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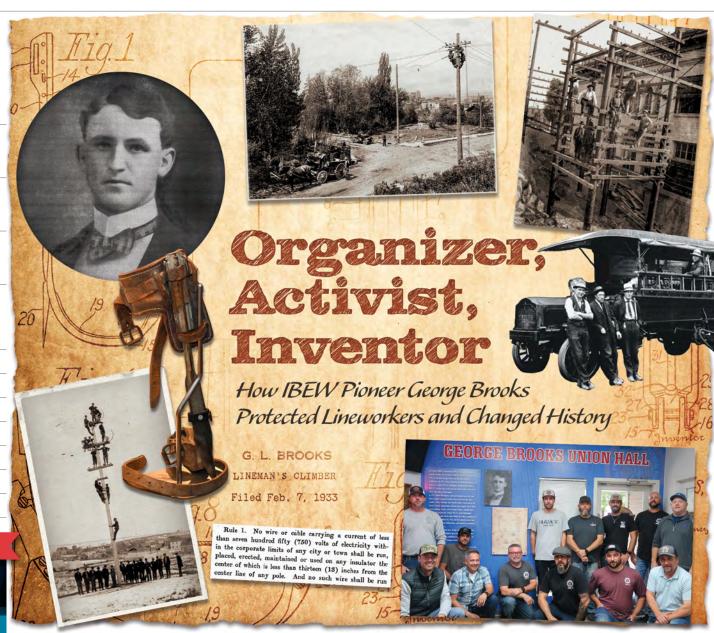
In Memoriam 18

DEADLINE EXTENDED



Deadline: Nov. 30 • Details on pg. 20





George Brooks, a lineman and president of Seattle Local 77 more than a century ago, made his mark on the labor movement and lineworkers in particular through backwoods organizing, scrapping with bosses, lobbying the Washington Legislature, and inventing a piece of safety equipment still used today for pole climbing. His blueprint and patent for what came to be known as Brooks Hooks can be seen on page 5.

hey gathered in the lowland forests bordering Seattle, arriving by wagon or horseback for secret meetings under the shroud of towering evergreens. It was too dangerous for the young president of Local 77 and his band of brothers to discuss their plans anywhere else.

They were preparing to demand safety reforms at a time when industry-funded "goon squads" might have broken their bones, or worse, for daring to act collectively.

But taking risks was nothing new. As linemen in the early 1900s, their life expectancy was little better than a flip of the coin.

Barely one in two survived North America's deadliest job for more than three years. IBEW dues in those days had one purpose: paying grieving



families' funeral expenses.

George L. Brooks, the activist leader of the local based at Seattle City Light, knew nothing would change unless labor forced the utilities' hands.

In 1913, armed with a clandestine draft of a safety code and an arsenal of arguments for legislators, Brooks and his members trekked south to Washington's capital in Olympia.

Against all odds, they beat the utility and industrial lobbies, making Washington the only state with a law protecting electrical workers, one that later would serve as a template for federal safety codes.

For the first time, the men installing poles, stringing wires, powering streetlights and maintaining the nascent electrical systems in rugged terrain and growing cities had legal safeguards, and companies could face steep fines for violating them.

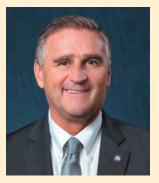
Branded a troublemaker, Brooks was promptly fired from City Light and blackballed at utilities up and down the West Coast.

•••••

GEORGE BROOKS continued on page 4

FROM THE OFFICERS

Open Your Local to Veterans



Kenneth W. Cooper International President

eterans Day is an incredibly special day for me and my family. My son served in the U.S. Navy, my son-in-law is a major in the Air Force, and my father-in-law is a Korean War veteran.

I'm so proud of them. They are powerful reminders of the sacrifices

The day also is powerful because it reminds us that the IBEW has honored veterans in both the U.S. and Canada — not just in words, but in action — throughout

One of the most notable examples in recent years is the Veterans Electrical Entry Program, or VEEP.

Since it began in 2019, the IBEW and the Electrical Training Alliance have provided both virtual training and hands-on electrical training to active duty military personnel as they prepare for the transition to civilian life.

The benefits are too numerous to list here, but the one I am most proud of is that it helps veterans avoid many of the problems too many of them face when they leave the military. It is a national scandal that veterans are more than 50% more

likely to die by suicide in the U.S. than the general population. Financial problems and loneliness are all too common.

Having access to a good career with family-building wages is one crucial way to address that. You'll read on page 3 of this month's Electrical Worker about VEEP expanding to training facilities at Salt Lake City Local 354 and Atlanta Local 613. It's great news and makes VEEP available to more military members around the country — even overseas.

But there is so much more work to do. That's why I'm calling on more of our local unions to welcome VEEP into their

I get it won't be easy. Many of you active in your local unions already are incredibly busy. Training facilities are being stretched because of the strong construction market. There's also the matter of funding.

But we're talking about our veterans here, the men and women who faithfully served our country. Many saw combat. All too often, they return to civilian life and prospective employers tell them, "We have no place for you."

Well, that's not the way things are at the IBEW. We find a way to get things done and take care of our veterans.

I encourage you to set up a Veterans Committee at your local if it doesn't yet have one. You'll find they will get the word out about our resources for veterans quicker than any form of social media.

Explore ways to provide funding with your Joint Electrical Training Committee. Many of our locals involved in VEEP report that signatory contractors have generously donated because they believe so strongly in the program. Reach out to Greg McMurphy, a Kennewick, Wash., Local 112 member who coordinates VEEP's inside construction for the Electrical Training Alliance at gm@etalliance.org.

I can't think of any better way to honor and remember those who served our country on this Veterans Day. You'll also be doing your part to help the IBEW meet the challenges of today's electrical industry.

We Are All Organizers

he NFL and WNBA fans among you have likely already seen the IBEW's latest ad campaign promoting the benefits of membership in our great union. Along with the campaign's sister site, IBEWYes.org, it's driving huge numbers of interested candidates nationwide to the IBEW.

But it is not just TV. We are also talking to prospective members on social media, telling the stories of real members sharing how the IBEW has improved their lives.

It is a big investment but a necessary one because there is no greater priority for the IBEW right now than organizing. We are facing a once-in-a-generation chance to grow the union to levels we have not seen in decades, and we need to seize the moment.

Organized labor is more popular than ever, with high-profile union victories like the auto and dock workers strikes making it clear to working America that only collective bargaining gives workers the power to win higher wages and better benefits.

And interest in unions will continue to grow, because labor is most popular with the youngest generations. A poll commissioned by the AFL-CIO last year found that nearly 9 in 10 people under 30 approve of unions.

Another reason organizing is so critical is that jobs in our industries are exploding.

A construction boom for semiconductor factories, battery plants, data centers, EV charging infrastructure, renewable power projects, new transmission work and more has created an unprecedented hunger in the economy for electrical workers.

International Secretary-Treasurer

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that we'll see 70,000 new electricians a year. We are also expecting to see significant growth in the telecommunications and manufacturing workforce because of investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act and the CHIPS and Science Law.

We need to organize for the simple reason that we need the manpower to staff the work. If the IBEW cannot do it, then our competition will, and we will lose power and relevance.

More members means more power to demand higher wages. It strengthens our health and retirement benefits, and it gives us more political leverage.

Our ads are effective because they show actual members telling their stories. You are the IBEW's best organizers.

When workers hear from others like themselves, they are more likely to listen.

So, if you see an opportunity to have a conversation with a nonunion worker, take it.

If you know of a workplace that belongs in the IBEW, tell your business manager.

And talk about the IBEW and all the good things it has done for you and your family in your community. Post a link to **IBEWYes.org** while you're at it.

Thank you for doing your part to make sure the IBEW continues to grow and thrive so we're still around in another 130 years. Future generations of electrical workers are counting on the work each of us does right now to meet this moment.

My IBEW STORY

Jackson Wildes, apprentice wireman Madison, Wis., Local 159



66My dad is an IBEW electrician for Local 890 in Janesville, Wis., so I grew up around the electrical trade. I remember thinking, 'Yeah, I could do this.' But when I was young, I really didn't know what to do with my life yet, and that's what led me to the military.

I enlisted in the Marines at 17, graduating high school ahead of schedule so I could ship early. My boot camp was at Marine Corps Recruit

Depot San Diego, and then I did marine combat training at Camp Pendleton. I got selected for my military occupational specialty shortly after boot camp as an expeditionary airfields systems technician.

I was stationed in Beaufort, S.C., for my first four years. And I really loved the job. We were trained to go anywhere in the world to install runways and fully functioning airfields. The runways were constructed with aluminum matting that we would hand lay for 9,000-foot-plus stretches, and a lot of airfield lighting was needed. We also ran, installed and maintained arresting gear. I did that for eight years and made it to sergeant.

I met my wife while I was in South Carolina. We got married quickly, and then I dragged her halfway across the world to Japan, where I was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni. I did a lot of work in the Pacific — in South Korea, the Philippines and the rest of my time in Japan.

While in Japan, my contract was coming to a close, and at that point I had a family of four with another child on the way. I just decided I was tired of being gone all the time — I wanted a stable career where I could work my hours and come home to see my wife and kids at the end of the day. I talked to my dad about moving back and signing the book at 890 for a CW/CE entry-level position.

And then my master sergeant, who was also getting out and looking at the electrical trades, said, 'You should check out this VEEP program.' I reached out to VEEP, and I soon realized that the timing of this opportunity to place with the IBEW and NECA was perfect. Over time, I got so much support from Greg McMurphy and the other instructors at VEEP.

I was able to stay active duty while attending VEEP classes in Alaska. I did have to pay out of pocket to travel and stay there, but my wife and I talked it over and agreed that it was an investment on a lifelong career. We knew it would pay off tenfold in the future.

My wife, kids and I met up in Wisconsin after I graduated VEEP. I had a pending agreement with Local 159 after I graduated. So I called Local 159 and said, 'I'm Jackson, I just graduated VEEP, and I'm curious about when I should get to work.' Within the week, I was working full time. The transition went as smoothly as any servicemember could hope for.

With my name affiliated with VEEP, I've gotten emails and messages from other servicemembers. I love that, and I tell them: If you're looking for a brotherhood type of relationship that you get in the service, you'll find similarity there with VEEP and the IBEW. You have your own work family there like you did in the service where you have brothers and sisters you can go and talk to.

It worked out phenomenally for me, and I'm really grateful for that.

Share your story at ibew.org/MyIBEWStory



manager, Rob Axford, was named Organizing Business Manager of the Year.

See "Steady Grassroots Organizing Brings Dramatic Growth, Top Honors for N.C. Local" on page 6.

With New Locations, VEEP Helps More Veterans Go From 'Brotherhood to Brotherhood'

lynnis Landfair has firsthand experience with how military members feel when their active duty ends.

She once had to work three jobs to support herself after leaving the Air Force in 1990, even though she had proven herself as a leader. Landfair earned the rank of sergeant and was a dedicated crew chief for fighter jets.

Loneliness. A lack of direction. Not being part of a team or something larger than herself. She experienced all of it.

Fortunately, her sister, Shawnna, was an IBEW member and journeyman wireman who "nagged" her about the benefits of membership. That persuaded Landfair to apply for the apprenticeship program at Salt Lake City Local 354 — not far from where she finished her military career at Hill Air Force Base in Utah.

She was accepted and went on to a distinguished career as a journeyman inside wireman who now serves on the Eighth District Veterans Committee.

"I saw the lifestyle and the security, gave it a shot and never regretted it," she said.

But Landfair knows she was fortunate. Most veterans don't have a close friend or relative reminding them that the trades make for a great career. That's why she was thrilled that Local 354 hosted its first cohort of members through the Veterans Electrical Entry Program, or VEEP, earlier this year.



VEEP graduate Milton Smith, left, receives his certificate from Mike Lanoue, director of the Utah Electrical Training Alliance. Smith decided to stay in Utah and start his apprenticeship at Salt Lake City Local 354.

"I want anyone in the military to go from a brotherhood to a brotherhood," she said. "I don't want them to go through some of the things veterans have gone through. This program is one of the best out there to get people into the electrical industry and into the IBEW."

Local 354 will welcome two more VEEP cohorts in 2025.

"To me, it was a no-brainer," said Mike Lanoue, director of the Utah Electrical Training Alliance, a partnership between the IBEW and NECA. "It's a way to give back to our veterans and everyone who served our country."

International President Kenneth W. Cooper has long called VEEP a priority.

"What's great about it is that it extends the IBEW's long, proud history of supporting our veterans while also serving as a tool for meeting growing demand in the electrical industry," Cooper said. "We must continue to find ways to expand VEEP and Canadian veterans outreach across North America."

Atlanta Local 613 will host its first cohort beginning in April, giving VEEP a base in the South.



Alliance is to the far left, Utah Electrical Training Alliance Director Mike Lanoue is in a dark shirt and tie, JATC instructor Nick Bryant is third from the right, and Local 354 organizer and Eighth District Veterans Committee representative Tony Sorro is to the far right.

"We value our folks that have served in the military," Business Manager Kenny Mullins said. "We do what we can to help them, and I have several veterans on our staff. They tell me the transition to civilian life can be a little trying."

Started in 2019 in conjunction with the Electrical Training Alliance, VEEP provides a combination of virtual and in-person training to personnel while they are still on active duty.

The virtual training can be done wherever servicemembers are stationed across the world. The in-person training comes at local unions and their training centers offering VEEP.

It eases the worries of veterans looking for a career upon leaving the service. And it offers the IBEW skilled apprentices who are accustomed to working as a team to accomplish the goal.

Servicemembers completing VEEP must provide proof that they will be accepted into an IBEW local union's apprenticeship program. Many choose an area because of family considerations, but some are so impressed with the area hosting VEEP that they choose to stay there. Two of the 11 members of Local 354's VEEP cohort decided to enter its apprenticeship program.

"We're pretty proud of the fact we got involved with VEEP early on and we're doing a lot of things to make it better," Local 354 Business Manager Steve Woodman said.

Anchorage, Alaska, Local 1547 offered the first cohort, in part due to its proximity to a large number of military installations in the state. A handful of locations in Southern California added the VEEP curriculum during the last two years.

Now the program is starting to spread across the country.

"I think we've demonstrated a model that is working," said Greg McMurphy, the Electrical Training Alliance's assistant director in charge of VEEP's inside construction program. "It allows [JATCs] to select people that are likely to succeed and are ready to go into the job."

Atlanta and Salt Lake City are ideal locations for several reasons, McMurphy said.

Atlanta has one of the busiest airports in the world, making it easy to get to. The local construction market is booming. There also are large military installations in Georgia, including Fort Moore, Moody Air Force Base and Dobbins Air Reserve Base.

"There's a tremendous amount of transitioning servicemembers in that end of the country we want to serve," said McMurphy, a member and former apprenticeship director of Kennewick, Wash., Local 112.

Utah was the fastest-growing state in the nation from 2008 to 2023, according to data analyzed by the Pew Charitable Trusts. Salt Lake City has a booming construction market, and its airport is a hub for Delta Air Lines. It is also just 30 minutes from Hill Air Force Base, which is known primarily for the maintenance it performs on Air Force iets.

'There's a good transportation infrastructure there," said McMurphy, noting that Local 354 worked to find housing at an affordable cost for servicemembers attending the in-person training.

It also had veterans among its membership — like Landfair — who are willing to put in the work to make VEEP a success. She thinks the program can even play a role in lowering the suicide rate among veterans, which is 57% higher than among non-veterans in the U.S., according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.



VEEP graduate Nathan Littlefield, left, receives his certificate from Lanoue. Littlefield also stayed in Utah for an apprenticeship at Local 354.

