

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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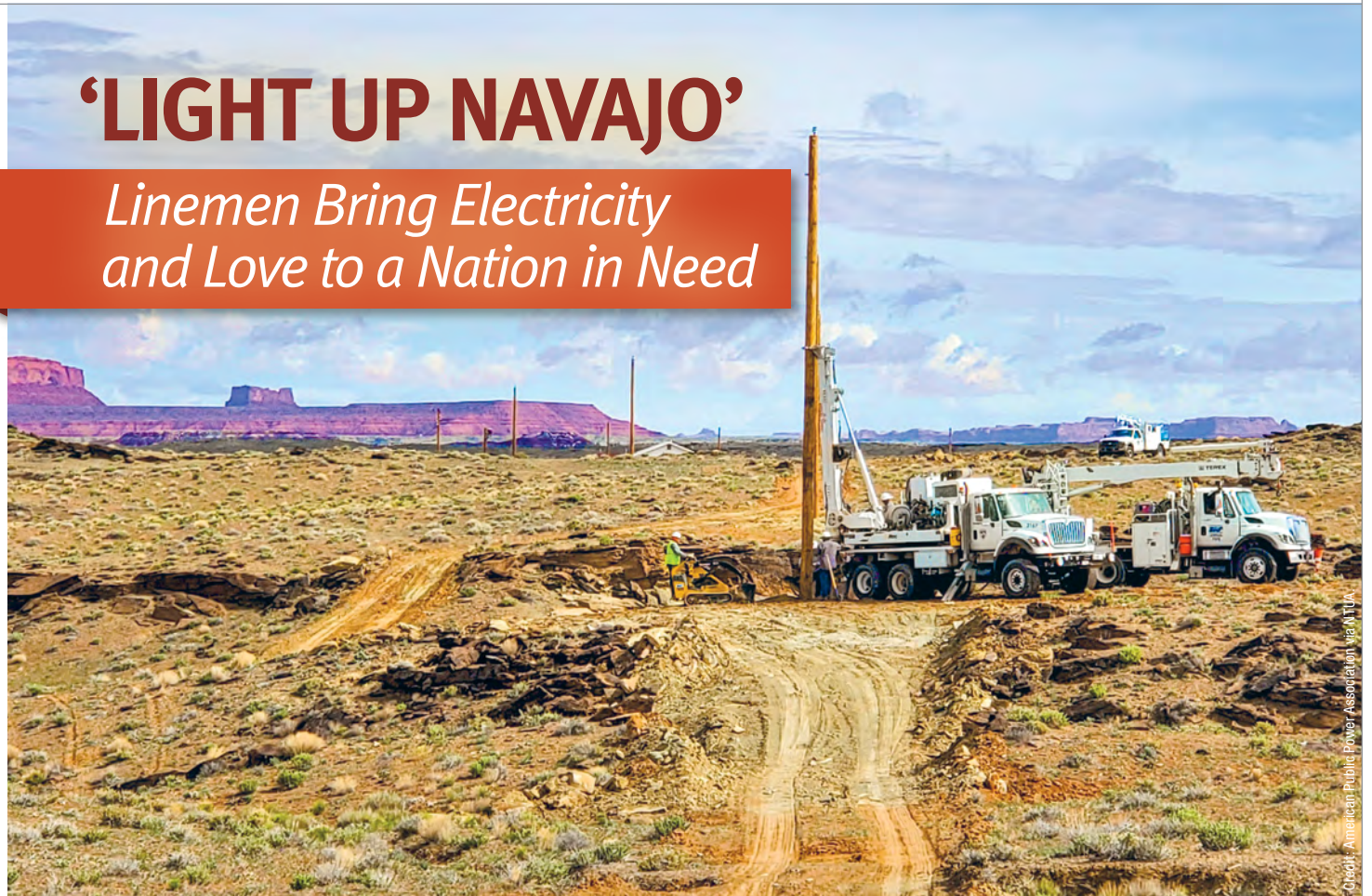
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## ‘LIGHT UP NAVAJO’

*Linemen Bring Electricity  
and Love to a Nation in Need*



*Dozens of IBEW linemen from across the country spent parts of April and May setting poles and stringing wire across the vast terrain of the Navajo Nation in the American Southwest to bring electricity to some of the 15,000 households on the reservation — about a third of all residences there — that have never been hooked up to the power grid. More IBEW members are already signed up to take part in the second phase of “Light Up Navajo” in 2020.*

In the sacred story of the birth of the Navajo Nation, the first holy people rose through three worlds before emerging into the splendor of their homeland in what would become the American Southwest. They called it the Glittering World.

Their landscape sparkles against brilliant blue skies, bookended by sunrises and sunsets that turn towering red rock formations, canyons, mountains, lakes, forests and high desert into majestic works of art.

But inside thousands of the homes dotting the Nation’s 27,000-square miles, it is dark.

No lights. No working refrigerators or microwave ovens. No TVs, computers or cell phone chargers. No modern conveniences beyond what some

## OUT OF THE DARKNESS



residents minimally fuel with small generators a couple of hours a day.

Roughly 15,000 of the 55,000 families living on the reservation never have had electricity. Their homes comprise 70% of all dwellings in the United States without it.

But last spring, thanks in large part to IBEW members, the lights went on in 233 of those homes. Hundreds more will be hooked up later this year during the second phase of a mammoth project called Light Up Navajo.

It has been life-changing for the Navajo people and linemen alike.

“When they turn the first switch and they can finally use the microwave, the mini fridge, they’re crying, we’re tearing up,” journeyman lineman Matt Scirpoli said. “I’m so proud I could be part of it.”

## Eager to Volunteer

Scirpoli, of Worcester, Mass., Local 486, was among dozens of IBEW members around the country who traveled in spring 2019 to the Navajo Nation to work alongside electricians from the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority.

The territory, larger than West Virginia, sprawls across the adjoining corners of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. Roughly 190,000 residents — about two-thirds of the Navajo population — live on the reservation at any given time.

Density averages 4.2 houses per square mile. But many are spread farther apart, making the work of installing utility poles and stringing wire more labor-intensive and time-consuming than is typical for line crews.

Utilities and municipalities, such as the City of West Boylston in Massachusetts, where Scirpoli works, paid regular wages and travel expenses to send eager volunteers, many of them staying two weeks. Linemen happily worked to exhaustion, 12 to 14 hours a day, usually six days a week.

‘LIGHT UP NAVAJO’ continued on page 4



## FROM THE OFFICERS

# 2020: A Year to Build on Successes



**Lonnie R. Stephenson**  
International President

**A** resolution is only as good as your follow through, so as we announce our goals for 2020, it's worth looking back on the resolutions we made a year ago.

Last January, we asked you to redouble your commitment to organizing and the Code of Excellence, and for the sixth year in a row our membership has grown. The Code of Excellence is bringing in new contractors, new contracts and more work. We are larger and more financially secure than we have been since before the devastating recession a decade ago.

We also asked you to be ready to step up and call your representatives to protect our rights, wages and benefits from political attacks. And you answered that call.

When your union needed you, you showed up. In state and provincial capitals and in Washington, D.C., and Ottawa, there are hundreds and thousands of special interests clamoring to be heard. Many of them have more money than we do.

When we act together, for one another, our small voices become great, and all the money and power in the world has to sit up and listen.

And this year, in many places they tried their hardest to get us on our knees. We faced an unrelenting assault on the rights of working people to respect and safety on the job and a dignified retirement after our working days are over.

And you showed up.

At the beginning of the year we fought off a plan that promised to rescue a handful of at-risk pensions but by gutting the rest.

In the middle of the year, we called on you again to save the crown jewel of the construction industry, our unequalled apprenticeship system that turns out the best trained, most productive and best paid

electrical workers in the country.

Tens of thousands of you wrote in about what those apprenticeships meant to you. We highlighted just a handful for our Thanksgiving issue.

So, before we look ahead to our resolutions for the new year, you should take pride in all we accomplished in the one just past.

And now, we go again.

As November ended, Senators Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Lamar Alexander of Tennessee put forward a plan that doubled down on the abject pension reform we killed last year and somehow found a way to make it worse.

As you know, there are a handful of multiemployer pension plans that are in trouble. Unlike the banks, they did nothing wrong, but without immediate congressional action — the bipartisan Butch Lewis Act is sitting there for them to pass — those few plans could take down the pension insurance program called the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

But Grassley and Alexander's plan — again — doesn't save the ship; it tosses the passengers overboard. Not only that, it taxes your pension benefits by up to 10% more. You already paid income taxes on your pension once. Now they're back for more.

Their plan then jacks up expenses for healthy pension plans like ours by nearly 500%, up to \$2 billion a year.

The most cynical part of this plan is that it doesn't even save the pension system. It keeps the wounded plans alive but doesn't heal them, and it weakens every other plan at the same time by saddling us, and us alone, with the bill.

Not a single banker gave up a single dollar to right the economy they nearly sank back in 2008. They stuck us with the bill then too.

We need you to call your senators today and tell them to kill the Grassley-Alexander attack on the multiemployer pension system. Call **844-551-6921** to talk to your senators right away.

But remember, as we look to the year ahead, we are stronger than we were last year. There are more of us than there were last year. We have more practice fighting together than we did last year.

And this is an election year where the Supreme Court, worker safety, labor rights and the labor movement itself hang in the balance for at least a generation.

I hope your resolution is to fight even harder for yourself and your family. Our resolution is to do everything we can to support you to speak even more powerfully.

The holidays are over. We hope you enjoyed some welcome rest with your family and friends. It's time to get back to work. ■



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

## “LETTERS TO THE EDITOR”

### Save Our Pensions

I just watched President Stephenson's video concerning the Grassley-Alexander plan. I wrote to both of my senators, and my wife is doing the same. This Grassley-Alexander plan is infuriating and so very wrong. You work hard all your life, save money and retire, relying on your union pension and Social Security to live on. All those years of hard work, only to have some thoughtless and careless people decide your pensions should be taxed more than they already are.

*Jim Fliris Jr., Local 134 retiree  
Chicago*

### Making a Difference

I just watched a television ad about the IBEW and loved it. I was a college teacher for 30 years and a union member for most of that time. We would never tell people that college isn't for everyone, but I came to know that many people who are properly trained and represented can make a real difference in their communities. Thank you for keeping a positive image before the public.

*Mike Schliessmann  
Wimberley, Texas*

**[Editor's Note: See the IBEW's three new national television commercials at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker)]**



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

### Our Safety-Conscious Culture

*Responding to "The Numbers Are In: Union Construction Jobs Are Safer Than Nonunion" [also on Page 10 of this issue]:*

I have worked both union and nonunion construction. I have also been a union safety representative for the Teamsters, and as a salaried safety coordinator for a NECA contractor before I got into the IBEW. Union is by far more safety conscious than nonunion in my experience. Starting out in the construction industry in 1998, I wasn't even aware that OSHA existed beyond the mandatory posters that were required in the jobsite trailer, and that was on a prevailing wage Army Corps of Engineers project. Fast-forward 15 years and it was still the same experience for me nonunion. I love the safety culture that has been fostered in the union.

*Ryan Kesterson, Local 332 apprentice  
San Jose, Calif.*

### A True Cost of 'Precision'

*Responding to "Rail Workers' Safety, Jobs in Jeopardy as Precision Scheduled Railroad Expands" [also in last month's Electrical Worker]:*

Lost my job at Union Pacific two years ago to this PSR garbage. It's horrible what's happening to working families at the hands of greedy executives and shareholders who are bleeding that company for all it's worth at the expense of their employees and customers.

*Andrew Kramer, Local 2 member  
St. Louis*

### Never Too Late

*Commenting on an image posted as part of the "IBEW Changed My Life" series:*

Twenty years I worked as a nonunion electrician. I applied and was accepted into the lineman union apprenticeship. I finished and I'm proud to say I'm a union journeyman lineman. Best decision I ever made.

*Daniel Shade, Local 126 member  
Philadelphia*



# IBEW, NFL Step Up Partnership to Protect Children

The IBEW's multiyear effort on behalf of the National Child Identification Program was honored at the start of the Dec. 15 Chicago Bears-Green Bay Packers game at Lambeau Field in recognition of a strengthened partnership with other unions and the National Football League to protect missing children.

International President Lonnie R. Stephenson was joined by other labor leaders and Hall of Fame offensive lineman and Packers legend Jerry Kramer, who serves as a goodwill ambassador to the child ID program.

The NFL is a partner in the effort the IBEW has been involved with since 2017, which has helped millions of families compile identification kits to be given to law enforcement if a child is abducted or goes missing.

"I'm a sports fan, and being recognized in a legendary venue like Lambeau Field is an amazing moment," Stephenson said. "But like nearly every good thing in my life, it came from being an IBEW member. I thought about that many times during that day; that I was representing all our members because of the good work they do in their communities. It was a great feeling to be there representing the 775,000 members and retirees of this great union for such a great cause that so many of us have been a part of."

The IBEW joined forces with the National Child Identification Program in 2017 to help members prepare if faced with the nightmare of a missing child. The two parties recently strengthened that partnership with an initiative that will make the kits available to even more families, both union and nonunion.

Working with both the Democratic and Republican attorney general associations, the IBEW and its utility partners will distribute 4 million child identification kits to kindergarteners and their families throughout the country.

Utility companies the IBEW has collectively-bargained agreements with will sponsor programs that distribute the kits in states where those companies have a presence. Officials from the National Child Identification Program will work with the attorneys general to ensure sponsors in states where the IBEW does not have a utility presence.

The kit has a list of information for parents or guardians to compile and store in a safe place in case a child is reported missing, including the child's medical information, height, weight, fingerprints, a picture and a swab of their DNA. They turn that over to law enforcement in case of emergency, saving precious time during the investigation process.

It's something no parent or guardian wants to use, but it's a tool that could be a life-saving mechanism in a time of crisis.

"What I've learned is the IBEW and its members are leaders," said Kenny Hansmire, a former NFL wide receiver and executive director of the identification program since its inception. "They lead in their communities. They lead everywhere they go. When this idea came up, it just made sense for them to



be involved because of their relationships with the utilities that want to work with the attorneys general to make this a success."

Stephenson said doing so is a natural extension of IBEW members giving back to their local communities, a core tenet of membership.

"We originally partnered with the National Child Identification Program

because we wanted to give our members another tool to take care of their families, even in the most troublesome circum-

stances," he said. "It was a success and this is a natural next step. We were honored when Kenny and others asked us to deepen our involvement."

The IBEW and its local unions have distributed about 750,000 of the child identification kits to members since 2017. The program was started by the American Football Coaches Association in 1997, about one year after the murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, the daughter of an IBEW member in Arlington, Texas. Police efforts to locate Hagerman, whose body was found four days after she was abducted, were slowed by

lack of fingerprints and DNA information.

That was a catalyst for local and state governments to strengthen efforts to locate missing children. The activation of the child abduction system when a minor is reported missing is called the Amber Alert in Hagerman's honor. Her death also sparked the American Football Coaches Association, which is based in nearby Waco, Texas, to act. It worked with law enforcement to develop the kits.

As of Dec. 31, 2018, 34.8% of the nearly 86,000 people listed as missing in the United States were 18 years old or younger, according to the FBI's National Crime Information Center's Missing Persons File.

Hansmire noted that when an emergency strikes in most parts of the country, IBEW members in the utility branch are called on to quickly restore power to often desperate communities. That makes us a natural partner for the program, which is designed to answer the call during another emergency, the disappearance of a child.

"The IBEW is on the scene when disasters happen," Hansmire said. "Your emergency crews are always available." ■

## Tampa Wireman Takes Top Klein Tools Honor

Tampa, Fla., Local 915 member Fernando Guillen, a journeyman inside wireman who now teaches electricity full-time at nearby Plant City High School, was honored in November by Klein Tools as its 2019 Electrician of the Year.

"He's a pretty sharp individual," said Local 915 Business Manager Randall King. "Fernando was a good apprentice when he came through, and the work he's doing now is incredibly important, helping to recruit and train the next generation of electricians."

During a ceremony held in the wireman's classroom, Local 915 Training Director David McCraw, some of Guillen's students and several of the school's leaders were on hand as representatives of Klein Tools presented the wireman with a check for \$1,000, plus an additional \$1,000 to be used to buy Klein Tools products to help support the school's fast-growing electrical program.

"Guillen's commitment to his students really stood out in our minds as someone who is not only dedicated to his job, but who is an ambassador of the important work electricians do every day," said Greg Palese, Klein Tools' vice president of marketing. "By sharing his story, we hope to encourage the next generation of tradespeople to follow in his footsteps."

"I'm still completely in awe, amazed, surprised," said Guillen, who grew up in the Tampa area. Spanish-language television commercials touting teaching as a career option had inspired him to consider it at a young age. "As a Hispanic, I knew the struggle when teachers couldn't pronounce your name," he said.

A lot of people had encouraged him to go to college after high school, he said, but he worried about whether he could afford it. His parents, Margarita and Melchor, had supported Guillen and his two brothers by picking strawberries and other seasonal fruit.

"They told me, 'You need to better yourself,'" Guillen said. "If you're not going to go to college, you need to learn a trade."

He ended up taking electrical classes at Tampa's Erwin Technical College. When he graduated, one of his teachers sent a letter of recommendation on Guillen's behalf to Local 915, telling him, "They're gonna treat you well."

After joining the local and completing his apprenticeship in 2011, Guillen worked for several years on a variety of industrial and commercial jobsites.



Some of Fernando Guillen's students pose with the Tampa, Fla., Local 915 member (holding trophy), a journeyman inside wireman-turned-high school teacher who was recently honored as Klein Tools' 2019 Electrician of the Year.

Credit: Hillsborough County Schools.

Meanwhile, word about his teaching interest had reached Plant City High School administrators, and when Guillen received an offer to teach electricity at the school, "It was good timing," he said. "I was close to the end of a project and figured I was about to be laid off." He sailed through the application process and was hired in 2016 to teach one electrical class of 30 students and five other classes of carpentry.

It was rough going then. "For the first year, the only tools I had for class were the ones in my own toolbox," he said.

Now, he teaches electricity to nearly 100 students across six classes and has enough tools for students to work in pairs. "My local and [Tampa-based electrical utility] TECO Energy have helped out a lot," he said.

Guillen made it to Klein Tools' national finals after being selected by the company out of hundreds of nominees in his region, which includes Florida, 10 other states and the District of Columbia. At

the national level, he was up against winners from five other U.S. regions.

Public, web-based balloting was held, and Guillen encouraged people to vote for him at every opportunity — posting a solicitation for support on Local 915's Facebook page and getting his fellow teachers to let students spend class time casting ballots. "I work with an amazing group of people," he said.

Klein Tools considered the vote tally and other factors before declaring Guillen the grand prize winner based, it said, on his outstanding mastery of the craft, classroom experience and dedication to his local community.

"He's just a genuine good guy. When you think of a good person, you see his picture," said McCraw. "And being an IBEW member, he knows the value of our training."

In a Facebook post, Guillen expressed his sincere gratitude for the support he received on the way toward winning his award.

"I first have to thank God because without him none of this would have been possible," he wrote. He also thanked his wife, Diana, and their two children.

"Thank you to ... countless numbers of journeymen wiremen electricians, fellow classmates from IBEW Local 915, for helping mold me into the electrician I have become today," he wrote. "I am honored to be put in this position. This is something I will cherish for the rest of my life." ■



# 'LIGHT UP NAVAJO'

## Linemen Bring Electricity and Love to a Nation in Need

▶ Continued from page 1

Just driving between the secluded worksites could take two hours or more, sometimes to service a single home. Scirpoli's crew installed 26 poles and 18,000 feet of wire at one isolated property. His Local 486 brother Brian Foley, a journeyman lineman from Sterling, Mass., helped put up hundreds of poles along a 12-mile stretch to bring power to a cluster of 30 homes.

