

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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## IBEW News

### Photo Contest Winners 3

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Natalie Anaya
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Chris Manzotti
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Adam Brinkman
- Honorable Mention: Emanuel Yllescas & Desiree Bates

### A Clean Sweep

IBEW Members Take Top Honors at 'Super Bowl for Electricians' 20

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### NEW FEATURE

## My IBEW STORY

We asked you to share what IBEW membership has meant in your life. See what you had to say.

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*Outside Organizing for the 21st Century:*

## A Golden Age, a Silver Tsunami and an Ironclad Plan

*More than 130 outside line workers joined the IBEW when JCR Construction signed on with Boston Local 104 after decades of organizing attempts. It was the largest single organizing win in years and the first of what could be many as the IBEW's new organizing strategy is extended to the outside branch.*

**W**ith a significant victory in New England, the IBEW announced a new era in outside construction organizing.

JCR Construction, one of the Northeast's largest nonunion transmission line contractors, had been the target of unsuccessful organizing attempts for decades. But since the 2016 International Convention, the way the IBEW organizes new members and new companies has been changing.

"When I say we are making this brotherhood into an organizing union again, that doesn't just mean locals organizing more. I mean we'll use all the resources at our disposal in a coordinated fashion to maximize our success," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson.

## WINNING THE FUTURE

Director of Membership Development for Outside Construction Ed Mings began the latest JCR campaign a year ago as the first director-level outside organizing specialist in nearly two decades. Since then, he and Special Assistant to the International President for Membership Development Ricky Oakland have worked to bring the overwhelmingly successful new organizing model from the professional and industrial and inside construction sectors to the outside as well.

"Our market share is down to 35% and International President Stephenson said, 'We have to organize this branch,'" Oakland said. "As a brotherhood, we have the resources, but we have to be smart about how we attack this. The locals know the workers, the contractors and the work. The international organization brings coordination and leverage."

At stake is a fundamental battle to regain power in an industry that is in a gold rush.

Renewables like wind and solar are being built at a record pace. The high-voltage transmission lines connecting them to population centers are the main bottleneck to faster expansion. Distributed generation that sends power into the grid from every direction requires radically rebuilding distribution networks. There is also the new national first responders' network and the 5G mobile networks to build out, in addition to the regular repair and replacement of the existing distribution infrastructure. Hundreds of billions of dollars of work is here, and it is happening now, just as the industry runs headlong into a demographic dilemma years in the making.

Complicating this golden age of line construction is a "silver tsunami," where a generation of up to 100,000 linemen — at contractors and utilities, union and nonunion — will become eligible for retirement in the next five years. But it's also an opportunity.

"No one can man all the work. The skills of the linemen have never been in greater demand, and workers have never had more leverage than right now," Oakland said. "It would be crazy to simply

OUTSIDE ORGANIZING continued on page 4

## FROM THE OFFICERS

# Why We Chose Joe Biden



**Lonnie R. Stephenson**  
International President



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

**E**ndorsing a candidate for president before the end of the primary process wasn't a decision we took lightly. But the urgency of the issues at stake in 2020 compelled us and the rest of your IBEW officers to take a stand.

Those issues — energy jobs and health care, especially — were the reason we're backing Joe Biden.

Over the last three years, we polled thousands of our members, from first step apprentices and newly organized call center workers to elected local leaders and retirees with decades of hard work behind them.

We listened, and we know not all of you will agree with this choice. But, at the heart of every decision we make at the IBEW is the duty we have to preserve and protect IBEW members and their jobs.

Thankfully, because we belong to a union, our American Dream of good jobs, safe workplaces, decent wages and benefits and the promise of a dignified retirement is still alive.

But it is at risk.

More than 85% of IBEW members work in the energy industry, and the most important and urgent issue to our vast and diverse membership is a realistic approach to energy decarbonization that preserves our jobs. Getting that right informed our decision.

Joe Biden has been a presence at IBEW meetings and conferences for decades. He has listened to and shared our concerns. His plan to rebuild American infrastructure is shaped by an open dialogue with the very IBEW members who will build and maintain the energy grid of the future. His policies are based in realistic, science-driven approaches that will protect jobs and working families.

