

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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## IBEW News



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## Nearly 700 Atlanta Gas Light Workers Join the Brotherhood

Organizers Joe Skinner, Doug Williams and Jimmy Flynn celebrate after the votes were counted with AGL workers and V.O.C. leadership, including Ronnie Smith, Timothy Jackson, Marcus Green, Wavers Smith, Ed Leland, Kristy Rounds, Robert Barber, Thomas Stores, Colin Smith, Gary Smith, Justin Gardner and Raeshawn Martin.



Welcome TO THE IBEW

In life and in organizing, the longest odds make for the sweetest victories. Given what they faced, the election victory of nearly 700 Atlanta Gas Light workers April 19 and the creation of Atlanta Local 1997 is like biting into a fresh-picked peach on an August afternoon.

When the drive began, it had so much against it. Deep in the right-to-work South in a state with one of the lowest union densities in the country, members were spread between 23 service centers from Rome in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains to Savannah on the Atlantic coast, more than 350 miles away. A previous union had been decertified and four subsequent organizing attempts had failed.

"It was always going to be hard," said Assistant to the International President for Membership Development Ricky Oakland. "We had some things going our way, but no one thought this was a sure thing."

What they had, Oakland said, was a platoon of volunteer organizers who had no quit in them, a strategy to make use of them and organizers, led by Fifth District Regional Organizing Coordinator Joseph Skinner, who would walk through walls to get it done.

"From the first meeting to the last house call, we executed it perfectly," Oakland said.

### Rebirth of a Union

Until 2004, most of AGL's gas technicians, troubleshooters, appliance repairmen, pipefitters and meter readers were members of the Teamsters.

Steve Galloway, a 30-year veteran AGL field specialist, was a chief steward and sat on the negotiating committee for three contracts with the Teamsters. But he supported the decertification and, when the IBEW tried to organize the utility in 2006 and again in 2012, he sat it out.

"I didn't think our previous representation was doing anything good, and I was skeptical about anyone new," he said.

But in the summer of 2015, Southern Company — the second-largest utility company in the U.S. — announced it was buying AGL. The takeover was completed in 2016. AGL workers were making less than union utility workers in Georgia — in some cases up to \$10 less an hour. After the merger, Galloway said, things got worse.

They were switched to a Southern health plan that cost more. Pensions were changed. Bonuses at AGL were \$10,000 lower than at Southern subsidiary Georgia Power.

The IBEW has 12 contracts with Southern Company subsidiaries, and each one provided better pay and benefits than AGL.

ATLANTA GAS LIGHT WORKERS *continued on page 3*

THE IBEW's  
**2018 PHOTO CONTEST**

**Deadline: Oct. 1**  
See page 6 for details



## FROM THE OFFICERS

# Thank a Lineman



**Lonnie R. Stephenson**  
International President

**E**very July 10, we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day. It's an opportunity to recognize the efforts of our brothers and sisters who often work under trying conditions. They're the people who go out after the storms and turn the power back on, hitting the road when everyone else is ducking for cover.

This past year has been especially devastating, with Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria tearing up the Gulf Coast and the Caribbean, leaving millions of people without power — including some in Puerto Rico still going without.

In California, it was wildfires. Brothers and sisters lost their homes. It was like nothing I've seen before. But our lineworkers and gasworkers, as always, were the first to respond.

When others are told to stay inside and avoid the danger, our brothers and sisters put themselves right in the middle of it. When disaster strikes, they're on the front line.

Whether it was wading through feet of water in Houston, or traversing scorched earth in northern California, these brave souls were doing all they could to restore some normality by way of power.

And it's more than disasters. These energy professionals also install new streetlights in places like Detroit, making it safer to walk at night. They're at the forefront of the energy revolution, making the grid more reliable.

It's rare we go a day without using electricity. It's a hallmark of the times we live in. We measure our productivity and advancement by how connected we are. Part of our ability to do that is because of the hard work and dedication of our lineworkers.

We heat our homes in the winter, cool them in the summer and get online at all hours of the day. And it's thanks to our brothers and sisters working day and night at utilities across the U.S. and Canada.

With our friends at the Edison Electric Institute, we chose July 10, in part, to honor our founding father, Henry Miller. On that day in 1896, after organizing thousands of electricians across the country, he died when he fell from a pole while working in Washington, D.C. We've come a long way in terms of safety and technology since then, but as any lineworker will tell you, it's still a dangerous profession. They know full well the risks inherent in their work, and they do it anyway.

So, the next time you're charging your cell phone, making your morning coffee or watching your favorite television show, take a minute to recognize that it's all possible because some skilled women and men in our union are making it possible. ■

# Federal Union Busting

**M**ore than half a century ago, President John Kennedy issued Executive order 10988, which recognized the right of most federal employees to representation on the job, including joining a union.

For Kennedy, giving federal workers the right to come together in a union was not just the right thing to do for employees. It was crucial for building a productive labor-management relationship based on respect and commitment to public service.

Today more than 60 percent of all federal employees are union members.

For Kennedy, collaboration and respect for the right of government employees to collectively bargain was the best way to manage a modern federal workforce.

Not so our current president. In May, Donald Trump issued a series of executive orders which eviscerates 56 years of federal worker rights.

They force agencies to renegotiate union contracts to squeeze as much out of federal employees as they can while making it harder for union representatives to do their jobs and fairly represent every employee.

Federal unions have never been just about themselves. They have tackled issues such as sexual harassment, health and safety problems and protecting whistleblowers.

They have helped our federal government become a more efficient and productive workplace, and that is in the interest of every taxpayer.

Without unions, federal employees have no voice at work, and no way to improve their workplaces.

These orders are not just an attack on the rights of federal workers, including members of the IBEW's government branch. They are an attack on the rights of all working people.

Because when you take away the voice of one set of workers, every working person suffers.

Just look at Wisconsin, where Gov. Scott Walker initially defended his attack on state workers by saying he would never come after private-sector unions. Only four years later Walker and the Wisconsin GOP went ahead and passed right-to-work legislation. By 2016, unions went from representing 14 percent of all Wisconsin employees to under 10. And you better believe that put downward pressure on wages and benefits.

The Trump administration has already racked up a record of hostility to private-sector unions and workers' rights as well, from appointing union-busting judges to federal courts, to overturning rules protecting workers from wage theft.

Trump's latest actions are a reminder of how important it is that we vote this November and get a pro-worker majority in Congress that can hold this president accountable.

Private sector or public, the IBEW will never shy away from its commitment to fighting for the rights of all working people. ■



**Kenneth W. Cooper**  
International Secretary-Treasurer

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Proud to Be a Puerto Rican IBEW Member

It makes me very happy that my IBEW brothers and sisters throughout the United States have volunteered their time to help restore electrical power to Puerto Rico. It makes me so proud to see these companies sending their workers and making a big effort to help. My family members, including those still living in Puerto Rico, are very grateful for these locals and companies stepping forward. Thanks to all of you who went to help.

*Jose M. Vega, Local 3 retiree  
New York*

## The Union Difference in Alabama

Late last year, Doug Jones beat Roy Moore in the Alabama special election for U.S. Senate. Doug is the first Democratic senator from Alabama in 25 years, and while the media gave most of the credit to women voters, I want to point out the union men and women down here, including retirees, who put him in the Senate.

*James T. Burnside, Local 558 retiree  
Sheffield, Ala.*

## Government for the Rich

As I was reading your cover story about gerrymandering [*May 2018 Electrical Worker, "How Politicians are Killing Democracy One District at a Time"*], I wanted to remind all union brothers and sisters and their families that the obvious agenda of right-wing, anti-union groups like ALEC, Prosperity Action, etc. and the super-rich families funding them is to reduce the government to a weak and ineffective entity. This is being done piece by piece, law by law and district by district. The politicians these groups support are defunding the government by cutting taxes on corporations and the rich. When they're done, the everyday worker will pay all the taxes and have no say in the decisions that affect our lives, giving all the power to the rich and corporate elites and leaving us with a gutted government.

Democracy is the only equalizer between the powerful elites and the rest of us, and we must not allow their agenda to take our freedoms from us. This November, union members must get off our backsides and vote our paychecks, our families and our country.

*Robert Wentworth, Local 445 member  
Battle Creek, Mich.*

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



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

## Giving Thanks for an IBEW Career

Thirty-seven years ago, I was bartending and not really sure what I wanted to do with my life. I was sure I didn't want to travel the normal road most women took at the time. I was an athlete, a biker, an academic, more than a little rough around the edges. I was inducted into Local Union 415 in 1982. I owe my life, my successes, my prosperity, my integrity and my moral compass to the mentorship of the IBEW members who've crossed my path. No, it is not for everyone and it is misleading to believe that everyone is cut out for the sacrifice of blood, sweat and tears required to make a successful journeyman. But for those successful individuals, the world is your oyster. Thankful for the opportunities made available through the IBEW.

*Lori Valdez, Local 415 member  
Cheyenne, Wyo.*

## Solidarity Wins

*Responding to "Law Repealing Bank Rules Opens Door to Another Great Recession," Page 8 of this issue:*

We brothers will survive through thick and thin. I truly believe that we will survive and prosper through whatever our country goes through as long as we stick together and fight for our common ground. In brotherhood everyone wins.

*Zach Leute, Local 113 apprentice  
Colorado Springs, Colo.*



Continued from page 1

# Nearly 700 Atlanta Gas Light Workers Join the Brotherhood

By this time, some of Galloway's colleagues, including Joey Leach, Mike Strange and Justin Gardner, had reached out to the IBEW to try again. This time, Galloway signed on to help.

When Galloway was called into a captive audience meeting to urge people not to support any union drive, he stood up to speak.

"They were putting out the same misleading stuff they did years ago: union dues will be \$160. Negotiations will start at zero," Galloway said. "I stood up and introduced myself. I told people, I started with the gas company 30 years ago. Near everything I have I owe to AGL, and in two years I am out the door. AGL is a good company, but it could be better, and even though it won't benefit me any, we need a union."

## A Plan Comes Together

In 2015, Oakland proposed a professional and industrial organizing strategy to newly appointed International President Lonnie Stephenson: don't just take what comes up; go out and find opportunities with companies we already have a good relationship with. Stephenson signed on.

"Our best advertisement is our members, and it isn't just workers who notice. Some companies have figured it out too," Stephenson said.

**"I was taught young ... to stand up for what you feel is right."**

—Joey Leach

Nick Akins, the CEO of American Electric Power, filmed a commercial for the IBEW. Alabama Power CEO Mark Crosswhite spoke at the 39th International Convention in 2016. When the IBEW organized at Baltimore Gas and Electric last year, new owner Exelon told the formerly virulently antiunion company to stay neutral.

"The most important part of the 2015 plan was to pick better targets. Don't organize whatever comes through the door. Don't prioritize organizing companies that will fight us to the death," Oakland said. "We focus on companies that we have good relationships with and start there. We don't need more moral victories; we need more members."

So, in March 2017, Fifth District International Vice President Joe Davis and Oakland asked Fifth District Regional Organizing Coordinator Joe Skinner to reach out to some of the leaders of the 2012 campaign and ask if it was time to give it another go. Skinner was soon joined by Fifth District lead organizers Jimmy Flynn and Doug Williams.

"I got in touch with some of the guys and they thought it was worth a meeting," Flynn said.

Joey Leach signed the first card April 17 at the first meeting.



In the final days of the campaign, Director of Professional and Industrial Membership Development Jammi Juarez and a team of international organizers and representatives from the Fifth and Tenth Districts fanned out across the state.

"This is my third or fourth try, but I was taught young not to be a follower, to stand up for what you feel is right," Leach said. "I stepped up because it takes one person to get it started and moves to two."

A few weeks later, at the next meeting, all 19 people in the Marietta office showed up and every one signed a card. Within weeks, Flynn said, they had volunteer organizers across the state and by the end of the campaign, there were volunteer organizers at every site, more than 60 in all.

"From the beginning, we said this was about only two things," Flynn said. "First, it has to be your campaign. We will do everything to help you, but we can't do it for you. And second, all that matters is a contract. To get that contract, you can't just have a win, it has to be big, and you can't just have a local, you need people to pay their dues."

One of the most important decisions, Flynn, Oakland, Skinner and Williams said came when Davis recommended, and Stephenson approved, the creation of a new local for the AGL workers, Local 1997.

"I wanted a union of our own. Nobody else. We will do it all in house," Leach said. "A lot of people jumped on board when we got our own union. It just cut off a lot of what the company was saying."

For example, some managers at the company said dues would be upwards of \$160 a month, that they would be forced out on strike and they could lose what they already had, common tactics nearly all organizing drives face.

"We could say, 'Only if you vote for it,'" said Director of Professional and Industrial Organizing Jammi Juarez. "We tell them being a member of the IBEW costs \$19 a month. Everything after that is up to you. You want a full-time business manager? How much do you want to pay him or her? Want a secretary? An office? A political fund? Your bylaws are decisions that you and the leaders you choose will make for yourselves. That resonates, especially in the South."

It also dealt with the major complaint about the previous union, Galloway said. They were part of a large local and

members felt like they didn't have a voice. With their own local, the focus would never drift. The issues that mattered to the local would always be the issues that mattered to the members.

The main concerns were favoritism, lack of advancement and losing pay and benefits.

Skinner, Flynn and Williams heard age-old stories common to every worker without a contract. Health care costs go up, and the cost is shifted completely onto the workers. The guy who goes fishing with the supervisor gets the promotion and never has to work weekends. One constant was the lack of advancement.

"We have guys with 30 or more years that have still not topped out in their classification," Skinner said. "I said, man, you could be a brain surgeon in 12 years, and you're telling me the company doesn't think you're a senior gas technician? That is a joke. It's a way they are taking advantage of you because you don't have a contract."

For some, the final straw was when the company began installing dash cams in company trucks, but not just facing out, they also faced in. Whenever a driver accelerated too quickly or braked too hard, the camera and microphone would start recording.

"We'd been told a lot of things. The company is going to do this, the company is going to do that. The dash cams were put in for safety purposes, then they were there for disciplinary purposes. You will get a raise, but we

didn't get one for seven years, not even a cost-of-living increase," Leach said. "I know when that camera points inwards, it is not for your safety."

Skinner said they were always careful to be honest but positive.

"We want even the people who hate us to agree on something, so we would say, 'AGL is a great company. Southern is even better. And we'll be a good partner. This will be positive for everyone,'" he said. "If you can get them to nod their head at least twice, you can start there and maybe change some minds."

## The Final Push

In many ways, the campaign was like others. The company held captive audience sessions; the volunteer organizers had meetings off-site to answer the misinformation from those sessions. The company, which had worked to decertify the

Teamsters and had fought the IBEW in the past, did not change.

"The truth is we had some potential unfair labor practices charges that we could have filed, but instead we called Ricky [Oakland], who talked to President Stephenson, who called Southern Company CEO Tom Fanning," Skinner said.

Not long after, Skinner received a call from AGL CEO Bryan Batson with a pledge that the company would stay neutral.

It was like uncoiling a spring, he said.

"Supporters didn't fear retaliation. Even nonsupporters' attitudes changed to, 'Well, it may not be so bad. At the end of the day, the company has worked with us before,'" Williams said.

## The Win

By March, the campaign was 11 months old, and new cards were slowing to a trickle.

"That can happen in any campaign. It can happen when you have 30 percent of the workers signing cards, or 80 percent or, like it did here, 61 percent," Skinner said. "Then you have to ask, are we comfortable with this number? Do we push on and try for more, call the election or bail?"

For Skinner, it was close.

"I did not feel good. I told my wife, according to these numbers we should lose. I had not won a campaign with less than 65 percent of the cards. We've been close, but didn't win," he said.

The volunteer organizing committee, Skinner said, had no doubts.

"I was 100 percent sure," Leach said.

"They were scared and said, 'I won't sign a card, but I promise you I will vote yes.' But these are guys I grew up with. We are all 25, 30, 35-year employees. When they give you their word, I trust these guys."

Skinner, Flynn, Juarez, Williams and Oakland had to decide they would trust

AGL continued on page 4



Organizers and international representatives from the Fifth and Tenth Districts campaigned across the state, including Jeff Henderson, organizer Doug Williams, Brian Thompson and Ed Mobsby.



## Nearly 700 Atlanta Gas Light Workers Join the Brotherhood

► *Continued from page 3*

them as well, file the cards with the National Labor Relations Board and move to a vote.

Oakland recommended, and Stephenson approved, following the model used so successfully at Baltimore Gas and Electric last year. The goal was personal visits to all of the nearly 700 households, which is only possible by sending in dozens of International Office organizers and representatives from the Fifth and Tenth Districts — something Membership Development calls the Strategic Winning Action Team.

**“Life just changed for 700 families, and you never want that feeling to end.”**

— *Fifth District Lead Organizer Doug Williams*

Stephenson even approved sending Oakland, Juarez and other senior members of the International Membership Development Department to make those personal connections during the final days.

“It is a significant investment of time and money, but the reward was within reach,” Stephenson said. “The future of 700 families was in the balance. The volunteer organizers had done thousands of hours of work leading up to the vote. It is moments like this that the IBEW was created for. Of course, we were going to do whatever it took to help them bring their campaign home successfully.”

More than two dozen came in all, driving hundreds of miles from apartment buildings in Atlanta to isolated homesteads in the farmlands outside Valdosta.

When the election was over, the data wasn't quite right: it underestimated their victory by a single percent. On the day of, several dozen people who — for whatever reason — did not sign cards, went and voted for the union by 62 percent.

“I get up at 1:30 in the morning to go to work. I was sure that we were going to win and was in bed trying to go to sleep,” Leach said. “Skinner texted me as soon as the board certified the vote, Jimmy Flynn called me 10 minutes later and then I had another 20 or 30 calls to me with texts in between. It was like they could all

breathe again. I really wasn't worried. I left worrying to Skinner and Flynn.”

Williams, like Flynn and Skinner, is already out on new campaigns — including another subsidiary of Southern Company. The win was still a moment to savor.

“There are low lows and months will go by where you feel like all you hear is ‘no.’ And then you're standing there after a vote listening to people whooping outside in the parking lot because life just changed for 700 families, and you never want that feeling to end,” he said. “They did it. We just helped, but you know what it is going to mean for them.”

As Skinner said from the beginning, this victory is a sweet moment, but it was never the goal. The goal is a contract, and that is the next step.

“Now they will elect the leaders of Local 1997 and they will decide what they want in their contract, and we will help them get there,” Williams said.

For Juarez, the victory, following close on the heels of the BGE win, tells her that an on-site team laying the foundation supported by a large team arriving just before the vote is a plan that has legs.

“The V.O.C. is what makes this work. After the petition they need a lot more support, but it is their work throughout that 12 months that makes it possible,” Juarez said.

Leach sends the love back the other way.

“Without the organizers, none of this would have been possible. It got frustrating and I quit 100 times. Next day, they'd call me back,” Leach said. “I know their wives. I know their kids. There was never a time when they didn't pick up the phone, calm me down or cheer me up when it got frustrating. I just can't say enough about them.”

Victory, Oakland said, is contagious.

“A win like this, in the South, sends a message: the plan works,” Oakland said. “And we had the people in the fleet division and at the call center asking us if they could join in. We had to tell them, ‘Not this time; but get busy. Start the conversation, and we will be there when you are ready for us.’”

Southern Company has 34,000 workers and, with this contract, the IBEW will represent nearly 9,000, which means the plan still has room to grow, Oakland said.

“When a company understands that an IBEW-organized workforce is good for business, and our members get pay and benefits that make a permanent difference for them and their families, we have a map and a destination,” Stephenson said. “Get ready for a lot more stories like this.” ■

*Some of the first members of the V.O.C., Steve Galloway, Joey Leach, Kevin Jackson and Ronnie Smith, came together for a final meeting before the vote.*

## Off-Broadway Play Raises the Curtain on Local 3's Electchester



*On a brief break from cutting and removing fallen trees after Hurricane Sandy, Local 3 volunteers pose at “Harry's rock,” a memorial to Electchester's legendary founder and late local Business Manager Harry Van Arsdale.*

**Luke:** You've seen Electchester. Kids in the playgrounds, old people sitting on benches, lots of trees.

**Elena:** I like the idea of a neighborhood. You know, of all the places I've been, I never lived in a neighborhood.

Strolling the tidy green grounds along the gently curving streets of Electchester, Queens, you pass classic red-brick apartment buildings, playgrounds, a grade school, a public library, a police substation, a small shopping center, a medical clinic, even a 48-lane bowling alley.

It's oddly serene for a neighborhood a half-mile off the Long Island Expressway, across from a housing project, in a borough that is the most ethnically diverse urban area in the world.

“It's a dream living here,” one longtime resident said, a sentiment echoed by others.

Steeped in union Brotherhood, Electchester is a unique, tightknit community that thousands of New York Local 3 members and their families have called home for nearly 70 years.

This spring, an off-Broadway play immortalized their home, its rich history, traditions and shared values as well as the modern tensions that accompany change.

“It's not all roses, but at the same time it is,” said journeyman inside wireman Joe Proscia, who has lived virtually all of his 60 years in Electchester and inspired one of the play's characters. “You don't see anything like this. If you were sick, you wouldn't be able to rest, because people would be bringing stuff over. You're not just living the Brotherhood or Sisterhood on the job, you're bringing it home with you.”