"We were running pole lines across the desert to serve just a few houses," Foley said. "The best day we had was 35 poles."

Some utilities sent workers to the region in company vehicles to supplement the NTUA crews' equipment. Still, there weren't enough bucket trucks to go around, and linemen found themselves scrambling up and down poles. It was more climbing than most of them had done in years, but it came with a fringe benefit.

"If you got up on a pole on a mesa, the views were amazing," said journeyman lineman Todd Johnson of Rockford, Ill., Local 196. "The landscape varies so much. There's a lot of openness, a lot of sand, a lot of rock mesa, also in areas it was a little bit mountainous."

Johnson and three of his IBEW brothers at Rochelle Municipal Utilities were on scene in March, two weeks earlier than other crews.

"We were kind of there to test things out," he said. "There were maybe a few minor bugs, but nothing that didn't get worked out in a hurry, like not always having enough material on site."

He and other volunteers had nothing but praise for the meticulous, highly skilled NTUA linemen they worked alongside. "They're very well trained," Johnson said. "They have a fantastic apprenticeship program. If someone can't make a class, they bring a tutor out to them because this place is so vast."

### A Different World

On their own, tribal crews hook up an average of 474 homes a year. "If NTUA stayed its course, 50 years from now we'd still be connecting people," NTUA General Manager Walter Haase said.

Haase's long career in energy management began as a summer helper with Chicago Local 134, where some of his

many family members in the building trades are members.

A past chair of the American Public Power Association, Haase has been speaking to utilities for years about the hurdles to fully powering the impoverished Navajo Nation, from exorbitant costs to years of red tape. Meanwhile, many Navajo families are enduring Third-World conditions.

"We all forget what it's like not to have electricity or running water," Haase said. "Navajo families use coal right out of the mine or wood from the forest to heat their homes and cook their food, and neither one is a very healthy environment. If you don't have electricity, you don't have refrigeration. You have no electricity to move water."

"They have 250-gallon plastic water tanks on a pickup or trailer and at least three times a week they drive an hour, hour and a half, to get water," he said. "The same time, they're going to the store. There are no Walmarts or Targets. In most cases they're going to a gas station with a convenience store. And they're going to have to buy ice, which only lasts for a short period of time."

As Haase made the rounds of APPA conferences, stunned utility leaders offered to help, planting the seeds for what's become Light Up Navajo.

"APPA has a mutual aid program that sends electric crews to areas hit by natural disasters like hurricanes and tornadoes," he said. "It was suggested that the same model could be used to deploy crews to the Navajo Nation."

Linemen who made the trip left Navajo families with more than electric power, Haase said.

"In my opinion, the more important thing than these people getting electricity, was that they got to see that other American people cared enough about them to stop what they were doing in their lives and come help them."

### 'It Really Humbles You'

IBEW volunteers witnessed the hardships Haase described and many more.

"It definitely opened my eyes," journeyman lineman Chris Worth said. "They're



Above: Kevin Cranford, left, and James Cotton, dig a hole for a new pole. The Vacaville, Calif., Local 1245 members were part of a five-member IBEW crew from the Sacramento Municipal Utility District who spent two weeks in the Navajo Nation in April and May 2019. Right: Their Local 1245 brother Corey Smith in a SMUD line truck.

telling stories of driving two hours a day to get ice or food, and you're thinking about the complaining we do about driving to Safeway in traffic. It really humbles you."

Worth was one of five members of Vacaville, Calif., Local 1245 who headed to Arizona in late April from the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, traveling in trucks SMUD lent to the cause.

The houses they serviced were pre-wired — some of them modular homes that came with wiring; others traditional Navajo hogans with thick earthen walls that had to be adapted. "Some of these houses, they'd had the wiring installed a long time ago," said journeyman Corey Smith of the Local 1245 crew. "One woman was in tears, telling us, 'We've been waiting for nine years.'"

Without minimizing the frustration their regular customers feel when the power goes out, IBEW linemen couldn't help but return home with a new perspective. Confronted by a man irate about a maintenance outage a few months later, Smith said, "I was thinking, 'Dude, you have no idea.'"

It was a lesson Worth repeated for days with his teenage daughter. "Probably a week's worth of lectures," he said with a laugh. "Here we have everything right at our fingertips. She doesn't understand how much harder life is for the Navajos, how nothing is really convenient."

Chris Cox was one of four Rockford, Ill., Local 196 members from Rochelle Municipal Utilities who headed to the Navajo Nation two weeks before other crews to help NTUA with a test run of the Light Up Navajo program.



### Huge Challenges

The stories of primitive conditions invariably lead to questions about why NTUA isn't doing more, and doing it more quickly, Haase said. Time and again, he explains the stark realities in a community with a per capita income of \$10,700 and a 46.5% unemployment rate.

He said the 40,000 Navajo households with electricity are billed an average of \$630 a year. That's after paying a share of the \$30,000 to \$40,000 it typically costs NTUA to extend power lines to a single home.

Hooking up the final 15,000 would tally about \$1 billion, including new infrastructure — underscoring just how valuable the donated labor is.

"Even if we borrowed the money at zero% interest, the average residential bill would go to over \$6,000 a year," Haase said. "That's the financial reality. We get criticized, 'Why don't you just pay to connect everybody?' but if I did that, I'd create a manmade disaster on the Navajo Nation."

Despite NTUA subsidies and other tribal assistance, many families can't afford

to get the process started. The paperwork for environmental impact studies and federal rights-of-way — the U.S. government holds title to all land on the reservation — runs thousands of dollars and can take two years or more. Meanwhile, families have to pay to have their homes wired. And even then there's a long waiting list.

IBEW volunteers were awed by the dignity and kindness of the Navajo people in the face of such adversity, and their generosity with what little they had.

"They'd give us big hugs, and all kinds of gifts — mugs and shirts and memorabilia — not that that's what we were out there for. They were just so excited," said Nolan Brimhall of Phoenix Local 387, who has long interacted with the tribal crews in his years at Arizona Public Service. "They'd get birthday cakes and invite us to dinner. They fed us like kings."

The cakes weren't for anyone's particular birthday, Brimhall said, but were what families could pick up on a grocery run that represented a celebration.

The love showered on Brimhall's crew came with an extra measure of trust that he



Credit: American Public Power Association via NTUA.

Credit: John Storey, courtesy of Local 1245.

Credit: John Storey, courtesy of Local 1245.



# LIGHTING THE NAVAJO NATION

Of the **50,000** homes in the Navajo Nation, about **15,000** do not have electricity.



That accounts for

**70%**

of all U.S. households without electricity.

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority connects an average of **487** homes a year.

In six weeks in April and May of 2019:

**120** volunteers, many of them IBEW members from across the United States

Worked	Installed	Powered
<b>10,000+</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>233</b>
hours	miles of lines	homes

More IBEW members will be on their way in spring 2020 for Light Up Navajo II.



Worcester, Mass., Local 486 member Brian Foley's view of some of the estimated 1,000 poles that visiting utility crews working with NTUA electricians erected over six weeks in April and May across 50 miles of Navajo Nation terrain.

See more photos from Light Up Navajo at [IBEW.org](http://IBEW.org)



Phoenix Local 266 members Jayme Baranek and Mario Lizarraga, foreground, prepare to install a pole. They were among 30 members of their local at the Salt River Project who took part in Light Up Navajo.

Credit: APPA via NTUA.



Members from Phoenix Local 387 at Arizona Public Service include journeyman Julian Todacheenie, third from left, who grew up in the Navajo Nation without power.

credits to his Local 387 brother at APS, Julian Todacheenie, who grew up with his grandparents on the reservation without electricity or running water.

"It was cool to have Julian out there with us," he said. "He was able to communicate in the native tongue, and I think we got to experience a little more — we got to go to some areas, including some deep and sacred canyons, that not everyone did."

Todacheenie graduated from the NTUA apprentice program and joined Local 387 about 20 years ago. He's watched his children grow up with modern conveniences and technology he couldn't have imagined, but said his own childhood was culturally rich, and he never felt like he was missing anything.

"Back then, very few families had utilities," he said. "It was no big deal. My grandparents had learned to manage workarounds and they taught us. Growing up off the grid was normal."

Even so, his late grandfather was thrilled a few years ago when he finally got power at his ranch house — at age 93.

"He was excited about having power to run the refrigerator, the television, all that good stuff we take for granted," Todacheenie said. "He enjoyed the luxury of electricity for about a year before he passed."

## 'A Dream Came True'

Every lineman went home with memories of palpable joy when families turned on lights and appliances in their homes for the first time.

Worth recalled a boy, perhaps 14, who, like thousands of children on the reservation, had been using candles and a miner's headlamp to study. The boy was thrilled when his home filled with light, but it didn't sink in immediately.

"He said, 'I'm going to do my homework' and without even thinking, he put his headlamp back on — even though he'd just flipped the switch," Worth said. His mom said, "Honey, you don't have to do that anymore."

Johnson, of Local 196, was touched by one child's special request when his family's refrigerator began humming with power. "The first thing the kid said was, 'We can have popsicles now!' And that was the first thing they went out and bought," he said.

The families they helped gathered for weekly appreciation dinners at community centers called chapter houses, standing to tell stories about their lives before electricity. Emotions sometimes got in the way of their words.

"A 90-year-old woman — she'd never had power in her life — tried to express her gratitude," Local 486's Foley said. "She couldn't really speak; she could only cry. Like a dream came true to her."

The visitors were bowled over by the sacrifices many Navajo families make to afford their share of the high costs involved in getting power.

"The family with the popsicles, the mother got up and talked about how she and her family had to move away to put up wind turbines so that they could save money," Johnson said. "They had to leave their children with their grandparents so that eventually they could get lights on in their house."

Moved by what he saw and heard, Johnson said he is donating \$5,000 toward the Light Up Navajo coffers and challenging utilities and fellow linemen to join him.

"It blows me away to think that all these people, in the United States in 2019, don't have electricity," he said.

Brimhall, of Local 387, said bringing light to the Navajo people "was somewhat of a spiritual experience."

"The way they approached you and talked to you, they were so grateful," he said. "Something we do on a normal day is something that's totally changed some of these people's lives." ■



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

## BC Women's Committee Collects Comfort Cases for Assault Survivors

The Kamloops, British Columbia, Local 993 women's committee has been hard at work collecting all kinds of items, from clothing to toothpaste to pillowcases, for "comfort cases" for sexual assault survivors.

"We think it's a great way to help," said Local 993 Assistant Business Manager Mollie Routledge, who serves on the women's committee. "It's been an awesome experience to see so many people pitching in."

In many instances of sexual assault, a person's clothes are badly torn or damaged or needed as evidence. Sometimes, the survivors simply don't want to put them back on. That's where the comfort cases come in.

"They're a small piece of consolation at an incredibly difficult time," Routledge said.

As Local 993 noted in its blog post about the cases, one side effect of large construction projects that require a lot of travelers is that spin-off jobs are created, which attract transient populations to surrounding communities. History shows that, with the influx of people, paychecks and those on the periphery seeking to profit from the boom, there is often an increase in the crime rate, including sexual assault.

British Columbia's skilled trades are fortunate to have three major projects running concurrently for the next few years: the Site C dam in the northeast, which is ongoing; the LNG project in Kitimat in the northwest; and a hospital project in the central interior area. The total number of electricians alone is expected to be in the thousands.

"Some folks talk about 'man camps,' like there's a horde of rapists or something, and that's not it. Most of the people are just construction workers trying to feed their families," said Local 993 Business Manager Glen Hilton. "But sometimes you do get an uptick in violence, but not necessarily from the camp workers. It is usually from transient populations following the camps seeking to profit from them, and these comfort cases are a good thing. I'm glad our women's committee is taking this on."

The cases are packed with items including clothes and toiletries and can be personalized for the individual in need. Committee is collecting apparel for men and women in sizes from small to XXL, as well as items like bras and feminine hygiene supplies.

"Anyone can be a victim," said committee member Angie Camille. "We're not pointing fingers. It could be drug-related, who knows. We just want to help and let people know that Local 993 is here for them."

The cases cost about \$100 each,

said Camille and Routledge. They have received donations from groups including signatory contractor Houle Electric, Vancouver Local 213, Victoria Local 230, the Western Joint Electrical Training Society, the British Columbia and Yukon Territory Building and Construction Trades Council, the British Columbia Federation of Labour, United Association Local 170 and Pile Drivers Local 2404.

Routledge and Camille say the women's committee, which is about five years old, is also working on other projects, including putting together an all-women crew to upgrade the electrical work at a local women's shelter. They also held a holiday party at the shelter in December with a "Mrs. Claus" in attendance. Previously they've participated in the Women's March Canada; the Cupcakes, Cocktails and Conversation event for women in the trades; and lobbying events.

On Dec. 7, the women's committee

were co-organizers for the Red Dress ceremony and a shoe memorial. The latter is to remember the women who have lost their lives to violence, for which the committee collected gently used shoes. The Red Dress ceremony, part of the Red Dress Project, is a national day of remembrance for Canada's missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Hilton says Local 993 has been increasing its efforts to recruit more women to the trade, hoping to eventually get to 20%. It's currently at about 8%, which is well above the national average of roughly 3%.

"It's an ambitious goal, but it's trending that way," Hilton said.

*For questions or to donate items for the comfort cases, contact Routledge at [mollie@ibew993.org](mailto:mollie@ibew993.org) or Camille at [angie@ibew993.org](mailto:angie@ibew993.org).*



*Signatory contractor Houle Electric donated \$1,200 and two gift cards to the Kamloops, British Columbia, Local 993 women's committee for their comfort cases.*

## Des troussees de confort pour les survivantes et les survivants d'agression sexuelle

Le comité destiné aux femmes du local 993 de Kamloops en Colombie-Britannique travaille fort pour collecter toutes sortes d'objets, allant de vêtements à la pâte dentifrice à des taies d'oreillers, pour préparer des «troussees de confort» aux survivantes et aux survivants d'agression sexuelle.

«Nous croyons que c'est une très bonne façon de venir en aide,» dit l'assistante gérant d'affaires Mollie Routledge, qui siège au comité destiné aux femmes. «Ce fut une expérience extraordinaire de voir autant de personnes y participer.»

Dans plusieurs cas d'agression sexuelle, les vêtements de la personne ont gravement été déchirés ou endommagés ou ils sont nécessaires comme éléments de preuve. Parfois, les victimes ne veulent tout simplement plus les porter; voilà la nécessité des troussees de confort.

«C'est des petits morceaux de réconfort dans un moment extrêmement difficile,» ajoute Routledge.

Comme mentionné dans un article publié sur le site web du local 993 au sujet des troussees, un des effets secondaires des projets de construction de grande envergure qui requiert beaucoup de voyageurs, est la création des retombées en matière d'emploi, ce qui attire des personnes de passage dans les communautés environnantes. L'histoire nous renseigne que l'afflux des personnes, les chèques de paye et ceux en périphérie qui cherchent à profiter de ce boom, augmentent souvent le taux de

criminalité, y compris l'agression sexuelle.

Les métiers spécialisés de la Colombie-Britannique peuvent heureusement compter sur trois projets en cours d'exécution simultanément pour les prochaines années, notamment : le barrage du Site C dans le nord-est actuellement en cours; le projet de l'installation de GNL Kitimat dans le nord-ouest; et le projet de construction d'un hôpital situé dans le centre de la Colombie-Britannique. On s'attend à ce que le nombre total d'électriciens à eux seuls soit dans les milliers.

«Certaines personnes parlent d'un "campement d'homme", comme s'il y a une horde de violeurs ou quelque chose de ce genre, et ce n'est pas tout. La plupart des personnes sont seulement des travailleurs de la construction qui essaient de nourrir leurs familles,» dit le gérant d'affaires Glen Hilton du local 993. «Mais parfois, il y a une petite hausse en matière de violence, mais pas nécessairement en provenance des campements de travailleurs. Cela provient normalement des personnes de passage qui suivent ces campements à la recherche d'en profiter, et ces troussees de confort sont une bonne chose. Je suis heureux que notre comité destiné aux femmes ait pris ce projet en charge.»

Ces troussees sont remplies d'objets qui incluent des vêtements et des articles de toilette, et peuvent être personnalisées pour une personne dans le besoin. Le comité a donc collecter des vêtements de taille allant de petit à très très grand

pour les hommes et les femmes, ainsi que des objets comme des soutiens-gorges et des produits d'hygiène féminine.

«N'importe qui peut être victime», dit Angie Camille, membre du comité. «Nous ne pointons pas du doigt. Cela peut être lié à la drogue, qui sait. Nous voulons juste venir en aide et de laisser les gens savoir que le local 993 est là pour eux.»

Le prix de ces troussees est environ 100 \$ chacune, mentionnent Camille et Routledge. Elles ont reçu des dons provenant de groupes y compris des entrepreneurs signataires comme Houle Electric, le local 213 de Vancouver, le local 230 de Victoria, le Western Joint Electrical Training Society, the British Columbia and Yukon Territory Building and Construction Trades Council (le conseil des métiers spécialisés et de la construction du Territoire du Yukon et de la Colombie-Britannique), the British Columbia Federation of Labour (la fédération des travailleurs de la Colombie-Britannique), le local 170 d'United Association et le local 2404 de Pile Drivers.

Routledge et Camille nous mentionnent que le comité destiné aux femmes, qui date d'il y a environ cinq ans, travaille également sur d'autres projets, y compris de mettre en place une équipe composée de femme uniquement pour mettre le système électrique du refuge de la région pour femmes au goût du jour. Elles ont également organisé un événement au refuge pour la période des fêtes en présence de «Mère Noël». Auparavant,

elles ont participé à la marche des femmes, à l'évènement destiné aux femmes dans les métiers intitulé the Cupcakes, Cocktails and Conversation et à des évènements de lobbying.

Le 7 décembre, le comité destiné aux femmes a été coorganisatrice à l'occasion de la cérémonie des robes rouges ainsi qu'une cérémonie commémorative destinée aux chaussures. Cette dernière a été mise en place pour se souvenir des femmes qui ont perdu la vie dans la violence, pour laquelle le comité a recueilli des chaussures légèrement usagées. La cérémonie des robes rouges fait partie du projet des robes rouges, c'est une fête nationale de commémoration pour les femmes autochtones portées disparues ou assassinées au Canada.

Hilton mentionne que le local 993 double ses efforts en vue de recruter plus de femmes dans les métiers, en espérant atteindre un pourcentage de 20%. En ce moment, le pourcentage se trouve à environ 8% qui est nettement plus élevé que la moyenne nationale qui se trouve à environ 3%.

«C'est un but ambitieux, mais on se rapproche de notre objectif,» ajoute Hilton.

*Pour des questions ou pour faire des dons d'objets pour les troussees de confort, veuillez contacter Routledge à l'adresse courriel suivante : [mollie@ibew993.org](mailto:mollie@ibew993.org) ou Camille à l'adresse courriel suivante : [angie@ibew993.org](mailto:angie@ibew993.org).*



# THE FRONT LINE: POLITICS & JOBS

## Southern Labor Allies Win Big

November's elections brought three important victories for allies of working families across the South — and with them a chance to create real change in a region traditionally hostile to the labor movement.

In Louisiana, Gov. John Bel Edwards beat back a challenge from nonunion contractor and former head of longtime IBEW-opponent Associated Builders and Contractors Eddie Rispone.