Local 354 organizer Tony Sorro served in the U.S. Army in 2004-2008, which included one tour in Iraq. VEEP doesn't just help veterans learn on-thejob skills, he said. It also serves as a safety net with their transition to civilian life.

For instance, many struggle with mental health upon their return. Sorro said veterans like himself involved with VEEP can help participants learn how to navigate the VA system and even let their foremen know when apprentices need to

miss time for appointments with mental health professionals. They also identify where benefits veterans earned under the GI Bill can apply to their apprenticeship.

"When you get out of the military, you get put back in the world and you sort of have to figure out your contacts," Sorro said. "VEEP bridges that gap."

Sorro, who is the Eighth District's representative on the IBEW Veterans Committee, grew up in a union family. His father and uncle were members of the Ironworkers, so he understood the value of a union trade and pursued it. But he still experienced the same feelings many newly discharged veterans do. He might have been lost without that union connection, he said.

"You feel alone. Even a roomful of people, you feel like you're by yourself," he said. "That's where my passion sort of hit the road. I wanted to get the word out that the IBEW can be there for veterans.

"A lot of guys don't know about a union," he added. "It's akin to the military in that you are part of something bigger."

Local 613 Training Director Russell Smith noted that relations between labor and management can sometimes turn contentious in the South, which has the most anti-labor laws in the U.S. But Local 613 and its signatory contractors quickly came together to fund VEEP at the local's training facility.

"When Greg offered us the opportunity to participate in something like this, both sides jumped in with no hesitation," he said. "I'm excited because it gives us a chance to show the nation how committed Atlanta is to helping veterans."

McMurphy said other IBEW local unions have expressed interest in hosting a VEEP cohort, especially with construction booming in many jurisdictions. The issue is funding. Additional revenue is needed to pay for the program, and not all local unions can do so. Lanoue said Local 354 was able to pay for it with a grant from the Labor Department's Apprenticeship Building America program.

It remains an ongoing challenge, but McMurphy is confident it can be met, allowing VEEP to spread across even more of the country. IBEW officials in Salt Lake City and Atlanta will be happy to spread the word.

"We've been pretty invested in our veterans for quite some time," Woodman said. "When they rolled this out, it was the logical extension to what we already had." ■

Continued from page 1

Organizer, Activist, Inventor

How IBEW Pioneer George Brooks Protected Lineworkers and Changed History

But the indomitable 24-year-old wasn't done leaving his mark on linemen's safety. Over the next two decades, he would invent the revolutionary Brooks Hooks that are still the model for gold-standard climbing gear.

Brooks died in March 1934, not knowing that his patent would be approved six weeks later or the impact it would have on generations of IBEW members.

Or knowing that Local 77 would grow into a powerful statewide union where his legacy is an enduring source of pride.

"His gift to our trade was bigger than what he achieved during his lifetime," Business Manager Rex Habner said. "It was a perpetuation of safety practices. Once you see one thing working, it multiplies, and that started with George Brooks."

THE KEEPERS of Brooks' flame at Local 77 place him in the same category of IBEW pioneers as Henry Miller, the union's founding president.

Miller himself died after a fall from a power pole during a storm in Washington, D.C., in 1896, one year before Local 77 was chartered on the other side of the country.

"Just like Henry Miller, George Brooks understood strength in numbers," Habner said. "He saw that 50% of the line trade was dying, and he organized his brothers to take a stand that saved lives. Then he spent years perfecting a device that made it safer and easier for linemen to do their jobs."

In Brooks' time, Local 77 was part of a patchwork of locals at upstart utilities across the Pacific Northwest.

Today, after a colorful journey of splits and mergers, it is Washington's largest local geographically, encompassing the state and parts of Idaho.

Brooks was hired as a City Light lineman in 1908, became chair of the union's safety committee and — the records are murky — was elected president in 1910 or 1913.

He'd been working half his life, first at a lumber camp at age 12 in his home state of Michigan and then as a railroad brakeman, the job that took him west.

Local 77's Rick Luiten, who supervises high-voltage/telecom compliance for the Washington state Department of Labor and Industries, said it speaks to Brooks' courage and character that the rails didn't scare him away from union membership, let alone activism.

It was the era when American industrialists had the ruthless police of the Pinkerton Agency in their pocket, along with vicious goon squads, corrupt sheriffs and thuggish yard bulls at rail stops.

For linemen, miners, loggers and other trade workers traveling by train in search of work, any hint of union affiliation or solidarity could put them in jeopardy.

Luiten, a labor history hobbyist, described brutal beatings that left men broken or dead, and for those who survived, the further threat of being thrown in jail and doing hard labor on a chain gang.



Workers with union leanings who slipped through the net were wise to keep their mouths shut. "Just sitting down at a bar and talking about safety problems or saying you heard that guys a town over were making a penny more an hour could make you a target," Luiten said.

Still, union jobs could be found, however threadbare the terms of agreement by today's standards. Posts in the IBEW monthly journal, which became today's Electrical Worker, alerted linemen to far-flung worksites where a union card could get them on the books.

"That's how it came to be called our 'ticket," Luiten said. "Just like today, their union card was their ticket to find work, but on the train they'd hide it in their shoes or boots and pray they never got searched."

The level of danger in the Seattle area during Brooks' tenure isn't clear, but Luiten said there's no question that he and his men were at risk of harm.

"Some people just stick out in the crowd as leaders and say, 'Hey, something's got to change.' And that was George Brooks."

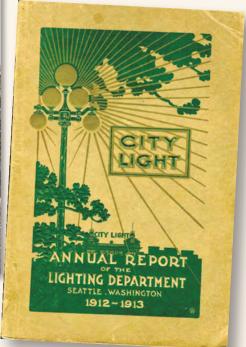
IN 1912, Brooks twisted his ankle. It turned out to be a twist of fate.

The mishap led to what his son recalled as 20 years of "Pa tinkering with a model for climbers with removable and replaceable gaffs."

The injury put Brooks on wooden crutches that had the same flaw as his

Circa 1910, an IBEW line crew prepares for a long day's work in the Seattle area. The three men in the middle are wearing climbing hooks (pre-Brooks Hooks) on their legs. Hanging from the wagon are ropes and pulleys known as "slack blocks," which were used to adjust the slack in high-voltage power lines.

The Seattle City Light building in the early 20th century and its 1912-1913 annual report, published the year Local 77 President George Brooks and activist members got the Washington Legislature to pass the nation's first-ever safety law for electrical workers.



pole-climbers, as George F. Brooks described in 1978 for a Local 77 brochure:

The crutches were so short that Pa had to bend over to use them. Ten-year-old Marguerite, my sis, asked why they didn't make them adjustable like telescopes, so that they would fit anybody. It never occurred to Pa to run to a patent attorney, so later on somebody else made a bundle. But Pa realized instantly that the same principle was needed to improve the lineman's climbers.

Brooks had barely begun to fiddle with a design when his role as a ringleader for safety abruptly ended his career at Seattle City Light.

With other utilities refusing to hire him, he returned to the railroads as a

brakeman for Northern Pacific. In 1917, he inherited his father's homestead and moved his family back to Lansing, Mich., where he became a member of Local 352.

His infamy hadn't traveled that far, allowing him to work as an itinerant lineman for Consumers Power Co. In 1923, he was hired by Lansing's Board of Water & Light to install the city's first traffic lights.

As his duties expanded, he was promoted to foreman and occasionally served as acting superintendent. His experience and ingenuity even led company engineers to tap him as a consultant — until his obstinance about safety

got him in hot water again.

In 1931, after scrapping with management about protecting his men, Brooks was demoted back to an inexperienced traffic-light crew.

THE OUTLOOK was better at home, where he and his son were on the verge of an engineering breakthrough.

The younger Brooks had enrolled in a high school drafting class to experiment with his father's designs after discovering for himself the limits of the era's climbing hooks.

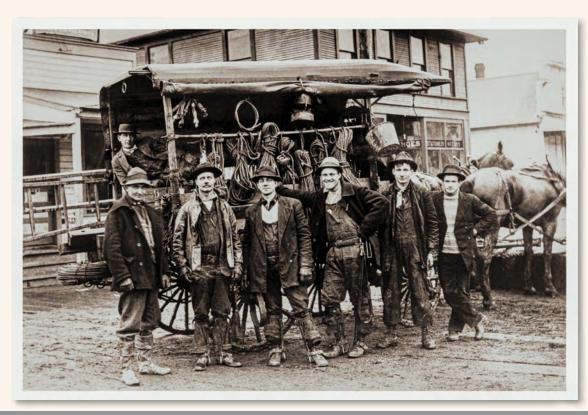
At age sixteen, one beautiful morning in August 1930, I decided to be an electrical lineman, just like my Pa. I walked across Alpha Street and started up a pole. It was easy to drag the gaff (spur) up the pole six to ten inches at a time, alternately shifting my weight from one foot to the other.

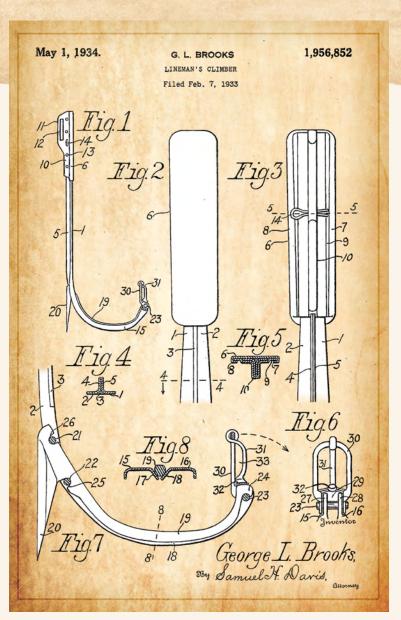
Climbing down was a different story:

The gaffs were tightly embedded in the pole — I couldn't pull either foot off the pole to step down. I was trapped. Finally, I managed to get one foot loose and step down a ways but [it was] even more difficult to free the other foot from the pole. After a half hour of struggling, I had gotten down only about six feet, and I was tempted to holler for help. But the embarrassment would have been just too much.

Eventually his feet touched ground. When his father came home for lunch, he fessed up:

He laughed, gave me the raspberry, then explained, "You don't pull the gaffs up; to get them out of the pole, you bend your knee outward, away from the pole, and at the same time, you twist your ankle so that you can pry against it with your foretoe. This way, you break a chip out of the pole, sideways, and the climber is out."





The teenage Brooks asked if the climbers got heavier for linemen throughout the day.

Pa replied, "About 4:30 p.m., they weigh sixteen ton!"

He theorized in drafting class that lighter-weight climbers could be made equally strong by using half as much steel in a channel or T formation. He brought the concept to his father.

His eyes lit up as he blurted, "Yup, and that ain't all! I think I've got the answer to a problem that's had me stymied for years!"

Brooks brought home a half-inch T-iron and a piece of sheet metal he'd fitted around it. He'd drilled holes in the contraption about an inch apart and inserted pins to create an adjustable model.

Before long, Brooks had a diagram to take to a patent attorney. While waiting for the government's answer, he traveled the Midwest seeking manufacturers, bids and investors.

production of Brooks Hooks, a design

"I like to say that George Brooks invented safety," said Mike Brown, assistant business manager of Local 77. "He invented Brooks Hooks, but he also

Pa said, "Now, any lineman, regardless of his height, can wear his hooks just where he likes them best — low on his calf or high up to the knee." He handed me his new telescoping gadget, along with his ten-year-old aluminum model with the replaceable gaff. He said, "I want you to ask your drafting teacher if you can make a drawing of this."

Though he didn't live to see the patent issued on May Day 1934 — his cause of death unknown - he'd made enormous strides that would lead to mass

> law for electrical workers, a code drafted by Local 77 under the leadership of George Brooks. The rules consume 13 pages of the Washington Legislature's

first-ever safety 1913 Sessions Laws book.



Clockwise from left: George Brooks' handdrawn diagram of his invention; an original pair of adjustable Brooks Climbers made by Mine Safety Appliances Co. of Pittsburgh on display in the IBEW Museum in Washington, D.C.; and the 1934 U.S. patent issued six weeks after Brooks' death. Use the QR code at bottom of page to read the story behind Brooks Hooks, as told by his son.

helped invent safety laws at a time when there weren't any — for any workers."

Other states gradually began to adopt electrical codes in the 1920s, and a national code was finalized in 1926. But there were no enforceable federal protections for workers until the Occupational Safety and Health Administration was created in 1970 under President Richard Nixon.

Brown and his colleagues couldn't be prouder of the fact that OSHA "plagiarized" Washington's electrical code, as

"It is literally the electrical safety standard across the United States, and it originated with George Brooks and his Local 77 brothers."

BY NECESSITY, the politics of safety in Brooks' day targeted the most immediate threats to life and limb.

His own men undoubtedly suffered joint pain and, even in the temperate Northwest, suffered heatstroke in the summer. But it would be decades before anyone was talking about ergonomics and extreme heat. Even longer before worksite safety would include defibrillators, GPS devices and other life-saving technology.

Longer still before mental health would be on the table, a matter of urgency today as the building trades confront an alarming suicide rate.

It was one of the topics in May at an annual member-driven safety conference named for George Brooks at Local 77's Spokane office in eastern Washington. This summer, the building itself was renamed George Brooks Hall, with its lobby transformed to honor him.

Along with a variety of presenters, the peer-to-peer event encouraged members to open up about safety concerns and brainstorm solutions. But first, they learned about Brooks.

"I think members are kind of in awe when they hear his story," Business Representative Dave Garegnani said. "They sit back and say, 'Wow, I had no idea."

Brown urged participants to see themselves as Brooks' modern-day counterparts.

MAKADEGOLAN

"We say, 'What do we need to do to move the needle on safety to have just as large an impact today as he and the brothers did back then?" he said.

The conversation ranged from jobsite and equipment issues to conflict de-escalation when dealing with hostile customers, managing stress and depression, and the signs that a colleague may be in trouble.

"Safety is not just about making sure that you have protective cover up on the lines or that your gloves are good or that your hot sticks are up to code," said Garegnani, who coordinated the conference. "It's about safety in our lives and in our heads and even in our hearts because if we're not functioning well, it affects our ability to do the job and have each other's backs."

The guestion came up: What would Brooks think if he were in the room?

"One of our members said, 'I bet George Brooks would have no idea we'd

be sitting around talking about our feelings," Garegnani said.

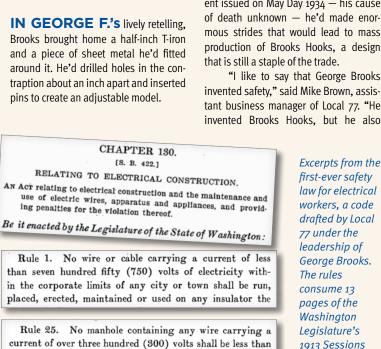
The consensus at Local 77 is that he would approve, that Brooks would see today's safety issues and the myriad subjects of bargaining as the natural evolution of the fight he led.

"I wish more people understood the sacrifice he and his brothers made," Habner said. "It's not a folk story. They were essentially doing the same thing we are today, working for the betterment of IBEW members and all workers, but the difference is that we have a huge labor movement around us.

"They were on their own and they must have been fearful. But look what they accomplished. They changed history

Scan this QR code to read George F. Brooks' full story about his father's invention.





six (6) feet from floor to inside of roof; if circular in shape

Steady Grassroots Organizing Brings Dramatic Growth, Top Honors for N.C. Local

quadrupling of membership in the past four years helped Raleigh, N.C., Local 553's Rob Axford capture the Organizing Business Manager of the Year award at the IBEW's 2024 Membership Development Conference in Chicago, an honor he calls "overwhelming."