“Alternating Currents” premiered in April at Local 3's union hall before moving off-Broadway in May, with additional performances held in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Staten Island. It is the third of The Working Theater's “Five Boroughs/One City” plays exploring the nature of community. The theater company has produced plays for and about working people since 1985.

The 90-minute play tells Electchester's story through the eyes of newlywed electricians Elena and Luke, an interracial couple, as they weigh the rewards and challenges of their new home. A narrator and three other cast members provide perspective as they rotate through a wide range of characters.

“I feel it's a love letter to Electchester and the spirit of community that Electchester is,” said Mark Plesent, the theater's producer and artistic director. “We didn't sugarcoat the conflicts, but the ideals of Electchester shine through.”

Embodying those ideals on stage is the legendary Local 3 leader who first envisioned the community.

“Our union's come a long way since the days of lockouts and brawling in the union hall,” the character of Harry Van Arsdale Jr., the local's late, beloved business

manager, intones from a podium. “But we've got more work to do, and if we don't all pitch in, it's not gonna get done. I'm here to tell you, a union's not just wages and hours. It's Brotherhood. It's looking past our superficial differences. It's the vehicle for a better life. If we all stick together — help raise our brothers up — there's no limit to what we can achieve in this world.”

*Right: Local 3 Business Manager Chris Erikson, with mic, and delighted children at the annual tree lighting ceremony, an event portrayed in the play. Below: Electchester's towers and some of its 36 brick buildings.*





## A Living Legacy

A larger-than-life figure in Local 3 and the greater New York City labor movement of the mid-20th century, Van Arsdale championed integration and civil rights while tirelessly fighting for workers and unions. His renowned integrity, humility and compassion won hearts and minds. The play pays homage to a gesture he made wherever he went, handing out small cards that said, “Be kind. Everyone you meet is putting up a hard fight.”

In 1949, inspired in part by a housing project for unionized garment workers, Van Arsdale proposed Local 3 build its own community of affordable, comfortable homes for electricians.

One year later, the local broke ground on a site rich with irony: the former Pomonok Country Club in Flushing, Queens, where anti-union titans of business spent leisurely afternoons on the golf course. The first section of what would become 2,500 cooperative housing units in 36 brick buildings and two 23-story towers opened to residents in 1951.

Local 3 purchased the 103-acre site with assistance from the Joint Industry Board of the Electrical Industry, a partnership that continues today. Both the local and JIB are headquartered in the six-story office building that anchors Electchester. The massive bowling alley under the complex is called “JIB Lanes,” with a bowling pin substituting for the “I” in the logo.

Virtually all of Electchester’s one, two and three-bedroom co-op apartments were filled at first by electricians and their families, though housing laws required the local to make a percentage of units available to outsiders. The ratio has shifted over the decades, with Local 3 members

and retirees residing in about 50 percent of the units today. The population is also more racially and culturally diverse.

Electchester hasn’t been immune to the friction and misunderstandings that come with change. Yet the bonds among residents are still strong.

“Alternating Currents” explores the fissures while celebrating the community’s solid foundation of unity and good will. Those values shine when characters exuberantly tell newcomer Elena about some of Electchester’s many activities:

**Sal:** We got the Street Fair, hip hop dance class, the Night Out Against Crime. The Electric Welfare Club for Jewish members.

**Shira:** If you’re a tech nerd, come check out the Futurian Society.

**Saul:** The Adlai Stevenson Regular Democratic Club. We’re on Facebook.

**Luke:** Hey, babe, I just signed up with the Latimer Association — for black electricians. We’re gonna give out these delicious dinner baskets at family shelters.

**Shira:** At the Amber Light Society, we give out scholarships, bike for the cure, and answer letters to Santa.

**Sal:** And let’s not forget: we got brothers and sisters on the picket line. Just ‘cause you have a job, doesn’t mean their strike doesn’t concern you. We gotta represent.

## Embedded in Electchester

To create a full-bodied portrait of Electchester, playwright Adam Kraar and a team from The Working Theater spent a year immersed in the community. They drank with residents at a local tavern, chatted with them at bus stops and community events, visited their homes and invited them to take part in focus groups and theater workshops.

From the team’s first visit, Kraar said

*Left: A 48-lane bowling alley lies below the headquarters of Local 3 and the Joint Industry Board, the “JIB” in the alley’s name.*

*Below: Electchester’s popular summer street fair draws residents from throughout Queens.*



*In a scene with main characters Luke and Elena, right, actors rehearse on the set of The Working Theater’s “Alternating Currents” before a performance at Local 3’s auditorium in Electchester.*

in a magazine interview, they found a clean, safe, friendly neighborhood unlike any other in New York City. “People have an infectious pride about the remarkable variety of community activities they offer,” he said. “At the same time, changing demographics and values — and recent pressures on unions in this country — threaten many of the things that longtime residents cherish about their community.”

They also got to know residents of the Pomonok housing project across the street, where noise, drugs and violence are an unending source of stress for its neighbors. The play conveyed the project’s troubles, but also its humanity.

Within Electchester, the team observed that “microaggressions” seemed to be at the root of most conflicts — comments or actions that aren’t intended to be racist but feel that way to others. Present, the producer, recalled an exchange during an audience discussion at the end of the second performance in Local 3’s auditorium.

When an older man said he didn’t think there was any racism in Electchester, another resident, an Asian-American woman, reiterated a point she made earlier. “She turned around and said, ‘Maybe it’s that thing I said before, that you don’t see it when you don’t live in that person’s skin.’”

“I thought that was just a great moment of conversation about how people perceive things,” Present said.

Reviewers lauded the play as illuminating, perceptive and thought-provoking. In exploring the “messy realities and living and laboring in NYC,” one said, the play “captures contradictions and nuances with empathy and humor.” Another called it “an intimate look at what it means to be part of a community, and what you’re willing to sacrifice personally to be a part of the whole.”

Present also was pleased by an enthusiastic response overall from Electchester residents, despite scenes that made some of them uneasy. “When people see their community being portrayed on stage, there are going to be moments when they feel uncomfortable,” he said. “Most of the reaction from the community was positive.”

After a matinee performance at Local 3 in late April, many in the audience

praised the play, its creative set and the cast — all Actors’ Equity members with Broadway, off-Broadway, regional theater and TV credits.

“All in all, it’s a pretty honest portrayal of the community and its challenges,” said John J. Kelly, a journeyman inside wireman and active Local 3 member who lived in Electchester with his wife, Grace, in the 1970s. Since then, they’ve lived less than a mile away. “We chose to live in Queens,” he said. “This is the most culturally diverse community in the United States, and Electchester is part of that. Everybody’s different and nobody’s different. That’s our strength.”

**“You’re not just living the Brotherhood or Sisterhood on the job, you’re bringing it home with you.”**

*— Electchester resident and Local 3 Vice President Joe Proscia*

Sharing stories about Harry Van Arsdale, who proudly spent the last 35 years of his life in the neighborhood he’d built, Kelly said he believes his late friend and mentor would have liked “Alternating Currents.”

“He would probably have something to say about it. He always had a critical eye for detail,” Kelly said. “But I think Harry would enjoy the show and the message it was trying to send — that we have some of the answers, but not all of the answers.”

## ‘I Love All of It’

For the past decade, The Working Theater has collaborated with Local 3, starting when Business Manager Chris Erikson — Van Arsdale’s grandson — commissioned the theater group to produce short plays about sexual harassment for a union conference. When it came time to pick a setting for the Queens chapter of the five-borough series, Present said Electchester was the obvious choice.

Erikson grew up in Electchester. “My life was influenced and shaped from my exposure to the diverse Electchester community,” he said. “I believe that quality, affordable housing is a key element of a strong and secure society; and I am sure that was what Harry Van Arsdale Jr. was thinking in 1949 when he envisioned Electchester. Congratulations to The Working Theater on their production of ‘Alternating Currents.’”

Proscia, the near-lifelong resident at the heart of the character “Sal,” served as tour guide for the theater team. “He welcomed us with open arms,” Present said. “That spirit, his caring for the community, I think that all comes through in his character.”

After seeing the show on opening night, Proscia had mixed feelings. “It started out good and positive, and then midway it kind of went on a sour note, and toward the end there was a silver lining,” he said. Then again, he acknowledged, that’s a lot like life itself.

His love for Electchester is palpable. His father, who was an electrician at The New York Times, moved the family there when Proscia was a small boy. Today he lives in one of the two towers, with his 85-year-old mother and a 92-year-old cousin in the other.

Despite his overnight shift as an electrician at Manhattan’s Javits Center, Proscia trades hours of sleep for community service, from his unpaid role as Local 3’s vice president to the mammoth job of organizing Electchester’s annual street fair. He is ebullient about it all, even remembering wind storms and blizzards fondly for the camaraderie that followed: In a blink of an eye, dozens of Local 3 members turning out with chainsaws, shovels, toolboxes — whatever the situation called for — and getting to work.

In the play, Sal exudes Proscia’s energy, forever looking out for his neighbors, extolling Electchester’s opportunities, juggling volunteer jobs and encouraging Elena and Luke to do the same.

“I work the graveyard, and I’m at the hall every day for my union duties,” Sal says. “Plus I got the scholarship drive, the blood drive. You don’t hear me complaining, and you know why? I love all of it.” ■





# Take Our Jobs to Mexico? Massachusetts Members Fight Back

**S**ens. Elizabeth Warren, Ed Markey and other Massachusetts political heavyweights joined hundreds of IBEW members on the state's South Coast May 12 to rally against the outsourcing of more than 150 local jobs to Mexico.

On April 20, Philips Lighting announced without warning that it was closing its Fall River, Mass., plant and shifting its operations to Monterrey, Mexico. Within days, Fall River Local 1499's leaders and Second District officials mobilized members of the IBEW, Teamsters Local 25 and other unions to rally outside Philips' facility in protest.

"Philips is claiming they're moving to Mexico to optimize production, but let's call this what it really is — a decision to pay low wages to foreign workers," said Local 1499 Business Manager Rui Pacheco, who only found out about the planned move the day of the company's official announcement.

Second District International Vice President Michael Monahan said the North American Free Trade Agreement has made such moves too easy.

"Since 2001, the United States has lost more than 800,000 good-paying, mainly union manufacturing jobs, with health insurance and retirement plans, thanks to NAFTA," Monahan told the rally. "The U.S. minimum wage is 12 times higher than it is in Mexico, where labor and environmental laws get skirted and corporations are allowed to exploit workers in ways that the United States does not allow."

Of the 160 workers affected, Local 1499 represents 97, who have an average of 32 years of dedicated and loyal service to the company, Pacheco said. "More than once, our workers have accepted concessions to help keep their jobs in Fall River, and this is how they're repaid?"

If the plan can't be stopped, the closure of the southeastern Massachusetts plant would happen in stages from now through early 2019. But the company and local officials seem to be treating the closure and move as done deals.

"We're not going down without a fight," Monahan said.

Fortunately, IBEW members are not battling alone. At a May 7 press conference, Fall River Mayor Jasiel Correia said that Netherlands-based Philips has received more than \$2 million in state and local tax breaks and other financial considerations since 1994.

"If you take our tax breaks, then you should be required to make your products in the United States," he said.

Correia was among the elected officials on hand at the May 12 rally to show their support for the Philips employees. Sens. Markey and Warren were joined from Washington by Reps. Joe Kennedy III and William Keating, and from Boston by Secretary of State Bill Galvin, and State



Fall River, Mass., Local 1499 members rallied on May 12 against Philips Lighting's plan to close its plant there and move the manufacturing jobs to Mexico.

Reps. Carol Fiola and Paul Schmid.

"Decisions like this don't just affect workers," Markey said. "They hurt hundreds of families directly and thousands of Fall River residents."

"What Philips is doing is wrong, and it is up to the rest of us to call them out," Warren said. "You don't get to walk away with millions of dollars in tax breaks and then turn around and spit in the face of your own workers."

"This fight is not over," Kennedy said. "Your voices matter, now more than ever."

Second District International Representative John Horak told The Boston Herald that he welcomed the congressional scrutiny. "A lot of politicians are starting to see it as a serious issue," he said. "It's not just a Massachusetts issue; it's happening across the country."

After Philips' announcement, former Fall River Mayor William Flanagan, via Twitter, called on President Donald Trump to stand up for American workers and to intervene to stop the planned closure. So far, the White House has remained mostly silent, save for a spokesperson's statement that the president "is committed to defending the American worker."

Second District International Representative Ed Starr said he hopes the May 12 rally will encourage all of Massachusetts' elected representatives to work harder to preserve Bay State jobs.

"We're in the position to let the community and workers know we're also there for them," Starr said. "This closure will affect this entire community, not just the workers who've been told their jobs are disappearing."

Shortly after Philips' announcement, thanks largely to the IBEW's urging, Massachusetts' entire congressional delegation — all nine House of Representatives members and both senators — signed onto a letter of protest to Philips Lighting North America CEO Chris White.

"Your decision to close the facility in Fall River and relocate to Mexico fails to take into account the benefits of operating in a community that has shown a willing-

ness to work with the company to make it successful," the letter read. "[I]t turns a blind eye and cold shoulder on the families and community that were integral to the success of Philips Lighting over 20 years.

"The tax cut signed into law by President Trump last year was intended to incentivize further investment by companies into their products and workforces, but Philips Lighting has chosen instead to use that largesse to reward stockholders and further outsource American jobs."

Pacheco underlined that point. "Recent tax breaks afforded to corporate America have not correlated with any bonuses or increases in wages at Philips," he said. "Rather, Philips' shareholders have been showered with \$187.4 million in stock buybacks."

In late April, another letter to White, signed by two-thirds of the state's senators, noted that the Philips plant was a small but important part of Massachusetts' economy, where manufacturing accounts for 10.1 percent of its economic output and 7.8 percent of its workforce. Fifty-two members of the Massachusetts House signed a similar letter.

Even more support for the workers came in letters from Massachusetts' Attorney General Maura Healey, Treasurer Deborah Goldberg, and Auditor Suzanne Bump. Republican Gov. Charlie Baker has remained largely silent on the issue, though his office says it has deployed a labor rapid response team to assist employees impacted by the layoffs.

Fall River's city council passed a resolution that called on Philips to consider the impact that the company's decision would have on its workers and their families, not to mention the area's overall economy.

Pacheco hopes that the controversy over the closure will force other corporate leaders considering similar moves to give greater thought to such ideas.

"Even if they can't protect our jobs," he said, "maybe they'll protect someone else's jobs. Until then, we'll do everything we can to keep these jobs right here in Fall River." ■



## THE IBEW's 2018 PHOTO CONTEST

Enter Today!

Deadline: Oct. 1

1<sup>st</sup> Place: \$200

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$150

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$100

Honorable  
Mention: \$50

For two decades, IBEW members across the U.S. and Canada have been sending us the images that tell the stories of who we are and the work we do. We've been proud to share those pictures with you, and this year we're celebrating a milestone — the IBEW's 20th Annual Photo Contest.

A few of the rules have changed, but your task is the same: Show us what it means to be a member of the greatest union in the world, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

See official rules and submission instructions at [ibew.org/photocontest](http://ibew.org/photocontest).

Starting this year, entries **MUST** be submitted **electronically** via the Photo Contest link on [IBEW.org](http://IBEW.org). Please contact the Media Department at [media@IBEW.org](mailto:media@IBEW.org) or 202-728-6102 with additional questions.

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# NORTH OF 49°

## IBEW Joins 'Just Transition' Task Force for Coal Workers

**T**he IBEW has been tapped to join a Trudeau government task force to assist coal workers and communities with Canada's transition away from coal-fired power plants.

The task force is part of Canada's pledge to phase out the fossil fuel by 2030 and to make it a "just transition," one that supports those whose livelihood depends on the coal industry, estimated at approximately 3,000 people working in either coal-fired power plants or coal mines, according to the Alberta Federation of Labour.

"Our members bring real-world experience that will be invaluable in this transition," said First District International Vice President William Daniels. "We're honoured to have a seat at the table."

Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna announced the members at a press conference on April 25. Political Action and Media Strategist Matt Wayland will represent the IBEW on the 11-person team that includes individuals from the environmental, government, academic and business sectors. Canadian Labour Congress President Hassan Yussuff will co-chair the committee with Lois Corbett, executive director of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick.

"This is a diverse group, and we're all here to work in the best interest of the workers and communities involved in the transition," Wayland said.

The team will meet with stakeholders, including provincial and local governments, labour unions, indigenous groups and businesses and issue a report at the end of the year with recommendations for the federal government.

The phase-out will most directly impact the four provinces that currently produce coal-fired energy: Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The IBEW represents around 2,000 members in the coal sector, represented by five locals: Fredericton, New Brunswick, Local 37; Calgary, Alberta, Local 254; Edmonton, Alberta, Local 1007; Halifax, Nova Scotia, Local 1928 and Regina, Saskatchewan, Local 2067.

Local 37 Business Manager and International Executive Council member Ross Galbraith noted that his local has a good record of minimizing the negative impacts of such transitions, having negotiated options like retraining, relocation and early retirement.

"I'm going to make sure every option is explored in order to protect our members' interests, including the potential for switching fuel sources," Galbraith said. "It's the benefit of a collective bargaining agreement and a good relationship with the employer."

Local 2067 represents members in all aspects of the coal production process, including mining and carbon capture and storage — a process that can

reduce emissions. In addition to concerns about losing a reliable baseload energy source, Business Manager Jason Tibbs says his roughly 500 members in the industry could be devastated by the transition.

"We're encouraged that the task force has an IBEW representative. We know he'll help elevate our voices," Tibbs said. "I'm hoping the government will see that there are many available options when it comes to the environment."

The task force made its first visit to Alberta in May. Under New Democratic

Party leadership, the province began its own just transition about a year ago, potentially giving the federal government, led by the Liberal Party, a blueprint.

Local 254 Business Manager John Briegel attended the meeting and presented on the local's experience, noting that many of the transition policies have been helpful, though some need adjusting, like the retirement benefit that can penalize someone with an early retirement provision in their pension plan.

"We were the first ones to do this, and we put a lot of time and money into

getting the best possible information," said Briegel. "We're working hard to make it the best transition it can be, but it won't be painless."

Briegel says there's been a lot of collaboration, including with Local 1007 and the Alberta Federation of Labour, which commissioned a study on pensions that should be completed this summer.

"We're not so smug as to say that we've done it all right, but our primary concern is the people, and there's a lot of good work being done here," Briegel said. ■

## AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

### La FIOE se joint au groupe de travail sur « la transition équitable » pour les travailleurs du charbon

**D**ans le cadre de la transition du Canada vers l'énergie sans charbon, La FIOE a été sollicitée pour rejoindre le groupe de travail créé par le gouvernement de Trudeau pour venir en aide aux travailleurs et aux communautés qui dépendent du charbon.

Le groupe de travail fait partie de la promesse du gouvernement canadien en vue de réduire progressivement les combustibles fossiles d'ici 2030 pour rendre « la transition équitable ». Cette aide est dirigée vers les personnes qui dépendent de l'industrie houillère pour gagner leurs vies estimées à environ 3 000 personnes travaillant soit dans une centrale alimentée au charbon ou dans une mine de charbon selon la Fédération des travailleurs de l'Alberta.

« Nos membres apportent une expérience du terrain qui sera fort précieuse dans cette transition, » mentionne William Daniels le vice-président international du Premier District. « C'est pour nous un honneur de pouvoir siéger à la table. »

Les membres ont été annoncés par Catherine McKenna la ministre de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique dans une conférence de presse qui a eu lieu le 25 avril. Matt Wayland de l'action politique/stratège en média du Premier District représentera la FIOE dans l'équipe de 11 personnes qui comprend des individus des secteurs environnementaux, gouvernementaux, académiques et des affaires. Le président Hassan Yussuff du Congrès du Travail du Canada coprésidera le comité avec la directrice exécutive Lois Corbett du Conseil de conservation du Nouveau-Brunswick.

« C'est un groupe diversifié, et nous sommes ici pour tenir compte des intérêts fondamentaux des travailleurs et des communautés impliqués dans cette transition, » ajoute Wayland.

Le groupe de travail consultera les groupes intéressés, y compris les gouvernements des provinces et locaux, les syndicats, les groupes autochtones ainsi que les entreprises et soumettra un rapport à la fin de l'année pour présenter ses recommandations au gouvernement fédéral.

L'élimination progressive touchera directement les quatre provinces qui actuellement produisent l'énergie à l'aide du charbon tel que : l'Alberta, la Saskatchewan, le Nouveau-Brunswick et la Nouvelle-Écosse.

La FIOE représente environ 2 000 membres dans le secteur du charbon, représentés au sein de cinq sections locales : local 37 à Fredericton, Nouveau-Brunswick; local 254 à Calgary, Alberta; local 1007 à Edmonton, Alberta; local 1928 à Halifax, Nouvelle-Écosse et le local 2067 à Regina, Saskatchewan.

Ayant négocié des possibilités telles que la formation, la relocalisation et la retraite anticipée, Ross Galbraith le gérant d'affaires du local 37 et membre du Comité Exécutif International, fait observer que le local possède de bons antécédents en matière de minimiser les impacts négatifs de telles transitions.