In Kentucky, Gov. Matt Bevin lost his reelection bid after launching three years of relentless attacks on unions and working families, including signing right-to-work into law.

And in Virginia, Democrats took over both state houses, putting labor allies in a position to do something that has never yet been done: repeal right-to-work.

In the three years since the 2016 election, pro-labor candidates have regularly won at the ballot in special and regular elections in every part of the country. November's elections were another show of strength.



Baton Rouge Local 995 Business Manager Jason Dedon, left, with re-elected Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards, one of the major victories for labor allies in the November elections.

"From Scott Walker to Matt Bevin, voters across the country have been sending an unmistakable message to their elected officials: fight for working families or find another job," said Political and Legislative Department Director Austin Keyser.

Edwards was the first Democrat to win statewide office in Louisiana in a decade after winning a run-off election against Sen. David Vitter four years ago. His 13-point win was large, but Vitter was a weak candidate and only one year later the state went for President Trump by 20%.

His opponent was a political newcomer, Eddie Rispone, but a familiar face to the IBEW. Rispone not only runs one of the nation's largest nonunion contractors, he is the former national chairman of Associated Builders and Contractors, an anti-union trade association.

"We felt we had enough support to get close. We might lose, but we would be close," said Baton Rouge Local 995 Busi-

ness Manager Jason Dedon. "Whether it was our positive message or negative undertones of our opponent, we saw a surge of new and returning voters. I talked with some people who voted for a Democrat for the first time in their life."

And for labor in Louisiana, it was personal with Rispone, Dedon said. Rispone had worked as a helper for Local 995 before quitting the IBEW and going on to run the largest nonunion electrical contractor in the state and the third largest in the country.

"Edwards told me, 'Labor has to get me a certain number of votes to get me to this win.' It was initially a shock number. It looked huge," Dedon said. "We doubled what he wanted."

It helped that Edwards' first chief of staff was former Bogalusa Local 1077 Business Manager Ben Nevers.

Edwards' victory was narrow: 51.3% to Rispone's 48.7% but in the Deep South that counts as a resounding victory, said Fifth District International Vice President Brian Thompson.

"We've been with Gov. Edwards since before he announced because he has always been with us," Thompson said.

"His re-election changes the conversation about unions in Louisiana and the South. We couldn't have done it without a tremendous effort from our locals, and especially the members who worked so hard for a good friend to working people."

In Kentucky, Bevin was elected to office four years ago. With his time in power he championed and adopted a right-to-work law, eliminated prevailing wage laws, gutted workers' compensation laws and tried to raid the state pension system. Bevin even issued an executive order doing away with the independent board that oversaw worker safety programs.

"It all just backfired on Bevin," said Kentucky political coordinator and Fourth District International Representative Frank Cloud. "The people he'd been [attacking] for three years just didn't vote."

State Attorney General Andy Beshear had been fighting some of Bevin's more legally questionable policies in court before deciding to challenge him at the ballot. Beshear, a labor ally in a Southern state with a strong history of unionism, rode his reputation for looking out for working families to a narrow 5,000-vote win Nov. 5.

Cloud said the exit polls told the story. There were 100,000 fewer voters for governor than other statewide offices. People may not have been able to pull the lever for a Democrat, but they didn't want four more years of Bevin. Nine counties that had been reliably red went blue for the governor's race.

Despite Bevin's attempt to make the election a referendum on the president,

Beshear kept the focus on working families in Kentucky.

"Keeping it local is why he won," Cloud said.

Virginia's governor, Democrat Ralph Northam, was not on the ballot in November, but every seat in the state House and Senate was.

Democrats nearly seized control of the lower House of Delegates in 2017, until a three-judge panel ruled that a single confusing ballot was meant for the Republican, not the Democrat, leaving the race a dead heat. The winner was chosen by picking a name out of a bowl.

There was no confusion this time. Pro-union candidates flipped two seats in the Senate to give Democrats a 21-19 majority and seven seats in the House of Delegates to take a commanding 55-45 majority.

With two years left in his term, Gov. Northam has the opportunity to pursue long delayed and ignored pro-worker legislation.

"We have a real chance to make some very important changes," Jeff Rowe, business manager of Newport News Local 1340, said leading up to the election. "Real progress on prevailing wage, on wage theft, on getting rid of the Comstock rule that prohibited project labor agreements on state-funded projects, a real chance to do something about the minimum wage and finally we have the opportunity to address right-to-work."

The new legislative majorities also likely spell the death of repeated attempts to devalue the title "journeyman" by weakening training and licensing standards and reducing the ratio of journeymen to apprentices on construction sites.

"It is unfortunate that so few members of the outgoing majorities listened to working-class Virginians. We spoke loud enough to be heard on Election Day though," said Fourth District International Vice President Brian Malloy.

Malloy lauded the IBEW members who showed up throughout the state on labor walks, phone banks and other grassroots organizing through the long campaign.

"They couldn't have won what they did without us," he said. "Now they have the power they asked for. Our message to the new majority is the same as the message to the old: We will work for you as long as you work for us." ■

## NLRB Workers Forced to Fight for Their Own Rights Against Union-Busting Bosses

The National Labor Relations Board's own workers rallied in November against management abuses affecting their union's ability to represent them, signaling new depths of the agency's union-busting agenda.

"This is an agency dedicated to promoting collective-bargaining and protecting workers' right to organize, so it is especially shameful to see our leadership engage in such blatant conduct," Karen Cook, president of the NLRB Professional Association said, in a statement.



U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro speaks in support of National Labor Relations Board employees who protested in November against management abuses against their own union, an extension of the agency's escalating hostility toward private sector workers and unions nationwide.

Protesting outside the NLRB's Washington headquarters, career staffers called out board Chairman John Ring and General Counsel Peter Robb for unprecedented attacks on two employee unions, Bloomberg Law reported.

The conduct is in line with escalating action by the board's GOP majority that is targeting private-sector workers nationwide. Decisions and new rules allow employers to eject union organizers from public spaces, more easily withdraw union recognition, discriminate against union members in the workplace, thwart protests and undermine the rights of employees at subcontractors and franchisees, among other rollbacks.

The latest challenge for workers inside the NLRB, at headquarters and in satellite offices nationwide, are two Trump administration executive orders designed to break federal unions and make it easier to fire employees.

Union leaders charge that management has exceeded the already-hostile scope of the orders, which, among other things, allow agencies to curtail the paid time and access to physical space at worksites that make effective representation possible.

"They're doing it because they think they can get away with it. There's no recourse," Michael Bilik, the legislative co-chair of the NLRB union, told Politico. "Going beyond the executive orders is an abuse of power that undermines the civil service."

NLRB staffers also take issue with the agency's failure to spend its full budget the past two fiscal years, suggesting it is another sign of animus toward both federal employees and aggrieved private sector workers who seek justice through the board.

Bloomberg reported on the budget surpluses earlier in November, writing that Ring and Robb "recently implemented a number of changes to the way that the agency investigates unfair labor practice cases and how the five-member board issues decisions in those cases. ... The Board has also offered staff buyouts and left certain open positions unfilled, citing anticipated budget cuts."

The leftover funds at the end of fiscal year 2019 on Sept. 30 amounted to \$5.7 million, out of the \$274 million that has been allocated to the agency each of the past six years. Federal law generally requires agencies to spend their allocated resources as directed by Congress.

Last year's surplus raised enough eyebrows that the Government Accountability Office investigated, but it closed the probe without issuing a public report of its findings.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, who joined the rally along with Rep. Jan Schakowsky of Illinois, told Bloomberg Law that Democrats plan to investigate further.

"It's a misuse of funds," said DeLauro, who serves on the House Committee on Appropriations and chairs its subcommittee on labor agencies. "We're taking a very hard look into all that."

NLRB workers have protested the cuts previously and don't buy claims that unspent funds are merely a matter of increased efficiency, the explanation a board spokesman gave Bloomberg in an Oct. 31 email.

The union responded: "For two years, the steady drumbeat from our leadership has been that employees need to make sacrifices to satisfy the president's looming austerity budgets, which, predictably, has greatly undermined employee morale. So when we learn that, for the second year in a row, the agency has failed to spend the money that it was appropriated by Congress, the vague explanations in the email do not soften the blow."

International President Lonnie R. Stephenson said it's all part of a disturbing pattern at the NLRB.

"There appears to be no end to the ways that the board majority and general counsel are pushing their anti-worker agenda and harming the rights and economic security of millions of working Americans and their families — now including their own staff," he said.

"The only way to change course is by changing the politicians who appoint and confirm NLRB members. It's more urgent than ever that we do that at the ballot box next November." ■



POLITICS & JOBS *continued***Finalized Overtime Rule Leaves Out Millions of Working People**

The Trump administration announced its final overtime rule on Sept. 24, ending a yearslong process that sought to undo the original, more generous, 2016 rule.

"This was an unnecessary exercise in watered-down rule-making," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "While a lot of families will benefit from this, many more will not, and for no good reason."

The finalized rule expands the threshold under which workers can be eligible for overtime pay from \$23,000 a year to \$35,568. This increase means that 1.3 million more working people can now earn 50% more when they work more than 40 hours a week. The change went into effect on Jan. 1.

It's far below the original rule though, which would have raised the threshold to \$47,476 and indexed it to inflation, allowing for increases as the cost of living goes up.

The original rule came out of the Obama administration in 2016, but business groups and 21 Republican-controlled states sued and a district court judge in Texas stopped it from going into effect.

As the Economic Policy Institute's Heidi Shierholz noted, the Trump administration didn't need to create a new rule. It could have defended the 2016 one, which was exhaustively researched. But it didn't.

"While the administration may be trumpeting this rule as a good thing for workers, that is a ruse," Shierholz wrote. "In reality, the rule leaves behind millions of workers who would have received overtime protections under the much stronger rule, published in 2016, that the Trump administration abandoned."

Shierholz estimates that roughly 8.2 million working people would have bene-

fited from the 2016 version but are now left out. EPI also noted that if the rule had simply been adjusted for inflation since 1975, the threshold would be about \$56,500. In 1975 more than 60% of full-time salaried workers qualified for overtime. By 2016, that number had plummeted to only 7%.

"President Trump reversed a good policy and took away money from 8.2 million middle-class workers today. That's cruel," said Rep. Donald Norcross of New Jersey. "Currently, Americans with modest salaries are working unlimited hours with limited salaries. While President Obama set out to raise the threshold, today, thanks to Trump, millions will remain uncompensated for their labor."

Norcross is a member of Folsom, N.J., Local 351.

The overtime rule is the latest in a series of Obama-era regulations that the Trump administration has rolled back. The Department of Labor has delayed the fiduciary rule, which required financial advisors to act in the best interest of their clients, and rescinded the persuader rule, which granted more transparency to union election campaigns. The National Labor Relations Board has been on a similar tear, throwing out pro-worker rulings left and right — including five in just one week.

"At every turn, it seems, this administration has sided with corporate interests at the expense of working families," Stephenson said. "Whether it's overtime pay, the right to organize your workplace or the right to get sound retirement advice, this administration is making it very clear where its interests lie, and it's not with average Americans."

The overtime rule came just days before Eugene Scalia was confirmed as the new Secretary of Labor. Scalia, the son of former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, has spent his career working to safeguard corporate interests, oftentimes in opposition to the rights of working people. ■

## TRANSITIONS

RETIRED

**William T. Bohné**

Railroad Department Director William T. Bohné, a 45-year member of the IBEW, retired in November.

Bohné grew up in

Springfield, Pa. After two years of active Navy service as an electronics technician, he joined the IBEW in 1974 as a member of Wilmington, Del., Local 2270.

"Penn Central — what eventually became Amtrak — was hiring electricians," he explained, "and it seemed like a good fit for me with my naval experience."

Bohné continued serving as a Navy reservist for a few more years while becoming active within his local, working on organizing and performing shop steward duties before joining the grievance committee in 1976.

In 1980, he began a 13-year run as Local 2270's local chairman and president. At the same time, he also served on Railroad System Council 7's executive board. He became the council's assistant general chairman and legislative representative in 1993; six years later, he was its vice general chairman.

An original member of Amtrak's Labor-Management Joint Medical Administrative Committee, Bohné served as a labor officer and fiduciary from the committee's 1996 inception until he retired. He also served on other committees, including Amtrak's Joint Labor-Management Productivity Council, the FRA's Railroad Safety Advisory Committee, and the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department Executive Committee.

In 2002, then-International President Edwin Hill appointed Bohné a Railroad Department international representative. "I loved coming into the office and working with IBEW office employees and

members," Bohné said.

Two years later, Hill promoted Bohné to direct the IBEW's Personnel Department, a role he filled until 2006, when he was named by Hill as the Railroad Department's director.

"Bill truly enjoyed the camaraderie at the International Office," said Al Russo, an international representative in the department. "But he was always up for a good fight."

One fight was wrangling to get the U.S. National Freight Agreement ratified in 2018, Bohné said. The agreement initially was rejected with only about 35% of railroad members voting, prompting Bohné and the negotiating committee to visit railroad locals around the country and explain why the IBEW recommended accepting it.

**"Bill has more energy than anybody I know. He never stopped."**

— International Representative Jim Meyer

"I enjoyed negotiating, but even more I enjoyed visiting members at their locals and mixing it up with them, explaining why we thought a 'yes' vote was in their best interests," he said. "I took a lot of crap, but that comes with the territory." The contract was ratified on the second vote, and Bohné was pleased to see almost 60% voter participation.

"Bill has more energy than anybody I know," said Railroad Department International Representative Jim Meyer. For example, Bohné could be counted on to respond to email messages at all hours. "He never stopped."

Bohné also is an expert task juggler, Russo said. "He kept all these balls in the air," he said. "He has the craftsmanship to handle any problem at any given moment."

"He was kind of a crisis manager, and very good at it," Meyer agreed.

Bohné touted modernizing the Railroad Department and establishing better relationships with locals and railroads as high among his accomplishments. "We brought the department into the 21st century," he said, introducing electronic record-keeping and using the department's web page to update members.

He also sent regular issue-update emails. "Connecting with the members, keeping them in the loop," he said. "That was important to me."

"And our department conferences — bringing them from the Dark Ages to educational experiences that were informative and entertaining," Bohné added.

He also is proud of having helped establish the Federal Employers' Liability Act Designated Legal Counsel program to help ensure members' access to lawyers experienced in handling railroad workers' injury claims. More recently, the department helped establish a disability and life insurance policy for members.

Bohné holds an associate degree in liberal arts from Delaware County Community College and a bachelor's degree in labor

studies from the National Labor College.

Throughout his tenure at the International Office, Bohné remained active with St. Mark Lutheran Church in Clifton Heights, Pa., where he has served as chairman of the Mutual Ministry and Christian School committees. He also sings in the church's choir.

Bohné also has volunteered with the Springfield Athletic Association coaching baseball and football, and with the Springfield Youth Aid Panel, where, as chairman, he helped adjudicate criminal cases.

"He also has a wicked sense of humor," Russo said. Shortly after Russo was hired to work in the International Office, "Bill told me we had a 9:30 meeting with President Hill, but that I had to be in the office by 9. I got here at 8:45, and Bill met me in the lobby and said, 'Your first day here and you're already late! President Hill has left for the day.'" The mortified Russo silently rode the elevator to the Railroad Department office with Bohné, who kept a straight face all the way before finally telling Russo he was kidding.

Bohné thanked the IBEW brothers and sisters he worked with throughout his career — the local union members and officers, the system council officers and everyone at the International Office. "If it wasn't for them and their support, we couldn't have done what we did," he said.

In retirement, Bohné plans to stay active traveling, playing golf and biking, as well as spending more time with his wife, Cathy, his two children and five grandchildren, his brother, and his 95-year-old father. "I'll also get more involved in politics and railroad arbitration," he said.

Please join us in thanking Brother Bohné for his service to the IBEW and in wishing him a long and happy retirement. ■

DECEASED

**Gary A. Heald**

The officers regret to report the death of retired Special Projects Department Director Gary A. Heald on Nov. 17. He was 81.

A native of Iowa, Brother Heald was initiated into the IBEW in 1959 as a member of Cedar Rapids Local 1362 when he started work at the Collins Radio, now Rockwell Collins, plant. He served the local as business manager from 1971 to 1981 and was an executive board member from 1970-71. He also served as chief steward and on the Local 1362 negotiating, strike, COPE, grievance and activities committees.

A committed trade unionist throughout his career, Heald's labor-related activities included service as secretary-treasurer of the Iowa IBEW State Conference and as a University of Iowa Labor Advisory Board member. He also served on American Red Cross disaster projects and on various political committees in Iowa.

In 1981 Brother Heald was appoint-

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**Mouse Pad \$2.00**

Blue mouse pad with white IBEW logo, measures 10" x 9".

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100% polyester fleece with full zip front and 2 pockets. Black with pink trim and features embroidered pink IBEW initials on front left chest.

**Logo Cloth Patch \$9.50**

7 3/4" Embroidered IBEW cloth patch. 100% nylon twill - red, blue, white and gold logo.

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





ed an international representative and assigned to the Manufacturing Department, where he served for 10 years.

He loved sports, especially baseball, and worked as an umpire for the Cedar Rapids Reds. He even had a chance to become a Major League umpire, but it didn't quite pan out.

## “What made him a good umpire made him a good negotiator.”

—Retired International Representative  
Pete Potenza

“What made him a good umpire made him a good negotiator. He had confidence in his own judgment and didn't take any guff from managers,” said retired International Representative Pete Potenza, who worked with Heald in the Manufacturing Department in the late '80s.

Heald and Potenza worked in manufacturing while the entire industry was moving south or overseas and negotiating those contracts became much harder. They often had to find creative ways to keep jobs going, even if it was only for a few more years.

“Our members gave a little to keep their jobs, but Gary wasn't just looking for any deal,” Potenza said. “He knew contracts would be voted on and he always had in mind that vote.”

In 1991, he was appointed by former International President J.J. Barry to take charge of professional and industrial organizing as the director of the Special Projects Department. He held that position until his retirement — after 40 years in the Brotherhood — in 2002. Special Projects was folded into the newly created Membership Development Department after the 2006 International Convention in Cleveland.

Brother Heald spent his final years playing with his 11 grandchildren, two great grandchildren and his dog, Bailey, before succumbing to a long illness in November.

The officers offer their deepest condolences to his wife, former International Office staff-member Ellen; his children, Shawn, Scott, Dana, Jennifer, and Kellie; and the rest of the Heald family. ■

### RETIRED Luc Couture



First District International Representative Luc Couture, a leader in Canada's railroad industry who also represented federal employees across the country and members at Quebec's construction locals, will retire effective Feb. 1.

“It's difficult to find a brother or sis-

ter who's had an impact on more branches of the IBEW in Canada than Luc,” First District Vice President Thomas Reid said. “He served so well traveling across Canada and protecting the rights of our railroad members that my predecessors gave him even more responsibility. Not surprisingly, he handled that responsibility very well.

“He will be missed, but this is certainly a well-earned retirement.”

Brother Couture was born in Montreal and raised in its South Shore suburbs on the banks of the St. Lawrence River just across from the Island of Montreal. He was attending college when he applied for a summer job as a restaurant server aboard trains for Canadian National, which was still offering passenger service at the time.

Couture didn't get that job, but his application wasn't in vain. He learned about another opening at Canadian National and was hired as a signal and communication maintainer in 1976.

He was 18, working outside and had found a career.