Vice President Biden stood out among the candidates in his willingness to listen, learn and follow through on the kinds of energy policy that will protect our members' livelihoods. That's why we chose to speak up when we did.

Now, let us be clear, on the issues of working people's rights on the job, safety, health care and freedom to collectively bargain, any of the leading Democratic candidates would be an improvement on the current administration.

Over the last three years, we have watched President Trump's policies and actions in office. We know some of our members strongly support him, but we have to be extremely frank: the Trump administration has been disastrous for our members and for the rights of working people. Corporate power has never been more ascendant. Job sites are more dangerous. Organizing and collective bargaining are harder.

Every working man and woman in this country faces relentless opposition from this administration and the judges he has appointed. Our rights as union members are under attack because right-wing judges in the courts and the National Labor Relations Board are overturning years of pro-labor laws that threaten the rights of our members daily. While Trump followed through on his promise to deliver another tax break to millionaires and billionaires, he failed to expend any effort on the bipartisan infrastructure bill that would have put tens of thousands of us to work.

Worse, his wholesale denial of climate change is not only foolish, it is cowardly. In its failure to look a problem square in the eye, put on gloves and get to work, it runs against the very ideals that we as working Americans hold dear.

Meanwhile, the IBEW has trained more workers for the green economy than any other organization in the world, and we are uniquely positioned to lead the transition to a carbon-free economy.

But we cannot let the pressing need for climate action lure us into fantasy. Unrealistic policies that ignore nuclear power and carbon-capture or grid reliability and resilience fail our basic responsibility to the future and the present.

This is where Vice President Biden separates himself.

On health care, Joe Biden's plan would ensure that Americans who want a viable government-run plan can get the quality care they desperately need. But he also recognizes that many of us who fought and bargained year-after-year for the kind of health benefits that are the envy of the working world want to keep those plans.

On retirement security, Joe Biden will fight for and sign the Butch Lewis Act and turn back Republican efforts to tax our pension plans into bankruptcy.

We want to thank Sen. Bernie Sanders, in particular, who came to our Political and Legislative Conference last year, answered our questions and truly listened to our members' hopes and struggles. He showed up. There is no doubt that both he and Vice President Biden are with us on important labor issues such as the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which passed the House last month. Where they differ lies at the heart of the IBEW — preserving the energy jobs that put food on IBEW members' tables.

In the end, we hope our endorsement of Joe Biden sends a clear message to every candidate: we need a president whose policies will support working class jobs and unite Americans around a vision that lifts all of us up, not just the ultra-wealthy.

It's clear that candidate is not Donald Trump. As leaders in the energy industry, we hope each of the Democratic candidates takes a long look at why we chose to endorse Vice President Biden and seeks our input on energy policy going forward. ■

## “LETTERS TO THE EDITOR”

### A Pitch for the Brotherhood

I and most brothers and sisters would agree that we are in a line of duty of great importance to this country. Our work pales in comparison to the great women and men who serve in the military protecting our freedom and risking their lives, but the jobs we do are vital here at home. Our work can be dangerous, too, and that's why the training we receive has to be the best in the industry. Our apprenticeships are second to none, and we take pride in our craft.

Our Code of Excellence, our perfectionism, our refusal to bend on proper procedure, our distaste for shortcuts, and above all, our bond of brotherhood sets us apart. That bond requires love, compassion and charity for our fellow brothers and sisters, and it should always take precedence and remain the cornerstone of our union.

I'm writing this because I think we should all be making this pitch to everyone who doesn't know about the IBEW. I hope each of my brothers and sisters will take time to help spread this message to their own communities.

*Douglas Sonnier, Local 861 member  
Lake Charles, La.*

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



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

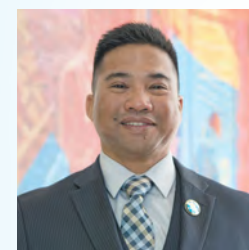
### Organizing Takes Courage

If you're not organized and don't have a local union representing the employees, then unfortunately you are disorganized and doomed, eventually, for failure. Safe work practices, professional training, decent wages, health care and pensions after giving 40 to 50 years of your sweat and blood don't happen with wishful thinking. It takes courageous brotherhood and commitment to achieve "an honest day's pay for an honest day's work."