"I always have strived to be as good as the other business managers in the IBEW, the fierce, super-intelligent business managers that are steering those ships with thousands of members," said Axford, who has served as Local 553's business manager since 2018.

For a long time, Local 553 "was a small local with very few contractors working in that area," said Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hall. When Axford took over, the local's membership figure hovered around 100, with members frequently needing to travel to find work.

In each of the last four years, however, Local 553 has landed on Membership Development's list of top 20 organizing locals, with its numbers rocketing from 200 in 2020 to more than 850 as of press time.

"We're still growing, of course," Axford said. "Every day, there's somebody taking the IBEW oath in the front of the hall."

Tenth District International Representative Chuck Moore, who services Local 553, noted that the IBEW Constitution lists "establishing friendly relations with employers" as one of a business manager's top responsibilities.

"That's what Rob has done," Moore said. "He has really developed that trust with local contractors. They're growing because they trust him. He gets them on board and shows them that the union isn't bad and what the benefits of working with us are."



"All I'm interested in is the results," said Axford, the IBEW's 2024 Organizing Business Manager of the Year.

Axford added: "We've been doing everything we can to advocate for contractors. All I'm interested in is the results."

North Carolina and the other states in the IBEW's Tenth District — Arkansas, Tennessee and South Carolina — have enacted right-to-work laws that attempt to kneecap unions by letting bargaining-unit workers enjoy all the benefits of being in a union without having to pay for things like contract negotiations or enforcement.

"When I came in as vice president, I told everybody, 'Right-to-work is a hurdle that we can see, so let's just put that to the side,'" Hall said.

Axford said he welcomes any opportunity to grow the local, such as by supporting pre-apprenticeships and filing grievances tactically and by encouraging younger members' participation in RENEW and starting up social events like picnics.

"We continue to try to do as much as we did last year, this year," said Axford, who recently marked



Above: Presenting the Organizing Business Manager of the Year award to Raleigh, N.C., Local 553's Rob Axford, center, are International Secretary-Treasurer Paul Noble, left, and Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hall. At right, Rebecca Axford, an international representative with the IBEW's Education Department — and Rob's wife — also was on hand.

30 years of IBEW membership. "The name of the game is jurisdictional workers and trying to support our contractors and get more contractors." ■

top 10 Locals IN 2024 by Membership Growth Over Last Year Local 2001 Fremont, Neb. Local 342 170%

Winston-Salem, N.C.

| Local 1105 | 89%

Newark, Ohio

Local 873

61% Kokomo, Ind.

Uaco, Texas 57%

55% Local 446 Monroe, La. Local 2362

Selma, Ala. 53%

Local 1769

49%

44%

9 Local 784 Indianapolis
49%

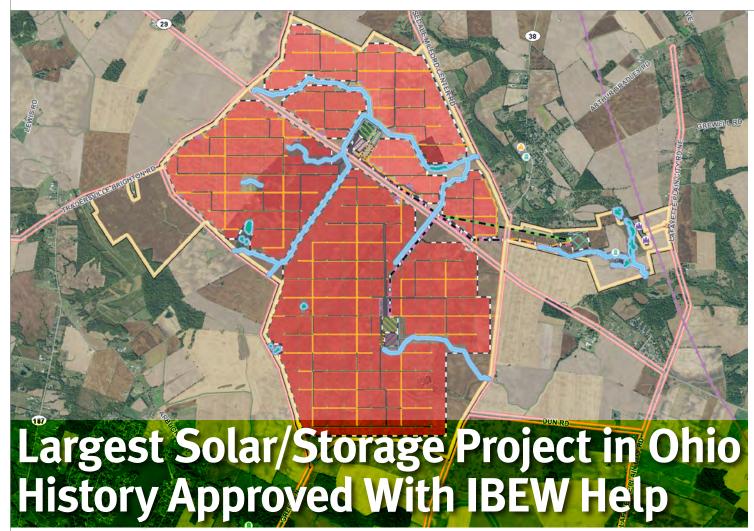
Seattle

Local 840 Geneva, N.Y.

'Sense of Belonging'

he IBEW Women's Conference, held Sept. 24-26 in New Orleans, was the largest to date with more than 800 members attending, almost half of whom were there for the first time. With a theme of "Powered for Success," participants heard from a diverse array of speakers and panelists on topics including pre-apprenticeships as a way to bring in more women; how to deal with bias; and the importance of mental health, which included attendees getting a challenge coin in support of suicide prevention. "The conference was a resounding success," said Jennifer Gray, director of the Department of Civic and Community Engagement. "It combined inspiration, education and advocacy to empower the women of the IBEW and ensure that they not only felt welcome in our union but walked away with an overwhelming sense of belonging."





\$1 billion solar and battery storage project in Ohio that will be built by members of Columbus Local 683 is back from the dead because of critical interventions by the IBEW.

It started last March when the Fourth District signed a memorandum of understanding with the owners of Oak Run, which will be the largest solar and battery storage project in Ohio history.

The agreement was significant news for Local 683, but there was genuine joy when the Ohio Power Siting Board approved the project soon after.

But the Champagne was put back on ice when an 11th-hour appeal was filed against the development by Republican politicians in rural Madison County, between Dayton and Columbus.

The fate of the project, like dozens of other renewable projects in the Midwest, was held hostage to a multi-state "dark money" campaign fanning legitimate local questions into a furor of rumor and conspiracy.

Happily, Local 683 and the members who live in Madison County fought back against the appeal, and the Champagne was finally uncorked in late August when the board firmly rejected the appeal and gave it final approval.

"This is a huge victory for sanity, progress and working families in southern Ohio," said Fourth District International Vice President Gina Cooper. "Power demand is skyrocketing in Ohio, and there is a desperate need for locally generated, carbon-free power. Our members will show up anywhere and anytime to get these projects built."

With at least 800 megawatts of solar generation, the Oak Run project is more like the utility-scale solar projects in California, Texas and Nevada than the ones normally built in the Midwest, which typically max out at about half the capacity. Not only will it be the



Oak Run will also be a research and demonstration site for agrivoltaics, which seeks to maximize clean energy generation alongside traditional farming.

largest solar project in state history, but its 300 MW of battery makes it the largest storage development in the state.

More than 1,000 construction workers of all trades will be on site, including at least 500 members of Local 683, depending on the schedule, said Local 683 Business Manager Pat Hook.

"We have been arguing for and helping developers get projects built for years," Hook said. "We have members in every community in our district, including dozens in Madison County. We are sometimes the only voice arguing for progress. We can say: 'My kids' schools will benefit. My town will benefit. I will benefit by not having to travel into the city or out of the jurisdiction. And that's good for me and my family."

But there is considerable negativity about renewables projects in Ohio, Hook said. SB 52, which passed in 2021, handed a near stranglehold to opponents of clean energy development — but only clean energy. The bill exempted

carbon-intensive development from any local input. The result is that siting-approved construction projects worth thousands of jobs are in limbo, new siting applications have dried up and many more are tied up in courts.

"Some of the opposition is sincere concern, mostly about not wanting change, and we are not only happy to address those concerns, we are uniquely placed to do so because we live here, too," Hook said.

A common concern from locals was about the loss of farmland. Farming is a way of life as much as it is a way to earn money.

In response, the Oak Run project's developers are setting aside a third of the project site as a research center for agrivoltaics, the name given to farming between solar panels and beneath their canopy.

But Fourth District Renewable Energy/Government Affairs Representative Aaron Brown said much of the The \$1 billion Oak Run solar project nearly died under a wave of dark money opposition until Ohio IBEW members fought to get it approved.

opposition — and the vast majority of the money — isn't local and isn't in good faith.

"What we are facing is a concerted, extremely well-funded campaign that misrepresents their interests to the local people," Hook said. "People who build subdivisions on farmland are paying for ads that say, 'Farmland should be saved for farming.' If it wasn't so sad, you'd laugh."

These interests aren't opposed to growth and change. They just don't want growth and change that benefits anyone but them.

"We aren't rich in rural Ohio. There aren't that many blue-collar jobs left out here and these projects are a pathway of dozens and dozens of people to get into a fantastic trade," Hook said. "We demand local hire in our PLAs and MOUs. These are local, union jobs that are just about the last and only pathway to the middle class for our neighbors."

Cooper said fighting against the political extremism plaguing this country is now a crucial job for the IBEW. Whether it was environmental extremists in the past or the MAGA and QAnon conspiracists now, it's up to the IBEW to speak up for the rational, optimistic middle.

"Load growth in this region is outrageous. Ohio companies are demanding clean, reliable, local energy generation. Ohioans are demanding good careers. That this is even controversial is crazy. I'm against crazy," Cooper said. "When the opponents of critically necessary infrastructure want to stand in the way of clean, reliable energy, who else but the IBEW can show up to defend progress?"





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Massachusetts Members Bring Fire-Ravaged Community Hospital Back to Life

ighteen months after a 10-alarm blaze shut down the only full-service hospital in Brockton, Mass., the facility reopened bigger, better and safer than ever thanks to the unparalleled skills of IBEW electricians.

The February 2023 fire, which ignited in the electrical room, caused catastrophic damage that wasn't obvious from outside the 19th-century brick facade. But inside, the hospital's arteries were in ruins.

Today, its electrical system is state of the art, meticulously rebuilt, rewired and reconfigured by crews 6o-strong from Brockton Local 223, with assistance from Boston Local 103.

"This achievement is a testament to the invaluable efforts of the dedicated electrical workers, whose hard work and commitment played a crucial role in the restoration," Brockton Mayor Bob Sullivan said. "Thanks to their phenomenal efforts, this hospital is set to serve our community for many years to come."

Doug Nelson, the recently retired business manager of Local 223, said the five-story hospital — for all its many challenges — wasn't the most complex project most members have worked on. But it may be the most meaningful.

"I was born there, and it was always part of my childhood and growing up here in Brockton," Nelson said. "I think a lot of us have those kinds of personal ties. We understand how important the hospital is to our community and how critical it was to get it up and running again."

The hospital's electrical system was so outdated that the main switch room where the pre-dawn fire erupted was also the source of emergency power for backup generators. More than 160 patients had to be evacuated in the dark.

The urgency of the project was multiplied by turmoil at several other area hospitals, whose out-of-state owner had declared bankruptcy. In the wake of the fire, the nearest emergency care for Brockton's 100,000-plus residents was limited to two clinics.

IBEW members tackled an exhaustive list that included installing three generators, creating a system of underground pipes for a new external electrical room, replacing pipes feeding the existing hospital, and using wheels



Restoration of Brockton Hospital after a February 2023 fire employed as many as 60 IBEW electricians a day from Brockton, Mass., Local 223, and Boston Local 103. A vast list of projects included installing underground pipes, pictured above, for a new exterior electrical room, and, at bottom right, more pipework feeding the hospital itself. At top right is a section of wiring for 3,000 solar panels that members installed above carports in the parking lot.

and pulleys to tug 14,000 feet of rigid mineral insulated, or MI, cables through complex infrastructure. They also built more than 20 electrical closets that required nearly five miles of feeder pipe and wire.

"We basically redid the whole electrical backbone of the hospital without them demoing the hospital," said Phil Talbot, Local 103 member and general foreman for J&M Brown, which won the electrical contract.

Since the hospital celebrated its grand reopening in August, Talbot and about 10 IBEW members have remained on site wrapping up the project.

He said workers had to navigate ceilings jammed with ductwork and old pipes, the result of decades of repairs layered on top of repairs — typical in hospitals, which don't ordinarily close down for restoration work.

"Our crews did a great job of running new pipes so that we could pull wire through it and probably, something crazy, like 60 MI feeds," Talbot said.

First, though, old pipes covered with soot had to be removed.

"You can imagine how black and filthy the pipes were," Local 223 journeyman Brian Callahan said. "We're trying to pull them out, and the conductors were melted to the side of the conduit, which made it a little more challenging.

"That was my first taste of it," he said with a laugh about his early assignment. "I've worked in coal plants, and that's exactly what it was like. You went home absolutely filthy every day. But after a week or two, that was done and it was on to the clean stuff."

For Callahan, that included "the tremendous amount of electrical closets and new panels — every single one of them re-fed with new pipe and

He had high praise for Talbot as general foreman, saying he "made the job go as smooth as can be" and deftly managed the workload and manpower to avoid lavoffs.

Heather Gonsalves, who joined the hospital team near the end of her first year as a Local 223 apprentice, marveled at the education she got.

"It was awesome and scary at the same time," said Gonsalves, now a third-year apprentice. "I'd only done two solar field jobs prior to this. I did not have construction experience, so I was lucky enough to have some really amazing journeymen that I worked with.

"I walked onto that jobsite and was very honest. I said: 'I'm very green. I don't know a lot, and I want to know a lot,"" she recalled.

"It was such a

good job to learn on. I'm definitely a better electrician because of it."

Among her many assignments, Gonsalves was part of a crew that installed 3,000 solar panels atop carports in the hospital parking lot.

Mike Monahan, international vice president in the Second District, joined community leaders and hospital staff in applauding IBEW members and signatory contractor J&M Brown.

"I cannot praise the company enough or the brothers and sisters of Local 223 enough for the outstanding job they've done," he said.

Owner David Noon responded that J&M Brown is "very proud indeed of what we have accomplished at the hospital [and] very grateful for incredible cooperation, talent and dedication of the members of Local 223, which made it possible." ■







Part of the remaining IBEW crew at Brockton Hospital, along with Local 223 **Business** Manager Steve Barry, at left, and his retired predecessor. Doug Nelson, at right.



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Intensified Organizing Pays Off as IBEW Grows in Canada

he First District's increased emphasis on organizing throughout Canada earned several honors at the Membership Development Conference in Chicago in August, including largest overall growth during the last year.

The district added 2,907 members between Aug. 1, 2023, and July 31, 2024, the most of any of the IBEW's 11 districts. It also added the most BA members during that period, with 481. BA members typically work for a single employer with negotiated pension and benefits.

During the last two years, the First District has added about 4,900 members throughout Canada, increasing overall membership to about 67,000 after several years of declining numbers.

First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk noted that 46 signatory contractors were added in the construction branch during the last year, which is primarily composed of A members. Twelve new units earned representation in the professional and industrial, or P&I, sector, which is primarily composed of BA members.

"To me, a big part of organizing is about bringing more contractors into the fold," Shewchuk said. "That provides more market share and gives new contractors a chance to expand their business and put our brothers and sisters to work."

The First District also was recognized for being one of seven districts that exceeded 4% in A membership growth and one of two districts that exceeded 1% growth in BA membership.

Shewchuk saluted Canadian local unions for buying into the increased organizing efforts, which were instituted just after his election at the 2022 International Convention.

All construction locals were required to meet with at least five contractors within their jurisdiction and hire a full-time field organizer providing information to his or her business manager.

The district office conducts an audit every six months to see what trends can be taken advantage of. It instituted an annual First District Membership Development Conference in addition to the one held by the International Office.

On the P&I side, local unions and the district office have made online registration available at many employers, especially in government.

"We made every possible effort to reach out to them and get them to sign up electronically instead of chasing them all over the country." Shewchuk said.

First District International Representative Mark Watson, a leader in the push, said organizers did a good

job taking advantage of a strong Canadian economy.

"Some of the major centers in Canada, particularly Toronto, Vancouver and Ottawa, are very busy," Watson said. "There's a lot of work. ... But you still have to do the work. Knock on doors, hit those jobsites, and show those people a path to the IBEW."

Jim Lofty, business manager of Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213, said a strong economy and the provincial and federal governments using union labour on large projects have been good news for his members.