“Back then, I really enjoyed the exercise part,” he said. “It was physical and it was a different kind of work — even when you're a grunt and you're always digging. Compared to what I was doing before, which was studying business administration, it was a little more exciting and the money was better.”

## “It's difficult to find a brother or sister who's had an impact on more branches of the IBEW in Canada than Luc.”

—First District IVP Thomas Reid.

Couture became a member of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen and later the Canadian Signal and Communication Union until its merger with the IBEW in 1990, when he joined Montreal Local 2003.

He served as local chairman until 1998, when he was elected senior general chairman of System Council 11, which includes all IBEW railroad unions in Canada. About 1,500 Canadian members are covered by contracts with seven different rail companies.

“When you're a steward, you're doing stuff for others,” he said. “When there's a grievance, you meet with the company and exchange information, and that was the stuff I liked. As chairman of the system council, I was doing that for more people. I learned from volunteering in my kids' sports leagues, it's better to be on the inside than complaining from the outside.”

In 2004, Couture was named an international representative, where he also serviced local unions representing federal employees and construction workers in Quebec.

One of the reasons Couture was recommended by then-First District Vice President Phil Flemming for the job: he's bilingual. He grew up in a French-Canadian home, but many families in his neighborhood spoke English, so he learned to speak both.

“The federal government uses both languages, and if you're fluent in both you gain a lot of credibility at the bargaining table,” said Reid, who served as an international representative alongside Couture for several years in the district office. “Being able to speak French is an absolute must in the Quebec construction industry, which is unlike anything else in North America.”

By provincial law, all commercial construction work in Quebec is done with union labor. But instead of unions relying on members' dues, as in most areas, the provincial government collects fees from both employers and workers and distributes them to skilled trades unions throughout the province.

“If you can't speak French in Quebec,” Couture said, “you can't even go to a meeting.”

Couture estimated he's been part of more than 50 contract negotiations, proudest among them establishing a four-day work week for Canadian National maintenance and establishing a very successful LTD plan managed by the system council for members employed by Canadian Pacific and Toronto Terminal. But he stressed he couldn't have done it alone, thanking the bargaining teams and members for their support and that of his wife, Susan, who did much of the hard work of raising their five children while he traveled across Canada.

The couple also has five grandchildren and plans to keep their home in Hawkesbury, Ontario, along the Ottawa River while also spending time visiting family in Florida. Couture and Susan served as foster parents before his IBEW responsibilities deepened and he now plans to volunteer for more activities in his community.

The IBEW officers and staff thank Brother Couture and his family for his service and wish him a long and happy retirement. ■

### RETIRED Jim Springfield



Capping a career of nearly 40 years with the IBEW, Tenth District International Representative James “Jim” Springfield retired on Jan. 1.

“Jim's worked a long time to get to his retirement,” said Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hall. “He's left a pretty big void that needs to be filled.”

Brother Springfield was initiated into Chattanooga, Tenn., Local 721 in 1981. A nuclear reactor operator with the Tennessee Valley Authority, he was elected president and business manager in 1989, positions he filled until 1995 when

he was appointed an international representative. He also served in the U.S. Navy from 1974 to 1976 as an aviation electronics technician and in the Navy Reserve.

The California native started out as a district organizing coordinator and served on IBEW's negotiation team with TVA from 1987 to 1995. After that he transitioned to the Tenth District office. Springfield also taught business manager and organizing trainings before the creation of the Education Department.

“I had a great time,” Springfield said. “I've worked for three different vice presidents and they were all different. It's been a good experience.”

## “Jim's worked a long time to get to his retirement. He's left a pretty big void that needs to be filled.”

—Tenth District IVP Brent Hall

Springfield says his career highlights include organizing 100 senior reactor operators at TVA's three nuclear plants as well as workers at the V.C. Summer Nuclear Station in South Carolina.

“He was instrumental in that organizing,” Hall said of the TVA win. “He's knows the TVA like the back of his hand.”

Hall also praised Springfield for his near-encyclopedic knowledge of TVA and his incredible attention to detail.

“I could pick up the phone and give him a subject from the [former IBEW International President] J.J. Barry days and within 30 minutes he'd be emailing me a copy,” Hall said.

A graduate of Chattanooga State and Covenant College, Springfield served as vice president on the executive board of the state AFL-CIO, maintenance vice president on the Tennessee State Electrical Association and as president of the TVA's wage data committee.

“Jim's really been a blessing,” Hall said. “He's thoughtful, he's organized. And he'll tell me the truth whether I like it or not.”

Springfield says he's seen the IBEW grow in a positive direction over the years and that's something he'll take with him into his retirement — also, the friendships.

“I will miss the day-to-day job of helping people,” Springfield said. “Not just members, but those who want to better their lives and the lives of their families.”

A boating enthusiast, Springfield says he plans to enjoy some time on the Tennessee River and outdoors in east Tennessee, as well as spending time with his children and grandchildren.

“I'm going to enjoy the life that I have waited all these years to do, that my wife and kids lived while I worked to make theirs possible,” Springfield said. “I'm working on getting that nailed down.”

The IBEW's members, officers and staff wish Brother Springfield all the best in his retirement. ■

## 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

International President Lonnie R. Stephenson needs you to contact your senators and urge them to oppose a dangerous plan that could destroy multiemployer pensions. See his message at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker).

### Vimeo

IBEW members who serve on planning and zoning commissions ensure more work for their union sisters and brothers. Find out how at [Vimeo.com/IBEW](https://www.vimeo.com/IBEW).



### HourPower

Salt Lake City Local 354 apprentice Skyler Prochnow tells how the IBEW changed his life and made it easier to serve in the Idaho National Guard. It's the fourth episode of Band of Brotherhood at [IBEWHourPower.com](http://IBEWHourPower.com).



### ElectricTV

Hundreds of apprentices networked with industry leaders at the National Electrical Contractors Association's Convention & Trade Show in Las Vegas. Check it out at [ElectricTV.net](http://ElectricTV.net).





## CIRCUITS

### Seattle Women Raise \$30,000 for Burn Center

For the second year in a row, Seattle Local 77's women's committee has put its fanciest foot forward with a gala to support one of the nation's top burn centers.

Led by President Sara Langus, the local's women's committee hosted a gala event on Nov. 9 in Snohomish, Wash., that raised over \$30,000 for the Harborview Medical Center, the Pacific Northwest's only Level 1 trauma facility. Simply put, it's the place IBEW members go to when things go very, very wrong on the job — including members from as far away as Alaska.

"The women's committee did a great job on the gala," said Business Manager Rex Habner. "It's a wonderful way to give back and it has a really good message, that we'll take care of you too."

More than 200 guests attended the event, which had dancing, speakers and more. Some of those in attendance included nurses and others from Harborview, and officials from three different utilities. Some even made donations.

A number of IBEW locals from the Ninth District also pitched in, including: Seattle Local 46; Diamond Bar, Calif., Local 47; Portland, Ore., Locals 48 and 125; Salem, Ore., Local 280; Boise, Idaho, Local 291; Las Vegas Local 357; Tacoma, Wash., Local 483; Port Angeles, Wash., Local 997; and Honolulu Local 1186.

"We're all very fortunate to have Harborview," Langus said. "Their focus is on getting you healthy and getting you back to work."

Local 77 represents 8,700 members from tree trimmers to linemen to customer service representatives across Washington, Idaho and Montana. In addition to supporting such a vital medical center, Langus says she also wanted to create an opportunity to bring everyone together.

"There's a whole mountain range between us," said Langus, who is a customer service representative for the Snohomish County PUD, the largest public utility in Washington. "So I thought, 'What brings us together? Crisis!' Of course, that's not to take anything lightly, but this time we got to say thank you, give back and take a rare moment to get dressed up and enjoy ourselves."

The committee held a raffle at the gala and solicited donations and prizes. They sold individual and group tickets, and tables for \$1,500. In total, they gave away about \$25,000 in prizes and cash, including wine baskets, a Nintendo Switch, an engraved Hydro Flask and a grand-prize trip to Arizona. Langus said almost all of the items were donated by other locals or Local 77 members.

The women's committee includes Langus, Senior Assistant Business Manager Nichole Reedy, Jen Watson, Terri Kannor and Helen Berglund. In addition to their efforts, Langus said about 35 Local 77 members helped with the event.

"It was truly a group effort," Langus said. "Without them we couldn't have done this."

At last year's event, which raised



Seattle Local 77's women's committee held a gala fundraiser for Harborview Medical Center, the Pacific Northwest region's burn center, raising more than \$30,000. Pictured: Jen Watson (left), Teri Kannor, Helen Berglund, Nichole Reedy and Sara Langus.

about \$15,000, Local 77 member Robert Houser spoke about his time being treated at Harborview. In 2010, he was electrocuted with 800 amps — more than enough to kill a person — while on the job. After about seven surgeries, a medically induced coma and a lot of what Houser called "out of the box" thinking by the staff, he stood before the crowd to praise the staff who quite literally gave him his life back.

"If it wasn't for their responsiveness, for everything they did, I wouldn't be here," Houser said. "The next person they save could be you. These people are worth doing everything we can to support them."

This year, attendees heard from speaker Gary Norland, an electrician who survived being electrocuted with 12,500 volts while working, resulting in burns on 37% of his body. He was treated at Harborview and now speaks on the importance of safety on the job.

Langus, who also serves on Local 77's executive committee, is relatively new to the IBEW. She joined about four years ago and says she was encouraged early on by Reedy to get involved with the women's committee.

"I kind of just jumped in, guns blazing," Langus said.

The committee has its IBEW charter and is currently working on getting 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, Langus said.

"I'm really proud of Sara and our women's committee. They show how diversity is a strength," Habner said. "I've got two daughters. I'd love for them to get into the trade."

In keeping with the union theme of family and solidarity, Langus' father pitched in to purchase and cook prime rib for the event, and Local 77 committee members Becky Wright and Katy Holte made desserts and sides.

"I can't say enough good things about it," Habner said. "Everyone who attended is planning on coming back next year."

Langus says they're already working on the 2020 event, which will have a "Great Gatsby" theme. If anyone is interested in donating, they can reach out to Local 77 at 206-323-4505 or email her at [saralangus@ibew77.com](mailto:saralangus@ibew77.com). ■

### The Numbers Are In: Union Construction Jobs Are Safer Than Nonunion

It may not be news to those in the business, but new numbers back up what IBEW and other union construction members already know: there's safety in a union.

New York's Building Trades Employers Association, which represents more than 1,300 contractors in New York City, recently released new statistics using data from the Occupational Safety and Health

Administration. It found that union construction workers in the Big Apple are five times less likely to suffer a fatal accident compared to their nonunion counterparts.

"IBEW members and employers have safety baked into every aspect of the job; it's par for the course for us," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "It's always great to see our experiences backed up with solid data."

"[This study] shows that year in and year out, union construction firms are the safest in New York City. That's because when you have a skilled and experienced union workforce, the quality of work is better and safety is not just prioritized — it's part of the culture. These statistics make that clear," said BTEA CEO Lou Coletti.

According to the data, there were 18 fatalities in 2018, with only four on BTEA sites. The union contractors also received

33% fewer violations per project than their nonunion counterparts, and 25% fewer stop work orders.

"The results of this study aren't surprising at all," Local 3 journeyman Robert Holst told [silive.com](http://silive.com). "While every construction job has inherent dangers, it is the training that union building trades members receive during their apprenticeship that makes the difference in regards to a safe job. ... There is no substitute for a union apprenticeship program."

The findings echo others.

A January 2019 report by the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health found that "workers die as a result of employer's disregard for workers' health and safety and [the report] notes the difference between construction fatality numbers on union versus nonunion job sites, proving that unionized construction jobs keep New York's workers safer."

The report, titled "Deadly Skyline," also stated that while industry deaths decreased in New York City, they increased in the state as a whole. This was despite a construction boom in the five boroughs.

Dominique Bravo, director of Pathways 2 Apprenticeship, stated in a New York Times op-ed that nonunion contractors make up 90% of the construction companies listed in OSHA's "Severe Violator Enforcement Program" for New York.

"Union workers are safer because they are better trained and know they will be protected if they refuse to work under dangerous conditions," Bravo wrote.

Similar studies show the rise of right-to-work laws linked to an increase in worker deaths and that construction firms that employ union workers are more likely to engage in safety best practices and training.

"These studies prove what we already know," Stephenson said, "but it's on each of us to make sure we do our part to keep our workplaces the safest in the industry." ■



Data released by New York's Building Trades Employers Association show that the Big Apple's union construction workers are safer on the job than their nonunion counterparts. That's welcomed news to members like New York Local 3's Chris Bugeanu, pictured working atop Manhattan World One Trade Center.



# ORGANIZING WIRE

## Organizing Wins Pile Up for IBEW at New Jersey, Long Island Altice Locations

Years of legwork — along with the sale of a telecommunications giant — has led to hundreds of new members for the IBEW and its local unions on Long Island and in New Jersey.

Technicians and Construction Department employees working at Altice USA locations in Bethpage and Freeport, N.Y., voted for representation by Long Island, N.Y., Local 1049 mid-2019. Technicians at the same company's facility in Morris, N.J., voted to join East Windsor, N.J., Local 827 in late 2018. The two Long Island facilities have ratified a first contract, adding 126 new members. Contract negotiations are ongoing at the New Jersey location.

"Our new members know the company could just change the rules on them without a contract," said Local 1049 organizer William O'Leary, who led the campaigns on Long Island. "That's what it had been doing. Now they have a collective bargaining agreement, something which had never happened before. This will enable them to have a voice in the workplace. They can't take away the benefits they've had all these years just because management wants to save a little money."

In 2018, Local 827 successfully organized technicians at Altice USA facilities in the New Jersey cities of Newark, Lodi and Oakland and negotiated first contracts at all three places.

The effort came after Netherlands-based Altice purchased Cablevision for \$17.7 billion in 2016, making its subsidiary Altice USA the fourth-largest cable television company in the United States. The IBEW tried for years to organize the notoriously anti-union Cablevision in New Jersey and on Long Island, but the work wasn't in vain, said Joe Mastrogiovanni, Third District lead telecommunications organizer.

Employees at facilities throughout those areas remembered the time and effort the local unions had put in, he said. So, when Altice came in and started doing things like cutting out promised bonuses, reducing vacation time and sending more work to independent contractors, the IBEW had the upper hand when those workers started seeking out representation, he said.

"It was just a different mentality when Altice came in," Local 827 business agent and organizing committee head Joe Lambert said. "They started cutting and slashing and taking things away from the workers. They just had enough and wanted to put an end to it. They realized the only way to do that was with a collective bargaining unit."

Woodley Bien-Aime has worked for Cablevision and Altice USA for a total of 13 years, now serving as a service technician out of the Bethpage facility. An immigrant from Haiti, Bien-Aime said he always voted for union representation during past organizing drives but never took an active role in them.

That changed after Altice took over. Bien-Aime saw the changes and became a member of the volunteer organizing committee. He later served on the contract negotiation committee and is now a steward.

"This time, I felt like I had to be part of leadership," he said. "It was getting crazy. I felt like if I was not part of it, it was not going to work."

Bien-Aime said many of his colleagues who expressed reservation about union representation ended up voting for it. That was due in part to Altice's tactics, which included captive meetings with management to hear about the perceived problems with union membership.

But it also had to do with the work of organizer O'Leary, Business Manager Ronald Bauer and others at Local 1049, which separated the IBEW from other unions that might have showed interest in organizing them.

"They might come around and give us some [request-for-a-vote cards] but they never got involved like 1049 did," Bien-Aime said. "They tried really hard for us. It's a really good union."



International Representative Craig Duffy and Long Island, N.Y., organizer William O'Leary, left, pose with stewards Anthony Caporale, Michael DeTiberus and Woody Bien-Aime from a newly organized Altice unit. International Representative Frank Muia is at far right.

Mastrogiovanni said organizing work also was aided by Altice workers at unorganized facilities hearing how well the IBEW was representing them at the newly organized garages.

The newly ratified contracts have improved wages and safety conditions and allow Altice to hire outside contractors to perform work only when it does not lead to job losses for the contract-covered employees. IBEW research revealed Altice made hiring outside contractors a priority even at its European locations, he said.

"Once one garage organized, the world didn't blow up like Altice said it would," said Mastrogiovanni, adding that Third District International Representative Brian Brennan also played a major role in the organizing campaigns.

"They got a contract. The locals did a great job in negotiating the subcontractor language. We told [the Altice employees] from the beginning that once we won the election, we would be ready to negotiate a contract immediately, no matter what the company said."

Organizing in telecommunications has been more difficult in recent years due to consolidation in the industry and improved to technology leading to a loss of traditional jobs. Mastrogiovanni, for one, thinks the IBEW's work at Altice will help change that.

"I think it's going to show the telecommunications industry as a whole that these companies are obliged to negotiate in good faith," he said. "When we move forward in organizing now, these new members are going to talk to their colleagues and say nothing but good things about the IBEW. We put our money where our mouth is."

Both Lambert and O'Leary each said their business managers — Bob Speer at Local 827 and Bauer at Local 1049 — were extremely supportive of the organizing work.

"Our message to the workers was that we've been doing this for a long time and we're not going anywhere," O'Leary said. "We want to make things better for you. They were all very receptive." ■

## SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

### Locals' OSHA Partnerships Help Keep Workers Safe

Across the U.S., an ongoing shortage of inspectors at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is putting workers' lives at risk. But IBEW locals are stepping in to help fill the gaps.

Locals across multiple states are working with OSHA's Strategic Partnership Program, helping inspectors gain a more complete understanding of workplace safety.

"Our participation in the SPP won't totally solve OSHA's staffing and training problems," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "But it makes perfect sense for us to leverage our training and collective know-how to help make sure the OSHA inspectors who are still on the payroll know how to identify and fix safety hazards."

There are fewer than 900 OSHA inspectors available to check up on nearly 9 million workplaces in the U.S., according to data compiled by the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health. Research by the National Employment Law Project found that inspector vacancies are rising as hiring of replacements is slowing, which corresponds with a nearly 10% rise in the number of workplace fatalities and injuries between 2017 and 2018.

Administered through OSHA's 10 regional offices, the voluntary SPP is designed to promote a better understanding about the on-the-job hazards that workers in the construction trades face, giving unions, contractors and regulators the means to jointly conduct regular hands-on training, jobsite walk-throughs and spot checks.

"Electrical workers have a real stake in relationships like this," said the IBEW's Director of Safety Dave Mullen. "If inspectors aren't properly trained, unscrupulous contractors could be tempted to try and get away with safety violations, and that could put our members — and all workers — in serious danger."

Des Moines, Iowa, Local 55's connection with the SPP goes back a few years, said Business Manager Mike Sawyer. "It's helped a lot, especially on accident prevention," he said.

Sawyer said the program is beneficial. "Lots of doors to more work open up because of it," he said. And because job safety and training benefit contractors, too, the local — which just signed another multi-year agreement with the agency — continues to work on getting more of them to join the effort.

OSHA recently sent some of its inspectors in Iowa through training to get a more complete picture of the type of education electrical workers receive, Sawyer said. This "rubber glove" approach typically covers a thorough range of safety regulations and applicable industry standards and regulations.

The SPP also has shown benefits for members of Eau Claire, Wisc., Local 14, who over the summer finished construction of a new University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire student residence hall plus top-to-bottom renovations of a pair of 1960s-era dormitory towers.

"Once a month, we'd go through the sites — every floor, every room — and identify and address hazards," said Local 14 Business Manager Mark Lauer. No detail was too small as the team looked at everything from power tools and scaffolding to environmen-



Newark, Ohio, Local 1105 member Dave Sprankle's hardhat prominently displays a sticker signifying his local's strategic partnerships with OSHA.

tal controls and mobile equipment.