*Gene Clemans, Local 483 member  
Tacoma, Wash.*

## My IBEW STORY

**Leyton Torda, Journeyman Wireman**  
Honolulu Local 1186



“Before my apprenticeship, I was attending college full-time and working long hours in retail to pay tuition. I barely had time to study or finish my homework — not the best way to get an education.

My girlfriend at the time and I had a long conversation about me leaving school to join the apprenticeship. She's now my wife, and while we weren't sure back then, it turns out we made the best decision for us and our future family.

In the IBEW, I got the best training out there, and I made a living while I learned. My benefits and the money I made as a journeyman allowed us to buy a house and raise two children comfortably. I still count my blessings and never forget that the life I live now is because the IBEW made it possible. We get to live, work and play in one of the most beautiful places on Earth — Hawaii.

In Hawaii, part of the aloha spirit is sharing your blessings with everyone else. Membership in the IBEW has been one of my greatest blessings. Mahalo nui loa for allowing me to share my story.”

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

# AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

## 2019 IBEW Photo Contest



**FIRST PLACE**  
**Natalie Anaya | Los Angeles Local 11**

This year's winner comes from deep underground, where third-year apprentice Natalie Anaya captured this hero shot of journeyman wireman Ron Torres preparing for work. The Local 11 pair work for signatory contractor Dynalectric on Metro LA's Regional Connector, which will expand and connect Los Angeles' sprawling rail system through downtown by 2022.



**SECOND PLACE**  
**Chris Manzotti | Providence, R.I., Local 99**

Bridge work isn't for those with a fear of heights. But Local 99 journeyman wiremen Chris Manzotti and Paul Hallam (pictured) were up to the task when changing bulbs atop the Newport Bridge in preparation for its 50th anniversary celebration.



**THIRD PLACE**  
**Adam Brinkman | Tacoma, Wash., Local 483**

Sometimes a great photo comes from simply noticing what others don't, and journeyman lineman Adam Brinkman proved the point with this shot of a day's work reflected in a puddle of water. The Local 483 member works for Tacoma Power.

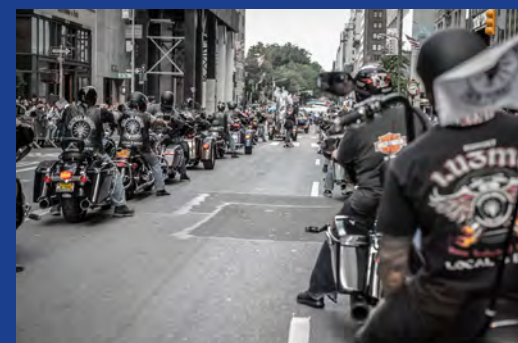
The IBEW's 2019 Photo Contest results are official, and thousands of you weighed in on IBEW.org, Instagram and Facebook.

Submissions came in the hundreds from across North America. They featured IBEW members at work, at play and everything in between, reminding us just what it means to be a member of the greatest union in the world.

This year's top prizes depict individuals at work both below the earth's surface and high above it. Third place pictures an IBEW line crew's work literally, and artfully, reflected in that surface.

As always, the winners were chosen by your votes. Congratulations to all of them on their outstanding work.

### HONORABLE MENTION



**Emanuel Yllescas | New York Local 3**

Manhattan's Labor Day parade is an annual tradition for the Local 3 motorcycle club. Journeyman wireman Emanuel Yllescas captured this unique perspective during a pause in the action.



**DESIREE BATES | San Diego Local 569**

Second-year apprentice Desiree Bates caught this San Diego sunrise behind Local 569 journeyman wireman Dwight Faulkner as the pair prepared to run conduit – an inspiring way to start the day.

Look for the launch of 2020's IBEW Photo Contest in May's Electrical Worker and on IBEW.org. We can't wait to see what our members are up to in the year ahead. ■

## Outside Organizing for the 21st Century:

# A Golden Age, a Silver Tsunami and an Ironclad Plan

### ► Continued from page 1

match the growth in demand. We have to win market share now.”