St. Paul's Hospital is building a massive new facility in Vancouver. Local 213 successfully organized Plan Group, a contractor on the project. Plan has a large presence in Ontario and Alberta, but this was one of its first major projects in British Columbia. Local 213 also recently wrapped up an organizing blitz in the city of Kelowna in the province's southern interior.

Local 213 also has a substantial amount of P&I members. It has added members in gas utilities and telecom,

"P&I is part of who we are, and it's just as key," Lofty said. "It creates that diversity in your membership. You're adding more women workers, younger workers and Indigenous workers. BA groups can create more consistency for a local, whereas construction groups are more cyclical."

While the numbers are worth celebrating, Shewchuk cautioned that the work is far from finished.

"Contractors are opening up to us more, and they're willing to sit down and build relationships going forward,"

First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk. right, with International Secretary-Treasurer Paul Noble as the First District was honored during the Membership Development Conference.



Share your IBEW news!

IBEW Canada is seeking impactful stories from local unions and members. Please contact Shaina Hardie at Shaina_Hardie@ibew.org.

La FIOE célèbre la croissance du **Premier District**

'est avec le doublement des efforts de l'organisation syndicale partout au Canada que le Premier District a reçu plusieurs mentions d'honneur lors de la Conférence sur la croissance de l'affiliation syndicale à Chicago en août; notamment, la plus haute croissance globale au cours de la dernière année.

2 907 membres se sont ajoutés au district entre le 1er août 2023 et le 31 juillet 2024, la plus forte augmentation de tous les 11 districts de la FIOE. Il a aussi accueilli le plus grand nombre de membres BA au cours de cette période, on en compte 481. Les membres BA essentiellement travaillent pour un seul employeur et bénéficient d'un fonds de pension et des avantages sociaux.

Au cours des deux dernières années, le Premier District a accueilli environ 4 900 membres de partout au Canada; après plusieurs années de déclin, on compte maintenant 67 ooo membres.

Au cours de la dernière année, le vice-président international du Premier District, Russ Shewchuk, souligne que 46 entrepreneurs signataires ont été ajoutés dans le secteur de la construction, composés principalement de membres A. Douze nouvelles unités sont maintenant représentées par le secteur du professionnel et industriel, ou P&I, composées principalement des membres BA.

« La plus grande partie, pour moi, est de compter plus d'entrepreneurs. Ceci permet d'avoir une meilleure représentativité et donne la chance aux entrepreneurs d'augmenter la taille de leurs entreprises et de créer des emplois pour nos consœurs et confrères.»

Le Premier District a également été reconnu comme l'un des sept districts d'avoir une croissance des membres A de plus de 4 % et l'un des deux districts d'avoir une croissance des membres BA de plus de 1 %.

M. Shewchuk a félicité les sections locales canadiennes d'avoir pris l'engagement d'adopter les efforts de syndicalisation; instaurés juste après son élection en 2022 au Congrès international.

Toutes les sections locales de la construction étaient tenues de rencontrer au moins cinq entrepreneurs dans leur territoire et d'embaucher une organisatrice syndicale ou un organisateur syndical à temps plein pour fournir les informations à leurs gérants d'affaires.

Le bureau du district effectue une vérification tous les six mois pour déterminer quelles tendances peuvent être appliquées. Une Conférence sur la croissance de l'affiliation syndicale du Premier District a maintenant lieu tous les ans, en plus de celle organisée par le Bureau international.

Du côté du P&I, les sections locales et le bureau du district ont mis en place un système d'inscription en ligne auprès de plusieurs employeurs, en particulier au gouvernement.

« Nous avons tout fait pour essayer de communiquer avec eux et de rendre l'inscription par voie électronique possible au lieu de courir après eux partout au pays », déclare M. Shewchuk.

Le représentant international du Premier District, Mark Watson, un leader dans cette lancée, mentionne que les organisatrices et les organisateurs ont fait un bon travail en profitant de la forte économie canadienne.

« Certains endroits principaux au Canada, en particulier à Toronto, à Vancouver et à Ottawa, sont très occupés », mentionne M. Watson. « Il y a beaucoup d'ouvrages. [...] mais vous devez quand même fournir des efforts; cogner aux portes, visiter les chantiers et leur montrer la voie vers la FIOE. »

Le gérant d'affaires de la section locale 213 à Vancouver, en Colombie-Britannique, Jim Lofty, partage avec nous que la forte économie ainsi que les gouvernements provincial et fédéral qui ont fait appel à la main-d'œuvre syndiquée sur les gros projets a été une bonne nouvelle pour ses membres.

L'hôpital St. Paul est en train de bâtir un nouvel établissement massif à Vancouver. Le local 213 a syndiqué Plan Group, un entrepreneur sur le projet. Ce groupe a une forte présence en Ontario et en Alberta, et ce projet, est l'un de leur plus grand en Colombie-Britannique. Le local 213 a récemment terminé une campagne syndicale à Kelowna, dans le sud de la province.

Le local 213 compte également un nombre considérable de membres du secteur du P&I. Le local a aussi ajouté des membres dans le secteur de distribution de gaz et des télécommunications, exprime M. Lofty.

« Le P&I fait partie de notre identité et il est tout aussi essentiel », déclare M. Lofty. On y trouve plus de travailleuses, plus de jeunes travailleurs et plus des travailleurs autochtones. Le groupe BA donne une meilleure stabilité au local, alors que les groupes de construction sont plutôt cycliques. »

Même si les chiffres méritent d'être célébrés, M. Shewchuk nous informe que le travail est loin d'être

«Les entrepreneurs s'ouvrent davantage à nous et ils sont prêts à créer des liens », prononce M. Shewchuk.

Racontez-nous vos nouvelles FIOE!

La FIOE cherche des histoires marquantes des sections locales et des membres. Veuillez communiquer avec Shaina Hardie à Shaina_Hardie@ibew.org.

CIRCUITS

Chicago Member Has Trained Thousands of First Responders on Electrical Safety

IBEW expertise covers just about every aspect of the electrical industry, and sharing some of that knowledge is one way members give back to their communities. For firefighters and other first responders in Illinois, it's the safety training from Chicago Local 134's Robert Hattier that they keep asking for.

"He's saved countless lives through all his training, and I have the firefighter testimonials to prove it," said Local 134 Business Manager Don Finn, who also represents the Fifth District on the International Executive Council. "We should sing it from the mountaintops."

Hattier, a Local 134 business representative and executive director of the Illinois IBEW Renewable Energy Fund, has over 20 years of experience in the industry. He shares that knowledge — on topics including solar electricity, energy storage and electric vehicle technology — with firefighters and other first responders, as well as building inspectors and other officials.

Demand for the classes has only grown over the nearly 10 years he's been offering them, Hattier said, in part due to the increase in solar energy use spurred by Illinois' 2018 plan to have 25% of its energy come from renewable sources by 2025. That plan followed a law passed in 2016 with backing from the IBEW.

"The only way the energy transition will be successful is if all industry stakeholders are trained and prepared for the technologies being deployed on our houses, buildings, communities, fields and roadways," Hattier said. "I am honored to have the opportunity to do my part to make that happen."

The main focus of the training, which began as an hourlong class in 2015, is on hazard awareness and effective mitigation strategies. A first responder dealing with an emergency at a solar-powered building or home

Chicago Local
134's Robert
Hattier has been
teaching
firefighters and
other first
responders the
basics of electrical
safety for nearly
10 years, with a
focus on solar,
energy storage
and electric
vehicles.





might encounter inhalation exposure, electrical shock and burns, a roof collapse, chemical spills from batteries or even battery reignition.

These fires can also take roughly 10,000 gallons of water to deal with, which not all trucks have.

"Firefighters and other first responders are the ones who have to interact with these systems when they are in their most hazardous states," Hattier said. "The inclusion of solar and battery storage systems in and on buildings complicates the fire response regardless of the cause of the fire."

to four hours — depending in part on how many questions Hattier gets — and also cover industry best practices and relevant codes.

"Responders should know as much as possible about what they're walking into," Hattier said. "The more information they have, the more they can make sure their teams are safe."

To date, Hattier has trained over 3,000 firefighters and first responders at more than 100 fire departments. He's also presented at several fire industry events.

And it's all through word of mouth. Fire departments operate in mutual aid networks, Hattier said, so when he trains one, colleagues in the network often reach out for training.

"It's the best sign that it's a good training," he said.

There are also the testimonials from attendees, like those who attended a recent training at Alton Local 649.

"It was fantastic. We had a parking lot full of fire trucks," Local 649 Assistant Business Manager Ryan Mouser said. "There's not enough of him to go around for what he does."

Mouser said they had about 70 firefighters and first responders attend over the three days the training was offered. It was so popular, in fact, that some attendees asked if they could come back for a second session.

"I had one fireman pull me aside and tell me that they go through a lot of training, and this was the most informative they've gotten," Mouser said. train-the-trainer class to allow more members and locals to offer their own training. In the meantime, he said, locals should feel free to follow his example.

"For anyone else who's interested in offering trainings like these, I'd say to start by reaching out to your local fire departments, find out what concerns they have and ask if they have responded to any events involving these technologies. Then invite them to your training centers," he said.

'I Want Everyone to Know' Baltimore Local Keeps a High Profile Outside the Jobsite

Just about everyone who's toured Baltimore Local 24's training facility walks away impressed. As with any IBEW local, it's a site for excellence. But not everyone in the community knows that — at least not yet.

"The average person has no idea that we operate in the backgrounds of their lives every single day," said Dave Springham, training coordinator for Local 24's JATC. "We want people to know that we offer a fantastic career choice for them, if this is the path they choose."

Local 24 used to be much more of an industrial local, Business Manager Mike McHale said. The work was "behind a fence," out of the view of anyone not employed there. But that's not the case anymore, and McHale, along with his team, are making their mark on jobsites and at community events, local government meetings and anywhere

"He was incredibly thankful. This really shines a big, positive light on Brother Hattier, and on the IBEW." There are other sources for similar

training for first responders, but those tend to be online only, Hattier said.

"We have a conversation with

them. We answer whatever questions they have. Sometimes they'll go off topic, ask about other energy concerns, and we'll address those too," he said.

An in-person training also opens a dialogue between the IBEW and the fire departments, Hattier noted.

"They know that this is what we do, that we're the experts," he said. "An additional benefit of this training is that fire departments will now reach out when they have any questions regarding electrical systems."

Hattier is working on a



Demand for the classes has only grown, in part due to the increase in solar energy use spurred by Illinois' 2018 plan to have 25% of its energy come from renewable sources by 2025.



Baltimore Local 24 Business Manager Mike McHale, pictured second from the left with members from Rosendin Electric, is leading an effort to make the IBEW a household name in Maryland.

else they can.

"We're taking every opportunity we can to increase our exposure," said McHale, a 40-year member from south Baltimore. "I want everyone to know what 'IBEW' stands for."

Local 24 does a lot of work with area vocational schools, as well as those with more college-bound students, and its staff make sure to attend career fairs throughout the area. But McHale has also made a push to get into the rooms where decisions affecting the local are made, so now there's someone from the local on every workforce development board in the jurisdiction.

"There are a lot of opportunities there. The work of these boards coincides with and impacts our industry," Local 24 Business Agent Jon McLaughlin said. "It lets us be a part of the conversation."

Rico Albacarys, a Local 24 membership development representative. got the workforce board he sits on to expand a program that offers financial assistance to college-bound students to include those entering the trades. He also pushed for higher standards on a program to offer course credit to students for doing certain types of work, ensuring that the students get valuable career experience and aren't just being used as cheap labor.

"They talk about apprenticeships, but rarely has anyone on the board actually been in one," Albacarys said. "A lot of money is allotted through these boards. It should go to programs that actually lead to a career."

Local 24's influence extends to the statehouse. Sen. Cory McCray is the local's vice president and a business development representative. He's one of less than 2% of the General Assembly with a blue-collar background and the only member who has completed a registered apprenticeship.

"I occupy a unique space that allows me to bridge the gap between the needs of working families and the legislative process," said McCray, who's serving in his second term. "I have both the opportunity and the responsibility to advocate effectively for apprentice-



Baltimore Local 24 hosted a camp for girls run by the National Association of Women in Construction in August, something the local has been doing for the past few years. It's part of a larger effort by the local to increase its footprint in the community.

ships and working-family issues."

One significant accomplishment of McCray's has been mandating that state-funded projects meeting a certain financial threshold are required to hire apprentices. He's also pushed for grant programs and tax credits for employers that hire apprentices from areas in Baltimore and across the state with a poverty concentration of at least 20%.

In addition to his legislative victories, the Baltimore native partners with area organizations to organize trade and apprenticeship tours for high school juniors and seniors. Over the last five years, McCray and his partners have brought more than 500 students to various apprenticeship programs, providing them with real-life examples and the opportunity to see people who look like them thriving in the trades.

"Cory is a good example for a lot of reasons of what a person can do," McHale said. "He never forgets where he came from."

The students McCray brings to Local 24 are just one example of the busloads of people who tour the local and training facility. Civic leaders come visit on a regular basis. The overwhelming response, Springham said, is surprise.

"Most people don't realize how comprehensive the training is, how impactful it is to people's lives," Albacarys said.

Visitors are also surprised that Local 24, like IBEW apprenticeships across the country, requires no public funding to operate.

"They see the investment we make in ourselves and our future and that we ask nothing in return but to stay and work as an IBEW member," Springham said.

One of the goals of Local 24 is to

recruit more women. As part of this effort, it recently hosted a camp for girls run by the National Association of Women in Construction. And in each of the past four years, the local has broken its record for the number of women starting their apprenticeship.

"It's still not enough, but it shows that the word is getting out to applicants — and their parents — that this is a great training and employment opportunity for young women," he said.

In addition to NAWIC, Local 24 has strong relationships with area community colleges and organizations like SkillsUSA, a workforce development organization for students, and ELECTRI International, which was established by NECA to promote educational and consulting programs.

"Now we have teachers sending students to us instead of the nonunion side," McHale said.

Whether it's students, women, citizens returning from incarceration or anyone else from their jurisdiction, Local 24 is leaving no stone unturned and building up its brand as the premier place to go for the best electrical training and a ticket to the middle class.

"We want everyone in our communities to know our organization is here and that they can be a part of it," Springham said. "Age, gender, race, education level, checkered background, none of that matters. If you're ready for a career, to get your hands dirty and give your contractor eight hours' work for eight hours' pay, we want you to be a part of the JATC and Local 24."



Local 24 apprentices participated in the IDEAL competition in May, hosted at the local's JATC. Pictured, from left: Fredrick Wilkes, George Kiama and John Wontrop.



ORGANIZING WIRE

PERSISTENCE

Illinois Manufacturing Workers Win Multiyear Fight for First Contract

n arduous five-year campaign to achieve IBEW representation is successful at last for the more than 160 men and women who work at a Conagra cooking spray manufacturing plant in eastern Illinois, after they ratified a collective bargaining agreement between Danville Local 538 and the North American food conglomerate.

Most of their struggle, though, hadn't been with Conagra, which completed its purchase of the factory only a couple of months earlier.

"The initial conversations with Conagra, before even getting to the bargaining table, were a breath of fresh air," said Local 538 Business Manager Aaron Goodrum.

Rather, campaign organizers agreed that most of the problems stemmed from the oppressive opposition to unionization of the previous owner, Full-Fill Industries, a family-owned company founded in the village of Henning in 1999.

A string of factory closures left Full-Fill one of a few area employers, with workers relating stories of sweat-shop-style working conditions, draconian management, low pay and rapid turnover. In 2019, a majority of fed-up Full-Fill workers voted to organize with Local 538.

The company's managers, though, refused to bargain for a first contract and even withdrew recognition of Local 538 a year later.