The Eau Claire team included representatives from Local 14 and other construction trades unions, contractors, OSHA, and the state safety and health agency known as WisCon.

After the jobsite walk-throughs, "we would sit down and review the hazards that we had personally identified," Lauer said. "We would go around the room, one by one, until everyone had been heard. Meetings could be five hours long sometimes."

"It was clear throughout this process that the building trades led the discussion," he said. "Our safety training is by far the best in the industry."

In Ohio, at least two local unions — Columbus Local 683 and Newark Local 1105 — are participating in the SPP. Mike Bednarczuk, Local 1105's training director, said that his local, its contractors and OSHA enjoy a positive collective relationship as a result of the program.

"We get a regular rundown from OSHA on current hot topics, and that gives us some insight into issues that they feel they need inspectors to focus on," he said.

Recently, the Newark team discussed changes in the American National Standards Institute's criteria concerning "Mobile Elevating Work Platforms," also known as lifts.

"It gives us a heads up and lets us know that we're going to need to adjust our training," Bednarczuk said. "It puts us right on the leading edge. We have a rapport with them that feels truly unique."

The training director believes that such partnerships with OSHA can be great marketing tools for everyone involved. "Put this out there where people can see it, so everybody knows about it," he said.

Above all, partnerships like SPP have the potential to help make our workplaces safer and keep workers safe, Mullen said. "Saving workers' lives is reason enough for us to take an active role in educating OSHA's inspectors about what to look for on job sites," he said. "Electrical workers certainly have ample know-how to get it done, and our training is second to none."

Visit [osha.gov/dcsp/partnerships](https://www.osha.gov/dcsp/partnerships) to learn more. ■



# LOCAL LINES

## Helping Those in Need

L.U. 1 (as,c,ees,ej,em,es,et,fm,i,mt,rts,s,se,spa,st&ws), ST. LOUIS, MO — Forest Park was the setting on a cold, rainy Saturday, Oct. 26, for Team IBEW's third annual participation in the American Cancer Society's Making Strides-St. Louis 5K/1 mile Fun Walk. The team included eight members from the UAW, 11 from IBEW Local 1, four from IBEW Local 1439 and 20 from Minnie's Minions. Team IBEW raised \$1,665. Special thanks to Local 1 journeyman wireman and volunteer Stacey Bonuso for working tirelessly for Team IBEW.

Local 1's "Be A Superhero of Health" health fair was Saturday, Oct. 12, at the union hall. It was available to all active members, retirees, covered spouses and adult dependents. The event provided wellness screenings, flu vaccines and hearing screenings, said Stephanie A. LaBanow, Health & Welfare director, IBEW-NECA Service Center Inc. Lunch was catered by The Picnic People.

The Fifth Annual Greg Booth Ride for Relief Poker Run was Saturday, Oct. 5. Nearly 100 Local 1 members, families and friends attended and raised \$4,600. The event is held in memory of former Local 1 business manager Greg Booth, who passed away in 2012. Funds raised for the Greg Booth Ride for Relief Committee provide aid to Local 1 union members in need.

We mourn the passing of the following members: Bernhard Ver Hey, Fredrick Schaber, Glennon Sprehe, Ian Rasic, Frank Wright, Ralph Cordray, Clarence Riley Sr., Charles Heidmann II, Thomas Henson, Ronald Taylor, David Edwards, Craig Pelham, John Brzozowski, Clarence Farmer and James Barry.

Jan Bresnan, P.S.



Team IBEW's fight cancer banner.

## Contracts Ratified; 2019 A Year of Success

L.U. 9 (catv,govt,lctt,o&u), CHICAGO, IL — 2019 was a busy, excellent year for Local 9. We settled a five-year contract with both the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District. These contracts secured prevailing wage rate for over 300 of our members working at these municipalities. We also settled a three-year agreement for our environmental contract. We look forward to another successful year at the bargaining table in 2020 as several of our contracts will be expiring.

At our Annual Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner in

April, we honored over 50 Local 9 members who retired the previous year. And in June, we celebrated with 61 of our members who achieved over 50 years of IBEW membership.

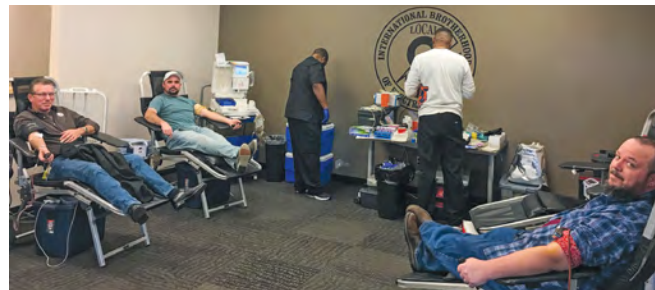
We also welcomed two new officers: Vice Pres. Brian Rush and Fin. Sec. Bryan Nieciak. Thank you to former Examining Board chairman Mark Simmons, Executive Board member Victor Ohanessian and financial secretary Brian Lewis for their longtime service. They are off to a well-deserved retirement.

Our members actively give back to the community. The 14th annual Local 9 Golf Outing was a huge success. Over \$17,000 was raised for the IBEW Local 9 Charity Fund. In November, we held a blood drive in conjunction with Versiti Blood Center of Illinois. Thanks to all who donated.

Speaking of charity, I applaud our office manager Mary Beth Kaczmarek, who in mid-2019 donated one of her kidneys to her brother Mike after he experienced kidney failure. Mary Beth and Mike underwent kidney transplant surgery in early July. The surgery went well for both and, after recuperating, Mary Beth and Mike are back to living life to the fullest. Mary Beth is a true hero! Way to go, Sister Kaczmarek! IBEW proud!

We wish all a happy, prosperous new year.

Bill Niesman, B.M.



Local 9 members participate in local's blood drive: from left, Guy Moser, Ryan Muntwyler and Tom Fitzgerald.

## Annual Softball Tournament

L.U. 25 (c,catv,es,i,ptc&rts), LONG ISLAND, NY — Our 49th Annual Softball Tournament was Aug. 23-25, at Baldwin Park, Eisenhower Park, and Wantagh Park. We had great weather the entire weekend. Local 3 (New York, NY) won the upper bracket and Local 25 came in second. Local 456 (New Brunswick, NJ) defeated Local 90 (New Haven, CT) in the lower bracket. A special shout out to our Local 25 "B" team for winning their "F" bracket on Saturday.

Thanks to all who helped coordinate the Friday night reception at the Marriott Uniondale and to retired member Ed O'Donnell, former softball committee chairman, for making all the calls to the members for Saturday's hospitality station at Eisenhower Park and coming to help the whole weekend. Thanks to



Some of the volunteers cooking for annual softball tournament man the grills. Among those gathered are Local 25 former business manager Kevin Harvey (second from left), Pres. John Guadagno (third from left), Bus. Rep. Jack Majkut (fourth from left), and E-Board member Tom Lawless (second from right).

Chairperson Joshua Margolis for overseeing the weekend, and thanks to those who provided transportation help and donated the generator again. We all look forward to next year's 50th Annual Softball Tournament.

John Guadagno, Pres.  
Tom Lawless, P.S./E-Board

## Honors for Military Hero; Contract Negotiations Updates

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uow), DIAMOND BAR, CA — Greetings, brothers and sisters. We are very sad to report that Local 47 Bus. Mgr. and Seventh District IEC member Patrick Lavin lost his wife of 45 years on Oct. 2, 2019. Ellen Lavin will be greatly missed.

A Local 47 member, Gunnery Sgt. Gary Gonzalez, was honored as "Military Hero of the Game" on Sept. 4 at a Dodger Stadium game. Among Gary's 17 military decorations are the following: Presidential Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Citation, Purple Heart, Navy Unit Citation, Combat Action Medal, Global War on Terrorism



At Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, Local 47 member Gunnery Sgt. Gary Gonzalez (left) was honored as "Military Hero of the Game."

Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, and Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

For the City of Colton-Water/Wastewater contract, a vote for a one-year extension passed by 75%. The City of Vernon contract was passed by 250-4. California Senate Bill 247 passed, which will have a huge positive effect on our line clearance tree trimmers. At press time, Association of Long Beach Employees (ALBE) and City of Anaheim bargaining continues.

Local 47's Christmas celebration at Anaheim Stadium on Dec. 13 was a huge success. Thousands of members and their families had a great time.

We're sad to report the recent death of several members: Scott Sugden, Mitchell Green, and Wesley "Flapping Eagle" McConnell. Our condolences and prayers are with their loved ones.

Work safe, live safe and free — and buy union!

Mitch Smith, P.S.

## International Lineman's Rodeo

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL — On Nov. 1, 2019, Havana and Hennepin power plants stopped providing Illinois with 728 MW of electricity, and at this writing Duck Creek Station's 425 MW was scheduled to cease on Dec. 15, 2019. With the help of local legislators, we were able to negotiate a better severance package for over a hundred of our affected members. After Vistra Energy's decision to shut down four coal-fired plants, it was a surprise when the company announced that the E.D. Edwards plant, located near Peoria, will shutter by the end of 2022. With the additional loss of the 915 MW produced at the Coffeen Power Station, Illinois will lose nearly 2,600 MW and hundreds of jobs.

Local 51 members competed at the Kansas City International Lineman's Rodeo & Expo in October. Out of 248 teams, Zach Beaty, Paul Koehler and Jordan Vanderwyngaerde took home first place in the Journeyman Hurtman Rescue competition, while Brian Courtright and Joshua Simpson received 10th place. Patrick "Buck" Rodgers had the fastest individual pole climb of the weekend at 12.34 seconds. Our apprentice linemen fared well, with Daniel Meachem placing tenth in the Apprentice Pole Climb and Derek Cheshareck receiving third place in the Apprentice Hurtman Rescue. Well done, brothers!

Line work and line clearance tree trimming are at full employment and should be steady all winter.

## 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	(rtm) Radio-Television Manufacturing	(u) Utility
(em) Electrical Manufacturing	(mow) Manufacturing Office Workers	(ws) Warehouse and Supply	(uow) Utility Office Workers
(es) Electric Signs	(mar) Marine		

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



Please attend your union meeting as it is the heart of where members discuss issues facing the membership. We wish you a happy new year and many blessings in the year ahead.

*Karlene Knisley, B.R.*

## Contract Negotiations; February Awards Banquet

L.U. 55 (c,lctt,o&u), DES MOINES, IOWA — Hello, brothers and sisters. Our local continues to grow. We are now over 1,200 members strong, and we still have a need for linemen and various other classifications.

We thank Jeff Lampe for his service as Executive Board chairman. He will be missed. We welcome Derrick Vandt as the new Executive Board chairman. We also welcome Jeremy Logsdon to the Executive board. Additionally, we welcome Chris Lichty and Ken Foutch to the Examining Board.

The Missouri Valley Apprenticeship Program recently broke ground for a new building and training grounds in Indianola, Iowa. This will be a fantastic facility. Congratulations to all!

The Recognition & Awards Banquet will be in February. Watch for details in a future newsletter. It's a fun event and a great time to see friends.

Bus. Mgr. Mike Sawyer and his assistants will be very busy over the next three to four months negotiating contracts for various units. Let's wish them well!

I know many of you are working very long hours, but if possible please find a political caucus site and go and give your input and vote for the person you feel will look out for organized labor and do what's best for all of us.

Always think safety at work and at home. Wear your safety equipment in the bucket truck and also keep an eye out for your buddy's safety.

*Myron Green, P.S.*



*Local 55 members Dennis Gamble (left) and Robert Yeager, who work with the City of Ames, Iowa, Municipal Utility, get ready to install a new 900-amp G.O.A.B. air-break switch for circuit control.*

## 2019 Community Service

L.U. 57 (lctt,mo,o,t&u), SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH — 2019 brought many opportunities to help out in our communities.

The monthly community dinner at the City of Refuge in Idaho Falls has been an ongoing program with members from Idaho Falls Power and Rocky Mountain Power providing a monthly dinner.

The annual Local 57 Golf Tournament again provided support to the University of Utah Burn Center. Proceeds from the tournament assist with sending young burn victims to the university's burn camp,



*IBEW Local 57 volunteers participated in a community service project to paint the homes of those in need of assistance.*

with the opportunity for youngsters to work through the healing process and create lasting memories. Thanks to the sponsors and all who participated for making this donation possible.

The local also teamed with Rocky Mountain Power employees and NeighborWorks in an effort called Paint Your Heart Out, painting homes for the elderly, disabled veterans, and others in need who are unable to afford the projects on their own. These opportunities are a few of the many to come, as we work together to make a difference in our communities.

*Scott Long, P.S.*

## 'A Brighter Future'

L.U. 71 (lctt,o&rtb), COLUMBUS, OHIO — On behalf of all officers and staff of Local 71, we hope everyone had a merry Christmas, and we wish everyone a happy new year!

At the close of 2019, we remember all those we lost too soon: Steven Karr, James McClain, Daniel Dade, David Dean, Hubert Byrd, James Ross, Jeremy Pope, Daniel Bruggeman, Kenny Fulton, Sean Fowler, Roy Brown, Colton Boring, William Moore, Donnie Sublett, Gary Sellars, Roy Howell and Russell Greer. May they rest in peace.

As we look forward to 2020 and all that it could be, let us pledge to support our union, organize the unorganized, maintain harmony within the ranks and continue fighting for a brighter future. As 2020 begins, thoughts turn to the elections and the consequences of any election. Sisters and brothers, we must be able to look past the wedge issues that politicians would like us to argue over on social media, and we must remain focused on the issues that affect working families. Your union can only directly represent you on issues covered by your collective bargaining agreements. With unions doing only 10% to 13% of the work across the USA, working families can ill afford to lose any more ground when it comes to labor laws that protect the middle class. So, support labor-friendly candidates and remain educated on the issues that are vital to the union's survival.

Work safe and attend your union meetings.

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

## Safety Days Program — IBEW Local 77 Booth Popular

L.U. 77 (lctt,mt,o,t&u), SEATTLE, WA — In an ongoing collaborative atmosphere, Snohomish County PUD CEO/General Mgr. John Haarlow asked IBEW Local 77's new Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Rex Habner to be part of the opening presentation for the company's Safety Days program. Bus. Mgr. Habner addressed both union and nonunion employees with a message that whether union or not, we are all still brothers, sisters, coworkers, friends and family and our common goal is to make sure everyone gets home safely at the end of the day.

For two days, all district employees were able to attend various classes and training in safety related topics. There were many demonstrations including:

Pole Top rescue, Arc Trailer shows, hard hat safety, bucket rides and many more. Classes included Self Defense, Dog Safety, FEMA, Stop the Bleed, Active Shooter/Home & Property Protection, and How to Talk to People in Crisis.

The IBEW Local 77 booth was a popular place for both represented and nonrepresented folks alike. This provided an excellent opportunity to have contact with members and to share what we're all about with nonmembers. Lots of interest was generated in the non-represented departments, which will hopefully encourage others to

join our union family.

*Sara Langus, P.S.*



*Local 77 Bus. Mgr. Rex Habner (left) with Local 77 Bus. Rep. Nichole Reedy (center), and John Haarlow, Snohomish County PUD CEO/general manager, at the Safety Days event.*

## Harvard Science Center Construction Project Underway

L.U. 103 (cs&i), BOSTON, MA — Approximately 200 Local 103 electricians and technicians, working for Sullivan & McLaughlin Companies, are busy building Harvard University's newest \$1 billion, 535,000 square-foot, John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS).

When it opens in the fall of 2020, it will be among the most cutting-edge teaching and research facilities in the country — featuring laboratories, classrooms and related teaching and research space. The six-story building, located across from Harvard Business School and Harvard Innovation Labs cluster, will serve as a new hub of learning for over 1,800 science and engineering students, researchers and faculty and will become a new iconic gateway to Harvard's growing Allston campus, featuring laboratories, classrooms and related teaching and research space.



*IBEW Local 103 electricians and technicians are working with Sullivan & McLaughlin Companies on construction of a new Harvard University facility.*

The building will also contain a new 5,000 square-foot Maker Space, featuring high-end manufacturing and assembly workstations allowing students to test ideas and incubate enterprises. Some 70,000 square feet of public green space will be located on site, a large interior atrium will be located on the building's ground-floor, and upper floors will be wrapped with a performative façade that will optimize natural interior lighting and ensure optimal heating and cooling efficiency. The building will be built to LEED Gold sustainability specifications.

*Lou Antonellis, B.M./F.S.*

## 'Staying IBEW Strong'

L.U. 125 (lctt,o,t&u), PORTLAND, OR — After the Janus v. AFSCME Supreme Court decision of 2018, many folks expected an expedited demise of the labor movement in America. Local 125 Bus. Mgr. Travis Eri directed his staff to increase efforts on education, communication, and engagement.

Pictured are Local 125 members employed by the City of Milton-Freewater. They know they have the choice of membership, and they've chosen to stay IBEW strong. These members are ALL-IN. With normal ups and downs in the workplace, these members continue to encourage each other and have increased their involvement within the local union.

"These members didn't let public opinion influence their decision to stay ALL-IN. In fact, they continue asking what else they can do to help educate others," said Bus. Rep. Jeremy White. "I am proud to be their rep," he added.

Moving into 2020, with increased focus on addressing members' involvement, Local 125's leadership is working with its RENEW Committee and to launch its Women's Committee. "We can't control court cases or legislation — but we can do the work to ensure our local grows and remains strong," Eri said. "We know these young workers and sisters are ALL-IN; are you?"

*Marcy Grail, A.B.M.*



*Local 125 members employed by the City of Milton-Freewater, OR, display IBEW sign and stay actively involved in the union.*



## LOCAL LINES

## Union Members Complete Training Programs at NTI

L.U. 141 (ees,i,o&u), WHEELING, WV — Hello, brothers and sisters. Our work picture is slow as of this writing, with 54 members on Book 1.

At press time, the local was busy planning our holiday activities, which included preparing our float for area Christmas parades, as well as planning our Christmas parties for members and retirees. The local also has been quite busy politically, working with local labor-friendly candidates to make sure the issues important to working families are heard and addressed.

IBEW 141 would like to recognize Bros. Daniel Morris and Justin Klempa for their recent accomplishments and advancement at the National Training Institute. Dan completed the four-year instructor training program, and Justin completed the Advanced Studies program. Congratulations to these fine gentlemen!

IBEW 141 is sad to report the passing of Bro. John Criswell. He will be greatly missed.

*Kurt "Bug" Reed, P.S.*



IBEW Local 141 members Justin Klempa (left) and Dan Morris after graduation at the NTI in Ann Arbor, MI, in August 2019.

## Apprentices Are Sworn In; Welcome to New Contractors

L.U. 177 (bo,ees,govt,i,mo,o&pet), JACKSONVILLE, FL — Pres. Luis Cano swore in 40 apprentices as new members at the September union meeting. [Photo, below.] We also recognized Bro. James Nolan, retiring from the Electrical Training Alliance of Jacksonville, and thanked him for the great job he has done. Bro. Nolan spent 28 years as either an instructor or as training director. We wish Bro. Nolan a happy retirement.

The work outlook remains steady in our area. A few jobs are finishing up but several jobs in the health-care industry are slated to begin soon. So far, we have been able to fill all calls, although some may take a few days to fill.

We have signed two new home-grown contractors. Bro. Josh Adams opened Watchmen Electric and Bro. Mark Horton started Elite Electric. We look forward to working with both for a mutually gainful relationship.

