were in it to win.

"There was a lot of frustration and a lot of phone calls. But the more I listened, the more they made me want to fight for them," said Marcum, who is now the business manager at El Paso Local 583. "Those guys tried to intimidate them, but they stood their ground."

At one point, they even reached out to the National Labor Relations Board about the actions of some supervisors. Fortunately, Trevizo said, once they did and the company found out, the actions were shut down.

"We were ready to file for an election or use the Cemex decision from the NLRB, but it never came to that," Sample said of the recent ruling that makes it harder for employers to interfere in organizing campaigns.

In the end, they got voluntary recognition. The entire campaign took about six months.

"This campaign should be an example to all that when there is an IBEW contract already in place and

there are other departments that aren't represented, there is always the potential to organize those groups into the existing contracts," Sample said. "If we keep educating workers at these locations, we can guide them to the representation they deserve."

Thanks to that education, Jedderly and her fellow unit members now have a voice on the job and the power of the IBEW behind them. As Sample and the others noted, the bulk of the credit goes to the women who stood tall in the face of fierce opposition.

"As a woman in a male-dominated field, it was great to see them with an attitude of 'They are not going to break us,'" Marcum said. "I love these girls. I am so proud of them."

While negotiations for Jedderly and her fellow analysts were ongoing as of press time, there's hope for a strong contract. Trevizo and Ortega negotiated theirs for linemen earlier this year and came out with no losses in vacation time and a 24% raise over the next five years.

"It's the best we could have gotten by far, maybe in the last 40 years," Trevizo said.

Jedderly's unit, while small, may have started a domino effect. Already there's been talk among other employees about joining.

"I really give it to these ladies. They've shown everyone what's possible," said Ortega, who had the honor of swearing in his mother at their November meeting. "Now our goal is the whole company." ■



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

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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.

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## WHO WE ARE

# The Leather-Clad Solidarity of the IBEW's Motorcycle Clubs

There are a lot of ways to foster solidarity in a union, and one of the most fun — and loud-est — is with a motorcycle club.

"It's more about seeing your friends than anything else," said Chicago Local 134 member Dean Hinderman. "No matter where you're from or what your trade's specialty is, we're all just brothers and sisters when we go out riding."

While IBEW members have been riding together for decades, official motorcycle clubs and groups didn't come into being until 1995 when a few New York Local 3 members started one. Considered the "mother local of IBEW riding groups," it now counts almost 200 members among its ranks, said Stan Stade, a Local 3 retiree and the club's treasurer.

"It's unlike anything else in the entire union," said Stade, who handles the patches that locals get, usually with the time-honored lightning bolts and the local's state or number. "These clubs bring together brothers and sisters from all different backgrounds and expose them to all the aspects of this great organization. It's a true example of brotherhood."

Those early club days are thanks to former International President Edwin D. Hill, who by all accounts had a big influence on how they grew into what they are now, including having a hand in designing the original patch.

"Ed was a mainstay in the East Coast," Stade said. "It's good to see that there's a new regime who's picking up the ball."

Today there are more than 50 clubs in the U.S. and three in Canada, though each of those represent multiple locals from their respective provinces. East Coast rides that started with about 20 participants were getting close to 500 just before the pandemic.

The Midwest Solidarity Ride, held at the end of July, had 100 motorcycles this year, with about 140 participants from close to 20 locals, all riding together through the Ozarks despite 100-degree heat. Hosted jointly by St. Louis Local 1

and Kansas City, Mo., Local 53, the event was the second unionwide ride in the Midwest. The first took place in the IBEW's birthplace of St. Louis in 2022.

"It was such an amazing feeling to ride side-by-side with so many brothers and sisters all sharing the same passion for riding," said Local 1 Business Representative Chuck DeMoulin, who serves as treasurer of the local's motorcycle club. "Knowing that we were raising money to help others in need only made it all the more special."

A staple of just about every ride, whether local, national or international, is fundraising. This year's Midwest ride collected close to \$9,000, which was split between the Ronald McDonald House in Kansas City, Mo., and The Women's Safe House, a domestic violence shelter in St. Louis.

Charity runs have long been a part of the IBEW riding community, said Edmonton, Alberta, Local 424 retiree Ray MacNeil, who also serves as the national president for riding groups in the First District.