« Je vais m'assurer que toutes les possibilités ont été explorées pour protéger les intérêts de nos membres, y compris le remplacement de combustible, » énonce Galbraith. « C'est l'avantage d'avoir une convention collective et une bonne relation avec l'employeur. »

La section locale 2067 représente des membres dans tous les aspects du processus de production d'électricité à partir du charbon, y compris les mines et la capture et le stockage du carbone, un procédé qui contribue à réduire les émissions.

En plus d'avoir des inquiétudes au sujet de perdre une source d'électricité de

base fiable, le gérant d'affaires Jason Tibbs annonce que ces quelque 500 membres travaillant dans l'industrie seront sûrement ébranlés par cette transition.

« Nous sommes rassurés d'apprendre que le groupe de travail comprend un représentant de la FIOE. notre voix se fera entendre, » dit Tibbs. « J'espère que le gouvernement va s'apercevoir qu'il y a plusieurs différentes options lorsqu'on parle d'environnement. »

Au mois de mai, le groupe de travail a fait sa toute première visite en Alberta. Sous la gouvernance du Nouveau Parti Démocratique, la province a commencé sa propre transition il y a un an. La province a présenté un plan d'action au gouvernement fédéral, mené par le parti Libéral.

Le gérant d'affaires John Briegel du local 254 a assisté à la réunion. Il s'est basé sur l'expérience du local, il a fait remarquer que plusieurs politiques de transition ont été utiles, même si certaines nécessitent un ajustement; comme la prestation de retraite qui peut pénaliser quelqu'un ayant une disposition relative à la retraite anticipée dans leur régime de pension.

« Nous étions les premiers à le faire, nous avons investi beaucoup de temps et d'argent pour obtenir la meilleure information possible, » informe Briegel. « Nous travaillons fort pour que cette transition se fasse dans les meilleures conditions possible, mais ça ne sera pas facile. »

Briegel confie qu'il y a eu beaucoup de collaboration, y compris le local 1007 et la Fédération des travailleurs de l'Alberta, qui ont demandé la réalisation d'une étude sur les retraites prévue s'achever cet été.

« On évite de dire que nous avons tout fait correctement, mais notre préoccupation première est le peuple, beaucoup de bon travail a été accompli ici, » assure Briegel. ■

## IBEW MEDIA WORLD

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

### www.ibew.org

Get all the news for and about IBEW members, including the online version of the Electrical Worker, at [IBEW.org](http://IBEW.org).

### YouTube

Members of St. Louis Local 4 work as broadcast professionals throughout Missouri and the region. See how the Code of Excellence is making their jobs — and their local — better at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](http://YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker).

### Vimeo

Dozens of IBEW members have been

elected to public office all over the U.S. and Canada. From the U.S. Congress to the local water board, learn how they're making a difference for working families at [Vimeo.com/IBEW](http://Vimeo.com/IBEW).



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# THE FRONT LINE: POLITICS & JOBS

## Right-to-Work Vote Means Hot Summer Showdown in the Show-Me State

Missouri voters will still have their chance to repeal the state's recently-passed right-to-work law, but Republican shenanigans mean the vote will come this summer instead of during November's general election.

Former Gov. Eric Greitens signed legislation passed by the GOP-dominated General Assembly that moves the vote on Proposition A to Aug. 7 — the date of the Missouri primary — instead of Nov. 6. A “no” vote would override the right-to-work law passed by the Legislature and signed by Greitens early last year. Greitens resigned his position June 1 amid an impeachment investigation by the state House and potential criminal charges, but it does not impact the legislation.

Last year, the IBEW and its labor allies collected about 311,000 signatures to put the issue on the ballot — nearly three times more than required by Missouri law. Sensing that momentum, right-to-work supporters opted to hold the Proposition A vote earlier to minimize working families' impact on a race with national implications.

“In November, we have a very highly contested election that may decide control of the United States Senate,” said Tim Green, a former state legislator and now director of governmental affairs for St. Louis Local 1 and the Electrical Connection, Local 1's partnership with the St. Louis chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association.

“They did not want the labor vote to be energized on the right-to-work issue, which could possibly benefit Sen. McCaskill and not the Republican candidate,” he said.

Right-to-work laws allow employees to opt out of paying union membership dues, even when they enjoy the benefits of a union contract. They undercut wages and benefits throughout a state, affecting union and nonunion workers alike.

Missouri Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill is running for a third term in a state that has gone almost entirely red in the last 10 years. In 2016, the Republicans added to their supermajority in the Gener-

al Assembly and also took control of six of the eight statewide elected offices.

Attorney General Josh Hawley is likely to be McCaskill's opponent. Republicans control the U.S. Senate 51-49 and view Missouri as a prime pickup opportunity.

“There was a lot of enthusiasm seen in the number of signatures to put this on the ballot,” Green said. “Now, that enthusiasm needs to be regenerated in August. If everyone gets out the vote, the labor movement will be successful in defeating this law.”

Green cautioned, however, that a failure to get out the vote has hurt Missouri labor organizations in recent elections.

“Elections have consequences,” said Green, noting that Missouri had fought off other right-to-work attempts before Greitens' election because a Democrat was in the governor's mansion. “We need people to participate.”

Missouri political director Rudy Chavez, a former president of Kansas City Local 124, agrees the Senate race was the reason the Legislature moved the Proposition A vote, but he thinks it actually helps the IBEW and other groups opposing the measure.

“Moving it up three months will help us to be motivated,” Chavez said. “I think people are fired up again. By having it in August, we know that when we spend our money on media [advertising], we won't be competing with statewide races. That's an advantage for us.”

Turnout usually is lower for primary races than general elections, but Chavez said that will be an advantage as well — if working families get to the polls.

“It still comes down to getting your people out,” he said. “I compare it to what I tell our members who are running for things like school board. You know there will be low turnout, but it's kind of low-hanging fruit. If we can get our folks out when others don't, you'll win.”

Chavez said Local 124 is advertising during Kansas City Royals radio broadcasts urging voters to vote “no.” It also has several mailings planned within its jurisdiction and is encouraging members to find at least six people to get to the polls and vote “no.”

Local 1 advertises heavily in the St. Louis area as part of the Electrical Con-

nection. It is urging voters at the end of each radio advertisement to vote no on Proposition A, Business Manager Frank Jacobs said.

Green said Proposition A needs to be defeated decisively. The larger the “no” vote, the less likely right-to-work proponents will bring the issue up again.

“I'm sure those special interest groups won't go away very easily,” Green said. “Hopefully, a strong defeat of this measure will help.”

The deadline to register in Missouri for the August election is July 11. ■

## Law Repealing Bank Rules Opens the Door to Another Great Recession

Nearly eight years of high-stakes lobbying by the banking industry paid off in May when the U.S. House voted to dismantle regulations that pulled the country out of the Great Recession, put millions of Americans back to work and protected consumers from financial ruin.



Wall Street is cheering a new law that weakens banking regulations.

The vote finished what the Senate started in March, dealing a final blow to key provisions of the 2010 Dodd-Frank law that helped rebuild the economy after Wall Street's collapse in 2008 and was designed to prevent future calamity. President Trump signed the legislation May 24, calling it “a truly great day.”

The nation's largest banks, whose risky investment schemes were largely responsible for the worst global economic crisis since 1929, are expected to reap billions from the partial repeal.

“These banks took massive risks in search of enormous profits, and when they got into trouble, it was working people who paid the highest price,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. “One in four of our construction members were out of work after 2008. People lost their jobs, their homes; marriages crumbled, all so these bankers could make a few extra dollars. And now this Congress has set them free to do it all over again.”

The Republican-sponsored law exempts all but a handful of financial giants from the stricter oversight that Dodd-Frank imposed.

Even with Dodd-Frank rules in place,

the banking industry's profits have soared. Now they are expected to skyrocket. “This is not a bill that benefits consumers. It is a big-bank bonanza,” Rep. Al Green, a Texas Democrat, said during the House debate.

Thirty-three House Democrats voted with all but one Republican in favor of the bill. Among those who stood firmly against it was Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, who said it puts the economic security of “hard-working American people” at risk.

“It rolls back key safeguards for American consumers. It opens the door to lending discrimination, and it potentially threatens the stability of our financial system and our economy,” Pelosi said on the House floor. “The bill would take us back to the days when unchecked recklessness on Wall Street ignited an historic financial meltdown. Wall Street gambled with the livelihood of consumers and then it was the middle class that lost its shirt.” ■

## Repeal of Tax Hike on Union Members and Traveling Workers Stalls

A bill to repeal a new tax on union dues and unreimbursed job expenses has stalled in the Senate, a significant financial blow to many working families and union members.

The bill, sponsored by Democratic Sen. Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, would reverse a little-publicized hike in the 2017 tax bill. Until last year, taxpayers who itemized their return could deduct a portion of their union dues and other unreimbursed job expenses. That disappeared when Donald Trump signed the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act” in December.

In 2014, the most recent year data are available, Americans deducted \$90 billion for union dues and miscellaneous job expenses. The savers included hundreds of thousands of IBEW utility, telecommunications and construction members, who will no longer be able to deduct part of the cost of uniforms or expenses incurred when traveling for work.

The total cost of getting rid of that one deduction is close to \$20 billion a year, according to Matthew Gardner, a senior fellow at the nonpartisan Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

To put that in context, ITEP found that the new law cuts taxes on foreign investors by \$47 billion annually and the corporate tax rate cut in the bill will reduce the tax bill of just one company, Apple, by nearly \$7 billion each year.

“There is a basic inequity in the tax bill that places union members at a disadvantage relative to companies trying to subvert those unions,” Gardner said.

One of the biggest sources of bias toward corporations and the rich, he said,

was that while workers can no longer deduct basic job expenses, corporations can continue to deduct billions of dollars in business expenses.

“That means businesses can deduct the cost of lobbying Congress not to eliminate the business expenses deduction,” he said.

The bill's supporters argue that an increase in the standard deduction to \$10,000 for an individual and \$24,000 for married couples filing jointly will make up the difference.

“Maybe that is true for the average taxpayer, and maybe it isn't. We will see. What is certain is this Republican Congress found a way to go after workers,” said Political Department Director Austin Keyser. “Many IBEW members are unique. Hundreds of thousands of members travel to multiple jurisdictions a year to work on sporting events and large projects, including storm recovery. It's concerning that they may be negatively impacted.”

While union dues are no longer deductible, Keyser said, membership dues to join the anti-union Chamber of Commerce still are.

Casey's bill attempts to right at least part of the inequity, bringing back the tax deduction for job expenses and union dues and making it available to more people.

Traditionally, only the 30 percent of taxpayers who itemized their return could take advantage of the mortgage interest, state and local taxes and job expenses deductions, among others.

But since the tax bill eliminated or capped those deductions, Gardner said he expects less than 10 percent of taxpayers will bother itemizing their return this year.

Casey's bill simply adds a line to the standard 1040 form that 90 percent of American taxpayers use so all union members would have access to those deductions, including many who weren't able to take advantage of it before.



Working people lost a major tax deduction last year and a bill to bring it back faces an uphill battle in Congress.

Unfortunately, Keyser said, the bill is stalled in the Finance Committee and unlikely to see any action as long as the Senate majority leader is Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

“McConnell won't bring this up unless it is five days before the election and it's politically advantageous for him to do so. And then he'll try to take credit,” he said. “Capturing the House and Senate and forcing this bill onto President Trump's desk is the only way we'll make up for the damage the tax bill did to us.” ■



Missouri working families rally at the state Capitol after turning in signatures forcing a right-to-work referendum.



# ORGANIZING WIRE

## Another IBEW Win in the South

Terry Waters and his fellow Frontier technicians in southwestern Alabama and western Florida weren't upset with their employer or working conditions. They did, however, think they could do better.

That's why they turned to the IBEW and Pensacola, Fla., Local 676 for help. And it paid off.

The Frontier workers' bargaining group was certified by the National Labor Relations Board in March of last year and ratified its first agreement on April 18, adding 26 new members in a part of the country with a reputation for being notoriously difficult to organize.

"Here we are in Alabama, and not only did they want to join a union, they hung together for 13 months to fight for a contract," said Robert Prunn, an international representative in the Telecommunications Department. "That proves what [International President Lonnie R.] Stephenson has said all along: 'We can win in the South.'"

Everyone involved in the successful effort — including Prunn, Local 676 Business Manager Dale Cope and Fifth District International Representative Clay Leon — gave Waters the lion's share of the credit. He's nearing retirement after working 37 years in telecommunications, including for companies that preceded Frontier's takeover of his division. But in an act of solidarity, he was determined to improve conditions for his colleagues before he left.

Waters had plenty of help from his co-workers. But convincing them of the need for a union was "an easy sell."

"To be honest with you, the company has always treated us well," said Waters. "But we have noticed that when some of our people were sent to different parts of the country to work because of storm damage or whatever, they would come back and say, 'Man, a lot of guys we worked with were union and they were awesome.'"

So, Waters and the other employees did some research. They learned the union-represented employees had contracts that included a grievance and arbitration system. Those contracts included guidelines on how to handle layoffs in a telecommunications industry that continues to downsize. They realized such protections would be nice to have in Alabama, a right-to-work state that allows employers to hire and fire employees at will.

Pay overall was competitive within the industry, but they were frustrated Frontier would not agree to a written wage scale. Employees with the same level of experience received different levels of pay, with no explanation from the company.

"We've never had a seat at the table to negotiate health care or layoffs or anything to protect us," he said.

Waters said he contacted the IBEW because it has a long-standing relationship with Frontier. A representative from the Telecommunications Department replied to his email within minutes, he said.

Waters and the rest of the Frontier employees voted 23-4 for representation, but the nearest telecommunications local

was more than two hours away.

Local 676 was just 45 minutes to the south, but it is a construction union. Cope's role primarily has been finding work for his construction members. He said he knew he and Leon — who also comes from a construction background — would need some help in securing the contract. Prunn made several trips from the International Office in Washington to speak with the Frontier workers and lead negotiations.

"My attitude was, if I can help the cause and bring our brothers into the labor movement, I'll welcome them with open arms," Cope said. "We'll do what we can."

The newly-organized Frontier employees agreed to a 4-year contract that guaran-

tees them a voice on the job. Among the items addressed were seniority, short- and long-term disability, just cause for discipline, grievance and arbitration.



Pensacola, Fla., Local 676 will represent a newly-organized unit of Frontier technicians in Alabama and Florida.

Credit: Creative Commons / Flickr user Mike Mozart

The vote to approve was 21-0 with five employees not voting. The newly-organized Frontier employees work out of the Alabama cities of Atmore, Camden and Monroeville and Molino, Fla.

"After all the hard work you put into it, when you have a unanimous vote like that, you really feel good," Cope said. "The message came across and they clearly understood it. It was such a great pleasure to work with Robert. I learned a lot and it's helped me become a better business manager."

Leon, who previously served as business manager at New Orleans Local 130, noted the main responsibility for a construction business manager in negotiations is to find work for his or her members. They normally aren't involved in negotiating items like

seniority, and they're usually dealing with several different companies at once.

That's why having someone with a telecommunications background like Prunn was crucial, he said. So was having an engaged potential membership led by Waters.

"I'm sorry we didn't get him into the IBEW earlier," Leon said. "He's a very sharp guy and just a credit to the industry. He would have been a great leader for us."

In the end, that teamwork led to a win in the South.

"This win is especially rewarding to me," Stephenson said. "A group of employees determined to make things better for themselves and their families came together and our staff and a local business manager stepped up when they asked for help. It doesn't get much better than that. I want to thank everyone involved and welcome our new brothers and sisters to the IBEW." ■

## CIRCUITS

### Phoenix Couple Rides Cross-Country for Cancer

Colleen and Rich Scheid grew up in northern Indiana, but the two journeymen inside wiremen didn't meet until 2004, when they were working at the Pastoria Energy Facility near Bakersfield, Calif.

"On one of our first dates, we went on a hike together," Colleen said. "I love exercising. When I found someone else who loves it as much as I do, we fell in love pretty quickly."

They married in 2007 and endurance training was part of a shared exercise regimen that included bicycling. They wondered what it would be like to ride across the country.

Earlier this year, the couple started their journey, which they're using to raise money to fight childhood cancer. The Scheids dipped the back tires of their bikes in the Pacific Ocean in San Diego on April 20. They plan to dip their front tires into the Atlantic in St. Augustine, Fla., around July 4, a distance of 3,053 miles.

Along the way, they are collecting donations to CureSearch in memory of Rich's nephew, Graham Wolff, who passed away in 2007 at 9 years old. CureSearch raises money to fight childhood cancer and bring researchers in the field together.

"When I get on my bicycle, I instantly have a smile on my face," Colleen said. "It's something about how you connect with the road, how you feel when the wind blows in your hair and on your face. When you conquer hills, it's such an accomplishment."

Two flags are always present on their bikes: America's stars and stripes and the IBEW's logo on a blue field.

"Both of our fathers were IBEW members," Rich said. "Very few days pass when we don't tell each other, 'Thank goodness for them and for getting us into the union at a young age.'"

"We thank our lucky stars they got us into this line of work. It's why we have all of this."

Colleen graduated from high school in northwest Indiana near Chicago. She was 19 when her family moved to Phoenix, and she wasn't sure about a career when her father encouraged her to pursue an apprenticeship. She took his advice and now is a 20-year member of Phoenix Local 640.

Rich is a second-generation IBEW member, who followed his father into South Bend, Ind., Local 153. He was working as a traveler following his divorce when he met Colleen. The two now live in Phoenix.

They've regularly gone on long-distance bike rides and run half-marathons. Rich jokes that Colleen turned him into a "vegetable guy instead of a chicken-wing guy."

But the cross-country ride was his idea. It was something he wanted to try for most of his adult life. Colleen was the perfect partner.

"He loves my energy," she said. "I was born with a smile on my face."

The ride takes on even more purpose because of Graham, who died one year after being diagnosed with brain cancer. The Scheids hope to raise at least \$7,777 for CureSearch. They were about one-third of the way to their goal in mid-May.

"This has become so much bigger than we imagined," Colleen said. "When I am riding up long hills, and it's kicking my butt, I realize these little kids are suffering more than me riding up a hill. That gives me more motivation to never complain."

The Scheids have no support personnel accompanying them. They did that in part because of the expense, but also because it allows them to keep their own schedule.

Strangers have donated money or offered a place to stay. Fellow union members see the IBEW flag and talk about the importance of unions in their lives. Local 153, which



Colleen and Rich Scheid, members of Phoenix Local 640 and South Bend, Ind., Local 158, respectively. The couple is riding across the country to raise money for child cancer research.



remains Rich's home local, donated \$500. Rich has noticed Teamsters honking their horns and giving them a thumbs-up when they pass.

"We've met so many great people who will just randomly stop and ask if we need any water," Colleen said. "We don't ask for money. They just say, 'Hey, how can I donate?' Just unbelievable kindness."

Local 153 Business Manager Bill Haase has known Rich for about 17 years. He originally proposed to his board the local donate \$153 to the ride because of the local number, but the board agreed to bump it up to \$500 because Haase and several other members have good memories of him, even though he's now seldom seen because he usually works as a traveler.

Rich was always the one bringing in doughnuts when Local 153 members were working on the Four Winds Casino in nearby New Buffalo, Mich., in 2007, for instance, he said.

"The guy always has a smile, he's a good worker and he always has a story to tell," Haase said.

Local 640 Business Manager Dean Wine said the Scheid's ride has been a rallying point for his members. Local 640 has donated \$1,000 to the ride.

"Union members work as hard as anyone, but we're all pretty blown away by what Colleen and Rich are doing," he said. "To have them spread our message while also raising money for a great cause, you can't ask for anything more."

As they do, Colleen and Rich have one constant visual reminder to motivate them.

"When I look back at the pictures and see the American and IBEW flags flying together," she said, "it's freaking gorgeous."

Those interested in donating can do so online at [pictureusrollin.com](http://pictureusrollin.com). Track the Scheids' progress on their Facebook page. ■



# TRANSITIONS

## DECEASED

### Thomas P. Van Arsdale



The IBEW regrets to announce the death of former International Treasurer Thomas P. Van Arsdale, one of the giants of the Brotherhood

from a family of icons. He was 94.

"Tom was a legend, smart, honest and tough," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "There are very few who could claim to have done more for the IBEW and our members than Tom."

Brother Van Arsdale was a third-generation wireman. His grandfather, Harry Van Arsdale Sr., joined the Electrical Mechanical Wireman's Union, which later became New York Local 3, around the turn of the 20th century. His father, Harry Van Arsdale Jr., was business manager of Local 3 from 1933 to 1968 and founding president of the New York Central Labor Council from its founding in 1957 until his death in 1986.

**"There are very few who could claim to have done more for the IBEW."**

— International President  
Lonnie R. Stephenson

Van Arsdale joined the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1943 while attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He served for three years, rising to the rank of ensign, including a stint overseas during World War II. He graduated with a degree in electrical engineering in 1945 and immediately applied for the Local 3 apprenticeship. He was initiated into the union where he began work in a supply house, then a cable manufacturing facility and a fixture company. A year later he started his apprenticeship, and in 1947 he became the secretary of the committee of the apprentices, negotiating the first of hundreds of contracts he'd oversee over the years.