We had our annual Chili Cook Off at our October union meeting with Britt Cope coming out on top with some great chili.

*Alan Jones, B.M./F.S.*

## Strong Work Picture

L.U. 197 (em&i), BLOOMINGTON, IL — We hope everyone had a healthy, happy holiday season. We look forward to having a great 2020. Our work picture looks very positive for the year. We are hearing that work at the Rivian Auto plant should be firing up after the first



Forty Local 177 apprentices were sworn in at September union meeting.

of the year. We look forward to the opportunity to bring new life into the old Mitsubishi plant. The work can provide our members and families with needed stability and a chance to show how productive the IBEW is. We will be utilizing organizing and also leaning on travelling brothers and sisters to man the job.

We encourage all our members 35 years old and under to join our RENEW Committee. Our younger members are the future of our industry and we need them to be involved in the union, so we continue to survive and grow. We want to tap into the energy and vision from a younger worker's perspective. If interested contact Matt Strupp or Matt Kyrouac for more information.

At this writing, we were getting ready to celebrate Veterans Day. Thanks to all our members who have served in the armed forces! As our ranks grow in the union, we need to reach out to other veterans to bring them with us. If you know good candidates, send them in. Remember to get involved in the local and stay involved!

*Mike Raikes, B.M./F.S.*



On the job site battling the elements at Local 197's Westminster Village construction project are members Nathan Hoenes (left), Clint Johnson and Josh Bertolet.

## Contract Negotiations

L.U. 245 (govt,lctt,o,rtb&u), TOLEDO, OHIO — Happy new year, everyone. I hope you had a good holiday and are looking forward to a prosperous new year.

As 2019 came to a close, negotiations were the main focus at Local 245. Negotiations for the Fourth District Teledata Agreement and the WTOL Channel 11 contract with TEGNA were continuing as of press time. At the time of this writing, Nelson Tree negotiations were scheduled to start in November 2019; and the City of Bryan and the Bryan Wastewater Treatment Plant negotiations were slated to start in December 2019.

Work on the Outside is steady with no new calls and no one on the books.

The Davis-Besse power plant is preparing for its 2020 refueling outage since Ohio House Bill 6 was approved. We would like to thank everyone again for supporting this bill and helping to get it passed.

Congratulations to Rick Russeau and Ray Zychowicz for being selected the Power Player Workers for the months of November and December for the Toledo Walleye professional ice hockey team. Local 245 is the main sponsor for the Toledo Walleye team for the 2019-20 hockey season. Also, our annual Local 245 Toledo Walleye game is scheduled for Feb. 15, 2020. Please call the hall for details.

Until next time, work safe and stay warm.

*Ray Zychowicz, P.S.*



Some of Local 257's class of 2019 apprenticeship graduates assemble for a group photo.

## 2019 Apprenticeship Graduates

L.U. 257 (em,i,rtb,rtb,spa&t), JEFFERSON CITY, MO — Congratulations to graduates of IBEW Local 257's apprenticeship graduating class of 2019.

The 2019 apprenticeship graduates are: Zach Bedsworth, Adam Berendzen, Gary Berhorst, Ryan Bopp, Bradley Brewer, Fred Brunston, Justin Case, Brandon Cliburn, Dalton Cook, Brett Crowley, John Hardwick, Scott Herod, Derek Holzhauser, Ryan Kliethermes, Chad Leslie, Robert Poe, Michael Piersall, Bryan Robertson, Tom Romesburg, and Seth Webb.

Best wishes to the graduates on their continued success and a rewarding IBEW career.

*Anthony Edwards, P.S.*

## 2019 Annual Family Picnic; Volunteers Get Out the Vote

L.U. 269 (i&o), TRENTON, NJ — Even as the days grew chillier, the calendar was just starting to heat up for the members of Local 269. September was witness to the annual Local 269 Family Picnic, at which the membership and their loved ones are treated to an afternoon of games, food and entertainment. To avoid leaving anyone out, let me say on behalf of the local: A big "Thank You!" to all the volunteers who worked so hard to make sure that a good time was had by all.

In October, members of Local 269, along with fellow trade union brothers and sisters from a number of local unions attended The Knights of Labor Dinner given by the Mercer County Building Trades. Three award winners were honored for their hard work and dedication to union cause.

Finally, the ongoing labor walks and Get Out the Vote efforts culminated with local and statewide elections on the first Tuesday in November. Thanks to the hard work and perseverance of union volunteers, many labor-friendly candidates were elected and in many cases, reelected. Politics can be fickle, and nothing is ever guaranteed except this: Without the effort, you are sure to lose.

*Brian Jacoppo, P.S.*

## Annual Chili Cookoff Benefit

L.U. 309 (i,lctt,mo,mt,o,rtb,spa&u), COLLINSVILLE, IL — In October, Local 309 served 120 gallons of our "White Lightning Chili" at the 36th annual Chili Cookoff. Participation from the members and their families was outstanding. Some even showed up to help out after working shutdowns that weekend. This event provides a great environment to get together and to connect with the community. Hats off to Bros. Josh Wieggers and Chris Weir for their tireless leadership in this endeavor. Proceeds went to the Distressed Members Fund.

Health & Welfare and Pension trustees were sent to the 65th annual Employee Benefits Conference in San Diego in late October for continuing education. In addition to classes explaining the intricacies of administering these funds, were the many classes that acknowledged that mediocre returns on our investments is the new normal. Despite this news, the vast majority of pension plans are recovering and are healthy. However, as a hedge against

these new circumstances, it is becoming more important that individuals have their own personal retirement accounts to supplement their pension if needed someday. Start them when you are young and max them out yearly if you can.

*Carlos S. Perez, R.S.*

## Industry Leaders & Training

L.U. 313 (i&spa), WILMINGTON, DE — The work picture has slowed some, although 2020 looks to be another decent year in our jurisdiction. There is work on the books, and the union hall is never at ease or satisfied until these jobs have gang boxes and boots on the ground with paychecks cashing. If things work out, members may have a couple of different jobs and locations to select from. Choices are nice, so enjoy them while you can.

The training department is always keeping up to date with the latest innovations in the trade. If there is something you are interested in, inquire to the JATC to see if there are enough people to get a class together. If not, we can help you get literature, information or enrolled in a class somewhere to keep you prepared. Staying sharp and on top of things is how we stay as the industry leaders. This is also a renewal year for your license, so consider signing up early for a continuing education (C.E.) class.

Try to visit the newer Healthcare link on our local's website [www.ibew313.org](http://www.ibew313.org) or app.

To all Local 313 retirees: Try to make it to a Retirees Club meeting on the first Wednesday of the month (from September through May). If you have not been attending, it's a good crowd and they would love to see you.

Buy American and have a happy new year!

*Bruce W. Esper, P.S.*

## New Year's Resolutions — CPR Training Refresher Course

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LE SUEUR, MN — Happy new year, brothers and sisters! What's your new year's resolution? How about saving a life? Giving blood and knowing CPR are two easy ways to save a life. Apprentices receive CPR training during their first, third and fifth years of the training program.

That makes all of the 177 Local 343 apprentices certified lifesavers. What about you and me? How long has it been since we've taken a refresher CPR course? The JATC offers reimbursement for taking CPR training on your own. There is no good reason not to. Make it your 2020 resolution.

At this writing, apprenticeship classes are nearing the halfway mark. Rochester has 32 first-year apprentices, 13 second-year apprentices, 33 third-year apprentices, 31 fourth-year apprentices and 22 fifth-year apprentices. Mankato has 10 first-year apprentices, five second-year apprentices, 11 third-year apprentices, 10 fourth-year apprentices, and 10 fifth-year apprentices. Thanks go out to the Rochester instructors Dan Goodew and Mike Brambrick Jr., and Mankato instructor Mike Wicks for their continued commitment to the training of our apprentices.

This statement was found on a tag attached to a pair of American-made leather work gloves: "Economists say that if everyone in the United States spent



an extra \$3.33 on U.S. made goods every year, it would create nearly 10,000 jobs in this country.”

Keep Americans working by buying Made In USA.

Tom Small, P.S.

## Iowa Political Caucuses; Holiday Lights Display

L.U. 347 (em,i,mt,rtb,rts&spa), DES MOINES, IOWA — Local 347 is looking to the future. The union hall on Eighteenth Street has served us well, but now the local is looking at an opportunity to build a new building in Ankeny. With I.O. approval, the land for the new hall is being purchased. Optimistically, we are looking at a spring of 2020 groundbreaking.

The local also signed a project labor agreement for the new federal courthouse to be built in downtown Des Moines.

Local 347's involvement with the Make A Wish Foundation is the traditional setup of the annual Jolly Holiday Light display. Thank you to the 2019 volunteers: Steve Rinker, Tyler Aller, Dustin Schmidt, Devon Wolf, Kevin Goben, Wade Lester, Doug Wolf, Chad Davis, Joe Rivas, Alan Selch, Alex Padgett, Jason Ballard, Mike Jones, Alec Perkins, Ron Ballard, Rick Chumbley, Rod Olson, Tyler Easter, John Zaun, Scott Embry, Cory Kelleher, John Stahowick, Alex Hansen, Timothy Hawthorne, Van Flattery, Tim LeClaire, Bobby Sample, Matt D'Angelo, Mike Gomez, Ben Duke, Josh Gibson, Dominic Latham, Brian Gruber, Eric Hager, Frank Scheider, Dalton Stoll, Adam Curry, David Reed, Scott Farnsworth, Pat Wells and Randy Tucker.

We listen to the news and get frustrated at reports regarding the government. As lowans, we plan to attend the 2020 Iowa Caucuses on Monday, Feb. 3. This is our opportunity to send a message that the current state of political affairs is unsatisfactory. We want a functioning, accountable government that serves the people. In some cases, we may need to send someone else to do the job. In some cases, we will have to say, “you're fired.” So, brothers and sisters, mark your calendars and plan to attend. This opportunity comes around only once every four years.

Mike Schweiger, P.S.

## Soccer Stadium Project

L.U. 369 (em,es,i,lctt,o,rtb,rts,spa&u), LOUISVILLE, KY — Since starting play in 2015 as Kentucky's only fully professional soccer club, Louisville City FC has quickly established a reputation both for winning on the pitch and for solid fan support.

In 2020, Louisville City FC will begin play in a state-of-the-art facility in Butchertown, a neighborhood in Louisville just east of downtown. The stadium will seat nearly 12,000 and will rival the KFC YUM! Center for beer taps per square foot.

Delta Services secured the \$6.5 million electrical package and put more than 50 journeyman wiremen to work at peak. The women and men of Local 369 on this project have worked nearly 60,000 hours without a lost-time incident.

Gene Holthouser, B.R.



Local 369 members and Delta Services at work to complete soccer stadium.

## 2019 Election Success — Wins for Working Families

L.U. 375 (catv,ees,et,govt,i&mo), ALLENTOWN, PA — As this article went to press, we were planning our winter festivities. Once again, plans were underway for the local's adults only Christmas party, as well as a children's Christmas party. It is always exciting when Santa visits the kids and grandkids of our members!

The election on Nov. 5, 2019, could not have worked out better for working families in Lehigh and Northampton counties. In Lehigh County, we now have a majority on our board of commissioners to support our county executive that we worked so hard to get elected two years ago. In Northampton County we were able to maintain control of the board, which over the last few years has passed some solid legislation for the middle class. Also, in our two major cities of Allentown and Bethlehem, some new friendly faces were elected to the city councils. Now it is time to continue this momentum into 2020 and beyond.

As we all know, politics are not fun, but they are essential in our day to day lives and our work opportunities. Thank you to all the members who walked for GOTV (get out the vote) and to those who stood at the polls to show their support for our labor-friendly candidates. Your work and dedication to our union are much appreciated.

Justin Grimshaw, A.B.M.

## Apprenticeship Graduates

L.U. 449 (catv,em,i,o,rtb,rts,spa&u), POCATELLO, IDAHO — Greetings, brothers and sisters.

Local 449 would like to congratulate the following members on completion of the apprenticeship program. Starting out as an apprentice, five years seems like forever, but you made it, graduates! Thank you to all for your hard work and dedication! The recent apprenticeship graduates are: Jason Goretsky, Casey McDonald, Spencer Musselman, Jason Hensley, Tanner Morrissey, Gabriel Petersen, Aaron Jolley, Thomas Moye and Kade Sloup.

Local 449 also congratulates Bro. Tony Zahn on his retirement. Enjoy it, brother — you've earned it.

It is with deep regret that we report the passing of Bros. Lewis Varnell Evans and Roger Sandberg. May they rest in peace.

Daniel Green, Mbr. Dev. Rep.

## Holiday Circle of Lights; National RENEW Conference

L.U. 481 (ees,em,i,mt,rts,s&spa), INDIANAPOLIS, IN — In October, our retirees got together to make sure that the stringers for the World's Largest Christmas Tree were all working and ready for installation. In November, our membership volunteered their time to install the stringers on Monument Circle for the Circle of Lights, a tradition that our members have been bringing to the city of Indianapolis since 1962.

In October, our RENEW Chapter sent a delegation to St. Louis for the National RENEW Conference. It was a

great time for our RENEW members to meet other RENEW Chapters and discuss what has been working in their locals to get younger members involved and excited about their union. It was also an opportunity for our delegation to talk with Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson and Sixth District Int. Vice Pres. David J. Ruhmkorff. [See photo below.] It is always great to see our leaders at these events, ready to talk with all the members attending.

Blake A. Andrews, B.R.



Local 481 RENEW Chapter delegation with IBEW officers. From left: Local 481 Bus. Rep. Blake Andrews, RENEW Vice Pres. Sean Eagan, Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson, RENEW member Craig Banning, RENEW Treas. Antwaun Armstead, RENEW Pres. Chris Madden, RENEW Rec. Sec. Anthony Westmoreland, and Sixth District Int. Vice Pres. David J. Ruhmkorff.

## Heart Association Walk

L.U. 531 (i), LAPORTE, IN — Members of Local 531, along with their families and even their dogs, recently participated in the annual American Heart Association Walk, which took place at Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve in Chesterton, IN. This event is sponsored by local medical facilities and local industry, organizations that Local 531 has put a lot of effort into building solid relationships with. It was great to see our membership turnout so high, as we were the largest group represented. The rain held off just long enough for most of the members to complete the walk.

Also, recently, the apprenticeship awards banquet was held at Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City. Awards were given out to the 2018 and 2019 graduating classes. Congratulations to all the new journeymen on completing the program. Also, congratulations to the Apprentice of the Year Award recipients: for the 2018 class, Eric Cusick; and for 2019, co-apprentices of the year Caleb Tillema and Devon Westphal.

Jeremy Woolever, P.S.



Local 531 members along with their families participated in the American Heart Association Heart Walk.



IBEW Local 569 members hold up signs that state: “PLA = Local Jobs.”

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

L.U. 569 (i,mar,mt,rts&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA — We are excited to announce that 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of IBEW Local 569 — and we are looking forward to celebrating with our members and families throughout the year!

We had many bright spots of success throughout 2019 that will create more work for our members, including Imperial Irrigation District (IID) voting to have a 10-year project labor agreement (PLA) on new construction and maintenance; Vista Unified School District voting to have a PLA on \$247 million of school bond construction work; and the passage of state legislation to place a PLA on San Diego's \$3 billion Pure Water Project.

In 2020, we are going to continue to focus on our members, providing services such as our revamped Member Assistance Program; strengthening representation by

increasing our jobsite steward program to ensure safe and quality workplaces; focusing on accountability and transparency; pursuing more top-down organizing to add more contractors and therefore increase work opportunities for Local 569 members; and gearing up to enter into contract negotiations to fight for better wages and benefits.

2019 was a great year and we're heading into 2020 — and our 100th anniversary — as a stronger local thanks to YOU and your hard work!

Gretchen Newsom, Political Dir./Organizer

## IBEW Apprentice Champion At 2019 Tradesmen Competition

L.U. 575 (i), PORTSMOUTH, OHIO — On Saturday night, Nov. 9, 2019, IBEW Local 575 apprentice wireman Jordan Finrock proved that with hard work and dedication, even the highest of goals can be achieved.

Since placing 18th at the 2018 Ideal National Championship, Jordan has spent countless hours after work, and apprenticeship class, practicing for the 2019 contest. It is estimated that upwards of 100,000 electricians competed across the country to qualify for the Ideal National Championship Weekend held at Disney Coronado Springs Resort, in Orlando, FL.

Not only was Jordan crowned apprentice champion, but he also finished in the top five in the nation in the apprentice team competition with tool buddy and fellow Local 575

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## LOCAL LINES



IBEW Local 575 apprentices Justin Donley (left) and Jordan Finrock at 2019 Ideal National Championship competition.

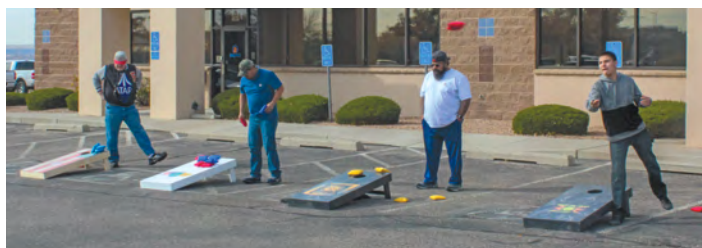
apprentice Justin Donley. Jordan and Justin are third- and fourth-year apprentices, respectively, at the Portsmouth Electrical Apprenticeship's Electrical Training Academy. Congratulations, brothers!

Dan Shirey, B.M.

### Local 611 Hosts Governor At Recent Union Meeting

L.U. 611 (catv,es,govt,i,lctt,o,spa,t&u), ALBUQUERQUE, NM — At a recent union meeting, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham was our guest of honor. Gov. Grisham spoke to the membership for about 30 minutes and talked about defeating so-called “right-to-work” and the importance of continuing to fight against RTW. The governor also spoke about free college tuition, funding childcare, holding employers accountable for back pay, and bringing manufacturing jobs to New Mexico. She concluded her visit by spending time taking pictures with the members.

At our October meeting, 50-year service pins



IBEW members participate in IBEW Local 611's Corn Hole Tournament.

were presented to Don Miller, Art Ordonez and Bill Rendell. Receiving 55-year pins were Wayne Deskin and Willard Gettemy.

On Nov. 16, 2019, the local held its first ever Corn Hole Tournament at the union hall. Plans are to make this an annual event. The tournament was held to raise money for Toys for Tots, and members were asked to bring a toy. We had hot dogs, hamburgers and a live DJ. It was a fun event and there was a great turnout. Ten teams participated in the tournament.

As of this writing, we have had several inside calls for Triad at Los Alamos, for Cupertino Electric at the Face Book project, and other calls around town.

A reminder: Local 611 union meetings are on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. Please make every effort to attend.

Local 611 extends condolences to the friends and families of recently deceased members: David A Stewart, Henry R. Martinez and Pedro N. Rodriguez.

I hope everyone had a happy and safe holiday season. Good wished to all for the new year ahead.

Darrell J. Blair, P.S.

### Year in Review

L.U. 617 (c,i,mo&st), SAN MATEO, CA — Greetings and happy new year. The work picture has remained strong, although recently there has been a slight pull-back from our record-breaking pace.

In June we held local union elections, with Bus. Mgr. Dave Mauro and officers being reelected. We welcome newcomers Leon Marshall Jr. to the Executive Board and David Rupp to the Examining Board. Congratulations to all!

Our organizer, Abe Taliki, has reached out to under-represented sisters and brothers who do not have a collective voice. Through his efforts, 10 to 20 new members have been sworn in at every union meeting over this past year. Thanks, brother.