Commitment and persistence helped oppressed workers at an eastern Illinois Conagra plant, pictured here when it was still owned by Full-Fill Industries, successfully organize with Danville Local 538 and ratify a first contract.

the unionizing campaign from the start, along with Etchason and Director of Professional/Industrial Organizing Joe DiMichele, then an international lead organizer.

"The employees at Full-Fill stuck together," DiMichele said. "I am so proud of them all for moving forward and never stepping back." (Read more in The Electrical Worker's August 2020 and April 2022 editions.)

Then earlier this year, organizers saw signs of change at the company.

acknowledged the Full-Fill workers' struggles. "They said, 'We have no intentions of continuing the same style.' It was a complete 180 kind of shift."

The sale was official July 1, and the parties quickly scheduled bargaining for August. "On our third meeting, we reached a tentative agreement," said Goodrum, marveling at how smoothly things had gone.

"More than once, I said to my colleagues, 'Do you remember the show "Punk'd"?" he said. "I feel like I'm on that show in some of these meetings, like I'm waiting for someone in a corner to say, 'Gotcha!"

The workers ratified a three-year agreement with annual wage increases, grievance procedures and more.

Another benefit of the Conagra acquisition is that it's helped Local 538 capture previously nonunion wire work at the plant. "Once Conagra was established, they realized that a lot of systems updating needed to take place," Etchason said.

"They had some contractors come in for quotes," Goodrum added. "One of our signatory contractors got the job and hired additional help out of our hall. It's opened the door for us to get in the facility and show them what we can do."

More work for Local 538 could be on the way for manufacturers and wiremen, he said, as Conagra assesses expansion opportunities. "I'm excited to see how it progresses here in the coming years."

The IBEW's team acknowledged all the work and sacrifice that led to these achievements.

"It was a 'one day longer' thing. We kept saying to them, 'We keep winning, we've won everything we filed,'" Arwood said.

"It shows how important it is to be committed, to be persistent," Etchason added

IBEW Manufacturing Director

Brian Lamm agreed. "It also spotlights that when the IBEW and workers persist, we win," he said.

Goodrum also noted the "ton of help" for the campaign by the Sixth District and the International Office.

"This would not have happened without the dedication of Local 538," DiMichele added.

"To finally see it come to a close and to be set, it makes you feel good," Goodrum said.

GETTING CREATIVE

Rhode Island Local Organizes Charter School Teachers

ob descriptions for a telecom worker and a teacher don't have much in common, but both have a right to be heard at work.

That's what faculty and staff at Highlander Charter Elementary School have now, thanks to Cranston, R.I., Local 2323, which has a long history as a telecommunications local.

"What it all comes down to is the IBEW is the best at representing people," said Regional Organizing Coordinator Steve Smith, who worked with school staff on their recent successful organizing drive.

There's a lot to like about Highlander, said Claribel Mejia and Michaela Wnuk, two faculty members who served as the drive's lead organizers. It's a community school with small class sizes that takes a one-student-at-a-time approach. Their own children and family members are enrolled at Highlander, which is in the state capital of Providence.

The school was named in honor of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, which has deep roots in the Civil Rights Movement and labor organizing. It encourages students to serve

as catalysts for social change and work for a just society.

Unfortunately, the administration wasn't practicing those principals in dealings with its own employees.

"Highlander teaches its students to use their voices, to be a part of social justice, but that wasn't happening for us," said Wnuk, a math specialist who has taught at the school since 2007. "We just wanted to be heard and recognized, too."

Wnuk and her colleagues had concerns about the school's calendar and how the day's schedule was structured. Other logistical decisions were being made without their input. Concerns they expressed were going nowhere.

"The administration would let them talk, then do nothing about it," Smith said. "There was a real reduction in their quality of life."

Mejia and Wnuk initially reached out to the teachers' unions and other unions in their area, but eventually decided to go with the IBEW. The Second District counts other nontraditional workers among its ranks, but this is the first group of educators to join Local 2323, which primarily represents Verizon employees.

"This win speaks to the tenacity of our organizers in the Second District," Local 2323 Business Manager Chris Buffery said. "It's a real testament to Steve and his team."

With limited organizing opportunities in New England's telecommunications industry, locals have had to adapt when it comes to organizing, Second District International Vice President Mike Monahan said.

Smith has really stepped up to the plate, he said. In addition to Highlander, he's organized community college professors, mental health therapists, Democratic Party campaign workers and animal control officers, among other nontraditional groups.

"To finally see [contract talks] come to a close and to be set, it makes you feel good."

- Danville, Ill., Local 538 Business Manager Aaron Goodrum

"They hoped we'd lose interest and walk away from bargaining," said Shad Etchason, the Sixth District international representative who services Local 538.

Refusing to go anywhere, the IBEW filed several unfair labor practice charges against Full-Fill with the National Labor Relations Board. At the time, the board was stacked 3-1 with anti-unionists appointed by President Donald Trump, and it sided with the company.

Union activists kept the organizing campaign alive, and in 2021, they testified before an administrative law judge against Full-Fill's efforts to decertify the IBEW.

The following year, the judge ordered Full-Fill to recognize Local 538. By then, the NLRB had its current pro-worker majority, thanks to President Joe Biden's appointments, and the board upheld the judge's ruling.

"We wouldn't have won those hearings if those workers didn't step up and testify," said Lynn Arwood, a Sixth District who was involved with "Things in late spring slowed down," Etchason said. "We weren't getting a lot of responses from Full-Fill."

"We'd reached a tentative agreement with them on several things," Goodrum said. "We were getting down to basically the economic stuff, but we were still far apart."

Management representatives from Full-Fill and Conagra in June told the plant's workers about the coming sale.

"The same day, I got a call from [Conagra's] labor relations team, letting me know that this is getting ready to happen, and 'we're going to get right into negotiations,'" said Goodrum, who had worked closely on the campaign under former Local 538 Business Manager Mike Arbuckle.

"They said, 'We want to get it wrapped up, make some food, make some money and start a good relationship," Goodrum said. About half of Conagra's plants in North America are union facilities, he said, and close to two-thirds of its workers belong to unions.

Conagra's labor relations people

TRANSITIONS



Teachers and other staff at Highlander Charter Elementary School voted overwhelmingly to join Cranston, R.I., Local 2323 in August. It's the first such group of workers for the local but not the first nontraditional unit in the Second District, where the IBEW has been making inroads with a variety of workers.

"Steve Smith is the best communicator I have ever met, which is why he is so successful at organizing," Monahan said. "Thanks in large part to Steve, the IBEW's reputation across our district's six states has drawn the interest of workers outside our core industries because they know we can give them job security and a voice in their future."

For Mejia and Wnuk, Local 2323 was where they felt most welcome and where they knew they were being listened to.

"We hit it off right away," said Mejia, a behavior specialist who has worked at Highlander for 10 years. "They let us guide the conversation and empowered us as the experts."

The first organizing attempt at the school came in 2019 and fell short by just one vote. The COVID-19 pandemic hit, slowing the effort and causing "absolute chaos," Smith said. But he stayed in touch with Mejia and Wnuk, and all three decided to try again when the time was right.

That came last year, when conditions around the school started to deteriorate and other staff kept coming to Mejia and Wnuk to see what could be done. Pay freezes and layoffs were instituted this year, along with a change in Highlander's leadership.

And unlike the previous drive, when employees had to contend with an intense anti-union campaign from the school, the teachers and other staff weren't buying it this time around.

No one attended the anti-union meetings, Mejia and Wnuk both said. The union busters were sent home early.

"We knew we had each other's backs," Mejia said. "We all wanted the same thing, which is to make the school better for the teachers as well as the students."

The vote was held Aug. 24, and 88% of the unit voted in favor. That success is because of the commitment of Mejia and Wnuk, Smith said.

"You talk about a force. They were phenomenal," he said. "I wouldn't

things better at Highlander, and the IBEW gave us the guidance and the legal framework to make that happen," Mejia said. Wnuk and Mejia said they'd like

to see other charter schools organize with the IBEW.

'Steve let us know that there's a seat for us, too, where we're the experts and the IBEW gives us the voice we deserve," Wnuk said.

Giving voice to workers is something Local 2323 is known for, said labor lawyer Marc Gursky, who worked with the local on the organizing drive.

"As a lawyer who represents a lot of different unions, I can say that charter school teachers are just like other workers," Gursky said. "They have no concern for rules about jurisdiction. They want a strong union to fight for them, and Local 2323 has a reputation as a fighting union.

"The IBEW is a great choice for non-public-school teachers because it can bring its private-sector organizing and bargaining skills and, if necessary, picket line experience to the charter school industry," he added. "I think that's why Highlander staff chose the IBEW."

Wnuk and Mejia said staff morale has improved and teachers are more comfortable speaking out. They're hopeful that when they get their first contract, they'll be able to make the school more competitive with other districts on pay, and a place where teachers want to be.

Now, they've got the IBEW by their

"We're going to be with them every step of the way," Smith said. "I have complete trust in them."

"Steve let us know that there's a seat for us, too, where we're the experts and the IBEW gives us the voice we deserve."

– Michaela Wnuk, math specialist

want to be on the other side of them."

Mejia and Wnuk credit Smith and the rest of the IBEW team with giving them the tools they needed to get over the finish line.

"We know what to do to make

DECEASED

Walter "Steve" Ray



Retired Ninth District International Representative Walter "Steve" Ray, who went from wiring space shuttle and spy satellite systems to bringing in hundreds of new IBEW members, died on Aug. 12. He was 74.

Ray was a lifelong member of Santa Barbara, Calif., Local 413, following his father into the Brotherhood with his initiation in 1969.

"Our father's endearment to the IBEW was ingrained in us from Day 1," said Ray's brother, Beau, who also became a member of Local 413.

After topping out in 1972, Steve Ray worked as a journeyman wireman with his IBEW brothers and sisters — occasionally as a general foreman and often with Beau-as a traveler, as well as on drilling rigs near Santa Barbara, at the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant and at what was then Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Since the 1950s, the U.S. Air Force has tested missiles and launched spacecraft for numerous customers and missions — including spy satellites for the U.S. military — from Vandenberg, now under the jurisdiction of the Space Force. By the 1980s, construction was fully underway to build a second Space Shuttle preparation, launch and landing site there, and Local 413 members could be found working all over the site.

"The first time I was given a chance to work with my brother, I found myself 13 floors up working on the underside of a platform as his welder's helper," Beau Ray said. "It was an exciting time."

Bert Gamble, who also worked on projects at Vandenberg and elsewhere with the Ray brothers, considered both lifelong friends. "I moved to Local 413 to get into an apprenticeship, and I didn't know anybody," he said. "The Rays took me in, and I became family. They just taught me so much."

Steve Ray also was a popular host. "Sometimes after work, I'd go right over to Steve's house," said Local 413 President Chuck Huddleston.

"Steve was just a blast to be with and had respect everywhere we went," Beau

"To Steve, it wasn't just a job, learning to be an electrician. There was more to it."

- Reno, Nevada, Local 401's Bert Gamble

After the Challenger disaster in 1986 halted NASA's aspirations for a West Coast shuttle base, the Ray brothers traveled some more. "The true meaning of brotherhood always shone brightest among our traveling brothers and sisters,"

Getting more active with Local 413, Steve Ray served on its JATC and as an organizer. In 1992, he was elected business manager.

"Steve was a true trade unionist. He got it and understood it," Huddleston said. "He truly cared."

In 1997, Ray was appointed by International President J.J. Barry to be an international representative with the Ninth District, which has a jurisdiction that includes California.

Huddleston noted that Barry quickly assigned Ray to represent the IBEW in the Building Trades Organizing Project, a multi-union pilot project to organize workers in Las Vegas who were helping to support that city's massive construction boom. Thanks in part to Ray's dedication and hard work, the BTOP effort brought nearly 7,000 tradesmen and tradeswomen into the IBEW and other unions.

Ray eventually returned to California to service locals in the central part of the state, overseeing numerous organizing campaigns, assisting with negotiations toward first contracts and contract extensions, and handling grievances.

"To Steve, it wasn't just a job, learning to be an electrician," said Gamble, who retired from the IBEW as a member of Reno, Nevada, Local 401. "There was

"He would help anybody," Beau Ray added.

Steve Ray also served for several years as president of the building trades for Santa Barbara and San Louis Obispo counties, and he consulted on a local government program that connected Santa Barbara residents with job opportunities.

After retiring in 2011, Ray remained a member of Elks Lodge 1538, and he spent his free time honing his interests in hunting, home improvement and maintaining his Jeep.

"He was just an amazing fabricator," Beau Ray said. "He had a full fab shop in the garage and built parts and bumpers and whatever else."

TRANSITIONS continued on page 14



A Fond Remembrance

Dale Townsend was a senior in high school in 1971 when St. Mark CME Church in Joliet, Illinois, offered him an opportunity to go to a youth retreat. At the youth retreat, there was a roundtable discussion about what everyone aspired to be/do after graduation.

Dale said he wanted to be an electrician, but he did not know how to make that happen. One young man at the church retreat spoke up and said, "My dad is a business agent with IBEW Local 176 in Joliet. I will speak to him about you taking the test and beginning apprenticeship training to be an electrician."

Dale passed the test, completed apprenticeship training and successfully became a journeyman electrician. What a blessing to the family! Dale retired in 2004.

He wrote a book called "Someone Needs To" because that is what he always said. Unfortunately, he passed on Sept. 4, 18 days before his book arrived. Dale fought courageously with heart failure, diabetes and two amputations. He will be fondly remembered as always smiling and always telling jokes.

> Debralee Townsend Joliet, Ill.

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

TRANSITIONS continued

The Ray brothers' families also continued taking regular vacations along the 22-mile Rubicon Trail in the Sierra Nevada mountain range.

"Steve was great with my boys and so proud that they got in the trade," said Beau Ray, whose sons Jake and Benton are Local 413 journeyman wiremen. "He was also great with our family as our parents got older. We would be barbecuing with them almost every weekend."

"Steve was always a great friend, always there for you," said Gamble. "He just was all brotherhood."

Please join the IBEW's officers and staff as we send our deepest condolences to Ray's wife, Carol, and their family members and many friends.

RETIRED

Gary R. Griffin



Almost immediately after Gary Griffin joined the Baltimore Local 24 apprenticeship in 1980, he was pretty sure he made a mistake.

"I was making \$4.44 an hour, and most of my buddies worked at Bethlehem

Steel making \$13 an hour," he said. "But my father said: 'Stay put. Bide your time.' There was no reason to think a few years later the mill would close and they'd be out of work. It was one of the few times I listened to him, and it really paid off."

After 44 years as a member and 45 working under an IBEW contract, Brother Griffin, an international representative for the Fourth District, retired Nov. 1.

In 1978, when Griffin first applied for the apprenticeship, Baltimore was like many American cities, with a large industrial base. In Baltimore, it centered on Sparrows Point, home to Bethlehem Steel, the tens of thousands of people who lived and worked nearby, and the industry that supported and fed off its products.

One of his first jobs was installing the 68-inch hot strip mill at Bethlehem. But by 1985, that work slowed, and downtown Baltimore was changing. Like many IBEW members of his generation, Griffin worked through the long dismantling of the industrial American city. He worked on the famed Baltimore Aquarium and Camden Yards — home of the Baltimore Orioles — from the first day to the last, and many hospitals in the city and the suburbs.

"We always did commercial work," he said. "We just did a lot more."

Griffin said he never set out to run for office, let alone rise to the loftiest heights of the union.

"It was happenstance," he said. "In apprenticeship, there were four or five of us who volunteered for everything. We did phone banks and door knocking, and after we would go out and ... celebrate. It was fun. It was friends."