Brother Van Arsdale worked with the tools for seven years, but he joined the Local 3 executive board only two years after topping out. In 1958, he came on staff as a business representative and was appointed a director of the Electrical Workers Benefit Society. He was a delegate to the 1962 IBEW convention, the first of many, where he served on the Resolutions and Law committee. That same year he went on a solo goodwill trip to the capitals of 10 South American countries, meeting with labor activists and government officials. A year later he made a 20-day trip to meet with trade unionists in Tokyo, Manila, Singapore, Rome, Italy, Berlin, Paris and London.

In 1964, Van Arsdale joined the National Electrical Code and Standards Committee, a position he held for 14 years. In 1965, he was appointed the assistant business manager for manufacturing.

In 1968, after 31 years, Van Arsdale's father stepped down as business

manager of Local 3, and the executive board elected Van Arsdale to finish the term. He was elected to his first full term a year later and was re-elected to the post for nearly four decades.

In an interview around the time of his retirement, Van Arsdale talked about the transition that he had been groomed for.

"To be business manager is like stepping out of the dark into the light, or vice versa," he said, showing his sense of humor.

Van Arsdale took over Local 3 at the height of the power and reach of organized labor in New York City. He was in high demand for charity and governmental boards, serving at some point on the board of the New York State Association of Electrical Workers, the Executive Committee of the New York City Council on Economic Education, the Labor Advisory Committee at Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations, on the board of trustees of the State University of New York, the board of directors of the Catholic Interracial League, the Police Athletic League, the Greater New York Fund and the United Way, among many others.

But the majority of his leadership came as the city and labor slipped into the crisis of the '70s and '80s.

"He was a quiet, reserved man of integrity and also a realist," said International Executive Council chairman and Local 3 Business Manager Christopher Erikson, Van Arsdale's nephew. "He had control over the labor movement in very difficult times and had to make many difficult, sometimes unpopular decisions. If it was the right decision, even though it might have been politically unpopular, he made it, and his legacy speaks for itself."

He spoke out against apartheid in South Africa when many didn't, Erikson said, and was committed to diversity in Local 3 and the trades so that men and women from every background benefited from the opportunities in the union trades. In 1975 he received the Award of Merit from the Black Trade Unionists and the Hispanic Labor Committee Award.

"He was bold that way," Erikson said. Since 1900, a member of Local 3 had filled the part-time position of International Treasurer. In 1978, Van Arsdale continued that storied tradition, proudly serving two decades as the Brotherhood's final International Treasurer. In 1998, the position was combined with International Secretary, and future IBEW president Edwin D. Hill took over the second highest post in the IBEW. Van Arsdale was then appointed to a three-year term as Treasurer Emeritus working on special projects for then-International President J.J. Barry.

In 1986, after a contentious three-way campaign, Van Arsdale was elected president of the 1 million-member New York City Central Labor Council, replacing his father, who had been president for 31 years. Van Arsdale held that post until 1995.

In 2006, 73 years after he accompanied his father to a convention of the New York State Labor Federation and watched future AFL-CIO president George Meany speak, 61 years after his initiation into the local that defined his life, Van Arsdale stepped down as business manager.

Ten years later, though his health was failing, Van Arsdale made his final speech to the IBEW, on video, to the thousands assembled for the 2016 convention.

"One-hundred twenty-five years ago, electrical workers just like you and I founded the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers here in St. Louis. Now it is your responsibility, for you are the future of the IBEW," he said. "Embrace the challenge. Embrace new ideas. Do not fear failure. Fear not trying. Echoing and living the words of Winston Churchill can only aid in the success of the IBEW: never, never, never give up. I wish you all a successful convention and a bright future for the IBEW."

The officers, staff and members of the IBEW extend our deepest condolences to Brother Arsdale's wife, Phyllis, his daughters Pat, Susan and Jean, his 12 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and to his friends and Local 3 family.

A funeral mass was held at St. Nicholas of Tolentine at 150-75 Goethals Avenue in Jamaica, Queens, May 23. He was interred at Mount St. Mary's Cemetery at 164-15 Booth Avenue, Fresh Meadows in Queens, the borough where he was born and lived his whole life.

Condolences may be sent to Phyllis Van Arsdale at 161-02 Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Avenue, Flushing, NY, 11365. ■

## APPOINTED

### Michael Richard



International Representative Michael Richard has been appointed director of the Construction Department, effective July 1. Brother Richard replaces Jim Ross, who retired.

"I can't think of a better guy for the job," said Local 58 Business Manager Brian Richard, who's known Michael Richard for more than 20 years. "Mike's willing to do the hard work. He won't ask you to do anything he wouldn't do."

The Detroit native followed in the footsteps of his father when he was inducted into Local 58 in 1993. Active in his local, Richard served on committees including safety, bylaws and community services, as well as the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus. Prior to his induction, Richard served in the Marine Corps from 1987 to 1992, rising to the rank of sergeant.

In 2012, Michael Richard was elected business manager, a position he held until his November 2017 appointment as an international representative in the Construction Department.

"Mike's always said that every pair of pants he's owned, every meal he's eaten and house he's lived in was because of the IBEW. He's never lost sight of that," Brian Richard said.

Brian Richard credits his predecessor with putting Local 58 "back on the map." In addition to steering the local through the lingering effects of the Great

Recession and Detroit's own long overdue recovery, he built relationships with the state building trades, serving as a trustee, and with the state AFL-CIO serving on the executive council. He also chaired the IBEW State Conference.

"Our relationship with the [AFL-CIO] state fed is probably stronger than it's ever been," Michael Richard said, and that type of relationship-building is something he'd like to see more locals do.

"The IBEW does more than a lot of groups, and that has a lot to do with our history of servicing our members and keeping them engaged," he said. "In turn, when we need people to turn out, they're there. They show up."

The former Marine sergeant says he's looking forward to promoting Helmets to Hardhats, a program to encourage veterans to enter the building trades post-service. He was also appointed by International President Lonnie R. Stephenson to serve on the opioid task force run by North America's Building Trades Unions.

The construction industry is one of the hardest hit by the epidemic and Richard says the task force has an important role to play in helping unions let their members know that they're there to help, even if someone has failed a drug test or relapsed.

"Addiction isn't usually solved after one time in rehab. We need to let them know they'll be welcomed back," he said. "Employers want this, too. That's one of the bright spots in all this."

Richard says he'll continue the work of his predecessor in terms of being a resource for locals and letting districts know the international office is always available to them.

It's also an election year.

"There's a lot at stake," he said. "We're dealing with attacks on the prevailing wage, right-to-work. And we can't just look at the federal level. There's a lot going on locally too."

The looming labor shortage is also of concern. With nearly 25 percent of construction members over the age of 55, Richard says locals will need to put more and more resources into organizing just to keep up with the pace of retirements in the years ahead.

**"I can't think of a better guy for the job."**

— Local 58 Business Manager  
Brian Richard

Richard says he'll continue to champion the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, women's committees and Reach out and Engage Next-gen Electrical Workers, the IBEW's initiative to get younger members involved in the union.

"One of the accomplishments I'm most proud of is increasing the number of women and people of color at Local 58," he said.

The officers, staff and members wish Brother Richard all the best as he takes up his new position. ■

## APPOINTED

### Brian Threadgold



After more than a decade's service as a local officer and international representative, Brian Threadgold has been promoted to head the Per

Capita Department, the financial engine that keeps the IBEW running.

"My analogy is that it's the heartbeat of the union," said Threadgold, a journeyman inside wireman who rose to the top of Topeka, Kan., Local 226.

**"It's the heartbeat of the union."**

— Brian Threadgold

Threadgold was sworn into the local as an apprentice in 1998, became president in 2007 and took the reins as business manager in 2010. He'd won re-election twice when International President Lonnie R. Stephenson asked him to come to headquarters as an international representative in the Council on Industrial Relations/Bylaws and Appeals Department. He moved with his wife and three daughters to the Washington, D.C., area last fall.

In just seven months at the International Office, Threadgold quickly proved his value and will "absolutely be missed," CIR/Bylaws and Appeals Director Mike Kwashnik said.

"Brian's done a fantastic job. He hit the ground running," Kwashnik said, describing Threadgold's work with bylaws, appeals and other labor-management matters CIR handles. "His leadership qualities shine through. He was a very successful business manager at his home local, and he served for years on the CIR panel. He shined again in his performance here, even though it was short."

In addition to the CIR panel, which works to settle construction industry bargaining, grievance and other disputes that have reached impasse, Threadgold served on the Kansas AFL-CIO executive board and chaired both the Kansas Association of Electrical Workers and the Northeast Kansas Building and Trades Council.

In his new position, which took effect June 1, Threadgold is responsible for managing vast financial and membership records, and for processing the per-capita dues payments from locals that make IBEW's work possible. He said his seven years as a trustee and financial secretary at Local 226 helped prepare him for the challenges ahead.

Threadgold added that he couldn't have gotten where he is without the great mentors he's had along the way. "The Brotherhood has taught me to focus on 'we' not 'me,'" he said.

A native Kansan who grew up playing baseball, hunting and fishing, Threadgold gained an early appreciation for unions from relatives in the painting and carpentry trades. While attending Emporia State University with the goal of being



an elementary school teacher, he learned about the IBEW from a cousin who was a third-generation member.

“He was the first one to talk to me about IBEW. That’s what perked my interest,” he said. “I was wrestling with being a broke college student or working for a living. I chose to be an electrical apprentice.”

He never looked back. “I felt fairly strongly about it being the right path early on, with the wages and benefits, and understanding the comprehensive reach of labor unions — the idea that we’re stronger together than we are as individuals.”

Please join us in wishing Brother Threadgold the best as he takes on his new responsibilities. ■

## RETIRED

### Timothy D. Bowden



After 38 years in the IBEW, Fifth District Regional Organizing Coordinator Timothy D. Bowden retired, effective May 1.

Bowden

was appointed an International Representative in 1997 by then-International President J.J. Barry to be part of his commitment to put organizing back into the heart of the Brotherhood. For more than 20 years, Bowden has been at the heart of that project in the Fifth District and a trusted adviser to a generation of organizers.

Brother Bowden was born in Phoenix and raised into a family of IBEW luminaries. His father, Clyde Bowden, was business manager of Phoenix Local 387 for more than 30 years and chairman of the International Executive Council for 14 years until his retirement in 2001. Bowden’s uncle, Dee Bowden, was a career member of Phoenix Local 640.

**“He didn’t have to tell you where he was: you knew. He was all action.”**

— Seventh District Lead Organizer Craig Parkman

After three years in the Navy, Bowden was initiated into his father’s local in 1981 when he took a job at Arizona Public Service. In 1983, he joined the apprenticeship program, jointly run by Local 387 and APS.

Bowden joined the executive board in 1987 and served for five years. That same year, he joined Local 387’s negotiating committee, a position he held for nearly a decade. In 1992, he was appointed secretary-treasurer of the Arizona state electrical association and was a delegate to the central labor council, positions he held until 1997. He also served on the board of directors of the Irrigation District of Sun Valley Farms.

Brother Bowden came on staff at Local 387 in 1994 when he was appointed a business representative, stepping down when he was made assistant business manager in 1996.

“Everyone on staff was an organizer,” Bowden said. “The business manager — my father — didn’t want to use lawyers, so we had to learn how to do everything. Every year you went to classes at George Meany Center for Labor Studies: arbitration, negotiation. It was intense.”

That skill set caught the eye of Barry, who brought him to the district office in 1997 to be a professional and industrial organizer in some of the most anti-union parts of the U.S.

“If you organize in the Seventh District you have to have tough skin. You are going to get your nuts kicked in. Regularly,” Bowden said. “So, you need a real heart for people and their issues and problems. When you see people, they are scared to death, but they need help. You need to connect with that and capitalize on it: I am here for you.”

Bowden brought the same heart and toughness to his job managing the Seventh District’s organizers, said Lead Organizer Craig Parkman.

“It is so hard to explain Tim because he didn’t have to tell you where he was on anything: you knew. He was all action. He would say this about the Brotherhood: ‘It is something you feel,’” Parkman said.

Parkman said Bowden was the kind of boss who was there when you needed but would let you do your job your way.

“If you asked for advice, rather than tell you what you need to do, he would tell you a story,” Parkman said. “He was very proud of his dad and was really good about using his own experience or the history of his father. ‘Be careful about that, because I remember one time...,’ he’d say.”

Bowden is retiring, but he won’t stop working. He and his wife Karen run a ranch with registered Red Angus.

“There’s always something to do on the ranch. And we will travel some,” he said. “When I first started, you flew out on a Monday and flew back on a Friday, 220 days out of town a year. I have about a gazillion Hilton points. I’m going to start using them for someplace fun.”

Please join the officers in thanking Brother Bowden for his faithful service to the IBEW. We wish him and his family a long and fulfilling retirement. ■

## RETIRED

### Tom Davis



Seventh District International Representative Tom Davis, who spent most of his career organizing across the Southwest and helped start

the Business Development Department, retired effective May 1.

Born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, Davis was the son of a GTE telephone installer and Communications Workers of America member. Davis himself already had been a member of three unions before a four-year stint in the Coast Guard, where he worked as welder while

stationed in Galveston, Texas. He was discharged in 1981 with the rank of petty officer third class.

“I just automatically thought being in a union was the way things went,” Davis said. “Toledo is such a strong union town. Everyone on my block was in a union. When you heard about someone getting into an apprenticeship, especially in the building trades, you were always kind of envious.”

**“To be able to see how you changed people’s lives, that was a great feeling.”**

— Tom Davis

While in Galveston, Brother Davis met his future wife, Christine, and moved to her hometown of Albuquerque, N.M. The couple married and Davis’ father-in-law, a member of Albuquerque Local 611, suggested he apply for an apprenticeship.

Davis did just that, eventually topping out as a journeyman inside wireman in 1987. He immediately got involved in local union affairs, serving as chairman of the legislative and community volunteer committees before being hired as an organizer in 1991.

“We were very fortunate in that we had a lot of work in the year or two after I became an organizer,” he said. “We took advantage of that. If you can organize the work, you organize contractors and that growth means more market share. Better market share means more bargaining strength. It’s pretty simple.”

He impressed enough in that role to be hired as a Seventh District organizer in 1994 before being promoted to international representative in 1997, staying on the district staff to lead organizing efforts.

Davis said he was always grateful his superiors allowed him to implement programs he and others used to spur membership growth at Local 611 at construction locals throughout the Seventh District.

He also marveled as improved technology provided organizers with better information to do their jobs — particularly the IBEW’s Organizing Accountability Reporting System (OARS), which stores information on signatory and non-signatory contractors across the nation, and Project Tracker.

In 2012, he was one of three international representatives charged with forming the Business Development Department, which Davis called essential to organizing and has produced substantial results.

“He was probably one of the best picks we could have made for that spot because of his years of experience in organizing, his institutional knowledge and the people he crossed paths with,” Business Development Director Ray Kasmark said. “I always thought of him as a cross between MacGyver and James Bond. He was that figure who was very capable of pulling off anything assigned to him. He knew right where to go to get it done and which buttons to push.”

Davis said he and Christine plan to travel more internationally and build their dream home in Albuquerque. They also

plan to spend more time with their two daughters and granddaughter.

As his career progressed, Davis appreciated the fact that his home state of New Mexico did not have a right-to-work law. Every other state in the Seventh District — Texas, Arizona, Oklahoma and Kansas — has one. That made the job more challenging, but no less gratifying.

“To be able to see how you helped change people’s lives, that was a great feeling,” Davis said. “I like to think I’m not a big ego guy, or crazy about money, but I do like the feeling that at the end of the day, I got something done and got something accomplished. Organizing offers an endless amount of possibilities to do that.”

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

## RETIRED

### Rick Ellis



Richard A. “Rick” Ellis, an international representative in the Membership Development Department, retired on June 1

after 40 years of loyal membership in, and service to, his beloved union.

A native of Chattanooga, Tenn., Ellis is a proud third-generation unionist. His father and grandfather, who worked for railroads, had served as organizers and shop stewards as members of the International Association of Machinists.

Ellis was 19 years old when he was initiated into Chattanooga Local 846. (Local 846 amalgamated in 1992 with Chattanooga Local 175, a utility and outside construction local with jurisdiction over several counties in northwestern Georgia.)

“My uncle was a 55-year member of the IBEW,” Ellis said. “He’s the one who told me that if I was going to be in the electrical industry, I should be a lineman.”

Following the successful completion of his apprenticeship, Ellis found steady work as a traveling lineman for construction companies throughout the southeastern United States.

“But I always stayed active with my local,” he said. “I attended union meetings and tried to be involved as much as I could.”

He strengthened his involvement with the IBEW in 1983 when he began the first of two terms on Local 846’s executive board. That same year, Ellis started an eight-year run of service on the local’s examining board. He also worked on several of Local 175’s committees, including negotiations, health and safety, and grievances.

Ellis also has served on the board of the Tennessee State Association of Electrical Workers and as a vice president for the Tennessee state chapter of the AFL-CIO, and he spent some time on the board of the Line Construction Benefit Fund (LINECO), the specialized insurance plan for IBEW’s outside-working members.

In 1998, Ellis became Local 175’s

business manager, a position he held until 2001. That year, then-International President J.J. Barry appointed Ellis to the International Office as an international representative in what was then called the Organizing Department.

“They asked me if I wanted to come to Washington,” he said. “I told them, ‘I’m about working people, and I’ll do what I can to continue to fight for working people’s rights.’”

Two years later, as the Brotherhood was facing a period of sustained membership declines, then-International President Edwin D. Hill overhauled the IBEW’s operations to bolster its organizing campaigns. To help facilitate that restructuring effort, Hill appointed Ellis to be director of organizing specific to the outside line contracting industry.

Ellis counts among his biggest accomplishments his work for what became the I.O.’s Membership Development Department.

“That’s when I think we made a lot of gains,” Ellis said. “We were able to bring on a lot of nonunion outside contractors and to develop fair relationships with them.”

A graduate of Chattanooga’s Tyner High School (now known as Tyner Academy of Math, Science, and Technology), Ellis extended his education by attending classes at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He also took courses at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies (later known as the National Labor College) in suburban Washington as well as at the Southeastern Line Constructors Apprenticeship and Training (SELCAT), where he later served as an instructor and officer.

**“Union members in the South have to be strong to put up with the challenges.”**

— Rick Ellis

Ellis noted that Tennessee and Georgia in particular have gained a reputation for being negative toward unions over the past few decades.

“Union members in the South have to be strong to put up with the challenges,” he said. “We have to really stick together. Coming up through the ranks of a union family taught me a lot about what being in a union is all about.”

A few years ago, Ellis returned to work in the field when he was appointed to be a political coordinator for IBEW’s Tenth District, which serves Tennessee, Arkansas, and the Carolinas. Since 2012, he has been on special assignment, working as a regional lead organizer on the professional and industrial side.

Now that Ellis is retired, he is hoping to shift his focus somewhat.

“Since I’ve traveled so much in my 40-year career, being at home will be nice,” he said.

He hopes to spend more time on his farm with Carol, his wife of 38 years, as well as their two daughters and three grandchildren.

The IBEW’s officers, staff and members wish Brother Ellis a long, happy, and productive retirement. ■



# LOCAL LINES

## CEREA Award Recipient; Puerto Rico Storm Restoration

L.U. 15 (u), DOWNERS GROVE, IL — Greetings, brothers and sisters.

Local 15 would like to thank retired Bro. Wayne John, a recent award recipient, for his longtime service.

ComEd/Exelon's Retired Employee Association (CEREA), sponsored by Local 15, recognized Bro. Wayne Johnson for his outstanding service to its members and presented him with a Service to Membership Award. Wayne is "one of a kind" and has been with CEREA from its beginning. He currently serves as secretary-treasurer of the organization. CEREA Pres. Thomas Turngren and Local 15 Pres. Dean Apple stated that no one is more deserving of this award. Wayne has helped countless ComEd, Exelon, Midwest Gen and NRG retirees and their families navigate through medical insurance, life insurance and pension plan issues. Wayne also works as a research specialist for Local 15.

Local 15 members assisted with storm restoration in Puerto Rico after Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck. Approximately 125 Local 15 members joined the more than 5,000 electrical workers assisting with the Puerto Rico restoration process. Members from Overhead, Heavy Hauling, Supply, Fleet and Clerical departed for Puerto Rico on Feb. 17 this year and returned on April 7. Our members worked flawlessly. For this we thank them and all the IBEW electrical workers involved for their assistance.

Sam Studer, P.S.



IBEW retired member Wayne Johnson (right) receives CEREA award presented by Local 15 Bus. Mgr. Dean Apple (left) and CEREA Pres. Thomas Turngren.

### Career of Service

L.U. 19 (u), AURORA, IL — On March 29 this year, Local 19 said goodbye to one of our retiring business representatives. Lisa Roscoe was the clerical business representative for the past 21 years. Her passion and dedication to the local and our membership have been second to none. We wish Lisa and her husband, Scott, who also recently retired as a business representative from Pipefitters Local 597, a long and relaxing retirement.

Visit IBEW Local 19 on Facebook. And be sure to attend your monthly union meetings!

Natalia Guzman, E-Board



From left, front row: Local 19 Bus. Rep. Dean Bourdages, retiring Bus. Rep. Lisa Roscoe, Bus. Mgr./Pres. Chris Harris. Back row: Vice Pres. Terry Haggerty, and Bus. Reps. Mark Klinefelter, Jim Lanzrath and Andy Nacke.