We are proud of our various clubs and organizations that have given back to our community,

through many activities and projects including: 5K runs and motorcycle ride benefits; the Wreaths Across America project to honor fallen veterans; veterans coat drives; and assisting at the VA hospital. We honor and remember all military service members and their families. Our membership also reaches out in school job fairs and political actions. Local events and volunteerism connect us to the pulse of our community.

With 2020 elections just around the corner, please remember to find candidates who support labor, renewable energy, a healthy environment, and are union friendly. Let us stand strong and united as we move forward into 2020.

Lastly, let us remember our union brothers and sister who have traveled on.

Kenn Perfitt, P.S.

### Welcome to New Contractor; New Journeymen Recognized

L.U. 625 (c,ees,em,i,it,mar&mt), HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA — The following members have recently retired: Phil Crawford, Reg Driscoll, David Julien and Steve MacAskill.

Congratulations to the following brothers on completing their certificate of qualification and becoming journeypersons: Colton Abraham, Cole Bezanson, Brad Crooks, Daniel Fraser, Matt Hansford, Jesse Surette, Taylor Bailey and Matt Woollam.

Our local held its Annual Golf Tournament on Sept. 22 at Pen Hills Golf Club. We had 65 members in attendance.

The local's Retirees Reunion was Oct. 20 at our Union Hall/Training Centre. There were 38 and a plus-one in attendance.

Local 625 would like to welcome newly organized contractor FOG Construction.

Brad Wood, Organizer/B.R.

### 2019 Service Awards Dinner

L.U. 683 (i), COLUMBUS, OHIO — Work in our jurisdiction remains strong! We are thankful for the traveling brothers and sisters who are helping us man our calls!

On Sept. 21 last year, the 61st annual 25-Year Dinner was held at the Hollywood Casino. This yearly event honors our members who have at least 25 years of membership with Local 683.

Approximately 500 members and guests attended the dinner. This year's 25-Year Club Pres. Mike Chretien called the meeting to order, and retired member Don Horn gave a nice invocation. After dinner was served, Retirees Club member Bob Garich spoke about some retiree issues and the benefits of the Local 683 Retiree and Widow's Club. Bus. Mgr. Ed Moore thanked the members for their service to our industry and spoke on the current events of the local. Local 683

members who passed away this past year were acknowledged, and a moment of silence was held in their honor. Bro. Chretien then announced each group of honorees with 25 through 65 years of service, as they walked across the stage and received their service pins and certificates. Thanks to Mike Chretien for hosting and Trent Parker for the PowerPoint presentation! Special thanks to Claire Brotherton and Bobbie Tucker for all their hard work planning this event!

Pat Hook, Pres.

### Veterans Committee Launches at Local 697

L.U. 697 (c,es,i,mt&se), GARY AND HAMMOND, IN — Local 697 was proud to celebrate Veterans Day 2019 with the official launch of the Veterans of 697 Committee.

Bro. Mike Longoria, a Local 697 member and veteran, stepped up to be the chairman of this committee. The group participated in their first event on Nov. 16 as they partnered with The American Veterans Collection to supply and deliver food, clothes and winter jackets to homeless veterans. This was made possible by a monetary donation from the members of Local 697.

In 2019 the membership also supported our Local 697 veterans by providing them with a free Local 697 Veterans T-shirt as a small thank-you for their service to our country. This annual reminder started in 2018 and will continue as we have one of our own, Local 697 Bro. Dominique Crummie, fighting overseas in Operation Enduring Freedom. Please keep Bro. Crummie in your thoughts and prayers.

For more information on the Local 697 Veterans Committee and to view the video interview hosted on the WJOB Network, visit [www.ibew697.org/Veterans](http://www.ibew697.org/Veterans).

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



At official launch of a “Veterans of 697” video interview, from left: WJOB host Jim Dedelow; IBEW Local 697 Bus. Mgr. Ryan Reithel; Local 697 veterans Mike Longoria and Joe Garrison; and Cassie Ayling, NECA-IBEW Powering America NWI.

### Tribute to Longtime Members

L.U. 773 (as,em,i,mo&o), WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA — The local mourns the loss of our first- and second-longest serving members.

Henry “Hank” Zimmerman was a 78-year member and William “Bill” Varga was a 73-year member.

At our 100th Anniversary Banquet in July 2018, attended by Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson, Hank's 75-year certificate, as well as Bill's 70-year certificate

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Local 773 member Hank Zimmerman (far right, kneeling), in vintage photo of Moore Electric workers at Windsor Shipyards on the Detroit River circa 1944. Standing, at far left, Local 773 member John Raymond, who later became IVP for Canada.



and 1945 apprenticeship contract were on display. As a member, Hank was a teacher and a Hydro Inspector for over 30 years. He served in the Royal Canadian Navy in World War II and at his passing at age 97, Hank was one of the longest-serving members in North America. Hank is survived by his sons Greig (retired Local 773 member) and Ronald.

William Varga was a proud IBEW member, a long-time employee of local contractor Ebbinghaus Electric, and also had other distinctions in his life. He was involved in municipal politics for 33 years and as a respected gentleman, he rose to become the mayor of Lasalle, Ontario, which is just outside the City of Windsor limits. At his passing he was age 92.



*William "Bill" Varga, former mayor and longtime Local 773 member.*

*Barry Heeney, R.S.*

## Apprenticeship Graduation; Community Service Volunteers

L.U. 915 (i&mt), TAMPA, FL — Local 915's 2019 Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony honoring the December 2018 and September 2019 classes had a combined 33 members graduate to journeyman wireman status. The fifth-year Apprentice of the Year Award for the December 2018 class went to Bro. Corey Wade, and for the September 2019 class, that award went to Cody "Fish" Skirmont. Local 915's Brad Felkner Memorial Award, for displaying the highest standards of integrity and IBEW brotherhood throughout the five-year apprenticeship, went to Bro. John Talley. We congratulate all the graduating apprentices and wish each of them a long, safe and prosperous career.

In partnership with the Union Sportsmen's Alliance and the Florida Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council, volunteers spent nine weekends of their summer to help build a fishing pier, accessible to the handicapped, at the Suncoast Youth Conservation Center. It reportedly was the largest conservation project to date in the history of the Sportsmen's Alliance. Special gratitude to each of our local union members who helped make this project a success.

We are proud to report that the 2019 Klein Tools Electrician of the Year Award was presented to one of our very own. Congratulations to Bro. Fernando Guillen for this honored recognition.

*Theresa King, R.S.*



*Local 915 volunteers at the Suncoast Youth Center Pier Project dedication ceremony. Back row, from left, Bus. Agent Shawn McDonnell, Cody "Fish" Skirmont, Bus. Mgr. Randall King; front row, Rob Weber, Catherine Weber, Rudy Pimentel and Zeka Gamma.*

## JATC Training Pre-Apprenticeship Program

L.U. 1015 (em&i), WESLACO, TEXAS — IBEW Local 1015 would like to send out a big Texas salute to Valley View High School, ISD, located at 600 N. Jackson Rd. in Hidalgo, Texas.

IBEW Local 1015 and the Rio Grande Valley Laredo Electrical JATC have teamed up with Valley View Independent School District to launch our pre-ap-



*Valley View High School students receive hands-on training through a pre-apprenticeship program launched by IBEW Local 1015 and the RIO Grande Valley Laredo Electrical JATC.*

prenticeship program for the high school juniors and seniors in that area. We have a full class of 34 students who find our program so exciting and are eager to learn more about our electrical career.

With the help of the following people, this program has taken off with great success and has done very well on the first semester of the fiscal year: Mr. Ramiro Balderas Jr., Career Technical Education director at VVISD; Local 1015 Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Sergio A. Salinas; and RGVLE-JATC Training Dir. Osvaldo Cabada Jr.

We are pleased that our class includes male and female students, which shows that more women are now interested in taking on the electrical field in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and are welcomed into the industry.

The Rio Grande Valley has been going through some great transformations for the last several years. We have made a big difference with our new teaching methods, which work very well with the students and the school district.

*Tammy Casas, P.S.*

## Officer Transitions; Four-Year Contract Ratified

L.U. 1049 (lctt,o,u&uow), LONG ISLAND, NY — In October, Bro. Ed Conklin, being a dedicated family man, decided to spend more time with his family, and resigned from the office of president. Before joining the IBEW, Ed was a union Ironworker. Ed has spent his entire career as a tireless advocate for unions and their members. Ed will continue to serve the membership as a steward.

The Executive Board appointed then-Vice Pres. Jim Cooper as president to fill the unexpired term of office. Executive Board member Chuck Doyle was appointed vice president. After reviewing numerous résumés, the board then appointed Bro. William Lombardi to the vacant Executive Board seat.

In November, we completed negotiations with PSEG LI. The company's first offer was unacceptable. The membership stood up for those who have yet to be hired, by saying no to a Cash Balance Pension Plan. The negotiating team, led by Bus. Mgr. Ronald Bauer, negotiated a four-year agreement with wage increases, a wage bonus, shift bonuses, minimal increases to our medical plan and a continuation of our Career Average Pension Plan for new hires.

On behalf of Bus. Mgr. Bauer, fellow officers, the Executive Board, the business and office staffs and the entire membership, I wish to express our sincere appreciation, gratitude and best wishes to Int. Rep. Ellen Redmond on her retirement. Ellen has been an integral part of Local 1049 for 39 years. We wish her many years of health and happiness.

*Thomas J. Dowling, R.S.*



*Local 1501 members meet at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD, to ratify a new collective bargaining agreement with Northrop Grumman Innovation Systems. Bus. Mgr./Pres. Dion F. Guthrie is at the head table conducting the vote.*

## Open House Celebration — New Union Hall, Training Center

L.U. 1249 (catv,lctt,o,t&u), SYRACUSE, NY — On Sept. 21, 2019, IBEW Local 1249 celebrated the completion of our new union hall and the Richard J. French Training Center with an open house and family barbecue.

We had an amazing turnout of members, family and friends. It's always a great time when we can all get together. We would also like to thank Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson for taking time out of his schedule to attend and speak at our open house. It was great to have Int. Pres. Stephenson at our event and it was greatly appreciated by the membership.

*Colby J. Czajak, A.B.M.*



*Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson speaks at Local 1249's Open House event to celebrate the completion of a new union hall and training center.*

## 'Strong Progress & Success'

L.U. 1289 (u), LAKEWOOD, NJ — Happy new year! It's been a fast-paced 2½ years, but the goals of moving the local forward and bringing back family-oriented events have been very successful.

We have sworn in many new members, including meter readers, mechanics, clerks and line/substation apprentices. Job postings within Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) have also increased, thanks to continued positive bargaining sessions. This allows our members to move into higher paying positions and opens doors for others.

Productive negotiations resulted in contract settlements with JCP&L, Madison Borough and South River, plus an extension with Exelon. Health care is always the main target, so we are proud to have successfully bargained ours to remain virtually the same.

The snowstorm of March 2018 was a catalyst to finally get storm OT for our meter readers. Company trucks are not provided for this classification; however, multiple calls to company management resulted in rental vehicles for all, which allowed them to assist in the restoration efforts.

Family events included Christmas parties, marching in the Belmar St. Patrick's Day parade and our first Local 1289 Family Cookout. Plans are to make the Family Cookout an annual event. More events and activities to come!

*Lynda Hartmann, P.S.*

## Members Ratify New Contract

L.U. 1501 (ees,em,mo,pet,rts&t), BALTIMORE, MD — Members of Local 1501 recently met to approve a new agreement with Northrop Grumman, a new contractor that recently was the winning bidder on a contract at the NASA Greenbelt, MD, facility. Local 1501 has represented members at this facility since the mid-1970s and Bus. Mgr. Dion Guthrie has represented them this entire time. The outgoing contractor, Sierra Lobo, lost the contract bid to Northrop Grumman effective Sept. 30, 2019, and Northrop Grumman took over on Oct. 1, 2019. It has been a difficult time during this transfer of contractors with many differences but we feel we have most of them worked out. Only the future will tell us where we have been successful.

*James Boyd, F.S./P.S.*

## 'Plan for Financial Future'

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA — To open, I will quote a few lines that make me think of our situation in the good times that are currently happening in Local 1579's jurisdiction as well as other parts of the country. You might be familiar with the book.

- "Just as the rich rule the poor, so the borrower is servant to the lender." — Proverbs 22:7
- "Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty." — Proverbs 21:5
- "If you lack the means to pay, your very bed will be snatched from under you." — Proverbs 22:27

Our work situation is great! We are blessed with what is reportedly the largest construction job in the country, the Plant Vogtle addition of Units 3 & 4. This job is currently working a six-day schedule. However, this project will one day be finished and although our work will still be in good shape, we may be working less than six days a week.

That said, let's save what we can. Before buying a new toy, sacrifice for a year and see if you can save enough to purchase without borrowing. If we base our finances on a six-day schedule and are still in debt, we have become the servant to the lender forcing us to continue to look for that six-day scheduled job that may not always be available.

If we work hard and plan well, we will prosper. Until next time, God bless!