While he was working at a powerhouse in 1989, some of the older journeymen on the job were officers. They told him and his friends that they should make the jump from volunteer to officer.

"The examining board is the lowest office there is, and I was asked by a guy who was running for business manager to run. He lost and all 13 other officers on the ticket won," Griffin said.

He liked it and was good at. He won a seat on the executive board in 1995 and stayed there for a decade. In 1998, he came into the office, eventually taking the job of referral agent. He was elected vice president in 2001 and then president in 2005. By 2007, he was Business Manager Jim Kaufman's closest aide. When Kaufman was appointed to the Fourth District office, Griffin decided to run. It was a three-way race, and he won, but at a cost.

"The politics were confrontational at the local. It wasn't driven by policy or where people lived or what they did. It was factions and personality. Nothing else," he said.

He said his proudest achievement was navigating the pension fund through the shoals of the Great Recession. He led negotiations for a much better contract, giving the local room to increase support to the pension.

"In 2008, the pension took a 24% hit overnight. The annuity fund was just sitting there. We took a dollar out and put it in the pension and repaid it with a quarter out of the annual \$1 raises we negotiated," he said. "We caught the market coming back, repaid the annuity, the pension fund is stable, and the health fund is doing great. And all within that one agreement."

In 2010, his two opponents combined into a single ticket. He lost and went back to the tools for the first time in a dozen years. But even though he was out, he still went to union meetings and tried to lower the temperature in the local.

When the next election rolled up in 2013, he ran again. This time he won, and Griffin was reelected again in 2016.

Griffin served on the National Training Institute Advisory Committee and the Electrical Training Alliance Core Curriculum Committee and was vice president of the Maryland and District of Columbia AFL-CIO, where he sat on the COPE committee. He was vice president at the Baltimore Metro Council AFL-CIO and served as a member of the community service board.

"In apprenticeship, there were four or five of us who volunteered for everything. We did phone banks and door knocking, and after we would go out and ... celebrate. It was fun. It was friends."

–Gary Griffin

In 2017, Fourth District International Vice President Brian Malloy asked Griffin to accept the role of international representative and desk rep. He held that position for both Malloy and current district International Vice President Gina Cooper.

"Gary's attention to detail and eagerness to help make projects successful will be missed. Gary loves his family, especially his grandchildren, and I could not be happier for him entering this next chapter of life," Cooper said.

Griffin said he and wife, Josie, have no great travel plans for retirement but plenty of local trips.

"I have five grandkids within 15 minutes," he said. "I've also been playing golf for years, and I still suck. I'd like to improve."

Please join the officers and staff of the IBEW wishing Brother Griffin a long, healthy retirement surrounded by family where every drive lands squarely on the green.

RETIRED

CJ King



International Representative CJ King, a former member of the Eleventh District staff who played a key role in the Education Department in the last 15 years, retired Sept. 1.

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Brother

King took a circuitous route to the Brotherhood. On a lark, he traveled with some friends to Southern California just after his high school graduation.

"We just wanted to learn to surf and tan and become a beautiful person," he said. "There was no plan whatsoever."

Rent had to be paid, however, and King landed a nonunion job at California's San Onofre nuclear power plant as a radiation protection aide.

He stayed there for several months before returning to Massachusetts, where he began working as a radiation protection technician. He traveled the country helping nuclear plants safely go through refueling shutdowns.

It was another nonunion position, and King, with a growing family, decided after nine years that he didn't want to spend so much time on the road. Thus, he accepted a position at the Fort Calhoun nuclear plant just north of Omaha, Neb., and the family moved to the Cornhusker State in 1989.

The plant's employees were represented by Omaha Local 1483, but membership was not mandatory in a so-called right-to-work state. King joined Local 1483 in 1990, when he realized he was being shortchanged overtime pay that was called for in the collective bargaining agreement and the local helped him recover it.

"I just felt that it was not right to be a freeloader," he said. "You gain a benefit, you pay for it."

Not long after, he attended his first union meeting. It was being held just as contract negotiations were about to begin with the Omaha Power District, the plant's owner.

"I went to yell and scream at the business manager about how he wasn't doing a good job, even though I had never been to a meeting before," King said. "He told me what they were trying to accomplish, and I thought, 'This makes sense.'

"That's when I got involved."

He soon became a steward and earned a spot on the local's executive board. He was elected business manager in 1994 and reelected three years later. It wasn't a full-time position, and King continued to work at Fort Calhoun.

In 1999, he joined the Eleventh District staff as an international representative servicing professional and industrial local unions. He later branched into organizing and served as membership coordinator for the Sixth and Eleventh districts.

"I needed somebody with that kind of experience, in both utility and nuclear, and CJ was that man," said Bill Eads, who was Eleventh District international vice president at that time. "We got him aboard, and he was a really good international rep and an all-around good guy."

For his part, King said he enjoyed traveling again and working with members face to face. He led successful organizing drives at Black Hills Energy and Bodine Electric Co., both in lowa.

"I enjoyed the interaction with people, and it felt so good when you were able to change lives," he said

He's best known by younger IBEW activists for his work in the Education Department, which he joined as an international representative in 2009. King has traveled the country leading training for P&I organizers, stewards and business managers.

"I just loved working with members," King said. "It was great to work with leaders and to spend time with the rank-and-file membership. When I did the stewards and Code of Excellence training, that really was the best."

Education Director Amanda Pacheco said with a laugh that she did everything she could to keep him from retiring.

"It's impossible for me to express what an amazing brother CJ is, was and always will be," added Pacheco, who has served in her role since 2013. "When I came into this job, I had a lot to learn, and he taught me so much. I've always told CJ that I'll put his institutional knowledge against anyone in our union."

for me to express what an amazing brother CJ is, was and always will be. When I came into this job, I had a lot to learn, and he taught me so much. I've always told CJ that I'll put his institutional knowledge against anyone in our union.'

– Education Director Amanda Pacheco

King has long been active in politics. He is chairman of the Douglas County Democratic Party — which includes Omaha — and attended his fifth Democratic National Convention as a delegate in August.

In retirement, he plans to continue to live in Omaha with his partner, Kim Macias, and spend additional time with his four children and four grandchildren while also doing some traveling. He has also volunteered to speak to groups about labor history and the importance of the IBEW and other unions.

Despite leaving New England many years ago, he remains an avid fan of Boston sports teams.

CJ stands for Clarence Joseph. King said he didn't particularly care for his first name during his younger years, so he asked friends to call him CJ.

"I loved the work that I did, and I really struggled with retiring," he said. "I've been eligible to retire for about seven years. But it's time for a younger person to come in, and hopefully they'll have the same opportunities I've had."

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

LOCAL LINES

Greetings From Local 1

L.U. 1 (as,c,ees,ei,em,es,et,fm,i,mt,rts,s,se,spa,st, ws&ptc), ST. LOUIS, MO — Our local's Labor Day picnic and festivities at the hall were awesome. All enjoyed the great weather. Food, fellowship and family are the best ways to celebrate and honor the sacrifices of the members who preceded us.

As this update reaches the masses, we are hopeful that labor was successful in educating and motivating our membership to vote for labor-friendly candidates.

The Electrical Workers Minority Caucus reminds everyone to scour their homes and reach out to neighbors to donate any used coats to your respective locals, who will see that they reach the right people in our communities.

The holidays can be a stressful time for some. Check in on each other. Sometimes a gesture as simple as asking how someone is doing can brighten a dark or somber mood.

Happy holidays to all from Local 1!

Kyle Hunter, P.S.

Local 15 Signs Staffing Initiative Agreement

L.U. 15 (u), DOWNERS GROVE, IL - Our local and Constellation Energy signed a staffing initiative agreement Aug. 21. We started discussions with the company in 2021 about an agreement that would add more members to the IBEW.

President Chris Riser, Vice President Ben Busser, and Business Representatives Brian Daniels and John Richards negotiated 71 new union positions within Local 15.

This agreement involves the creation of 25 positions in a valve services group, which provides promotional opportunities for mechanical maintenance employees. Also, the agreement provides 41 additional radiation protection technicians to help perform decontamination work and add support for outage seasons. Last, the agreement includes amendments to the facilities maintenance agreement, which will add five positions and increase wages. This affects Local 15 members at Braidwood, Byron, Dresden, LaSalle and Quad Cities nuclear generating stations.

John Richards, Bus. Rep.

Local 41 Pensioners' Luncheon and Progress Meeting

L.U. 41 (em,es,govt,i,se&spa), BUFFALO, NY - In August, we celebrated our annual pensioners' lunch. More than 100 of our retired members came to celebrate as more than 30 received their yearsof-service pins, ranging from 20 to 65 years as an IBEW member. No one was prouder than Brother Leo Kogler, who received his 65-year pin.

Thank you to all our retired brothers and sisters for your continued dedication and support of the IBEW and Local 41.

Local 41 was honored to host the Third District Progress Meeting on Sept. 10-12 in downtown Buffalo. It was the first progress meeting held in New York state in 40 years. Nearly 400 delegates from Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania came together for the yearly meeting as required by Article VII of the IBEW Constitution.

On Sept. 11, young workers' and veterans' groups worked together on a volunteer project at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park. More than 50 brothers and sisters worked together to clean and paint the USS Croaker in preparation for its journey with the USS The Sullivans to drydock for restoration. The Buffalo Naval Park opened in 1979 and has grown to become the largest inland naval park in the United States.

Matthew M. Gaiser, A.B.M.



From left, Local 41 Business Manager Greg Inglut, pensioner Leo Kogler and pensioner President Frank Mahoney.

News From Local 47

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uow), DIAMOND BAR, CA — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Business Manager/Financial Secretary Colin Lavin and President Rafael Gomez presented Senior Assistant Business Manager Mike Moore his 50-year service pin and watch Aug. 13. Congratulations, Brother Mike.



Local 47 Business Manager/Financial Secretary Colin Lavin and President Rafael Gomez present Senior Assistant Business Manager Mike Moore his 50-year IBEW service pin and watch.

Here are Local 47's bargaining and event updates:

- Southern California Edison The arbitration of Ray Delgado was set for Aug. 22, and it was settled for \$18,000. With the closure of Barstow District settled, each member was given \$2,000. For real-time operators, the parties are very close to a final agreement. For call center workers, bargaining for a contract for newly certified call-center employees took place in August.
- City of Anaheim We have wrapped up bargaining on the general and part-time customer service contract, which has been renamed part-time utilities service employees.
- City of Banning Utility and general negotiations continue.
- City of Riverside/Wastewater Negotiations continue.
- Local 47's Sept. 14 motorcycle run and Sept. 21 family picnic were huge successes.

We congratulate the following brothers on their retirement: Robert Brenna, Michael Kemp, Thomas Lasher, Ronald Lemoine, Greg Nelson, Lon

Peterson, Rodney Peterson, Randall Ruis and Arnold Trevino.

We're sad to report the deaths of Peter Falls; Shane Slaght; and Local 465 member Terry Crook, who was working in our jurisdiction. Our condolences and prayers are with their loved ones. Work safe and buy union!

Mitch Smith, P.S.

PAL Training Conducted at Local 51

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL - Two teams from our local participated in Local 601's $annual\,soft ball\,tournament\,in\,August.$ Everyone had a great time and appreciated the IBEW hospitality.

In September, we hosted a familv solidarity day at the Peoria Chiefs' minor league stadium, Dozer Park. It was very well attended, and we are looking into something similar for our membership next year.

On July 25, Local 51 conducted its first PAL (Politics, Activism and Livelihood) training for Local 51 Executive Board members and officers. Nearly 20 members attended this first training. PAL training discusses the importance to talk about

and be involved in politics and why voting for IBEW- and union-friendly candidates is so important to all of our livelihoods. Business Manager Bobby Wedell set another date in September for an additional round of training, this time focused on our unit chairs, recording secretaries/treasurers and stewards.

Work continues to be very slow in the Local 51 jurisdiction, and this trend is expected to continue throughout 2024. Our line clearance tree trimmers continue to receive steady work.

We wish all our brothers and sisters a happy Thanksgiving and a merry Christmas!

Karlene Knisley, Bus. Rep.



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

Trade Classifications (as) Alarm & Signal Electronic Technicians (mps) Motion Picture Studios (ars) Atomic Research Service (fm) Fixture Manufacturing (nst) Nuclear Service Technicians

(bo) Bridge Operators (govt) Government (cs) Cable Splicers (i) Inside (catv) Cable Television **Instrument Technicians** Communications (Ictt) Line Clearance Tree Trimming Lightning Protection Technicians (ptc) Professional, Technical & Cranemen (ees) Electrical Equipment Service (mt) Maintenance

Electrical Inspection (mo) Maintenance & Operation Electrical Manufacturing (mow) Manufacturing Office Workers Electric Signs (mar) Marine

(rr) (rtb) (rtm) Radio-Television Manufacturing

Powerhouse (pet) Professional, Engineers & **Technicians**

Outside

Railroad

Radio-Television Broadcasting

Sound Technicians (st) Telephone

Transportation Manufacturing

Shopmen

(se)

Sign Erector

(spa) Sound & Public Address

Utility (u)

(uow) Utility Office Workers

(ws) Warehouse and Supply

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.

Radio-Television Service

Service Occupations

LOCAL LINES



Local 131 apprentices on their first day of school.

Apprentice Class of the Future

L.U. 131 (i,rtb,rts,se&spa), KALAMAZOO, MI — Our local welcomes all the new first-year apprentices indentured last summer: Eduardo Aguilar, Noah Baker, Allison Brandli, Ben Haumann, Jonathan Hopp, Mason Holder, Konnor Miller, William Miller, Creighton Pierce, Leo Pulsinelli, Nathan Riddle, Nicolas Rieger, Derek Roblyer, Gabriel Rogers, Ivan Sage, Jonathan Strampel, Broderick Try, Eric Vantine, Gavin West, Kiwoa Whitfield and Sawyer Whitfield. The IBEW will always be here for you.

The work outlook is steady in Kalamazoo. Several projects are keeping the book clear, and travelers are working in the jurisdiction. Palisades nuclear plant continues to staff up. Thank you, President Biden, for all you have done for IBEW members.

There are plenty of ways to participate with Local 131. Step up and join RENEW, the Veterans' Committee, the Women's Committee or the EWMC. We need you to participate to make the local stronger.

The retirees' Christmas luncheon will be Dec. 11. Call the hall for reservations. Last year we filled the place, and let's do it again. Have a joyful holiday season!

Morris A. Applebey, B.M./F.S.

Local 141 Hosts Annual Family Picnic

L.U. 141 (ees,i,o&u), WHEELING, WV — Hello, brothers and sisters. Work remains slow at our local, with 46 members on Book 1 at the time of this writing.

On Aug. 10, Local 141's Social Committee hosted the annual family picnic and golf scramble at Wheeling Park. It was a perfect day filled with fun, food, activities for kids and, most of all, brotherhood. Brother Adam Combs and teammates Michael Long, Aaron White and Kyle White won the annual golf scramble with a score of 12 under par. Members and their families also enjoyed passes to Wheeling Park, which included a pool, miniature golf, playground and other activities.

Local 141 is proud to endorse two of its members who are running for House of Delegates seats

There was certainly no shortage of food or drink, either. Sodas, water, hamburgers, hot dogs and ice cream were offered in abundance. For the adults, there was the ever-popular beer truck. However, the most popular items on the menu were the boiled shrimp and steamed clams diligently served up by Brothers Mike McGrath and Wayne DeAngelo. The officers of the local passed out custom T-shirts and beach towels, and I think it's safe to say that no one went home empty handed (or hungry, for that matter). Thanks to everyone, and see you next year!

Brian Jacoppo, P.S.