## Lending a Helping Hand; IBEW Members Wire VFW Hall

L.U. 25 (c,catv,es,i&rts), LONG ISLAND, NY — In the fall of 2017, our area Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) in Medford, NY, reached out to our Local 25 Pres. John Guadagno for help with some electrical issues at the VFW's 100-year-old meeting hall.

Pres. Guadagno and Bro. Tom Skladel, an E-Board member and chairman of the shop stewards committee, organized 24 of our Local 25 members to come together and help rewire the VFW meeting hall. The wiring was so antiquated that we pulled most of it out and totally rewired the new kitchen and basement. All new air conditioning was also installed.

After the project was completed, the VFW on April 13 hosted a dinner for all the trades at the newly renovated meeting hall. Many of the veterans were on hand for the occasion and thanked us for our support. During the event, Local 25 was presented with two separate awards. One was a plaque for an outstanding job on the project. The other was a special proclamation, presented by Suffolk County Legislator Robert Calarco, stating gratitude to IBEW Local 25 for our generous community service.

Thank you to Pres. Guadagno and Bro. Tom Skladel for their leadership. Kudos to all who participated in the project for doing a great job.

Tom Lawless, P.S./E-Board

## Apprenticeship Graduates

L.U. 35 (i), HARTFORD, CT — Local 35 is proud to recognize the apprenticeship graduating class of 2018.



Local 35 apprentice graduates: Evan Dumas (left), John O'Sullivan, Colin Abrahamson, Trevor Vizard, Phillip Drummond, Heath Kowal, Josh Zwingelstein, Gavin King, Jonathan Nurczyk, Justin Viens, Ryan Bollenbach, John Harper, Adam Kies, Connor Dundon and Shawn Meduna. Also pictured is Robert Eckert (back row, center), now a Local 96 member.

Congratulations to all the graduates on successfully completing their JATC apprenticeship. Graduate Phillip Drummond was recognized as outstanding apprentice.

The following brothers graduated on May 21: Colin Abrahamson, Ryan Bollenbach, Phillip Drummond, Evan Dumas, Connor Dundon, John Harper, Adam Kies, Gavin King, Heath Kowal, Shawn Meduna, Jonathan Nurczyk, John O'Sullivan, Justin Viens, Trevor Vizard and Josh Zwingelstein,

Good wishes to all the graduates on their IBEW careers.

Christopher Brown, Training Dir.

## Workplace Safety Champions

L.U. 37 (em,o&u), FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA — Members of Local 37 at NB Power's Coleson Cove Generating Station celebrated an amazing achievement recently — 13 years without a single lost-time accident. On April 11 this year, Coleson Cove employees gathered together to celebrate their remarkable safety record.

It's very clear that this team of over 100 people is committed to working safely and keeping their workplace safe. And that's what it takes to achieve a major milestone like this. They are all true safety champions.

To commemorate the day, employees were presented with a framed copy of a group picture. [See photo below]. Undoubtedly it will always serve as a reminder of their achievement and that safety is what brings us home every day.



Local 37 members employed at NB Power's Coleson Cove Generating Station are recognized for a milestone safety achievement.

I'm proud of all Local 37 members for their continued commitment to safety and how they show it — by making safety their No. 1 priority in everything they do.

Ross Galbraith, B.M.

## Political Action for Workers; RENEW Food Drive a Success

L.U. 41 (em,es,govt,i,se&spa), BUFFALO, NY — Our RENEW group held a food drive and volunteered at our area food bank. RENEW collected and delivered almost 350 pounds of food, then packed meals to be made available for children to eat on weekends. Thank you to our volunteers: Jim Badaszewski, Dave Cole, Matt Gaiser, Kyle Gietler, Cole Huston, Tyler Kostrzycki, Brandon Romalewski, Mike Sargente, Ken Scheifla, Adam Schwab and Scott Tyx.

Over the years we have had a decent working relationship with our elected officials, but at the county level we have recently had a majority that was not always labor friendly. This past November, we were able to help regain the majority in our favor. One item we lobbied for, and the Erie County Legislature passed, was a requirement that contractors performing work on Erie County projects of over \$250,000 now must have apprenticeships that graduate at least 30 percent of their apprentices in the type and scope of work they are bidding on. Without the relationships we have with our legislative majority, this would never have happened.

We must continue to work to elect candidates who hold the same values we believe in, but to do this it takes

## Submitting Local Lines Articles

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

## Trade Classifications

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

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



time and money. We must volunteer at labor walks and phone banks; we must talk to our relatives and neighbors about the importance of voting in every election; and we must ensure we do what we can to help those candidates who help IBEW Local 41. Please be involved in the election process — our jobs depend on it.

Gregory R. Inglut, A.B.M.



Retiring Local 43 Pres. Pat Costello (left) presents gavel to newly sworn in Pres. Kevin Crawford (right).

### Tribute to Career of Service

L.U. 43 (em,i&rts), SYRACUSE, NY — March 31 marked the retirement of Local 43 Pres. and Asst. Bus. Mgr. Patrick Costello. During Pat's 43-year career of service to the IBEW and Local 43, he also held positions as Executive Board member, vice president, business manager and trustee.

It is difficult to explain in this limited space the dedication and time Pat has devoted to the labor movement. Pat has dedicated himself to not only the welfare of the IBEW but for all working men and women in central New York and the Mohawk Valley. His hard work has strengthened the labor movement in our area. As an IBEW member, Pat embodies all that the IBEW Constitution stands for.

For me personally, he has been a close friend and working partner for the past 38 years. We will all truly miss his quick wit and sense of humor around the union office.

Bro. Costello's efforts to improve the lives of our entire membership and their families will never be forgotten. On behalf of the officers and members of IBEW Local 43, a big thank you, Pat, and we wish you a long and healthy retirement. Enjoy, brother!

Don Morgan, B.M.



Local 47 Bus. Mgr. and IEC member Pat Lavin (third from right) with, from left: Rick Garcia, Chris Cadilli, Jorge Flores, Erin Koh, Naty Soto, Tyrone Chamois and Joe Awad.

### Contract Negotiations Update

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uow), DIAMOND BAR, CA — Greetings, brothers and sisters.

Summer is just around the corner. Local 47 took first place in the 2nd Annual IBEW SoCal BBQ and Chili Contest in San Diego, hosted by Locals 569, 465 and 47.

At the time of this writing, bargaining with the City of Anaheim and Utilquest continues. Southern

California Edison Pony Driver bargaining is complete.

SCE Planners: The National Labor Relations Board has finally ruled — and at the time of this writing, ballots were to be mailed on May 7.

Morongo: As of press time, a hearing was scheduled for an unfair labor practice (ULP) over refusal to bargain a union security clause. The tribe is now claiming sovereign nation.

Davey Tree Service: Bargaining was completed for a two-year agreement that features a 2 percent wage increase in 2018 and a 2.25 percent increase in 2019.

Irvine Ranch Water District: General units continue to bargain, and the supervisors have been recognized; more sessions are scheduled at press time.

Alta Gas: Members overwhelmingly ratified a three-year successor agreement that features increases of 2.75 percent, 2.5 percent and 2 percent. The agreement was ratified by a 100 percent vote.

Siemens, Bear Electric and St. Francis traffic agreements are all due in June.

Upcoming events: Steward & Safety Conference — June 2; 18th Annual IBEW members Memorial Golf Tournament — July 27; and the Local 47 Picnic — Aug. 11.

We are sad to report the death of the following brothers: Michael Dengler, Juan Villa, Kirk Williams, Enrique Arroyo Sr. Our condolences and prayers go out to their loved ones.

Live free and safe — work and buy union.

Mitch Smith, P.S.

### Annual Family Picnic — Sept. 22 at Union Hall

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL — Mark your calendar! The local's annual family picnic will be Sept. 22 at the union hall. This is always a great occasion for members to enjoy fellowship and camaraderie. Additionally, our RENEW Committee will raffle off an IBEW Local 51 neon sign and you must be present to win. Bring your kids and grandkids as they will enjoy the inflatables.

Sister Kristi Sullins, operations support representative working in Centralia, was recently selected by an Ameren judging panel to sing the national anthem at the company's annual shareholders meeting. Additionally, she will perform our national anthem at the July 30 St. Louis Cardinals baseball game when the team takes on the Rockies. Congratulations, Sister Sullins!

On April 9 this year, Vistra Energy Corp., the parent company for TXU Energy and Luminant, announced it has completed its previously announced merger with Dynegy Inc. At the time of this writing, Vistra communicated that it will continue its fleet evaluation to find savings and try to improve the bottom line for each plant, but

will not be making any rash decisions.

There is not a moderate Republican candidate currently in Illinois. They are anti-worker, right-to-work supporters, and their labor voting records prove it. In November, it is crucial to elect politicians who will stand with labor. If you have moved or are newly married, your voter registration may be invalid. Contact the hall if you need help registering to vote.

Karlene Knisley, B.R.



From left, Local 55 retiree Ed Kooker, 50-year award recipient Butch Mahon, Bus. Mgr. Mike Sawyer and retiree Myron Green.

### Years of Service Award; 2018 Officer Transitions

L.U. 55 (c,lctt,o&u), DES MOINES, IOWA — Hello, brothers and sisters. We had a great Christmas party in early December last year. Approximately 200 members and their families attended. A lot of kids attended, saw Santa and had lots of fun.

Mike Brookes retired as business manager on Dec. 31 last year. Mike served two and one-half terms as business manager and achieved many accomplishments. He will be greatly missed!

Mike Sawyer was appointed business manager/financial secretary to fill the unexpired term of office. Bus. Mgr. Sawyer previously served as an assistant business manager, from 2008 until taking office as our new business manager. Let's all wish him the best!

On Feb. 13, Bus. Mgr. Sawyer, retired member Ed Kooker and myself went to Albia to present Local 55 retiree Butch Mahon his 50-year pin. During his career, Butch traveled all over the country as a longtime, devoted member of the IBEW.

We now have around 1,100 members in our local, and it seems that we could use a few more line-men if you're looking for work.

PAR Electric lost the Cost Plus contract with Mid America, but PAR is still doing bid work and just getting ready to start 27 miles of 345-kilovolt line near Ottumwa. Intren, a signatory contractor out of Unionville, IL, has now picked up the Cost Plus work for Mid America in the Des Moines metro area. Signatory contractor J.F. Edwards Construction has just picked up a large windfarm project near Evely, Iowa.

We also have a retiree breakfast the first Monday of each month at 9 a.m. sharp at the Triple Crown Buffett at Prairie Meadows in Altoona.

Remember to work safely.

Myron Green, P.S.

### Work Picture Strong

L.U. 71 (lctt,o&rtb), COLUMBUS, OHIO — Our work picture remains strong with a few open calls remaining and all paying per diem. Contact Larry at the hall for more information. Local 71 has been using all the tools in the tool box to keep up with the demands from our contractors. From starting new apprentices, to using our conditional lineman program. We have been laboring to keep up with the demands lately. Now with the new conditional pre-apprentice lineman classification, we have another option. Hopefully this will give us a chance to bring in those who are graduating line colleges before

the nonunion employer can put them to work.

Local 71 is honored to be awarding years-of-service pins this year to a fine group of brothers. These award recipients include the following: For 50 years of service — Charles Bragg, James Carmack, Nelson Duncan, Isom Ison, Clarence Johnson, William Meese, Frank Miller, James Pickenpaugh and Harold Pyle; for 55 years of service — David Crabtree, Wesley Reeves and Allen Sallee; for 60 years of service — Fritz Ogrady; and for 65-years of service — David Fissel.

Local 71 just turned 64 in February, so these award recipients are some of the men who were fighting back in the early days for the working conditions, pensions and wages we all enjoy today. Let us never forget that and hopefully every one of us reading this article today will live by the same principle: "To leave this trade better than how we found it."

Happy Fourth of July, brothers and sisters!

Bryan Stage, B.M./F.S.

### Retirees Honored at Luncheon

L.U. 81 (i), SCRANTON, PA — IBEW Local 81 held its 23rd annual retirees luncheon recently at Al Mia Amore Restaurant in Dickson City, PA. There were 12 new retirees: Eugene Arcurie Jr., Samuel Basta, Robert Bernatovich, Anthony Carito, Donald Kearney, Archibald Lafferty, James Page, Joseph Pohutsky, Nicholas Riggi, Richard Schraeder, Michael Schuler and John Zielinski. We had one member, Joseph McDonnell, receive a 70-year pin. Receiving 55-year pins were: Edward Bozcar, Michael Holmes, John McNulty and Robert O'Leary. Presented 50-year pins were: Joseph Davitt, James Doherty, Gerald Foley, Richard Kearney, James Langan, Gorge Lutz, Bradley Nash, James Ryan, Robert Timlin and John Walsh.

Bus. Mgr. Paul Casparro thanked everyone who came to the luncheon. He extended a special thank you to those who received their 70-, 55- and 50-year pins for all they have done for Local 81 to make it what it is today. [Photo at bottom, right.]

Mike Brust, P.S.

### Volunteer Crews Aid Puerto Rico Restoration

L.U. 97 (u), SYRACUSE, NY — As of this writing our line rodeo team is preparing for the NSUJL Linemen's Rodeo. The NUSJL, or National Sisterhood United for Journeymen Linemen, is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting families of fallen/injured IBEW line workers. We are also pleased to be a sponsor of this event. Good luck, team!

On our Brookfield property we are glad to report a long-term contract extension with general wage increases each year. It passed by an overwhelming majority.

Thanks to all who volunteered to participate in restoration in Puerto Rico. We sent three separate



At Local 81's annual retirees luncheon and awards presentation.

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## LOCAL LINES

waves of restoration crews. When the crews returned they told stories of the devastation they saw, the teamwork they experienced, and the gratitude of the local people.

It is with sadness that we report the passing of former president/business manager Thomas Primero II. Tommy was stricken while assisting with restoration efforts in Puerto Rico. We'll always remember his determination, tenacious bargaining, and dedication and service to the workers of our local and predecessor Local 137. May he rest in peace.

*Dan Machold, B.R., P.S.*

## Annual Blood Drive & Wellness Event a Success

L.U. 103 (cs&i), BOSTON, MA — On April 10, Local 103 hosted its Annual Blood Drive & Wellness Event. More than 1,000 members and their families attended throughout the day.

Routine health screenings were offered that could uncover risk factors for chronic diseases. Since time spent at a doctor's office often means unpaid time off the job, the event offers the convenience of completing these screenings at the union hall. The screenings included blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, melanoma and hearing exams.

The event also serves as an important opportunity for members to give back through blood donation. "The IBEW 103 Annual Blood Drive & Wellness Event is a great opportunity for our members to stay fit for work and give back to the community," Local 103 Bus. Mgr. Lou Antonellis said. "This time of year, around the anniversary of the Boston Marathon Bombing, we are reminded how important it is to donate blood. The Red Cross is always in need of more donors, and at IBEW 103 we are proud to answer the call."

Thank you to all who participated. We look forward to next year's event.

*Jimmy Fleming, P.S.*

## 'Welcome to New Members' Contract Ratification

L.U. 111 (em,govt,lctt,mt,o,rtb,spa&u), DENVER, CO — The officers, staff and Executive Board would like to congratulate and welcome our newest members from United Power Member Services Dept. These courageous workers made the move to organize last June, they certified in August, and began negotiating their contract in September 2017. The company employed every union-busting technique it could, but the employees remained focused, united and solid. On March 24, the new Local 111 members successfully ratified a new collective bargaining



*Local 111 welcomes new members. Back row: Linda Reiter, Britany Olson, Delores Behrhorst, Blanca Ordaz, Gail Winn, Lou Oliveros, Bea Armendariz. Front row: Samantha Riblett, Mayda Morgan, Angeline Velasquez, Tina Pralle, Julie Vogel, Ana Pollack, Erma Martinez, Jovanny Alvarez, Julie Miracle, Ericka Sweet. At front center, kneeling, is Asst. Bus. Mgr. Richard A. Meisinger Jr.*

agreement, which they can be very proud of. They were able to maintain their retirement, health and welfare insurance, and vacation benefits.

Asst. Bus. Mgr. Richard A. Meisinger Jr. was able to secure seniority provisions, work rules, and pay rates reflecting what similar classifications and co-ops pay. Some of these new members were previously so underpaid it took a \$7 an hour increase to get them where they needed to be. Congratulations and welcome to the IBEW family!

Save The Date: On Sept. 8 this year, Local 111 will celebrate our 111th year anniversary. We will host a family friendly evening at the Denver Zoo. Please visit the local union website at [www.ibew111.org](http://www.ibew111.org) and click on the 111th Anniversary tab for more information and registration.

*Patrick S. Quinn, P.S.*

## VOC Training Session; Focus on Member Education

L.U. 125 (lctt,o,t&u), PORTLAND, OR — Bus. Mgr. Travis Eri wanted to focus on member education in May. More than 35 attendees took part in a Volunteer Organizing Committee Education training session — with the theme "I'm Staying IBEW Strong" — conducted by Int. Rep. Tracy Prezeau. Participants learned how important it is to engage members and empower our workplaces against attacks that weaken our union.

Among other topics, Eri and Prezeau shared the history of "right-to-work" legislation. Many attendees were surprised to learn about the racist roots of destructive "right-to-work" proposals. The leaders noted that our union was built on fairness, equality and opportunity. "Our contracts were originally based on dignity, hope, respect and security, not material things," Prezeau explained.

Our local also joined IBEW Locals 77, 483 and

659 along with our NECA partners to host its Safety Summit. The keynote speaker focused on how communication, leadership, accountability and morale affect safety results. Attendees learned how they can individually focus on building stronger cultures at their respective workplaces.

Lastly, more than 40 members attended shop steward training. Eri said: "These members are intelligent, passionate and committed brothers and sisters who are serving the membership each day. We should all thank these members who serve in this challenging role to promote the IBEW's values."

*Marcy Grail, A.B.M.*

## Apprenticeship Graduates; Annual Golf Outing in July

L.U. 197 (em&i), BLOOMINGTON, IL — Congratulations to our newest journeyman wiremen and teledata installers who graduated from the apprenticeship program this spring. A graduation dinner was held at Alexander's Steak House to honor our newest leaders in the electrical industry. The graduation class size was small in number, but the quality we are turning out is top notch. Graduates, as you progress in your careers, we hope you stay grounded and involved in the local.

Reports from around the country show that there is a shortage of electricians. We thank those locals that are able to provide our brothers and sisters with work while our work picture continues to be slow. One day we hope to return the favor. For those out of work locally, we encourage you to sign other books for employment and help those locals man the work. It is imperative that the IBEW is able to supply the manpower. It will be beneficial to you and your family as well as the IBEW.

We look forward to our annual golf outing on Saturday, July 28, at Fairlakes Golf Course. Call the union hall to sign up. Remember to get involved in the local and stay involved!

*Mike Raikes, Pres.*

## 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

L.U. 229 (em&i), YORK, PA — Local 229 proudly celebrated its 100-year anniversary on April 7 this year. We had a fantastic celebration that was well-attended, and all had a great time.

We were honored to have Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson, Int. Sec.-Treas. Kenneth W. Cooper, Int. Vice Pres. Michael D. Welsh and Gov. Tom Wolf attend and extend their congratulations to the local on this milestone. Thank you to the many IBEW locals that supported our event. Thank you to IBEW representatives, retired Int. Vice Pres. Donald C. Siegel, and nearby local union officers and agents, as well as Local 229 members and retirees for attending. All in attendance helped make it a wonderful evening. The Brotherhood is truly alive and well.

Local 229 is very busy with a couple hundred travelers working. We are into Book 2 for most calls. The work picture looks very good through 2018 and 2019. This year we have the ongoing Calpine gas-fired project, two new hospital projects ramping up, an expansion at Harley Davidson, a scheduled outage at Peach Bottom nuclear station starting Oct. 15, and numerous other nice projects. Travelling brothers and sisters can sign Book 2 Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. — all you need is a current dues receipt.

*Matthew Paules, B.M.*



*Local 229 celebrated its 100th anniversary in April this year.*

## Contract Negotiations

L.U. 245 (govt,lctt,o,rtb&u), TOLEDO, OHIO — There is a new face in the office at Local 245 with the addition of Ken Kurtz, the new business manager. Ken fills the position previously held by Phil LaCourse, who retired in April after many years of service to the local. We welcome Ken aboard and wish Phil a long and enjoyable retirement.

Well, the pending sale of the Bayshore Power Plant came to be with the purchase by Olympus Power LLC from Morristown, NJ. As of this writing, the local is currently bargaining with Olympus and hoping to have everything wrapped up by July.

Members employed at Channel 24-WNWO have a new contract, with the ratification of an agreement with Sinclair Broadcasting.

Negotiations are currently underway with Nelson Tree as of press time.

First Energy Solutions announced the closing of its nuclear plants including Davis-Besse to take place in 2020. Although this was very disturbing news, there are still some options out there with the possible sale of

# IBEW MERCHANDISE

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Black motorcycle kick stand pad with white IBEW initials. Made of ABS plastic and great for use on any soft surface.

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



*Local 197 congratulates recent apprenticeship graduates. Front row, from left: Pres. Mike Raikes; Keith Tay (NECA); graduate Josh Roig; and instructor Bernie Uszcienski. Back row: graduates Dave Hines, Matt Schifferer and James Towle; JATC Dir. Renee Riddle; Seth Zeller (NECA); instructor Jake Knobloch; and graduate Tyler Walsh.*



the plant or government intervention, to name a few.