"It used to be that bikers could tell you where all the bootleg liquor was. Now it's ice cream shops and charity fundraisers," said MacNeil, who received his 50-year pin in September.

MacNeil, who helped form the Alberta Crew, which has members from Local 424 and Local 1007 in Edmonton, took part in the first annual Canadian ride, held in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, just before the Midwest event this year. While it didn't attract as many members as its U.S. counterpart, MacNeil said there's no shortage of interest on his side of the border and he's working with locals across the country to set up charters of their own.

"It keeps me involved in the IBEW even though I'm retired," he said. "The union and the motorcycle rides are a big part of who I am. Besides, you never really retire from the IBEW. Not entirely."

Like MacNeil, Hinderman said he plans to keep up his involvement in the motorcycle rides even after he retires



*The IBEW's motorcycle clubs provide open-road solidarity for members across the U.S. and Canada. "We're spreading further and further," said Edmonton, Alberta, Local 424 retiree Ray MacNeil. "It goes back to what Henry Miller had in mind. I'd like to think that if he were around today, he'd ride a Harley."*

next year.

"They've reawakened a spirit in me," said Hinderman, who put 5,000 miles on his bike this summer. "These rides are some of the best things I've done in my 40 years in Local 134."

Local rides, between the bigger annual events, are an especially convenient way to keep that spirit alive all year long. Some locals have a ride almost every weekend, often attended by other locals. The only problem is squeezing them all in, said retired Local 3 Business Representative Jim Bua, who's been around since the beginning of Local 3's club and serves as an adviser.

"A lot of times, after working all day, you go home, you're tired, you don't always feel connected to the union. But on a run, it brings everybody together," he said. "It's a reminder that there are people like you who have the same hobbies. It's a great melting pot, just like the IBEW."

Hosting duties for next year's Midwest ride have been passed to Local 134 and the planning is already underway. Hinderman said they're working on a map that will list where all the riding clubs are and an app that will connect everyone and give them a quick and easy way to stay in touch in case anyone needs anything.

"It's all about safety," he said. "Your brothers are always watching out for you. You won't fall down without being caught."

Next year's Canadian ride will take its members to picturesque Banff in the Rocky Mountains.

"It's Ed Hill's vision coming through," MacNeil said. "We're spreading further and further throughout the U.S. and Canada. It goes back to what Henry Miller had in mind, too. I'd like to think that if he were around today, he'd ride a Harley."

The rides also serve as a de facto advertisement for the IBEW, and an impressive one at that, with members all riding together sporting their patches — union-made, of course.

"I always get this feeling of awe when I see motorcycles for as far as the eye can see," said Local 1 member Mike Crocker, who serves as his club's president. "It's pretty cool when you see people coming out of their houses and businesses to get a look at us and wave at all the motorcycles."

The bigger rides, like the Midwest Solidarity Ride, also come with off-the-bike opportunities for members to get to know one another. This year's ride included a stop for lunch at Redd's BBQ

and Saloon, owned by a Local 53 member, and a banquet dinner with a raffle and prizes. Local 134 took home the award for having the most members, and MacNeil, who rode over 1,700 miles from Alberta, won the prize for having traveled the farthest. It's also something he did almost entirely in attire more commonly associated with the beach than a bike.

"I would say that about 4,000 miles out of my 5,107 this summer was in shorts, a T-shirt and flip-flops," he said. "Even when it was raining."

Hinderman noted that even when they were at a nice hotel with a pool, they opted for sticking close to their bikes.

"We're not really hang-out-by-the-pool types," he said. "We're more hang-out-in-the-parking-lot guys."

Perhaps it's not surprising that a union and a motorcycle club gel so well together. They're both about solidarity and watching out for one another. And especially with a motorcycle ride, it can be a magnificent way to spend the day.

"It's a great experience. After a day of riding, you get to relax and have a meal with your friends, old and new, and sit around and tell stories," said Local 53 member Chad McGregor. "Not that all of them are true." ■



*Mike Crocker, St. Louis Local 1's riding club president, presents a check to the St. Louis Women's Safe House organization, one of two beneficiaries of this year's Midwest Solidarity Ride.*