Solidarity Wins Every Time

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LE SUEUR, MN — Approximately 1,200 IBEW limited energy members in Minnesota work under a statewide agreement. The collective bargaining agreement is between five Minnesota IBEW locals and three NECA chapters representing NECA member contractors and non-NECA member contractors. The limited energy apprenticeship has six classifications: installer 1 through installer 6.

Minnesota power-limited technician license, they become a journeyperson installer. Other classifications progress from technician, senior technician, foreperson technician to general foreperson. Approximately 110 limited energy workers are Local 343 members.

Contract negotiations began in June. The first offer was rejected by 97.5% of the membership. A second vote was held in July and again voted down by the membership. Permission to strike was granted by the I.O. Both sides entered the required 10-day cooling-off period.

On the third vote, NECA's new offer was accepted, with more than 90% of the statewide membership voting yes. One

IBEW local had 100% voter participation with 100% voting to accept.

Limited energy members will receive a 7% wage increase each year for three years. Changes in language affecting classification progression and vacation/sick time were among other benefits gained under the new contract.

Congratulations to the limited energy membership!

United We Bargain. Divided We Beg.

Tom Small, P.S.

Local 357 Members Saving Lives and Having a Summer Blast

L.U. 357 (c,i,mt&se), LAS VEGAS, NV - Our local kicked off the summer with a patriotic bang, participating in the Fourth of July Parade in Boulder City, Nev. The parade, a symbol of our unity and shared values, started in a traditional manner, but it took a fun and much-anticipated turn, ending in a massive water fight between the attendees and the parade walkers. We had an absolute blast! Thank you, Rachelle Warren and the Parade Committee, for your hard work.

Two Life Saving Awards were presented at our July 2024 general meeting. We are immensely proud of our Brothers Adam Henderson, Steve O'Hara, Jimmy Lee Smith, Robert Ramirez and William Rowen, who were recognized for their life-saving actions. Their bravery and quick thinking were instrumental in saving the lives of fellow Local 357 members. We are grateful for their service and proud to have them as part of our union family.

Julie-Ann Peeples, P.S.

Local 405 Congratulates Junior Luensman

L.U. 405 (em,i,rtb&spa), CEDAR RAPIDS, IA — Our local would like to congratulate Business Manager Junior Luensman as he moves up to the International Office to take over for the retiring CJ King as

Once the apprentice tops out and acquires a



Members and their families wait to have their caricatures drawn and their faces painted at the annual Local 269 picnic.

Family, Friends and Fraternity

in two districts in West Virginia. President David

Cantrell and Executive Board member Cody Cump-

ston have both been working tirelessly on their

campaigns, and if elected will be strong voices for

our members and all of the working families in

their districts in the West Virginia Legislature. Best

Brothers Gary D. Lucas and Clarence J. Ramsay.

Local 141 is sad to report the passing of

Kurt "Bug" Reed, P.S.

of luck to these fine brothers!

They will be greatly missed.

L.U. 269 (i&o), TRENTON, NJ — Though many regret the end of summer and all it brings, there is always something to look forward to — and for many of our members and their families, our local's annual picnic fits the bill.

The amount of effort put forth by the many volunteers within our ranks at this year's event was clear in the smiling faces, good cheer and high spirits throughout the fairgrounds. Activities such as paddle boating, beach volleyball, mini-golf, horseshoes and fishing ensure that there was something to do for all. There was even a caricature tent with a talented local artist drawing up the likenesses of the attendees.



Local 357 members at the Fourth of July Parade in Boulder City, Nev., before they got blasted



Members, friends and family gathered prior to the Local 141 golf scramble.

the international representative in charge of education for the Sixth and Eleventh districts (see Transitions story on page 14). In his new role, Junior will do an excellent job using his love for and knowledge of the IBEW in educating members and officers. He has left Local 405 in the very capable hands of Matt Resor, and we all wish Junior the best as he moves on.

Jon Fasselius, R.S.

Labor Day at the Indianapolis Zoo

L.U. 481 (ees,em,i,mt,rts,s&spa), INDIANAPOLIS, IN — Brothers and sisters, our local closed out the summer with our second annual Labor Day picnic at the Indianapolis Zoo. It was a fantastic event with more than 2,000 in attendance. With face painting, unlimited rides, food and a private dolphin show, there was a little something for everyone to enjoy.

Thank you to all members and their families

who came out and helped us celebrate Labor Day. Involvement in your union only makes us all stronger. With so many distractions out there trying to divide us, seeing the solidarity at the zoo was a great reminder that we all need to stick together. When we do, nothing is impossible. We are looking forward to next year already!

Blake Andrews, Treas.

Local 499 Golf Tournament and Life Saving Award Recognition

L.U. 499 (u), DES MOINES, IA - On Aug. 10, our local held its first annual golf tournament, with 26 teams participating. Participants included current and retired members, including a team from one of our rural electric cooperatives, management, and representatives from Locals 55 and 347. The teams were had representation from gas, electric

In early September, the local presented a donation to the Iowa League of Heroes. This organization helps children and families in their time of need by donating time and resources dressing up as superheroes to visit kids in the hospital. Local 499 also delivered a carful of nonperishable donations to the Ronald McDonald House of Central lowa along with a check. The accompanying picture shows Vice President Steve Mitchell, President Kori Moore, Business Manager/Financial Secretary Patrick Murillo and an Iowa League of Heroes representative accepting the donation.

On Aug. 15, steward and line mechanic Bob Decker and co-worker Rick Vanderheiden presented Tom Pithan with a Life Saving Award. In March, Tom's son was choking. Tom leaped to action, giving him the Heimlich maneuver until he began breathing on his own. Tom transported his son to the hospital for further treatment. Local 499 recognizes Tom and is thankful for the knowledge and training that helped save his son's life, and we are glad his son is OK.

Sarah Faber, Bus. Rep.



Vice President Steve Mitchell, President Kori Moore and Business Manager/Financial Secretary Patrick Murillo presenting Local 499's donation to a representative of the Iowa League of Heroes.

Local 601's 47th Annual

and generation.



Back-to-back champions: Alton, Ill., Local 649's softball team.

A huge thank you to Springfield Local 51, Chicago Local 134, Rock Island Local 145, Decatur Local 146, Waukegan Local 150, Joliet Local 176, Springfield Local 193, Bloomington Local 197, Rockford Local 364, Aurora Local 461, Alton Local 649, and Lisle Local 701 for coming out and showing this tournament what it's all about!

Congratulations to Local 649 for winning it again, defeating Local 134 in a comeback you just had to be there to witness!

We hope to see you all again next year! See the album at photos.app.goo.gl/ UXY8ivsAR6fFXuRv8

Luther Baker, P.S.



From left, Local 611 members Rudy Laumbach, Robert Smith Nealy, Tyler Westley, Joseph Martinez and Eleazar Castro.

Softball Invitational

L.U. 601 (i&rtb), CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, IL — Local 601's softball team hosted its 47th Softball Invitational on Aug. 24-25. Families and friends came from all over the state to support the 14 teams that participated.

Local 611 Members Use Training to Help a Stranger

L.U. 611 (catv,es,govt,i,lctt,o,spa,t&u), ALBUQUER-QUE, NM — On Aug. 14, an American Airlines maintenance employee walked out of the restroom at the Albuquerque International Sunport Terminal and fell to the ground. Five IBEW/B&D Industries workers saw him fall and immediately rushed to his aid. Realizing that he was having a heart attack, the workers began giving him CPR until an ambulance arrived. Two of the members are ex-military, and one is a former EMT. Unfortunately, the maintenance employee passed away on his way to the hospital.

Due to their bravery and quick thinking, the five members were honored by our partner, Jaynes Corp., during a special recognition event for the Sunport terminal improvement project. The five heroes are Eleazar Castro, Rudy Laumbach, Joseph Martinez, Robert Smith Nealy and Tyler Westley. In a critical moment, these five members went above and beyond by administering life-saving techniques to a stranger in need. Thanks for making Local 611 proud.

On behalf of the local, I would like to extend condolences to the friends and families of Ruben Mancha, Mario Murillo, Ronald E. Phillips, Bryan

Salazar, Michael Salaz and Michael Wingo.

This is an election year, so make sure you get out and vote.

Darrell J. Blair, P.S.

Fifth District Progress Meeting and PLAs

L.U. 915 (i&mt), TAMPA, FL - August was a busy month for our local. Randall King, business manager of Local 915 and president of the Florida Electrical Workers Association, welcomed International

> Vice President Glenn Brannen and International Secretary Treasurer Paul Noble to the Tampa Bay area for the Fifth District Progress Meeting. International President Emeritus Lonnie Stephenson and Fifth District International Vice President Emeritus Brian Thompson were among the honored guests.

Business Manager King is negotiating project labor agreements for two projects at MacDill Air Force Base. These PLAs would cover all unionized trades, not just the IBEW. Local 915 has never had a PLA of this size on federal work.

We need to always remember that elections have consequences. For example, the

apprenticeship ordinance for St. Petersburg that was put in place in 2019 has been repealed. This ordinance was specifically targeted by Gov. Ron DeSantis during the last legislative session. Between recent preemption legislation out of Tallahassee and losing a lawsuit on appeal, the city of St. Petersburg had no choice but to repeal the ordinance. All of this happened in the final runup to breaking ground on the new Tampa Bay Rays stadium. This ordinance would have required IBEW apprentices to work on building the new stadium.

Brian Nathan, A.B.M.

Coldest River Software Joins Local 1347

L.U. 1347 (ees,em,u&ptc), CINCINNATI, OH - On behalf of the IBEW, I extend a warm welcome to Coldest River Software, our newest member company. It is with great pleasure that we embrace Coldest River Software as they volunteer to join our union family.

The commitment of Coldest River to join the IBEW is a testament to the enduring value of union membership and the recognition of the

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LOCAL LINES

benefits it brings to workers and employers alike. Its wealth of experience and expertise will undoubtedly contribute to the continued success and growth of our union.

We applaud Coldest River for their decision to go union and for recognizing the importance of solidarity and collective bargaining in today's challenging business landscape. By choosing to be part of the IBEW, Coldest River is not only securing better wages, benefits and working conditions for its employees, but is also contributing to the advancement of the broader labor movement.

We are confident that this addition to our union will further strengthen our collective voice and position us for continued success in the electrical industry. We look forward to collaborating closely with the company and supporting it in its endeavors as valued members of the IBEW.

I encourage all members to consider using Coldest River's software specifically designed for IBEW unions. SALT is a tool created for unions to easily generate custom social media posts with the click of a button and establish branding. And now they are backed by a professional group that is committed to excellence and union values. For more information about SALT, please visit saltsoftware.com.

Thank you!

Andrew Kirk, B.M./F.S.



Local 1347 Business Manager/Financial Secretary Andrew Kirk with Coldest River Software's Erin Heimbrock.

Gene White Receives Alaska AFL-CIO's Highest Award

L.U. 1547 (c,em,i,o,t,u,lctt&ptc), ANCHORAGE, AK — Gene White, a dedicated union brother, epitomizes the spirit of excellence and solidarity. His unwavering commitment to his fellow union members, the labor movement and his community has earned him the prestigious Robert A. McFarland Award.

Gene's journey began in Alaska in 1975, when he joined the Department of Education in Juneau. He quickly became involved in education initiatives, establishing the Community Schools program in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District in 1976.

In 1980, Gene embarked on a new career path, joining the Local 1547 apprenticeship. Throughout his time in the IBEW, he was always willing to lend a helping hand and advocate for his fellow workers. He played a crucial role in combating anti-union forces within the industry.

After retiring from his full-time career in 2007, Gene's dedication to the labor movement did not wane. He moved to Juneau to work as a legislative staffer, advocating for pro-worker policies



Local 1547 retiree Gene White with Community Outreach Manager Dora Wilson.

and making a positive impact on the lives of working people.

Since retiring again in 2012, Gene has continued to be a tireless volunteer for political campaigns. He is a valuable asset to any campaign, whether it's knocking on doors, putting up signs, making calls or appearing in campaign materials.

As Local 1547 Business Manager Doug Tansy said: "Gene White is a cornerstone of our union. His more than 40 years of service, coupled with his post-retirement activities, are marked by loyalty, activism and mentorship. His welcoming smile and friendly demeanor are matched only by his tireless dedication and commitment to his labor family. From the picket line to lobbying the Legislature, he has helped shape our union into what it is today. Gene White is an inspiration to us all."

Melinda Taylor, Comm. Dir.

Make it Happen

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA — Hello brothers and sisters, I hope you are all doing well. We want to congratulate our service award recipients that recently received their service pins at our last ceremony. Our members received pins for service between five and 60 years. Thank you for your service to Local 1579 and the IBEW.

It's been a very hectic time for Local 1579, with the shutdowns completing at Plant Vogtle and the data center finally beginning to hire. We are looking forward to a great partnership with Miller Electric on this project. The Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility project that I wrote about in my last article is closer to hiring for actual construction instead of demo. We expect this will come to fruition around the beginning of the year, toward the second quarter. Our in-town and prime contractors at the Savannah River Site are holding their own with sporadic hiring.

I can't stress the importance of our national election greatly enough. We all need to make sure that we support and vote for labor- and IBEW-friendly politicians. As a union member, your entire life as you know it could be under attack. Imagine where you would be with no Davis-Bacon, no PLAs, no labor unions and no pension plans, just to name a few of the directives that are being threatened. Do your part to save your livelihood.

"Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen."

- Michael Jordan

Mike Greene, Pres.