Energy Delivery has added to its workforce with the hiring of 16 Power Systems Institute (PSI) students in the line area.

On the Outside, the work picture is good and everybody is working. Calls have slowed down for now.

On the social front, our next Local 245 outing will be a Toledo Mud Hens baseball game on Aug. 19. Members and their family can sign up to attend by calling the hall and talking to Lisa or Amanda. The deadline to sign up for the event is July 31.

Until next time, work safe and enjoy the warm weather.

Ray Zychowicz, P.S.

## Retirees Honored

L.U. 269 (i&o), TRENTON, NJ — Members looking forward to the annual dinner honoring our retirees were not disappointed. Every year our brothers and sisters gather to pay tribute to those who made our present and future possible. Great food, fine spirits, and music throughout the evening help ensure a good time for all.

Over 200 guests attended the May 18 event this year, and it was a great success as always. After the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for our fallen service members, the festivities began with Bus. Mgr. Steve Aldrich handing out service pins based on years served. Members celebrating their 30th year in the local received a handsome gold watch and a rousing round of applause.

After the ceremonies, members sat down to a five-star meal served in an elegant atmosphere. After dinner, members were invited out to the patio to enjoy a cigar, hand rolled on the spot by the professional cigar rollers, who have become a fixture at the event.

Much time and effort go into a big event like this and we thank all who participated. We would be remiss not to thank two members in particular: Bro. Mike Lucuski, who sang and played guitar throughout the evening, and Bro. D. Brian Proctor, who snapped photos all evening. They along with many others ensure that this dinner remains one of the best nights in our local.

Brian Jacoppo, P.S.



Bro. Mike Lucuski entertains the crowd at Local 269's annual retirees dinner.

## Local Celebrates 100 Years; ATV Ride a Great Success

L.U. 317 (i,o,rts,t&u), HUNTINGTON, WV — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Local 317 recently celebrated our 100-year anniversary. The picture accompanying this article was taken at the 100th anniversary celebration and shows Bus. Mgr. James Gillette and retired Bro. Pete Boggs, who has 67 years with the IBEW.

We also recently enjoyed our Annual ATV Ride with some of our sister IBEW locals this past May. There was plenty of food to go around for everyone to enjoy, and everyone had a great time. We would like to thank our brothers who did an amazing job preparing food for all in attendance at the ride.

Work at the time of this writing has been slow on the inside. 2018 is anticipated to be a good year with projects on the table. Outside work remains

steady with more work upcoming on high line projects and substations in 2018. At the time of this writing, we still have members working in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico as storm restoration continues. We would like to thank members for their good work and remind everyone to stay safe.

Danny Doss, P.S./Organizer



Local 317 retired 67-year member Pete Boggs (center) and Bus. Mgr. James Gillette, at local's 100th anniversary celebration.

## 'Rules and Wages'

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LE SUEUR, MN — Our collective bargaining agreement (CBA) expresses the relationship between the employer and the union. The first seven articles within the CBA explain: grievances, employer rights and union rights, wage payment and working conditions, referral, apprenticeship, benefits, and safety. Related information continues through Article 15.

When there are questions on the job or at the break table about the tool list, wage rates, apprentice pay, the local's jurisdiction, or the bylaws the local union operates under, remember to open up your copy of the CBA. These rules are negotiated to ensure that "a working system and harmonious relations are necessary to improve the relationship between the Employer, the Union, and the Public." (See Page 6 of the current CBA.) We should not pick and choose what rules are convenient at the time. Because of these rules, we receive our earned and negotiated wages and benefits. The CBA covers all members at all times. Each one of us is a steward for the IBEW.

Congratulations to the nine recipients of the \$500 Apprentice Scholarship for successfully attending or volunteering at union functions: Joseph Aul, Nate Espenson, Johnathan Mastrey, Owen Sannes, Travis Schindeldecker, Paul Spevacek, Kevin Vogt, Allen Wacek and Milo Weckworth. [Photo, at bottom.]

Buying "Made In USA" makes dollars and sense for all Americans.

Tom Small, P.S.

## 'Getting the Work' — Active IBEW Membership

L.U. 363 (catv,em,govt,i,t,u&ws), NEW CITY, NY — IBEW Local 363 is on a roll. Our work picture, like that of many local unions in the country, is extremely



Local 343 Bus. Mgr. Chad Katzung (back row, right) congratulates apprenticeship scholarship recipients: front row, from left, Milo Weckworth, Nate Espenson, Allen Wacek and Kevin Vogt; back row, Travis Schindeldecker, Johnathan Mastrey, Joseph Aul and Paul Spevacek. Not pictured: Owen Sannes.



IBEW Local 363 members turn out 200-strong at a public planning board meeting.

busy — and it is not by accident.

We have been meeting all prospective builders at "the gate" of our local and then at the public planning board meetings, and we want to know one question: "Are you building this project union or not?"

We find that most builders are receptive and take advantage of the help we can bring in the approval process.

There are others who have told us they are not going to build union and they don't care what we do.

Accompanying this article is a photo (at top, right) taken at a recent public meeting where the developer thought he could get away with that in Local 363's jurisdiction. The project was shot down and that developer didn't get his approvals. If you look hard at the photo, perhaps you can find the developer's three guys somewhere among our 200 IBEW Local 363 members in attendance at the public meeting. There's power in the union!

Sam Fratto, B.M.

## 'Best Union Float' Award At St. Patrick's Day Parade

L.U. 369 (em,es,i,lctt,o,rtb,rts,spa&u), LOUISVILLE, KY — The annual St. Patrick's Day parade in Louisville was March 10. Local 369 has been involved for many years, as have several other unions from our area.

This year Local 369 won for Best Union Float. Those who were involved included: Kris Carney, Lisa Stiireman, Melanie Brooks-Mudd, Greg Mudd, Grant Medley, Tim Redmon, Tanya Thompson, Mitch Houck, Pres. Kevin Kazunas, and E-Board Chmn. "Electric" Bob Bartsch. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make the event a success.

Gene Holthouser, B.R.

## Grand Opening for New Union Hall & Training Facility

L.U. 375 (catv,ees,et,govt,i&mo), ALLENTOWN, PA — In April we celebrated the grand opening of our brand-new union hall and training facility. It was a great day for our local. Many members attended the opening to show their support and take a tour of the new building — and many business leaders and politicians stopped by as well.

The new training center is located in downtown Allentown, where the city is currently going through a complete revitalization. The training center has over 13,000 square feet of real estate to ensure that we continue to provide our partners with the best trained electricians in the Lehigh Valley. The facility includes five theory classrooms, a safety classroom, motor control lab, tele-data lab, fire alarm lab, power distribution lab, conduit-bending lab, and a craft

certification area. There is even a manhole buried in the parking lot for confined-space training.

The best thing about our new facility is that it was built 100 percent union, down to the lighting package, which was produced at an IBEW facility in our great state of Pennsylvania. Local 375 is excited that with such a long history, we now have a brand-new beginning.

Justin Grimshaw, A.B.M.



At Local 375's Open House wire-cutting ceremony: Vice Pres. Lonnie Hill, Pres. Craig Siegfried, Bus. Mgr. Paul Anthony, Int. Rep. Randy Kieffer, Treas. Alan Rex.

## Strong Work Picture; Training & Job Fairs

L.U. 379 (i,lctt,o&rtb), CHARLOTTE, NC — As of this writing, the Carolinas have moved on from a cold winter right into summer and are looking forward to a prosperous season for our members. Work here is still booming. We are working close to 1,000 people across our 29-county jurisdiction and we are on the hunt for skilled electricians and would welcome travelers to stop on in.

Education continues to be a focus. We have completed a third round of Foreman's Development Series, turning out 20 new graduates, and will be doing another course over the summer.

We have participated in multiple job and career fairs this spring, including one sponsored by the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System, attended by over 4,000 high-school seniors. These have been great opportunities to let students who are about to enter the workforce know about the advantages of a career in the electrical trade. We are also partnering with our local workforce development board to find ways to ease the shortage of skilled trades people.

Ashley Hawkins, Organizer

## 'New Organizer Message'

L.U. 459 (catv,ees,em,govt,mt,so&u), JOHNSTOWN, PA — A special note of appreciation goes out to Bus. Mgr. Paul Cameron for the opportunity to work for the members of Local 459 as their newly appointed organizer/business representative.

I am grateful for the faith and confidence given to me by my brothers and sisters, and excited to serve the local and its membership. I look forward to meeting Local 459 members in my travels throughout the state at the various district meetings. I am tasked with one of the hardest jobs in the labor movement today, which is organizing working men and women to help them gain union representation.

The business manager and I agree that growing our local and supporting the labor movement is the only way to ensure our success for the future. We



## LOCAL LINES



Local 459 Bus.  
Rep./Organizer  
Barry Hixson.

have several promising prospects in the works. And we are pleased to welcome eight new members, who recently voted in a new first contract. A small but significant win nonetheless.

Come out to the union meetings, meet your new organizer, and help our local union to grow and prosper. Thank you.

Barry Hixson, Organizer/B.R.

## IBEW Member Participates In 'Fight for Air Climb'

L.U. 499 (u), DES MOINES, IOWA — Local 499 Executive Board member Mike Buntz, line crew foreman from Des Moines, participated in the American Lung Association's "Fight for Air Climb" on April 8 in remembrance of co-workers Bro. Jeff Sanders and Bro. Dave Shipp, who both passed away from lung complications.

Buntz raced up the steps of four downtown Des Moines buildings, totaling 85 floors with 1,796 steps. He accomplished the race in a time of 15 minutes 43 seconds, which placed him second in his age division, with an overall placement of 56 out of 939 climbers.

Buntz plans to participate in the event again next year and hopes to get more of his co-workers involved in the future. Thank you, Mike, for being a great example to fellow IBEW brothers and sisters!

Sarah Faber, R.S.



Local 499 E-Board member Mike Buntz, line crew foreman, displays helmet inscribed in memory of two deceased co-workers.

## Apprentice Graduating Class

L.U. 545 (i), ST. JOSEPH, MO — The members and officers of Local 545 would like to extend congratulations to the apprenticeship graduating class of 2018.

The recent graduates are: D.J. Adams, John Blanchard, Nicholas Boyer, Philip Eiberger, Spencer Richter, Adam Schermerhorn, Jacob Stock and Derrick Stith.

May you brothers have a long and safe career in the IBEW.

Brandon Osteen, R.S.



Local 545 congratulates recent apprenticeship graduates. Front row, Spencer Richter (left), Nicholas Boyer, John Blanchard, Training Dir. Mike Kovac, Philip Eiberger, D.J. Adams; back row, Adam Schermerhorn and Jacob Stock. Not pictured: Derrick Stith.



IBEW Local 569 members build better communities. Photo by Timothy Dunbar.

## Building Better Communities

L.U. 569 (i,mar,rt,ts&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA — Recently, over 100 IBEW 569 electricians and power professionals donated 500+ hours toward Rebuilding Together San Diego (RTSD), a nonprofit that coordinates renovations of low-income homes and community facilities.

IBEW 569 replaced faulty electrical systems for a veteran, disabled seniors, and families in need, as well as two homes that provide housing counseling, and social services to 34 mentally ill, homeless and/or abused women. We are grateful for the outpouring of support from our members and the contributions of materials and resources from our signatory contractors. Together, we are strengthening our communities.

We also wish to extend sincere congratulations to our officer manager, Dana Morgan, on her well-deserved retirement! Dana has been with IBEW 569 for 29 years! Bus. Mgr. Nick Segura said: "Dana has helped our lives and work immensely by being our Rock of Gibraltar — keeping us together, running our operations smoothly, and deftly taking on new challenges with compassion and perseverance." Notably, Dana Morgan is a third-generation staff member. Her grandmother (known as "Mrs. B.") in the early 1950s was our bookkeeper, and Dana's mother worked for our training center for 20 years! Thank you, Dana, for your outstanding service.

Gretchen K. Newsom, P.S./Organizer



IBEW Local 589 members William Benkurt, Anwar Sheikh and Boris Katelevskiy received awards from Long Island Rail Road. Those attending the awards presentation included Local 589 officers and representatives from LIRR.

## Members Receive LIRR Awards

L.U. 589 (rr), JAMAICA, NY — We would like to congratulate three of our members whose hard work and dedication were recognized by the Long Island Rail Road.

Local 589 LLR electricians William Benkurt, Anwar Sheikh and Boris Katelevskiy were awarded special plaques in recognition for their innovative workplace contributions. These three members are responsible for new ideas and suggestions that will be put into practice by the Long Island Rail Road.

Among those who attended the awards presentation were LIRR officers and representatives, IBEW Local 589 Pres. Jeff Klein, the IBEW honorees and others.

The innovative ideas proposed by the three IBEW electricians will increase the reliability of our transportation service, the safety and efficiency of our members' work, and will benefit the next generation of IBEW Local 589 electricians.

Thank you, brothers, for all your hard work. Congratulations!

Augie Maccarone, R.S.

## Organizing Success; Outstanding Apprentice Award

L.U. 611 (catv,es,govt,i,lctt,o,spa,t&u), ALBUQUERQUE, NM — As of this writing, we have 350 men working at a Facebook jobsite, with calls coming in daily for more workers. Our organizing efforts have been a huge success to date.

We started our contract negotiations a couple of months ago. As of press time in late May, we have not yet ratified a contract. By the next writing, we hopefully will have a fair contract in place.

This year's Outstanding Apprentice Award went to Christopher Baker. Chris also competed in the IBEW Seventh District Apprenticeship Contest, which was held at the uptown Marriott Hotel in Albuquerque. Chris competed against 17 other competitors from the Seventh District, which consists of Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and New Mexico. It is the first time in many years that Local 611 has won the event. Congratulations, Chris, for a job well done.

Local 611 extends sincere condolences to the friends and families of the following members who recently passed away: Alan B. Shepherd, Jerry J. Lynch, Charles E. "Chuck" Clevenger, Graham Smith, Danny F. McCarron, Claudia T. Martinez and Royce M. Mogensen.

Remember to attend your union meetings and support COPE.

Darrell J. Blair, P.S.



Local 611 Outstanding Apprentice Award recipient Christopher Baker (second from left) with JATC member Tom Ross, Training Dir. Hank Humiston and JATC member Joey Solis at Seventh District Apprenticeship Contest.

## IBEW Volunteers — Youth Center Renovated

L.U. 613 (em,i,o,rts&spa), ATLANTA, GA — In January, the United Way reached out to Bus. Mgr. Kenny Mullins with a request for our local union to help out on a project in an underserved area of Atlanta. Winston Taylor, with the New City Project, had a building that needed a lot of renovation for use as a youth center and therefore asked for partners to make improvements. Thanks to volunteers from Local 613, including its EWMC and RENEW programs, who have worked on the project over the last few months, it is great to say the electrical work is almost complete.

We are proud to be a part of the New City Youth Center. With the help of Mr. Taylor, our Local 613 organizing team is reaching out to the neighborhood and the schools in the area. The local is recruiting students and residents into the apprenticeship program. This facility also allows us to reintroduce ourselves and educate the community on the benefits of being part of the IBEW and organized labor.

James Williams, P.S.



Local 613 contingent of volunteers helped wire a building for use as a youth center. From left: Rafiq Siddiqui, James Williams, Bus. Mgr. Kenny Mullins, Ian Whitchey, Ian's son Walker, Janice Lynn Hodge, Harley Peck and James Carr.

## Apprenticeship Graduates; Service to Community

L.U. 625 (c,ees,em,i,it,mar&mt), HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA — Congratulations to Bros. Mitchel Swan, Tim Rees, Alexander Weltz, Adam Gilchrist, Kyle Walsh and Mike MacDonald for completing their apprenticeship program and receiving their Certificate of Qualification.

We recently lost the following members: Bro. Stephen Dexter and Bro. Mark Viglasky passed away in March, and Bro. Leigh Biggar in April. Our sympathy goes out to their families.

Our local had our hockey team play in the IBEW Local 1928 Hockey Tournament in Merbertou in Sydney, Nova Scotia, April 6, 7 and 8. There were 12 teams, and Local 625 finished fifth this year, unable to retain a back-to-back championship.

Our NextGen Committee took part in the Threads for Life "Steps for Life" walk on Saturday, May 5, at Point Pleasant Park in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This is a charitable organization founded to help families affected by workplace tragedies. Local 625 donated \$200 and had 13 members and families in attendance.

Brad Wood, Organizer/B.R.

## Strong Work Performance; Newly Appointed Officers

L.U. 627 (u), FORT PIERCE, FL — The past few months have been significantly productive and rewarding for our members. The local continues its support and dedication to the Puerto Rican Restoration Project. The people of Puerto Rico are very grateful for the efforts of the Brotherhood. With a large percentage of the island being restored, there is still much work to do.



We've welcomed a new Clean Energy Center to our local! The station is nearing completion and is expected online June of 2019.

The refueling outage at the nuclear plant was successfully completed. Many high-standard and first-time quality man-hours from our members aided in the speedy return of the reactor to service.

Our former president, Mark MacNichol, accepted a position with the International Office as an international representative effective April 2. Thank you, Bro. MacNichol, for your leadership and dedication to our local; best wishes from the Brotherhood.

The Local 627 Executive Board at its April meeting made several appointments to fill vacated positions. Bro. Matt Jenkins was appointed Local 627 president to fill the unexpired term of office. Bro. Marshall Smith was appointed as vice president, and Bro. Rob Fenell as System Council delegate. Also, Bro. Fernando Salcedo was appointed press secretary.

Safety and solidarity always.

*Fernando Salcedo, P.S.*

## Spring Events a Success; IBEW Service to Community

L.U. 697 (c,es,i,mt&se), GARY AND HAMMOND, IN — The IBEW Local 697 EWMC hosted our fourth annual Charity Basketball Day on Saturday, March 24, and it was a total success. Bros. Mark Patrick, Dan Soderquist and Tony Patrick won the 3-on-3 tournament, and Bro. Mark Patrick also won the Hot Shot contest. All proceeds from the event went to help Bro. Chris Ortell and his family. [See photo at bottom, left.]

Also in March, we held our Annual Spring Blood Drive and broke our record by collecting 163 pints of blood. Since 2011, Local 697 has collected over 1,700 pints and will be adding to our total at our Fall Blood Drive on Friday, Oct. 19, this year.

Local 697 was the lead sponsor and chaired the annual American Heart Association Gala for Northwest Indiana. The event was successful as we led the way with our building trades by joining forces with our end users to raise funds and awareness to fight heart disease.

*Ryan Reithel, B.M./F.S.*

## Brotherhood & Solidarity; 'Our Past, Present & Future'

L.U. 915 (i&mt), TAMPA, FL — A true testament of brotherhood within a local union was experienced at Local 915's annual cookout and service-pin presentation. Approximately 200 sisters and brothers attended, ranging from those who paved the way to the newest members just finding their path.

The local is honored to have an 80-year service award recipient, Bro. Robert McDonald, although he was unable to attend the event. Twelve in attendance received service awards ranging from 45-year pins to 65-year pins. Additionally, 21 new members were sworn in. True solidarity was a highlight of the day,



*At Local 915 cookout and awards presentation, attendees included: Pres. Michael Weeks (far left); RENEW Committee members; 65-year pin recipients Alfred Reid and Charles "Buddy" Wade (center); and at far right, Bus. Mgr. Randall King.*

and everyone enjoyed the occasion.

Congratulations to all honorees, including the following brothers, for their loyal years of service: 65-year members Alfred Reid and Charles "Buddy" Wade; 55-year member Dennis Field; 50-year members David Adams, Robert Franz and B.J. Weeks; and 45-year members Bruce Barrow, Paul Carlisle, Kenneth Cyphert, Robert LaPierre, Glen Sanchez and Randy Tew.

Our local's prestigious Brother of the Year Award usually goes to the sister or brother who exemplifies service within our local, our community and beyond. As a well-deserved honor, this year's award went to Local 915's RENEW Committee. Our future is in great hands.

*Theresa King, R.S./P.S.*



*Local 993 retired member Fred Dick (left) receives IBEW 65-year service award, presented by Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Glen Hilton at December 2017 Awards Banquet.*

## 65-Year Service Award

L.U. 993 (catv,em&i), KAMLOOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA — Retired Bro. Fred Dick recently received his IBEW 65-year service pin. Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Glen Hilton presented Fred with the award at Local 993's Annual Awards Banquet on Dec. 9, 2017, in Kamloops, BC.

Fred is a dedicated, loyal member of Local 993, and he is proud to be part of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

*Glen Hilton, B.M./F.S.*

## IBEW Training Opportunities; New Journeymen Welcomed

L.U. 1015 (em,i), WESLACO, TEXAS — Being from Texas, we have big dreams that we are very proud of. We are helping more of our fellow brothers and sisters accomplish their dreams — success in obtaining that piece of paper which shows your name in bold print, your photo, and the word "journeyman." For new journeymen, showing that off to their families and friends brings a big smile to their face.

We call on all the men and women out there, who may have hesitated for a long time, to take that first step and allow us to help them advance by taking advantage of the best opportunity that IBEW Local 1015 has to offer — and that is knowledge gained through IBEW and JATC training and education.