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

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# In Memoriam

## Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in November 2019

Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death
1	Edwards, D. G.	9/6/19	26	Weber, J. M.	9/16/19	124	Wagner, D. W.	9/5/19	306	Maiorano, S.	9/4/19	549	Brightwell, J. H.	9/30/19	993	Metz, A. J.	6/19/19
1	Heidemann, C. H.	9/14/19	34	Fengel, G. B.	8/11/19	125	Galloway, J. E.	3/9/18	309	Jensen, P. T.	7/14/19	558	Mayer, R. P.	9/20/19	993	Wilson, R. M.	10/25/19
1	Henson, T. R.	9/14/19	35	Carpenter, J. M.	9/5/19	125	Haggstrom, K. E.	7/20/19	313	Ciarlo, G. A.	4/28/19	558	Smith, E. D.	9/23/19	995	Brand, A. W.	9/4/19
1	Hobbs, J. R.	7/25/19	35	Ruisi, F. E.	1/28/19	125	Peltier, J. J.	7/3/19	317	Buffington, D. O.	7/22/19	567	Haskell, M. A.	9/19/19	995	LeBlanc, C. M.	9/21/19
1	Kingston, H. R.	10/3/19	35	Russell, A. J.	9/29/19	126	Burge, J. W.	9/13/19	319	Trupej, I.	4/9/18	567	Lafontaine, R. M.	9/11/19	995	Millet, H. E.	9/14/19
1	Meczkowski, F. E.	9/2/19	38	Belter, C. J.	9/7/19	126	Millard, F. L.	7/22/19	322	Ford, G. N.	9/14/19	569	Birdsall, E. C.	8/17/19	1002	Sprouse, C. D.	9/16/19
1	Miller, H. K.	2/7/18	38	Friedel, R. W.	10/6/19	126	Overholtzer, R. S.	9/30/19	322	Gilkey, T. A.	10/13/19	569	Krewson, D. T.	8/31/19	1003	James, E. A.	8/19/19
1	Sprehe, G. D.	10/26/19	38	Polivka, J. P.	7/27/19	126	Ruehling, F. W.	7/12/19	325	Pratt, B. L.	9/15/19	569	Miller, J. A.	8/1/19	1141	Bell, L.	9/16/19
1	Taylor, R. T.	9/12/19	38	Recker, N. A.	10/14/19	126	Smith, W. F.	9/22/19	332	Angelo, N. P.	9/18/19	569	Mitchell, J. W.	8/13/19	1141	Goodin, B. W.	9/5/19
3	Bruder, P.	8/21/19	38	Wollen, R. V.	9/26/19	130	Hargroder, E. H.	8/31/19	332	Carney, P. R.	8/28/19	569	Odell, J. H.	9/9/19	1141	Nard, G. L.	10/9/19
3	Cangialosi, G.	10/3/19	43	Allen, H. C.	10/8/19	130	Singleton, L. J.	9/10/19	332	Faultner, W. L.	5/1/19	569	Stubblefield, M. W.	10/8/19	1141	Simmons, R. L.	9/17/19
3	Czarnecki, R. E.	5/14/19	43	Lindsey, M. J.	9/15/19	131	Heighton, H. P.	8/14/19	332	Sturak, J.	8/28/19	569	Wilder, I. D.	9/5/19	1186	Hirai, C. K.	7/29/19
3	Dellavalle, L.	9/10/19	43	Squitieri, F. L.	9/6/19	134	Brown, E. L.	9/16/19	340	George, J.	8/26/19	570	Stone, A. J.	2/9/13	1186	Nakamura, Y.	9/15/19
3	Eckes, H. J.	8/29/19	44	Trevenna, G. J.	9/25/19	134	Bruno, R. A.	10/17/19	340	Snyder, G. F.	10/7/19	570	Theiss, J. F.	10/19/19	1206	Wirick, R. D.	9/30/19
3	Fontana, F.	9/13/19	46	Cooper, J. A.	5/17/19	134	Curry, J. M.	10/14/19	340	Williamson, H. L.	10/13/19	577	Fritz, J. W.	9/18/19	1245	David, C.	5/29/19
3	Gaizo, D. W.	9/30/19	46	Everson, D. F.	9/18/19	134	Griffith, E. G.	6/19/19	347	Ramsey, J. W.	8/16/19	584	Gregory, A. J.	10/1/19	1245	Hughes, R. E.	4/5/19
3	Girouard, K. G.	9/26/19	46	King, R. A.	1/15/18	134	Mosser, A. F.	9/30/19	349	Hoffrichter, M. J.	5/19/19	586	Bordeleau, G.	6/29/19	1245	Jeter, W.	12/15/17
3	Harbort, H. C.	9/6/19	46	Mattila, J. I.	9/21/18	134	Musker, J. H.	8/18/19	349	Musumeci, M.	9/11/19	586	Parsons, D. J.	8/17/19	1245	Job, C. A.	9/19/19
3	Higgins, M. P.	9/19/19	47	Elder, S. J.	8/30/19	134	O'Brien, T. D.	8/6/19	349	Schmidmayer, M.	8/27/19	586	Prescott, M. E.	9/6/19	1316	Looney, R. E.	10/15/19
3	Keon, J. D.	9/29/19	47	Gibson, A. L.	9/27/19	134	Siguaw, V. B.	9/20/19	349	Webster, D. J.	7/29/19	595	Davidson, D.	7/11/19	1340	Winkler, R. A.	9/1/19
3	Kimmel, A.	10/26/18	47	Green, M. W.	9/24/19	134	Tendick, B. L.	9/22/19	353	Coates, S.	10/26/19	595	McClure, M. D.	3/2/16	1393	Hicks, D. R.	9/13/19
3	Klein, M.	9/15/19	47	Tafolla, R.	8/5/19	136	Moore, M. E.	7/15/19	353	Di Renzo, C.	10/15/19	595	Narron, L. E.	8/11/19	1393	Huey, L. V.	1/24/16
3	Marinato, B. C.	7/20/19	48	Faulkner, D. S.	10/10/19	145	Freisinger, W. M.	9/4/19	353	Fellowes, A. B.	10/4/19	595	Pimentel, D. F.	4/18/19	1393	Mincey, D. R.	9/1/19
3	Mc Loughlin, J. J.	2/20/16	48	LaFleur, J. D.	4/20/19	153	Addington, J. S.	9/20/19	353	Forndron, C. G.	10/25/19	596	Brooks, M. C.	8/14/19	1426	Long, A. R.	7/19/19
3	McGovern, J.	9/24/19	48	Revel, A. D.	7/29/19	153	Kolar, T. J.	8/20/19	353	Homolka, P.	4/14/19	596	Cox, R. G.	9/10/19	1439	Jones, S. G.	8/27/19
3	Polanco, J. E.	9/12/19	48	Shepherd, J. F.	9/27/19	158	Cordle, R. E.	10/6/19	353	Quayle, T.	9/22/19	601	Hursey, D. J.	8/20/19	1464	Baker, J. R.	10/17/18
3	Ridgard, S. A.	7/27/19	51	Carroll, K. M.	8/11/19	164	Bailey, P. A.	9/9/19	353	Wall, G. R.	9/29/19	601	Stirewalt, K. A.	9/20/19	1523	Pennington, J. R.	8/15/19
3	Roche, J. J.	7/19/19	53	Brundege, B. C.	8/24/19	164	Stanin, M.	9/3/19	353	Williams, R. C.	9/15/19	602	Lesley, H.	9/21/19	1547	Cashen, T. E.	8/28/19
3	Schiavone, W.	10/5/19	53	Drabek, G. L.	7/7/19	175	Ellis, A. R.	9/24/19	353	Woods, N. D.	6/26/19	613	McGehee, E. W.	9/14/19	1547	Jackinsky, G.	12/11/18
3	Shelfo, M. A.	10/2/19	57	Peterson, E. G.	10/12/19	175	Helton, J. C.	10/13/19	354	Houghton, P. D.	8/11/19	625	Levangie, H. C.	6/22/19	1547	Young, J. J.	5/11/19
3	Sloboda, M. R.	8/15/19	58	Adams, S. D.	10/12/19	175	Hurd, R. L.	1/31/18	357	Colapelle, M. D.	9/22/19	639	Headington, C. W.	9/23/19	1579	Dominguez, W. C.	8/16/19
3	Sullivan, J. J.	8/18/19	58	Berg, R. L.	8/30/19	175	Purcell, J. M.	6/1/19	357	Gardner, D. E.	9/30/19	640	Bothwell, D. L.	8/2/19	1579	Wingrove, G. L.	10/13/19
3	Tuozzolo, J. L.	10/1/19	58	Furdock, J. M.	9/20/19	175	Spencer, S. D.	10/26/19	357	Scanlan, T. P.	10/7/19	640	Kimbell, J. B.	10/18/19	1620	Butler, P.	9/15/19
5	Galioto, J. T.	9/10/19	64	Passewitz, T. R.	9/10/19	175	Thompson, J. F.	2/1/18	357	Vincent, J. M.	10/8/19	640	Rinehart, J. L.	10/14/19	1832	Gramlich, C. F.	10/21/19
5	Jennings, S. L.	9/12/19	66	Whetsel, R. W.	9/13/19	176	Kerr, R. K.	9/30/19	357	Williams, R. C.	9/7/19	640	Spraggins, D. C.	8/30/19	2038	Kingdon, F. A.	10/4/19
5	Klaphake, J. L.	10/14/19	68	Chaney Littlejohn, C. L.	8/11/19	177	Cox, P. R.	8/19/19	363	Wiss, S. H.	9/25/19	654	Armstrong, J. C.	8/30/19	2166	Chase, D. G.	9/9/19
5	Prendergast, J. F.	8/11/19	68	Childs, T. P.	8/3/19	177	LiBrandi, R. A.	8/21/19	369	Anderson, D. J.	8/12/19	654	Glatts, J.	6/8/19	2166	Jensen, H. D.	10/2/19
5	Schindehette, E. W.	7/20/19	68	Christofferson, P. M.	8/25/19	177	Murphy, M. A.	8/31/19	369	Bell, P. C.	10/21/19	659	Hall, W. C.	7/19/19	2286	Cravy, D. W.	9/14/19
6	Bunrock, E. J.	9/3/19	68	Gagnon, J. L.	7/24/19	177	Wall, W. M.	10/24/19	369	Berding, W. W.	7/8/19	659	Marszalek, J. P.	8/31/19	2295	Hernandez, G.	8/14/19
6	Louie, C.	6/26/19	68	Kelly, J. H.	9/18/19	180	Hoskins, W. H.	9/5/19	369	Caldwell, L. O.	5/18/19	673	Herald, R.	4/28/19	2330	Milley, A. G.	10/9/19
6	Rickets, W. E.	9/24/19	68	McCoy, H. L.	8/5/19	191	Boggess, D. T.	6/1/19	369	Coleman, J. T.	8/15/19	673	Keller, K. D.	10/1/19	I.O. (76)	Ryan, T. M.	9/20/19
8	Miekis, D. W.	10/11/19	68	McGrath, J. P.	1/12/16	191	Byram, F. D.	5/1/19	369	Dutton, R. A.	12/28/18	673	Osborne, L. A.	9/21/19	I.O. (134)	Braverman, J. I.	10/12/19
9	Conlon, J. E.	8/7/19	68	Olafson, M. L.	7/6/19	191	Neue, C.	9/22/19	369	Lockett, B. J.	7/18/19	682	Schee, J. R.	4/22/19	I.O. (134)	Brennan, M. J.	10/3/19
9	Evans, J. J.	10/18/19	68	Staats, D.	3/9/19	193	Newingham, W. D.	9/22/19	369	Wadsworth, L. E.	8/10/19	683	Banks, D. A.	6/9/19	I.O. (134)	Levin, D. S.	8/29/19
9	Fifer, D. M.	7/25/19	68	Jolly, J. P.	10/6/19	212	White, C. W.	9/13/19	375	Heist, P. M.	9/13/19	683	Morris, D. D.	10/16/19	I.O. (134)	Zygowicz, J.	6/27/19
9	Reidy, J. D.	10/20/19	76	Sandusky, R. D.	8/29/19	212	Windholtz, R. T.	9/12/19	387	Mathews, R. N.	10/4/19	701	Barkdoll, J. S.	7/14/19	I.O. (233)	Norton, L. A.	5/28/19
9	Tyms, M.	8/29/19	77	Stearns, C. D.	8/28/19	213	Houlden, R. L.	9/8/19	400	Kuhlwein, R. P.	7/28/19	701	Heinz, R. A.	4/15/19	I.O. (549)	Casto, M. A.	6/13/19
10	New, W. J.	9/28/19	77	Wilson, G. M.	8/28/19	213	Pritchard, H. A.	8/30/19	400	Mauro, J. S.	10/9/19	701	Piecuch, J. C.	9/30/19	I.O. (828)	Churchwell, J. W.	7/22/19
11	Alvey, T. D.	8/26/19	77	Hart, F. S.	9/14/19	213	Schnee, H. D.	8/7/19	401	Heacock, D. E.	8/21/19	702	Johns, M.	10/24/19	I.O. (1319)	Verone, J. G.	10/21/19
11	McCall, T. R.	12/22/18	80	Alsobrook, G. N.	9/18/19	223	Storey, R. D.	10/13/19	413	Pressley, C. W.	9/26/19	702	McVey, T. L.	9/15/19	Pens. (1470)	Makris, A.	7/28/19
11	Mills, G. E.	7/23/19	84	Dzus, Y. D.	8/1/18	226	Bond, E. L.	9/27/19	420	Ley, R. E.	10/2/19	702	Zeboski, J.	10/24/19	Pens. (1882)	Cascio, P. J.	6/19/19
11	Pourroy, E. J.	10/25/19	86	Pires, J.	4/25/19	226	Mabon, R. E.	9/30/19	424	Elmer, W.	7/31/19	712	Bupp, D. R.	7/17/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Atwood, R. F.	9/23/19
11	Powers, M. T.	8/31/19	86	Stafford, D. G.	10/27/18	230	Blank, S. J.	1/17/19	424	McGreevy, W. H.	10/3/19	714	Spencer, J. R.	8/15/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Brown, J. D.	9/25/16
11	Roussell, B.	10/7/14	86	Yockel, D. J.	8/29/19	230	Plewes, P. E.	4/26/19	424	Saruk, W.	9/3/19	716	Blackmon, F. C.	8/31/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Butcher, N. W.	2/27/19
11	Sparkman, F. D.	8/3/19	86	Mustard, J. J.	9/14/18	231	Pottebaum, R. M.	10/6/19	424	Tattrie, K. O.	9/30/19	716	Felder, L. E.	9/13/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Cole, G. E.	9/16/19
12	Donnelly, C. M.	9/27/19	89	Cotton, M. J.	10/15/19	236	Evers, W. R.	9/25/19	428	Hartley, R. T.	10/17/19	716	Hill, G. L.	9/19/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Colletti, J. B.	8/26/19
13	Weyer, S. L.	9/12/19	98	Curtis, C. T.	7/2/19	236	Schermerhorn, H. A.	9/14/19	428	Petty, R. L.	8/22/19	716	Trussel, G. M.	3/15/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Ellis, R. C.	10/19/19
14	Lapinski, A. P.	9/18/19	98	Kincade, Jr., W. E.	7/29/19	242	Lippo, L. M.	10/18/19	436	Baugus, B. D.	2/25/16	725	Smith, L. W.	8/26/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Freeman, N. M.	8/18/19
16	Neal, B. L.	6/22/19	98	McGill, W. L.	7/27/19	242	Stingl, P. A.	10/4/19	443	Likos, M. G.	9/21/19	728	D'Alessandro, A.	3/1/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Fuller, L. M.	8/25/19
16	Raley, S. E.	10/5/19	98	Salamone, A. J.	10/2/19	245	Walker, G.	10/2/19	459	Sanna, J.	10/6/19	728	Masters, R. S.	7/25/18	Pens. (I.O.)	Horner, F.	8/31/19
17	Walker, G. E.	9/16/19	98	Footo, D.	10/11/19	252	Huizenga, M. J.	9/14/19	465	LeMaster, C. R.	8/30/19	728	Rowland, E. W.	6/8/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Hoskin, C. G.	7/24/19
18	Jensen, D. L.	8/30/19	100	Wenn, R. S.	8/10/19	252	Ladd, K. R.	10/30/19	466	Gandy, L. L.	10/6/19	756	Due, F. Z.	10/29/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Johnson, L. F.	10/2/19
18	Schultz, C. E.	9/7/19	100	Marini, L.	10/13/19	252	Maikrzek, R. W.	10/19/19	474	Griffin, R. L.	5/10/18	756	Nelson, R. W.	10/21/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Kemnitz, A. R.	9/12/19
20	Clinkscates, J. L.	8/31/19	103	Ryan, J. C.	8/22/19	258	Wray, W. M.	2/15/19	477	Ellis, R. D.	4/17/19	760	Miller, J. E.	10/1/19	Pens. (I.O.)	Koppen, R. B.	9/13/19
20	Harrell, J. H.	9/17/19</															



# WHO WE ARE

## Retired Wireman Hopes TV Success Will Fund Charity Work



Retired New Brunswick, N.J., Local 456 member Charles Bush, right, and his friend Gerard Robinson are outdoors enthusiasts who hope their new TV show will help fund their charitable interests.

Although he spent most of his nearly 40-year career working as a journeyman inside wireman — or maybe because of that — Charles Bush has held a longtime, abiding appreciation for the outdoors, and for fishing in particular.

Recently, the New Brunswick, N.J., Local 456 member has been working on ways to combine his passion for nature with his lifelong commitment to community service.

“My claim to fame is that I was the chief foreman for the New York Times’s printing plant in Edison, N.J.,” he said, noting that he served in that role from 1990 until the plant closed in 2008. He retired in 2018 “mainly to chase fishing,” he said.

Bush also has served for years on the board of trustees for the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, N.J. That’s where he got to know Gerard Robinson, a New Jersey Transit worker and member of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART).

Interests in fishing and community service similar to Bush’s had been instilled in Robinson from boyhood, and in 2007, he formed Upstream Productions as an organization with a goal to expose inner-city children to a variety of outdoor-focused activities.

For several years, Bush and Robinson took groups of children from the urban neighborhoods of northern New Jersey — economically disadvantaged boys and girls or those with special needs or dealing with terminal illnesses — out to the country for day-camp excursions.

“It would be a fun day for them,” Bush said, featuring activities such as nature hikes, horseback riding, archery, swimming in lakes and — of course — fishing. Donations from a variety of sources

helped support these trips, he said.

“I kept trying to have fundraisers to keep them going,” Bush said. But unfortunately, money for the outings grew scarce over time. “Eventually, there seemed to be just no way for us to generate enough income.”

As Bush and Robinson brainstormed for fundraising ideas, they recalled that the IBEW and SMART, along with other unions and NECA, sponsor a television program on the Sportsman Channel called “Brotherhood Outdoors” presented by the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance.

“That’s how we came up with the idea to get a fishing program going,” Bush said. They felt that a TV show centered on their fishing adventures would have real potential to bring in sponsorships and donations they needed to help them continue their charity work.

Calling the show “Reel Fishing,” the union brothers set out to record several sample programs in which guests accompanied them on fishing trips to scenic locales across North America. “Our mission is to introduce [viewers] to the fun that is fly fishing,” Bush said.

Paying for these trips out of their own pockets, Bush, Robinson and guests traveled with video crews to a number of picturesque destinations. And to help “Reel Fishing” appeal to a wide audience — not just novice-to-experienced anglers, but also to fishing gear hobbyists and casual viewers — invited guests have included folks like Derik Harmon, the father of New England Patriots safety Duron Harmon, and John Nicholson, star of the ID Channel docudrama “Murder Chose Me.”

Their chances of convincing a network to carry “Reel Fishing” increased significantly after the camera operator who shot Bush and Robinson’s trip to California offered to ask a professional editor

friend of his to take a crack at crafting a broadcast-quality demo video suitable for submission to TV networks.

“It looked really good,” said Bush, who quickly forwarded the video to Outdoor Sportsman Group, the company that oversees the Sportsman Channel. The strategy paid off: “They made us an offer to run the show,” he said.

Season 1 of “Reel Fishing” is set to run this month on OSG’s Sportsman Channel and World Fishing Network, with aired episodes available to stream anytime online. (Visit [bit.ly/ReelFishingUnion](http://bit.ly/ReelFishingUnion) for showtimes.) Planning for future episodes is already under way.

“For the second season, we’re aiming toward getting retired athletes. Their schedules don’t change too much,” Bush said, noting that they had already made some connections with several retired professional baseball players in Florida.

Meanwhile, Bush and Robinson spend time between tapings continuing to work with national charities that serve cancer survivors such as Livestrong and Casting for Recovery. “We spent a day with some cancer survivors, teaching them how to cast,” Bush said. That particular event, held in September in connection with York County, Pa.’s, YMCA, was covered by local Fox affiliate WPMT-TV.

Bush hopes that positive media coverage like that, along with continued airings of “Reel Fishing,” will ultimately yield a steady flow of funding for all of Upstream’s charitable efforts. “We want to get back to doing stuff with the kids,” he said. “We have the dreams, but we can’t follow through until we get the funding.”

Visit [reelfishingwithupstream.com](http://reelfishingwithupstream.com) to find out more. ■



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

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

#### Send letters to:

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# Creative Thinking Helps Bring Museum Workers into the IBEW

In what's believed to be a first in the IBEW's 128-year history, museum workers have voted in favor of joining the union and have begun to bargain with management over a first contract.

"They're thinking outside the box and so are we," said San Diego Local 465 Business Manager Nate Fairman, who hopes this will spur similar organizing drives in his jurisdiction and beyond.

The workers at San Diego's New Children's Museum are part of a recent organizing wave among similar nonprofit professional groups, joining student organizations, political campaign staffers and think-tank workers in concluding that union representation and collective bargaining is the best path to job security and better wages and benefits.

But how did the workers choose the IBEW for representation? "We did get that question," Local 465 Organizer Anabel Arauz admitted. "They looked at other unions and had some conversations, but their conclusion was that the IBEW is very strong, really great."

It also helped that there is a personal connection between the museum and the IBEW. "One of the museum workers has a mother who works at San Diego Gas and Electric," Arauz explained. Local 465 represents workers in several SDG&E units, but none in the utility's call center, which Hannah Mykel's mother had tried to organize several years ago.

"I'd heard nothing but good things about the IBEW," Mykel said, "Well connected, financially stable, progressive, and experts in labor law and bargaining."

Mykel, who contacted Arauz in March, said that shifting power dynamics at the museum over the last few years had prompted staffers there to begin thinking about organizing. "We'd started to see a really high rate of turnover, and we'd exhausted all of our other opportunities to change things," she said.



**"When we try to change the culture — and here, we are the culture — we have to take responsibility."**

— Hannah Mykel, a staff member of the newly organized New Children's Museum in San Diego

These workers at San Diego's New Children's Museum recently decided to organize with Local 465 to help ensure a measure of job security and better wages and benefits.

"The museum is not just a place for us to go to make a paycheck," said Mykel, who has worked there since 2015. "We're all really devoted to our jobs."

In an interview with Voice of San Diego, Arauz stressed that not all unionizing efforts stem from workers who are at the end of their rope. "They care a lot about their workplace, and they want to be able to make that workplace a career for themselves, and for future artists and future employees."

About a quarter-million people visited the museum in 2018, representing a nearly 90% jump in admissions over the past six years. The institution now boasts a reported annual operating budget of \$4.8 million

from a combination of ticket sale revenue, endowments and charitable donations.

Meanwhile, wages and raises had not been keeping up with the cost of living for most staffers. This is a particular problem in San Diego, which consistently ranks high in surveys of the most expensive metropolitan areas in the U.S. Hourly pay for the museum's workers, though, was starting only 50 cents above California's statewide minimum of \$12 per hour.

"This trajectory is no longer sustainable without necessary changes that allow staff to grow alongside the museum," stated [ncmunion.org](http://ncmunion.org), a website that was the result of a true collaborative effort, created by outside volunteers and maintained by members of the organizing group to help publicize their efforts. "We are unionizing to highlight the worth of our work and to advocate for higher pay, increased transparency and equitable practices."

And thanks to the skillful efforts of Fairman, Arauz and others at Local 465, the workers were able to put together a fairly smooth organizing process.

"There wasn't a ton of pushback from the museum," Arauz said, something she found a bit surprising considering that the notoriously anti-union Cox Communications, one of the largest cable television and internet providers in Southern California, has a representative on the museum's board of directors. So does a San Diego labor law firm, which was asked by the museum to set up one-on-one and captive audience meetings with the workers.

"Still, they didn't spend a whole lot of time or money on an anti-organizing campaign," she said. "I think that the fact that we were very positive in our messag-



ing helped us. The workers just wanted to have a say."

After successfully petitioning the National Labor Relations Board to allow for an organizing vote, in-person secret balloting took place in mid-October, and about 70% of the 48 bargaining unit members voted in favor of joining the IBEW and Local 465. "They really want to do this, to take ownership," Arauz said.

"When we try to change the culture — and here, we are the culture — we have to take responsibility," Mykel added.

Bargaining unit certification by the NLRB soon followed, and by November the bargaining committee was polling workers about the kinds of things they would like to see proposed in their first contract with the museum. As a starting point, they're using as a template a contract negotiated by the OPEIU on behalf of workers at the San Francisco Museum of

Modern Art.

"We know that other museums are watching how we're doing," Fairman said, noting that there are nearly 70 other museums in greater San Diego alone. "We're finding that this could open some doors for the IBEW."

At an event in October where the museum's workers went public about the election and their commitment to vote yes on the question of organizing, Arauz gave out her business card and received some inquiries about possible future organizing efforts from workers at other museums. "Maybe we can get a few more of them going," she said.

Workers interested in organizing their workplaces can call the IBEW's Membership Development Department at 202-833-7000 or visit [ibewyes.com](http://ibewyes.com) to learn more. ■



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