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In Memoriam -

Local	Surname Date	of Death	Local	Surname Date	of Death	Local	Surname Date	of Death
1	Durphey, J. W.	7/21/24	25	Forge, J. C.	1/21/24	105	Wilson, A. P.	2/8/24
1	Leonhardt, P. A.	3/9/24	25	Lobasso, P.	7/24/24	110	Bade, T. J.	7/19/24
1	Martin, A. L. Rogers, J. S.	4/1/24 7/25/24	25 25	Nagel, B. G. Weir, R.	8/11/24 6/14/22	111 111	Baer, W. L. Gonzales, J. A.	8/22/24 3/16/24
2	Bray, V. M.	5/30/24	26	Cox, T. W.	8/13/24	112	Anderson, G. D.	7/8/24
2	Heidbreder, D. L.		26	Riesett, G. E.	7/31/24	112	Mitchell, E. R.	8/7/24
2	Long, W. J.	8/5/24	26	Weese, A. J.	6/27/24	115	Smith, E.	7/30/24
3	Armitage, W. R.	8/6/24	26	Woldetsadik, F.	8/4/24	115	Wilson, L. S.	8/28/24
3	Berrios, I. Bertolo, P. A.	7/14/24 8/10/24	32 34	Hoskins, J. K. Happekotte, M. E	8/26/24 . 8/2/24	124 124	Clark, J. E. Loveland, J. D.	6/13/24 6/27/24
3	Bongiorno, F. J.	6/29/24	34	Malson, D. W.	8/18/24	125	Pederson, B. L.	7/24/24
3	Carlson, R. R.	8/1/24	34	Nickels, N. L.	8/9/24	126	Kerr, K.	8/10/24
3	Cintron, O.	8/18/24	34	Swanson, J. E.	8/19/24	127	Lahti, V.	7/2/24
3	Davis, C. Desouza, O.	6/13/24 2/13/22	34 38	Uphoff, J. R. Burak, J. V.	8/10/24 6/19/24	129 130	Russell, M. H. Huynh, T. M.	8/13/24 7/15/24
3	Desouza, O. Devine, R. B.	5/22/24	38	LaCava, D. A.	8/9/24	131	Mays, M. R.	8/25/24
3	Ernst, K.	6/25/24	38	Nageotte, E. M.	7/13/24	131	Moore, K. R.	6/8/24
3	Everts, C. R.	8/5/22	38	Vittardi, R. H.	8/11/24	134	Catalano, S. M.	8/8/24
3	Fischer, J. A.	11/25/23	40	Reiman, P. D.	8/11/24	134	Dickson, W. L.	7/11/24
3	Fox, R. P. Gitter, M.	5/17/24 3/9/24	41 43	Bukaty, E. N. Kondakoff, P.	6/27/24 8/12/24	134 134	Ericksen, R. C. Hapon, W. K.	8/9/24 7/24/24
3	Hoffer, D. C.	8/7/24	43	Peryea, H. L.	8/21/24	134	Kennedy, J. K.	7/23/24
3	John, S.	8/29/24	46	Allyn, K. F.	8/16/24	134	Mack, A. A.	6/27/24
3	Kilpert, C.	8/1/24	46	Knight, E. V.	8/1/24	134	Narducci, A. P.	6/25/24
3	Krebs, T. J.	8/31/24	47	Rodriguez, R. O.	4/25/24	134	Novak, H. S.	5/13/24
3	Lefberg, S. Mauro, J.	7/19/24 8/22/24	48 48	Braden, J. L. Fry, R. L.	7/17/24 7/31/24	134 134	Sacramento, C. Sirinek, F. E.	8/27/24 1/15/24
3	Mendez, A.	8/6/24	48	Specht, F. L.	8/22/24	134	Smietanski, L. P.	8/10/24
3	Merchant, R. T.	8/6/24	48	Wornick, C. D.	8/12/24	134	Thelen, G.	5/4/24
3	Molfetta, F. T.	6/3/22	51	Fry, D. W.	8/6/24	134	Weber, R. P.	2/21/24
3	Mondesir, G.	5/17/21	53	White, S. A.	5/14/24	134	Winters, G. A.	6/5/24
3	Montella, J. V. Moretti, M. C.	8/1/24 8/31/24	56 57	Socash, M. Johnson, F. P.	7/25/24 7/17/24	134 136	Zirzow, W. R. Hulsey, L. F.	7/27/24 7/28/24
3	Nahlen, P. W.	9/2/24	57	Newey, H. L.	2/19/23	139	Jimerson, G. L.	8/8/24
3	Ragozzino, G.	8/2/24	57	Vlamakis, G. G.	4/17/24	141	Binkowski, T. E.	8/27/24
3	Rocchi, M. K.	4/28/24	58	Floyd, T. L.	8/3/24	141	Timberlake, E. A.	12/7/23
3	Sabino, V. Sampson, D. O.	10/26/23 7/27/24	58 58	Grassel, M. S. Hedges, T. M.	8/3/24 7/1/22	143 145	Heefner, D. C. Chase, C. A.	7/19/24 8/18/24
3	Sandomenico, P.		58	Johnson, H. W.	7/2/24	145	Klauer, C. E.	8/24/24
3	Schroeder, R.	8/8/24	58	Lewis, R. C.	7/23/24	145	Siebke, W. L.	8/29/24
3	Stracquatanio, A		58	Lyall, D. S.	8/4/24	146	Brunner, D. D.	6/2/24
0	Mantata N	2/18/24	58	White, T. J.	7/25/24	150	Ankley, R. K.	9/5/23
3 5	Vestuto, N. Serafini, J. J.	6/23/24 7/31/24	60 60	Carreno, R. G. Martinez, J.	8/27/24 7/17/24	150 153	Maatta, A. G. Wolford, A. N.	8/28/24 7/31/24
6	Beel, S. J.	9/3/24	60	Winkler, F. E.	8/4/24	159	Saxby, W. A.	7/1/24
6	Beyer, O. E.	8/16/24	66	Marcantel, K. B.	7/4/24	160	Stedje, S. B.	7/11/22
6	Beyer, R. H.	7/9/24	66	Miller, C. E.	6/26/24	164	Bennett, S. P.	2/23/24
6 6	Borland, D. A. Conroy, M. E.	5/22/24 8/22/24	68 68	Mayes, R. K. McClure, D. E.	7/28/24 6/3/24	164 164	Glentz, P. J. Pearce, K. R.	8/25/22 8/14/24
6	Cory, J. C.	7/31/24	68	Wood, G. T.	6/14/24	164		10/25/22
7	Bernier, P. F.	9/20/22	71	Berry, D. J.	6/30/24	175	Allen, L. V.	7/30/24
7	Collins, J. J.	7/1/24	71	Conrad, J. W.	8/15/24	175	Brooks, J. R.	7/28/24
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9	Biernat, L. M.	8/25/24	73 77	Beyer, W. A.	8/21/24	175	Lowery, J. J.	8/4/24
11	Brakob, D. W.	8/9/24	77	Fulwiler, J. K.	2/20/23	175	Tiska, A.	7/10/22
11	Eastman, L. J.	12/20/23	77	Howell, I. P.	7/21/24	176	Sennett, G. W.	7/24/24
11	Fontana, C. E.	6/19/24	77	Mackey, R. E.	1/21/24	176	Townsend, D. M.	9/4/24
11 11	Gerdes, G. Hytrek, G. P.	12/29/23 12/4/23	86 90	Ellis, B. T. Massaro, J. A.	8/29/24 8/5/24	177 191	Dixon, C. Abad, D.	6/11/24 8/19/24
11	Irwin, J. S.	4/19/24	96	Diemdowicz, D. J		191	Kent, B. E.	8/1/24
11	Legault, T. A.	12/15/19	98	Britsch, L. W.	8/4/24	193	Staley, M. G.	7/25/24
11	Warner, R. L.	5/16/24	98	Buchler, G. J.	8/23/24	194	Thompson, L. D.	8/13/24
13 14	Vulgaris, T. Johnson, P. L.	6/27/24 6/19/23	98 98	Robertson, G. W. Rogan, K. J.	2/13/21 4/15/24	197 210	Reece, L. Stroup, G. W.	6/23/24
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17	Aitchison, J. C.	8/21/24	100	Grimes, R. D.	7/25/24	213	Henderson, R. R.	
17	Dhoest, S. J.	6/9/24	102	Calello, L.	9/10/24	213	McDowall, N. A.	12/8/23
20	Abbott, J. W.	7/29/24	102	D'Alessio, F. R.	7/8/24	213	Rhodes, K. R.	1/15/24
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24	Broadbent, S. A.	4/11/24	103	Worobey, P. P.	8/3/24	230	Wadsworth, C. P.	9/2/24
24	Calvert, A. J.	12/22/22	104	Ericson, H. C.	7/29/24	231	Dandurand, R. E.	7/19/24
25 25	Breest, S. C. Duffy, C.	7/14/24 9/2/24	104 105	Lamothe, L. J. Elton, D. T.	7/26/24 7/20/24	233 233	Anderson, W. H. Immonen, W. W.	6/9/24 8/10/24
20	Durry, O.	3/2/24	100	Liton, D. T.	1/20/24	200	minionion, vv. vv.	0/10/24

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Parker, A. R.

8/23/24

Reaves, D. W.

7/7/24

Local	Surname [Date of Death	Local	Surname [Date of Death	Local	Surname Da	ite of Death
236	Hess, J. R.	8/14/24	441	Gaganis, C. J.	7/30/24	716	Wortham, C. N.	6/24/24
236	Sutherland, J. J.	. 5/11/24	441	Giannini, V. A.	10/31/23	728	Denham, L. L.	6/10/24
242	Little, G. F.	7/26/24	441	Neff, N. A.	7/8/24	728	Perez, B. Y.	7/28/24
252	Brittain, G. L.	12/22/23	441	Will, R. D.	7/22/24	743	Knepp, T. R.	7/13/24
252	Snyder, J.	8/20/24	446	Kitchens, C. E.	4/27/24	756	Williams, J. B.	8/15/24
254	Dodd, C. D.	6/14/24	465	Heide, H. F.	7/16/23	760	Burchfield, N. M.	6/3/22
258	Dundas, L. W.	6/15/24	474	Cansler, G. A.	6/8/24	760	Culbertson, H. S.	1/4/24
258	Fadden, G. P.	8/29/21	474	Harriss, J. D.	8/7/24	760	Potter, N. D.	7/23/24
270	Brackett, J. E.	7/23/24	477	Hoffman, D. E.	8/11/24	769	Bullock, L. R.	8/7/24
275	Ford, W. G.	7/23/24	477	Kirtley, D. W.	8/5/24	773	Taffinder, L. J.	8/9/24
275	Kurlenda, S. A.	8/10/24	477	Whitlock, L. W.	5/30/24	776	Yandell, D. E.	8/15/24
275	Schaner, J. R.	8/26/24	480	Alliston, W. P.	7/19/24	816	Jones, J. T.	7/25/24
275	Vorgias, G. P.	8/9/24	480	Mapp, M. G.	7/24/24	816	Nelms, C. E.	6/18/24
278	Canales, R. L.	7/17/24	481	Wilson, S. E.	6/12/24	816	Spiceland, T. M.	9/1/24
280	Guest, D. S.	5/18/24	483	Hoppe, N. J.	7/30/23	873	Marsh, D. P.	7/29/22
280	Hassman, R. L.	8/1/24	488	Astolfi, A.	7/1/24	873	Richwine, J. K.	3/27/24
292	Hilton, P. E.	6/4/24	488	Barton, T. F.	5/20/22	876	Appell, T. A.	8/18/24
292	Larson, T. H.	8/5/24	494	Borchardt, D. W		876	Cook, H.	9/2/24
292	Neeser, R. T.	12/14/23	505	Bell, J. I.	6/21/24	906	Blom, T. J.	6/14/24
292	Wambeke, D. P.	7/22/24	518	Stevenson, J. W		915	Alfonso, M. J.	8/22/24
301	Humphrey, R. G		527	Delgado, C. R.	8/8/23	915	Graham, D. E.	8/21/24
302	Batchelder, C. M		531	Dickey, G.	4/13/24	917	Hodges, J. E.	4/10/24
302	Beals, S. J.	8/28/23	558	Lamon, C. H.	8/26/24	934	Teague, R. A.	5/17/24
302	Pekari, G. S.	8/8/24	569	Cozzens, W. G.	8/4/24	934	Walser, H. D.	8/16/24
303	Falusi, J. S.	9/5/24	569	Davis, J. F.	12/13/22	948	Harris, O. R.	7/27/24
303	Wittig, J. W.	8/24/24	569	Sherinian, R. E.	7/6/24	948	Puchacz, S. W.	1/27/24
304	Wilhelm, G. L.	7/27/24	570	Sullivan, J. E.	2/21/24	993	Collins, R. P.	7/28/24
306	Johnson, R. S.	8/10/24	573	Koches, D. J.	8/23/24	1002	Self, A. G.	8/15/24
309	Krause, R. E.	7/8/24	583	Ibanez, O.	7/18/24	1105	Labaki, D. E.	8/25/24
309	Sanders, G. A.	1/16/24	583	Silva, S. O.	7/15/24	1116	Hogue, C. L.	6/25/22
313	Garcia, E.	8/9/24	595	Dimas, N.	5/19/24	1116	Jones, E. W.	7/29/24
317	Withers, D. L.	9/21/22	595	Draa, D. L.	5/28/24	1186	Takahashi, I.	3/3/22
325	Maslar, M. J.	3/27/24	595	McCune, K. G.	4/20/18	1205	Travis, R. O.	8/8/24
325	Pelton, R. W.	4/8/24	602	Hinds, H. E.	8/29/24	1212	Krim, H. T.	3/11/24
332	Bernard, A. M.	5/3/24	605	Hart, H. F.	2/28/24	1245	Bryant, R. L.	7/8/24
340	Eddenfield, D.	6/12/24	606	Jones, C. E.	8/25/24	1245	Eveatt, D. E.	2/16/24
349	Benavidez, P. A.		607	Spotts, V. T.	8/5/24	1249	Saville, H. D.	9/4/22
349	Dewey, J. M.	12/30/20	611	Markey, D. W.	1/24/22	1253	Alexander, P.	7/6/24
349	Dobbs, J.	6/28/24	611	Murillo, M.	7/30/24	1319	Flick, M. L.	9/7/24
349	Rivas, J. D.	8/27/24	611	Rodarte, N.	8/16/24	1439	Newton, R. W.	10/4/21
351	Little, J. H.	7/25/22	611	Salazar, B. A.	8/2/24	1464	Jones, D. L.	8/3/24
351	Reeves, R. N.	8/11/24	613	Graham, D. W.	7/11/22	1525	Koble, R. V.	1/4/24
351	Smith, J. F.	7/10/24	613	Hardy, D. C.	8/16/24	1547	Ferree, J. B.	6/1/24
351	Woods, D. T.	7/29/24	613	Kalb, R. O.	7/10/24	1547	Kelly, J. M.	7/13/24
353	Bablitz, A.	6/19/24	613	Martin, J. B.	6/25/24	1547	Laird, K. B.	7/21/24
353	Blauth, H.	7/3/24	613	Simpson, T. E.	8/24/24	1555	St-Pierre, A.	9/1/24
353	Clarkson, W. F.	8/11/24	613	Stubbs, M. T.	12/25/23	1701	Marcus, D. A.	7/22/22
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353	Germek, J. J.	12/11/23	617	Ingoglia, J. A.	6/5/24	1852	Hopewell, H. C.	12/16/23
353	Kozyriackyj, J.	11/29/23	625	Brown, K. V.	7/27/24	1925	Deskin, P. E.	3/31/24
353	Mohammad, S.	2/6/21	640	Trusler, P.	4/2/24	1928	Lannigan, J.	3/6/24
353	Molla, B.	1/18/23	647	Burns, L.	10/19/23	2330	Kent, W. J.	8/19/24
353	Rootham, W. R.		647	Wilson, M. W.	6/29/24	1.0. (5)	McManus, L. R.	1/13/23
353	Schofield, J. W.	8/19/24	648	Pigman, O.	4/17/24	1.0. (134)	Speer, W. R.	7/30/24
354	Covey, M. A.	7/28/24	649	Gagliardo, R. G.		1.0. (134)	Utecht, C. F.	7/23/24
354	Hillyard, M. J.	7/30/24	659	Barnes, G. G.	6/20/24	1.0. (292)	Dahl, H. O.	7/25/24
357	Butterowe, W. A		659	Fenn, E. R.	9/4/24	, ,	Catallozzi, D. J.	8/18/24
363	Bromley, W. W.	7/7/24	659	Gebhardt, P. E.	10/30/23	, ,	Chiappisi, F.	4/8/24
369	Bohn, W. M.	8/9/24	659	Ore, W. R.	8/16/24	, ,	DeGenero, I. J.	8/5/24
369	Hulsman, E. J.	7/28/24	659	Shaw, D. S.	3/12/24	, ,	Gallette, K. E.	7/17/24
369	Stauble, A. W.	2/20/20	683	Jaynes, J. A.	12/27/23	, ,	Gragg, D. B.	7/13/24
369	Tucker, T. B.	7/12/24	683	Sabo, J. A.	8/22/24	, ,	Jones, J. S.	7/5/24
386	Avellaneda, G.	8/20/23	697	Johnson, H. W.	8/24/24	, ,	Levins, G. L.	7/27/24
388	Anding, M. D.	7/27/24	701	Furco, F. J.	7/23/24	, ,	Lombardo, A. F.	12/12/21
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424	Mullins, R. P.	9/1/24	716	Hrbacek, A. J.	8/1/24		shows members	•
424	Sargent, T.	6/18/24	716	Mallow, J. L.	8/15/24		h claims were a _l	pproved in
429	Parker A R	8/23/24	716	Reaves D W	7/7/24	Sentembe	r 2024	



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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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