Local 1015 would like to congratulate our new journeymen: Aaron Hutton, Jose Guadalupe Solis and Angel Castillo. We are also proud to welcome our first female apprentice, Bridgette Bickerstaff. Welcome to all!

We have started venturing into a new era and are keeping up with the electrical industry in the Rio Grande Valley. In planning ahead for our near future, and to fill the need for skilled electricians in this high-demand occupation, we are partnering with area high schools to offer students the pre-apprentice career path with IBEW Local 1015 after graduating high school.

*Sergio A. Salinas, B.M.*



*Local 1015 Bus. Mgr. Sergio A. Salinas (left); journeymen Jose Guadalupe Solis and Aaron Hutton; and JATC trainer Servando Munguia.*

## Puerto Rico Power Restoration; Actively Engaged Membership

L.U. 1245 (catv,em,govt,lctt,o,t&u), VACAVILLE, CA — Twenty-six members of IBEW 1245 who work for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) recently returned from a mutual aid assignment in Puerto Rico, where they worked around the clock to assist with the power restoration effort following last year's devastating hurricanes.

"We interacted with the locals constantly ... and everyone we met was very helpful and appreciative," said SMUD Line Foreman Ben Bassett, an 11-year IBEW 1245 member. "They saw that we were away from our own families in order to help their families out, and everyone welcomed us with open arms."

Local 1245 is actively engaged in several critical pieces of utility-related legislation that are currently moving through the California Legislature. On Tuesday, April 17, several Local 1245 rank-and-file members came to the state Capitol to testify on behalf of

these bills. At the end of the day, thanks in large part to the powerful presence and compelling testimony that Local 1245 members delivered, both bills passed out of committee and will be proceeding through the legislative process.

In Outside Construction, there is no shortage of work, only manpower. Local 1245 expects that will continue to be an issue, not only in our jurisdiction, but across the nation.

*Rebecca Band, P.S.*



*Local 1245 members Levi Schoennauer, Paul Duncan and Brent Sambel setting a pole in Puerto Rico. Credit: Sacramento Municipal Utility District.*

## Miami Fort Station Cooling Tower Project

L.U. 1347 (ees,em&u), CINCINNATI, OHIO — In North Bend, Ohio, directly across from the Indiana/Kentucky border sits Dynegy's Miami Fort Generating Station, a dual-fuel powered generating facility. While some may believe that fossil fuel power plants are headed out the door, it is still just as strong and powerful as ever. Since its initial establishment in the early 1900s, Miami Fort Station has undergone many improvements.

This latest endeavor is one of the largest projects this site has ever seen. This multi-million-dollar upgrade to enhance the cooling tower has taken a lot of blood, sweat and tears, but it's incredibly worthwhile for the viability of the station.

Our Local 1347 brothers and sisters working at Miami Fort Station are prepared for many more years of providing safe, reliable power for the Tri-State area for years to come.

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



*Local 1347 members are employed at Dynegy's Miami Fort Generating Station. Standing at the site are, from left: office coordinator Rachel Glover, Bus. Mgr. Andrew Kirk, Asst. Bus. Mgr. Kenny Gross, Rec. Sec. Robert Todd and Pres. Kent Evans.*



*IBEW Local 697 EWMC hosted 4th Annual Charity Basketball Day on March 24.*



LOCAL LINES

The 'B' in Brotherhood

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA — The work outlook in Augusta is still very strong and getting stronger. Our ongoing nuclear powerhouse, Plant Vogtle is still increasing in manpower and should do so for some time. In addition, we are also picking up smaller projects around the area.

Many of the traveling brothers and sisters have come to our area to help us man our work. I would like to thank them for their help and support throughout our strong work situation.

Let's all remember that the "B" in IBEW stands for Brotherhood. Let's work together for a stronger Brotherhood, more standing together, more compassion and more teamwork with a focus on building our union in solidarity.

Until next time, God bless.

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

'Growth Achieved — In the Face of Adversity'

L.U. 1791 (em), WAUSAU, WI — Our story is much like the rest of the country regarding the hostile political environment our unions have faced in Wisconsin. Here in Wausau, we have survived, but that's not good enough. With an eye on the future, we are going to thrive. As a matter of fact, it's happening as this article is being written. New product lines are being brought to Wausau right now. Without a doubt, our members will be up to the challenge.

What happens to be highly unusual about this expansion is that it's occurring within a month of contract negotiations. This is a true vote of confidence on behalf of the company toward its working relationship with Local 1791. It's vitally important that our members understand that this relationship will benefit them and it's our duty as union leaders to see that it does just that.

Corporate America, along with some federal and state government officials, would have you believe, once again, that "trickle down" economics will be good for the workers. Been there, done that — and no, it wasn't good for workers.

It's time to shine the spotlight on the benefits of union membership by ensuring we get our members their fair share of the "trickle down." That being said, we want to thank all the hard-working members of Local 1791 and extend a welcome to all new members. In solidarity.

*Mark Pisca, B.M./Pres.*

'Humboldt Strong' — Volunteer First Responders

L.U. 2067 (o&u), REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA — Friday, April 6, 2018, will never be forgotten in the province of Saskatchewan. Early that evening, at the junction of Highways 35 and 335 in the province's north-east, tragedy struck.

A bus carrying 29 members of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Humboldt Broncos was struck by a tractor-trailer unit, ultimately causing 16 deaths and sending over half of the passengers to the hospital.

Volunteer first responders — including IBEW Local 2067 members Bro. Ryan Steinhäusser and Bro. George St. Amant — quickly arrived at the scene, providing care and lifesaving assistance on-site. Ryan (gas inspector, Tisdale) and George (electrical inspector, Tisdale) are members of the Tisdale Volunteer Fire Dept. and were two of the first to arrive at the accident site.

The IBEW Local 2067 leadership offers condolences to the families and friends of those who suffered loss, best wishes for recovery to those who survived, and immeasurable gratitude to the first responders who assisted after the accident.

Local 2067 understands it is impossible to fill the void for the families who have suffered such immense loss. We also recognize that survivors and first responders may never fully recover from the mental and emotional trauma, though physical injuries may heal in time. "No amount of money will make anyone involved whole," Bus. Mgr. Tibbs stated. "We donate what we can, but we make a real difference with our thoughts, prayers, and by showing support in the communities.

To read more, see article on Local 2067's website at: <https://ibew2067.com/2018/04/11/humboldt-strong>.

*Curtis Lizée, A.B.M.*



*IBEW Local 2067 members were among the first responders who assisted at the site of a tragic traffic accident that involved a bus carrying team members of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Humboldt Broncos*

In Memoriam

Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in May 2018

Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death
1	Blankenship, M. R.	2/2/18	17	O'Connor, O. R.	4/7/18	55	White, A. V.	2/8/18	104	St. Lawrence, V. L.	4/15/18
1	Bonney, R. H.	10/4/17	17	Ortiz, C.	3/13/18	56	Markham, A. A.	2/15/18	105	Robinson, J. H.	3/28/18
1	Clermont, B. D.	4/1/18	17	Smith, C. E.	3/20/18	56	Taylor, T. E.	2/19/18	105	Weszely, P. G.	12/29/16
1	Dayton, R. L.	11/20/17	17	Tripp, M. J.	2/18/18	58	Bernard, R. F.	3/24/18	108	Straigas, T. M.	3/28/18
1	Finazzo, R. B.	1/6/18	18	Courtney, R. F.	2/9/18	58	Borowski, P. W.	3/23/18	110	Bangs, M.	3/28/18
1	Harles, F. C.	3/10/18	18	Foster, H. M.	3/25/18	58	Bunzeluk, W.	10/31/17	110	Callies, P. C.	2/12/18
1	Moellman, R. J.	3/23/18	18	Hawtrey, F. W.	2/22/18	58	Durham, R. A.	3/9/18	110	Delesha, J. J.	2/23/18
1	Ruzicka, L. F.	2/7/18	18	Head, R. L.	3/25/18	58	Hoye, D. J.	4/13/18	110	Evans, G. D.	3/8/18
1	Scott, J. C.	2/18/18	18	Keith, J. H.	3/1/18	58	Hymes, J. F.	3/26/18	110	Ferguson, J. E.	3/21/18
1	Thompson, C.	3/16/18	18	McEntire, V. L.	2/10/18	58	Jones, J. D.	3/11/18	110	George, J. M.	12/28/17
2	Bequette, F. C.	3/23/18	20	Moore, C. L.	3/10/18	58	Levitsky, L.	2/27/18	110	Holmquist, G. R.	9/5/17
2	Wissmann, E. G.	9/22/17	20	Patrick, K. C.	3/30/18	58	Liss, R.	3/6/18	110	Miller, J. J.	2/24/18
3	Aceste, A.	5/2/18	20	Peters, J. D.	3/15/18	58	Niewoit, L. F.	1/25/18	110	Peterson, J. P.	1/31/18
3	Aji, A.	2/14/18	22	Elsasser, S. E.	3/15/18	58	Priziola, V.	4/9/18	110	Radman, C. A.	3/30/18
3	Alleyne, W. E.	3/3/18	22	Hanson, D. D.	4/1/18	58	Strachan, W.	2/10/18	110	Svoboda, R. N.	3/21/18
3	Amato, G.	2/24/18	22	Ware, N. H.	3/6/18	58	Thurman, A. C.	3/15/18	110	Wester, J. F.	3/21/18
3	Amerman, A. I.	3/26/18	22	Zyla, W. S.	10/28/17	60	Caldwell, R. L.	3/27/18	111	Baty, H. G.	2/27/18
3	Baccaglioni, W. F.	3/7/18	24	Collins, R. W.	3/19/18	60	Griffin, C. M.	3/18/18	111	Bauer, E.	12/12/17
3	Bents, R. C.	3/25/18	24	Duffy, G. F.	3/23/18	60	McDonald, A. L.	4/4/18	111	Draper, R. W.	3/13/18
3	Bisso, G. J.	4/16/18	24	Holmes, C. S.	3/23/18	66	Morton, J. L.	2/25/18	111	Yager, J. C.	1/11/18
3	Brunngraber, R.	3/4/18	24	Wallace, F. D.	3/21/18	68	Crabtree, T. R.	1/6/18	113	Foster, L. J.	3/30/18
3	Dacchille, V. P.	1/26/18	25	Dombroski, S. S.	3/11/18	68	Edelen, W. J.	3/24/18	113	Menslage, R. J.	1/20/18
3	Duncan, R. L.	1/10/18	25	Flanagan, F. T.	5/17/15	68	Intlekofer, K. J.	3/9/18	115	Letourneau, J.	3/22/18
3	Fedor, R. J.	3/26/18	25	Gill, G. R.	3/13/18	68	Moran, R. W.	3/25/18	117	Hogan, R. E.	1/22/18
3	Fodera, V. A.	4/1/18	25	Grundborg, R. R.	2/25/18	70	DelSignore, W. F.	4/17/18	120	Abell, W. C.	4/11/18
3	Gardocki, J. P.	3/1/18	25	Kohler, W. V.	2/7/18	70	Glasscock, R. L.	12/22/17	124	McCullough, B. L.	3/8/18
3	Graham, U.	12/27/17	25	Shannon, D.	3/28/18	70	Ward, A. G.	3/28/18	124	Sims, D. C.	3/24/18
3	Gubitosi, L. D.	4/17/18	26	Desmond, D. J.	2/20/18	71	Baker, D. W.	3/3/18	125	Brown, V. C.	12/29/17
3	Guiffre, L.	1/27/18	26	Hollandsworth, D. W.	1/26/18	76	Gunter, R. D.	2/1/18	125	Clifton, K. B.	1/12/18
3	Healy, P.	3/30/18	26	Kelley, L. G.	3/7/18	76	Henderson, E. E.	3/11/18	125	Frack, E. N.	1/5/18
3	Hillman, S. E.	3/19/18	26	Montague, M. R.	2/18/18	76	Walker, W. D.	2/15/18	125	Norton, T. L.	2/28/18
3	Hromada, J. W.	7/24/17	26	Western, E. A.	11/25/17	77	Bachman, V. R.	2/21/18	125	Peebles, G. J.	3/20/18
3	Kelly, R. J.	3/14/18	29	Kearns, J. K.	2/23/18	77	Bauman, R. E.	3/14/18	126	Schultz, C. E.	4/17/17
3	Kretzschmar, K. C.	3/1/18	34	Cunningham, R. M.	1/29/18	77	Brockway, D.	3/10/18	126	Zerby, D. E.	3/21/18
3	Lattanzio, T.	12/7/17	34	Holmes, R. E.	3/30/18	77	Carter, W. G.	4/6/18	129	Cheney, D. L.	1/16/18
3	Lopus, R.	2/5/18	34	Thomas, R. L.	4/29/18	77	Secord, A. L.	1/23/04	130	Chuter, P. J.	4/12/18
3	Lynady, M. T.	3/19/18	34	Zimmerman, R. P.	3/9/18	82	Cvitkovich, J. M.	3/10/18	130	Matthews, R. P.	3/26/18
3	Nappi, F.	4/11/18	35	Cosgrove, T. S.	2/17/18	82	Seitz, R. E.	4/11/18	130	Meyer, R. A.	3/20/18
3	O'Sullivan, J. F.	3/16/18	35	Kent, R. W.	3/2/18	84	Jones, M. S.	2/27/18	131	Ptacek, J. A.	2/8/18
3	Proctor, P. M.	3/22/18	35	Murphy, F. T.	3/27/18	86	Davis, T. N.	4/12/18	134	Black, T. E.	2/28/18
3	Rodriguez, M. A.	1/1/18	38	Agin, H. B.	3/23/18	90	Matlega, J. J.	1/18/18	134	Burke, D. J.	3/24/18
3	Roesle, F. L.	3/12/18	38	Firestone, W. S.	10/19/17	90	Sortito, J. M.	3/24/18	134	Carlson, R. H.	1/8/18
3	Roff, A. C.	4/14/18	38	Jirovec, E. E.	3/10/18	96	Eaton, J.	3/24/18	134	Cortese, T. J.	2/21/18
3	Scaringi, J. F.	12/30/17	38	Laspina, A. J.	6/7/17	96	Scaficchia, M. J.	3/21/18	134	Durham, R. T.	3/1/18
3	Springer, J. W.	4/10/18	38	Woznicka, G. J.	2/22/18	97	Ketterer, J. J.	3/22/18	134	Dvoratchek, J. L.	2/26/18
3	Toohey, K. J.	3/13/18	41	Carollo, O.	3/22/18	98	Burke, J. S.	3/23/18	134	Egan, J. M.	3/14/18
3	Valentine, F. M.	12/18/17	41	Fuchs, R.	3/14/18	98	Callanan, M.	12/9/17	134	Even, P. A.	1/24/18
3	Van Pelt, F. A.	3/8/18	41	Gause, C. E.	8/30/17	98	Christy, L. E.	3/25/18	134	Fegan, D. M.	3/22/18
3	Weitzman, M.	2/20/18	42	Hallstrom, L. W.	1/3/18	98	Doughty, G. R.	4/7/18	134	Fitch, M. W.	2/26/18
3	Wilson, L. B.	4/19/18	43	Boris, B.	2/25/18	98	Geis, H. S.	4/4/18	134	Gaige, J.	4/5/18
3	Young, C. R.	2/28/18	44	Hiltner, L. M.	11/23/16	98	Holland, M. E.	2/12/17	134	Greybill, T. G.	2/5/18
5	Bettwy, J. F.	3/14/18	45	Wolowic, L. M.	2/23/18	98	Jurkofsky, J. J.	3/29/18	134	Jensen, J.	2/18/18
5	Covert, J. D.	3/17/18	46	Alford, C. W.	7/3/17	98	O'Connor, T. P.	3/9/18	134	Magee, G. W.	3/1/18
5	Hedderman, J. M.	3/31/18	46	Allen, T. K.	9/14/17	98	Rowan, T. D.	4/18/18	134	Martinez, F.	11/26/17
5	Holland, D.	1/11/18	46	Andes, H. G.	3/10/18	98	Valentine, H. B.	4/10/18	134	McDermott, B. J.	2/15/18
5	Wilson, W. M.	3/25/18	46	Cissel, G.	10/17/16	98	Wenrich, J. R.	3/23/18	134	Nihill, J. F.	1/20/18
6	Giovinco, J.	3/3/18	46	Ensley, E. M.	4/9/18	99	Dimezza, D. M.	12/8/17	134	Olsen, R.	3/30/18
6	Lindt, D. C.	9/10/17	46	Freund, G. W.	1/12/18	100	Grady, O. B.	2/1/18	134	Padilla, D. J.	8/5/16
7	Wright, D. W.	12/30/17	46	Gallagher, J.	3/8/18	100	Hansen, L. E.	1/13/18	134	Pechnick, D. J.	12/3/17
8	Boddy, W. L.	2/11/18	46	Harper, R. E.	1/5/18	100	Kellum, C. J.	1/4/18	134	Rouchos, S.	6/2/17
9	Biesemeyer, L.	3/26/18	46	Hubbard, M. H.	2/27/18	100	Moxsy, D. T.	1/11/17	134	Strenk, W. J.	12/15/17
9	Gannon, A. P.	3/16/18	46	MacDougall, R. W.	4/10/18	102	Brown, D. W.	7/31/17	134	Swale, W. H.	3/20/18
11	Block, R. W.	2/23/18	46	Nelson, L. A.	11/22/17	102	Kline, L.	7/9/17	134	Willard, L. G.	5/26/17
11	Charnaw, H.	4/3/18	46	Smith, S. S.	3/14/18	102	Martin, J. F.	10/24/14	134	Zisterer, R.	12/27/17
11	Crawford, R. W.	11/26/17	46	Tucker, W. A.	3/23/18	102	McCormack, P.	11/14/17	136	Murphy, G. A.	10/10/17
11	Dupass, W. A.	2/19/18	46	Valleroy, E. M.	2/7/18	102	McGurran, J. R.	3/18/18	136	Stone, D. R.	2/13/18
11	Finkle, H.	2/12/18	47	Haacker, D. B.	9/30/17	102	Minnella, J. J.	3/7/18	143	Acker, W. R.	2/21/18
11	Herrera, J.	1/19/18	47	Leger, V.	2/1/18	102	Petta, C. R.	2/6/18	143	Pittman, R. J.	3/19/18
11	Heyer, T. C.	3/26/18	48	Brass, D. M.	12/23/17	103	Barbuti, J. D.	2/16/18	143	Sinkovitz, E.	3/1/18
11	Lindsay, H. C.	3/23/18	48	Brown, M. A.	4/8/18	103	Berry, K. R.	7/27/15	145	Breuer, S. P.	3/24/18
11	Mendoza, A.	3/22/18	48	Conner, J.	1/9/18	103	Bertochi, P. V.	3/19/18	145	Doughty, R. L.	1/1/18
11	Miller, H. D.	4/1/18	48	Cranswick, M. C.	3/7/18	103	Cooney, R. T.	2/8/18	145	Leatherman, D. J.	4/14/18
11	Mitchell, W. G.	11/7/17	48	Femenia, M. R.	3/22/18	103	Cosgrove, A. C.	4/10/18	145	Sigler, L. D.	1/29/18
11	Myers, K.	3/24/18	48	McIntyre, F. P.	1/8/18	103	Fisher, R. L.	3/7/18	146	Ward, D. L.	3/29/17
11	Pickler, J. L.	4/3/18	48	Oxford, H. L.	12/20/17	103	Landers, R. E.	8/9/17	153	Berens, L. G.	3/15/18
11	Pratt, S. D.	3/28/18	48	Tate, J. M.	3/14/18	103	MacDonald, J. A.	2/20/18	153	Wilmes, P. A.	2/1/18
11	VanPatten, F.	3/18/18	51	Johnson, C. E.	7/28/17	103	McClellan, J. W.	2/4/18	160	Carlson, G. R.	2/28/18
11	Wantz, R. I.	4/16/18	51	Krivi, J. C.	2/4/18	103	McPeck, G. A.	2/3/18	164	Belanger, J. J.	2/13/18
11	Warren, J. W.	3/8/18	51	Ramsey, R. C.	3/17/18	103	Ricci, J. F.	3/19/18	164	Mauro, R. V.	4/12/18
14	Steele, D. H.	3/17/18	53	Bickford, R. O.	3/17/18	104	Benjamin, F. M.	2/3/18	164	Murray, A. J.	1/5/18
16	Coomer, M. J.	2/28/18	53	Rose, K. D.	2/26/18	104	Hanson, J. A.	3/16/18	164	Patterson, R. R.	3/12/17
16	Smith, D. A.	3/20/18	53	Sherman, R. S.	1/9/18	104	Quilty, C. W.	10/29/17	175	Carroll, R. E.	4/5/18



Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death
175	Gass, P. L.	8/7/17	309	Ohlendorf, G. H.	2/1/18	453	Lee, T. K.	4/14/18	613	Mattingly, G. W.	1/26/18	949	Johannes, M. L.	4/4/18	I.O. (387)	Short, R. D.	3/6/18
175	Hedgecoth, B. C.	8/3/17	309	Riggins, P. J.	1/15/18	453	Lonon, B. L.	12/19/17	613	Smith, M. C.	7/8/17	952	Grigsby, J. W.	11/11/16	I.O. (424)	Hood, E. W.	1/2/18
175	Hutson, R. C.	3/17/18	313	Corrigan, H. J.	3/31/18	453	Moen, L. E.	2/24/18	613	Sullivan, J. A.	2/16/18	953	Graves, J. J.	9/14/17	I.O. (453)	Moore, T. J.	3/24/18
175	Pittman, E. L.	4/4/18	313	Nichols, F. B.	4/8/18	456	Chiavarini, J. W.	4/1/18	613	Taylor, C. E.	1/23/18	965	Ramsay, E. M.	3/1/18	I.O. (455)	Widelo, R. J.	1/11/18
175	Smith, W. H.	3/15/18	313	Wells, M. M.	3/16/18	466	Hayslett, D. J.	3/15/18	613	Weir, W. P.	9/21/17	968	Blue, A. V.	4/2/18	I.O. (641)	Kruczek, M. A.	4/9/18
175	Waldroup, D. B.	2/10/18	322	Slagle, J. P.	3/20/18	474	Brandon, J. W.	1/8/18	617	Knapp, G. P.	9/1/17	985	Abston, J. A.	1/26/18	I.O. (1377)	Clevidence, R. L.	9/29/17
175	Ward, G. R.	2/26/18	325	Freije, N. W.	3/18/18	474	Gray, E. E.	1/24/18	627	Kress, S. R.	3/24/18	993	Faber, J.	3/31/18	I.O. (1393)	Corazza, N.	6/17/18
176	Blaney, R. L.	2/24/18	332	Butler, D. E.	2/8/18	474	Grissom, J. B.	2/18/18	632	McPherson, J. E.	1/23/18	993	Whyte, S. M.	3/6/18	Pens. (25)	Gaus, P. J.	2/27/18
176	Korilko, T.	2/21/18	332	Hames, J. A.	3/20/18	474	Orman, D. W.	2/3/18	640	Frantz, H. R.	3/13/18	993	Wilford, G. J.	3/6/18	Pens. (637)	Criner, K. E.	2/2/18
176	Peil, G. E.	4/4/18	340	Fleeman, T. J.	3/7/18	474	Pryor, J. G.	2/9/18	640	Riley, J. E.	4/6/17	995	Weaver, E. W.	1/29/18	Pens. (686)	Krissinger, G. H.	3/15/18
176	Sisk, R. E.	3/9/18	343	Jirasek, J. F.	4/4/18	474	Thornton, C. E.	2/20/18	640	Taylor, G. L.	3/30/18	1002	Hatfield, H. R.	1/13/18	Pens. (982)	Ambrose, G.	3/9/18
176	Zelko, J. G.	4/16/18	343	Schwab, A. F.	3/17/18	477	Cox, J. M.	12/21/17	648	Musselman, G. L.	3/18/18	1002	Lacy, J. B.	3/24/18	Pens. (1788)	Corazza, N.	6/17/17
177	Cannady, J. S.	3/6/18	347	Kanzok, K. A.	2/12/18	477	Jordan, B. A.	2/12/18	649	Manns, D. F.	2/9/18	1049	Bevilacqua, R. R.	3/12/18	Pens. (1882)	Hullah, I. J.	12/13/17
177	Oden, J. E.	3/8/18	347	Lowe, A. R.	2/10/18	479	Villemez, C. P.	2/20/18	649	Turner, L. J.	9/18/17	1055	Brock, W. J.	2/7/18	Pens. (1882)	Robinson, C. L.	4/6/18
177	Pittman, B. E.	3/30/18	349	Campbell, J. A.	3/28/18	480	Harvey, W. G.	11/13/17	654	Zerby, H. E.	1/30/18	1105	Hamilton, H. R.	3/19/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Accario, M. M.	12/16/17
177	Spooner, S.	3/24/18	349	Cosens, D. A.	3/18/18	481	Cordell, D.	3/25/18	659	Conley, J. D.	3/3/18	1105	Schneider, F. M.	3/15/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Bentley, R. A.	12/30/17
177	Wood, P. G.	3/1/18	349	Hunt, N. K.	4/12/18	481	Klepfer, S. R.	2/5/18	659	Dusenbury, R. A.	3/22/18	1141	Gorden, J. O.	4/4/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Black, D.	9/19/16
180	Conley, T. E.	2/16/18	349	Morin, J.	2/24/18	481	Townsend, R. O.	4/19/18	659	Willis, D. L.	4/2/18	1141	Zimmerman, R. N.	2/16/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Burda, J. V.	2/24/18
180	Gourley, B. P.	2/24/18	349	Scott, F. M.	4/3/18	483	Tegard, F. J.	2/2/18	666	Barton, R. W.	2/17/18	1149	Bromilow, D.	1/31/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Clancy, J. P.	11/11/17
180	Orta, C. W.	1/25/18	351	McGowan, C. J.	8/9/17	490	Donovan, W. J.	4/3/18	666	Bolton, W. E.	3/9/18	1186	Ishii, W. S.	1/12/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Clark, N.	7/9/16
191	Brune, D. L.	11/19/17	351	Powell, R. B.	1/12/18	490	Tinker, D. I.	2/9/18	666	Broach, R. L.	1/4/18	1212	Greenberg, H.	12/31/17	Pens. (I.O.)	Coleman, D. D.	11/11/17
191	Mason, W. S.	7/3/15	351	Vassallo, D. R.	2/13/18	494	Brodzeller, J. P.	11/22/17	666	Bucci, J. B.	11/27/17	1228	Nunan, K. W.	4/6/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Decatur, H. N.	12/4/17
191	Metz, L. A.	3/20/17	353	Back, H. S.	4/17/18	494	Fuerbringer, F. W.	2/23/18	666	Condrey, J. P.	1/29/18	1245	Campbell, G. N.	3/3/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Fishkin, R.	2/18/18
191	Roberts, J. A.	3/2/18	353	Cirfi, L.	3/8/18	494	Jaeger, L.	2/4/18	666	Guyton, C. L.	10/20/17	1245	Doggett, M. A.	3/10/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Gracz, J. J.	4/16/18
191	Smith, R. N.	4/10/18	353	Conlin, W. B.	4/10/18	494	Walczak, R. E.	3/28/18	666	Lipe, D. W.	4/25/18	1245	Garner, A. A.	4/4/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Gray, W. B.	3/16/18
193	McAfee, R. F.	3/15/18	353	Guerreiro, J.	10/29/17	495	Hazard, H. J.	3/28/18	673	Maille, M. A.	2/3/18	1245	Weimer, C. E.	2/14/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Green, C. W.	3/1/18
193	Winhold, L. H.	3/14/18	353	Klavins, A.	4/6/18	498	Heuer, E. H.	2/2/18	676	Catanese, P. J.	4/21/18	1249	Winner, E. S.	1/29/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Grubbs, M.	4/17/17
194	Hickman, K. W.	4/19/18	353	Kovacs, S. A.	4/12/18	499	Coady, R. M.	3/3/18	676	Jordan, M. A.	1/21/18	1250	Martin, L. R.	2/2/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Guinty, C. F.	2/25/18
196	Henry, R. D.	6/27/17	353	Loewen, K.	9/26/17	499	White, J.	2/1/18	683	Chance, R. E.	12/31/17	1250	Mitchell, C. A.	2/26/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Haines, T. W.	3/31/18
197	Eads, J. B.	3/23/18	353	McGrath, J. W.	3/27/18	505	Turner, A.	3/10/18	683	Frey, S. A.	2/27/18	1319	Krepp, R. M.	3/19/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Headon, A. E.	11/19/17
204	Lichman, J.	2/27/18	353	Monaghan, A. J.	4/1/18	505	Williams, R. M.	3/22/18	684	Hicks, E. L.	1/29/18	1319	Nemits, G. G.	3/18/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Hughes, T. E.	2/13/18
210	Allen, B. T.	1/25/18	353	Murray, D.	4/10/18	508	Brown, E. M.	4/16/18	692	Nagy, W. H.	8/28/17	1393	Connell, J. J.	1/31/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Johnson, E. G.	3/17/18
213	Emard, A. J.	1/22/18	353	Ryan, W. P.	3/21/18	508	Courson, B. E.	3/9/18	697	Cox, R. D.	3/25/18	1393	Hoover, D. L.	2/5/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Johnson, W. J.	2/26/18
213	Gee, K.	12/26/17	353	Rympel, M.	12/4/16	518	Cooper, Y.	2/6/18	697	Schreiber, M. H.	4/20/18	1395	O'Brian, D. B.	3/28/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Johnson, R. P.	2/15/18
213	Hegedus, L.	2/17/18	353	Stutsbury, D.	9/25/17	520	Harris, D. L.	3/12/18	697	Yeager, C. B.	3/25/18	1439	McFerron, R. B.	3/4/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Kellogg, R.	3/19/18
213	Jablonska, H. G.	2/16/18	353	Vaivada, S.	1/29/18	527	Groves, O. L.	3/18/18	700	Chaney, G. R.	3/23/18	1439	VanCardo, J. A.	11/24/17	Pens. (I.O.)	Kiser, F. L.	4/14/18
213	Richter, C. P.	1/14/18	353	Walsh, K. J.	3/16/18	529	Whalen, T. C.	3/11/18	700	Layes, R. L.	2/28/18	1439	Williams, R. W.	2/12/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Knouse, W. G.	2/20/18
213	Stewart, E. J.	1/21/18	354	Calderwood, D. N.	1/6/18	538	Price, G.	3/2/18	700	Scott, W. G.	3/2/18	1516	Drennen, J. H.	1/29/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Kolis, V. M.	1/14/18
213	Vanheyest, J.	2/8/18	354	Ouzts, M. R.	4/8/18	547	Foltz, C. L.	4/4/18	701	DeTray, D. F.	4/23/18	1516	Goss, R. P.	3/2/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Lee, C.	3/2/18
222	Rowley, R. A.	2/27/18	354	Thompson, M. L.	3/1/18	553	Grunder, W.	1/8/18	701	Mitter, F. W.	3/16/18	1516	Stafford, R. E.	3/13/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Mammoser, J. L.	3/1/18
223	Cashman, R. F.	3/10/18	357	Butterowe, N. R.	11/4/17	557	McMall, W. J.	2/12/18	712	Namadan, R. L.	8/20/17	1531	Faircloth, D. E.	4/22/18	Pens. (I.O.)	McKay, N. R.	2/5/18
223	MacDonald, R. W.	3/2/18	357	Galgani, A.	4/1/18	557	Parent, W. F.	4/18/18	712	Reese, E. G.	12/6/11	1547	Garrison, V. C.	11/12/17	Pens. (I.O.)	Meo, J. F.	3/19/18
223	Murphy, F. W.	1/29/18	357	Garcia, J. R.	2/9/18	558	Bassham, L. F.	3/14/18	714	Gerlach, M. F.	4/14/18	1579	Boyd, K.	3/24/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Meo, M. M.	4/25/18
226	Kutka, E. J.	2/22/18	357	Napolitano, C.	3/26/18	558	Byram, D. L.	4/21/18	714	Yineman, G. C.	2/15/18	1579	Price, C. R.	2/1/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Miller, J. L.	12/20/17
236	Bonacker, H. V.	3/10/18	357	Roth, W. B.	3/28/18	558	Johnston, E. R.	3/21/18	716	Edwards, M. T.	3/8/18	1625	Garrett, E. L.	3/24/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Miner, W. F.	2/8/18
236	Desmo, N. C.	1/16/18	357	Stubbs, H. J.	4/12/18	567	Bernard, D. E.	3/22/18	716	Lauter, A. F.	4/8/18	1701	Bishop, R. J.	2/26/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Miron, L.	2/8/18
236	Kordana, C. J.	4/6/18	359	Timmons, R. M.	2/18/18	567	Hodgkins, A. H.	10/18/17	716	Maddox, D. L.	3/19/18	1701	McCarthy, D. L.	6/24/17	Pens. (I.O.)	Mondragon, T.	6/11/17
236	Lenseth, K. J.	2/24/18	363	Grabliuskas, E. J.	3/16/18	569	Blinkhorn, E. C.	3/12/18	716	Mulcahy, R. O.	5/20/16	1852	Eagles, J. H.	2/14/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Morgan, C. L.	3/2/18
236	Trombley, W. J.	3/20/18	363	Sylvester, F. M.	3/28/18	569	Flahive, R. T.	1/31/18	716	Quinn, D. W.	2/16/18	1925	Waller, M. E.	3/20/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Nefsky, C. S.	2/18/18
237	Wallace, G. K.	1/29/18	369	Bayens, M. J.	4/1/18	569	Halama, R. J.	3/5/18	716	Robertson, C. P.	3/1/18	2077	Hamilton, R. P.	2/24/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Oldag, D. E.	4/23/17
242	Schnepper, C. W.	12/28/17	369	Brummett, G. H.	3/24/18	569	Jacobs, B. M.	4/11/18	716	Valencia, A.	2/13/18	2150	Sorenson, R.	1/8/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Passalacqua, F. L.	2/7/18
245	Behlke, R. A.	11/12/17	369	Childers, P. J.	2/15/18	569	Miller, M. D.	3/18/18	716	Wilson, R. O.	1/14/18	2166	Thibodeau, M.	2/1/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Peaslee, W. A.	4/9/18
246	Williams, J. L.	2/28/18	369	Deal, B. W.	12/18/17	569	Oden, W. D.	2/11/18	728	Comes, W. D.	3/22/18	I.O. (12)	Corwin, R. R.	3/18/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Peters, J. R.	2/11/18
257	Rector, P. T.	3/31/18	369	McNay, J. F.	11/5/17	569	Shafer, W. L.	3/25/18	728	Lofley, J. A.	3/27/18	I.O. (21)	De Long, F. J.	3/4/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Pulkownik, W. E.	2/23/18
258	Morgan, J. F.	12/6/17	369	Smith, N. B.	4/9/18	569	Stringer, E. M.	2/4/18	728	Phelps, R. E.	3/28/18	I.O. (53)	Kleeman, J. W.	3/15/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Reed, R. R.	2/12/18
265	Wolph, A. P.	11/20/17	375	Rex, R. H.	1/9/18	570	Smith, L. D.	9/9/17	728	Reed, G. G.	3/29/18	I.O. (134)	Matti, J. H.	3/5/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Reif, J. J.	8/6/17
266	Jemente, R. J.	1/16/18	387	Franklin, R. E.	3/1/18	570	Vasquez, C. A.	4/3/18	728	Vernon, R. F.	3/7/18	I.O. (134)	Muir, M. J.	2/4/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Roberts, B. N.	1/23/18
269	Haines, R. S.	3/18/18	387	Gerboth, T. K.	3/9/18	583	Rivera, A.	11/27/17	743	Hartwig, J. T.	2/22/18	I.O. (134)	Rowe, J. R.	4/24/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Ruggeri, A. B.	1/3/18
270	McDaniel, C. H.	3/15/18	400	Vota, W. J.	1/17/18	584	Goodwin, E. R.	1/22/18	743	LaScala, M. A.	3/19/18	I.O. (134)	Sonetz, L. J.	1/17/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Rutkosky, F.	1/21/16
271	Gilbert, T. M.	3/20/18	402	Praymak, D.	1/24/18	584	Green, F. L.	3/7/18	760	Brock, R. S.	11/13/17	I.O. (134)	Talent, J. J.	3/11/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Turkett, C. C.	3/17/18
271	Nichols, A. L.	3/20/18	413	Blessing, E. R.	1/27/18	584	Stottlemire, G. A.	10/5/14	760	Isenberg, J. R.	1/3/18	I.O. (134)	Valenzo, R.	3/23/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Waters, G. M.	2/28/18
278	Berger, J. A.	3/4/18	415	Eggl, D. L.	10/31/17	586	Cinnamon, W. A.	1/14/16	768	Smith, M. D.	4/10/18	I.O. (245)	Brake, J. H.	3/28/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Watson, J. U.	3/4/18
278	Major, L. E.	4/25/18	424	Alsamar, S.	1/29/18	586	Rosenthal, H. A.	2/5/18	769	Long, T.	3/8/18	I.O. (304)	Grounds, T. M.	3/20/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Williams, G. W.	2/3/18
280	Hunter, R. G.	3/13/18	424	Balash, R. P.	4/4/18	595	Boepple, W. J.	2/1/1									



## WHO WE ARE

# DC Member's Path from Prison to Redemption

**N**ine years ago, Washington, D.C., Local 26 member Teon Plater was in darkness.

He had made some poor decisions, terrible really. No one died, but he hurt people. Left them scared and he was paying his price: 72 months buried behind high walls and barbed wire.

As his term was ending, a work detail came his way. Like all the others, he wouldn't be paid, but he would earn something more precious: fewer hours spent behind the walls, freedom a little bit closer. He'd done every detail that came his way until then, both as a way to get out faster and as a way keep a promise to himself, a difficult path he had chosen to get through captivity whole.

"Most of the time in prison, if you are not in a gang, you will be put in a gang. They volunteer you. I stayed on the humble path instead," he said. "And they respect that. A lot of time, from what I understand, they are so weary of being in gangs themselves, they revere and respect when you are not part of that. The constancy is what they respect. So, they said about me, 'He's hands off.'"

But this opportunity was different: it was farming. For Plater, black men in this part of the country, they don't farm voluntarily. Too many of their ancestors farmed involuntarily.

"Working for free in the dirt? I wasn't interested," Plater said.

But he agreed because he felt that was the humble way, and it was a decision that began his journey out of his own darkness to a career giving light to others.

The farm detail meant working for Bernie Fowler Jr. Fowler was a novice farmer and, as Plater and he crossed paths, in his own darkness. The recession tipped his development company deep into the red, his marriage was over and his daughter was fading deeper into heroin addiction.

Fowler saw hunger of all kinds: deep, soul-searching hunger and empty-stomach-on-the-way-to-school hunger. So he rented some land, planted a crop he would donate to local food banks and asked his friends in the sheriff's department for some men who might want to undo some of the damage they'd done to their communities by harvesting those fields.

Plater got past his distrust of farming, but an unexpected challenge sometimes froze him in the fields.

"I got nervous in big open places, not seeing a skyline with barbed wire in front of it. Even though I was in prison and everyone there was a stranger, I had less anxiety there than how nervous I was on the farm with all the volunteers and people I didn't know," he said. "At one point,



Washington, D.C., Local 26 member Teon Plater changed his own life and the lives of others working for the nonprofit Farming4Hunger.

I told Bernie I wanted to go back inside. I still go through times where it is hard to gear down that protective coating."

But Fowler listened like few other people Plater said he had ever met. And Fowler's commitment to feeding the hunger, to the possibility in Plater, convinced him to stay. That first harvest, Fowler, Plater and five other inmates pulled 185,000 pounds of potatoes with their bare hands from that rented field on Serenity Farms.

"The farm is aptly named," Plater said. "Standing in the field, you would put your hands in the dirt and you forgot your problems. It just goes out and integrates into the farm. You feel refreshed, even though you put in work. It feels clean even though you sweat and got covered with dirt."

When Plater's term was up, Fowler asked him to join the board of directors, representing the inmates, a position he held until this winter. And then they started talking jobs. Nearly a quarter of inmates return to prison within three years. The best way, research shows, to prevent recidivism is to keep them employed.

Plater wanted to be a trainer, but he told Fowler he was unsure about his prospects. In 2012, southern Maryland was little improved from the depths of the recession. But Fowler had planted seeds of his own. When his real estate business was flourishing, he cut rent in one of his buildings so the owner of a World Gym could stay open. Fowler called in a favor.

When the three met, the owner told Plater that, "if Bernie says you are OK in

his book, that's enough for me."

"The day he got out, he started work," Fowler said.

While working at the gym, he started to work with the wife and children of Tony Scott, vice president for service at Mona Electric, a signatory contractor with Washington Local 26. They became friends, and Scott gently, but persistently, began to offer Plater some advice: join the union, get a trade. Protect your family.

"On several occasions he talked to me about coming into the union. He said he would be willing to take me on at Mona," he said. "I had a profession. Training. It was low stress. You can do it forever. But I needed a trade. One day, something clicked: Personal training is working with energy. Farming is working with energy. Being an electrician, the root of all of it, is working with the energy."

Plater went down to the local hall in the fall of 2016, signed up and Mona pulled his name. He is now a residential technician, taking classes and waiting for his number to come up to join the construction apprenticeship.

Today, Plater is a changed man. He is married to Shalantae Hawkins. They have a 4-year-old son, Tyree, and a 1-year-old daughter, Aria. He spends his little free time continuing to volunteer at the farm, helping Fowler raise needed funds and extolling the virtues of the program to anyone who will listen.

And Farming4Hunger is growing and changing too. Instead of taking children to the farm, they take the farm to the them, Fowler said. In May, they announced a partnership with Prince George's County, just outside Washington, to build and run an urban farm, and they are in talks with state and local officials to expand to four more locations.

"So many guys have said the same thing to me: working in the fields was like a church with no walls. My conscience was speaking to me. The fields are talking to me. I can think about my choices and turning it around," Fowler said. "That is the secret sauce we are spreading, how to start feeling human again."

The vastness of the sky doesn't bother him anymore.

"The same way a seed needs to be in the darkness — in the dirt — the same way a child needs to be in a womb, in the darkness, to germinate and grow, go through the pains of maturation, it is the same way in the farm," Plater said. "You are in the darkness and you put yourself in the dirt and something magical starts to happen. The earth absorbs that darkness and it turns it into something wonderful." ■



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