Throughout the 1990s, utilities spent on average \$2 billion a year on transmission and distribution infrastructure. Since 2014, they have spent that much about every month and a half. Industry analysts at the Brattle Group expect that number to be maintained for the next two decades.

“The industry is blowing up. Interest rates are historically low, and the demand is historically high,” said Director of Business Development Ray Kasmark. “We expect a 4% growth in demand for linemen every year for the foreseeable future.

“It’s simple math. If you want to increase market share, you have to beat that spread between growth and retirement,” Kasmark said.

## The Old Way — Dying Slowly

Mings was appointed director in 2018 to gain the confidence of the outside locals, hire organizers in the field, set organizing targets and lay out our strategic plan.

For years prior, the outside effort lacked a comprehensive strategy, Mings said. Organizing was scattershot, with Mings handing out business cards and running a social media campaign nearly alone. In many places, the only time a company was organized was when it needed the union to help win a job.

“It was whoever walked through the door for a long time. It was all by chance. That’s why we were at 60% market share when I joined in 1978 and we’re at 35% now,” he said.

Some parts of the country, including Northern Illinois where Mings is from, had traditions of organizing and their market share stayed strong, but for many places, the

focus was on replacing the workforce through training apprentices and stripping the occasional worker from a nonunion operation.

“There is simply no way we can do this through apprenticeship and a lineman or two here and there. No way,” Mings said. “We have to organize companies into the IBEW or we will disappear.”

And it’s not that the apprenticeship programs aren’t trying.

“We currently have 1,100 outside construction apprentices. That is the most we have ever had,” said Mick Van Natta, linemen training coordinator at the Northeastern Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program. The story is much the same at the IBEW’s eight other outside training centers.

## Set a Strategy. Pick a Target. Execute.

Oakland was given a goal at the 2016 International Convention of 0.5% per year growth by the next convention in 2021. And a new strategy was needed to meet that goal.

Many organizing drives are handled at the local level, but some campaigns need more. Some targets, Oakland said, need additional resources from the international, up to and including full-time international organizers and all-hands-on-deck ground pushes that bring dozens of volunteer organizers from locals across the country for months at a time.

“We are seeing great results with this recipe in other sectors, and it makes sense to bring that same thinking to the outside,” Oakland said.

The strategy is relatively simple: Organize so many workers that contractors are forced to accept the IBEW or risk losing their workforce.

“We don’t want to go to an election in the construction side of the house,” Mings said. “What we are after is voluntary recognition.”

Choosing JCR as the first target was almost a no-brainer.

“We started at JCR because the linemen were interested in organizing. They came to us,” Mings said. “We had several meetings, and in a bargaining unit of about 150, we had 50 to 90 people showing up.”

During the organizing drive, JCR was bought by Quanta, a Texas-based “roll-up” contractor that has purchased about 50 outside electrical con-



*The IBEW now has the resources and ambition for coast-to-coast outside organizing campaigns from the new Boston Local 104 members at JCR (above) to workers like those from Vacaville, Calif., Local 1245, at right.*

tractors in less than decade. With revenue of over \$13 billion last year, Quanta are a giant in the industry and, like most of the half-dozen or so similar operations, they have both union and nonunion companies in their portfolio.

“I think that made a very big difference because it wasn’t the same longtime owner saying, ‘We won’t organize.’ It was a big company in Texas that owned two other union shops, and these guys had all worked together,” Mings said. “When they compared pay stubs with workers from unionized Quanta companies, they could see the difference the IBEW made.”

After collecting enough signed cards from JCR employees, Mings said he and Assistant to the International President for Construction, Maintenance and Business Development Jerry Westerholm went to the leadership of Quanta.

Westerholm has known CEO Duke Austin and founder John Colson for two decades. It wasn’t actually Quanta that bought JCR, but a Quanta-owned company, MJ Electric. Mings has known MJ Electric President Ed Farrington for nearly as long. When Westerholm called Austin to tell him they had more than a majority of cards, a long history of mutual respect was an important factor in the company’s response.

JCR agreed to voluntarily recognize the new members. At 130 new members, it is one of the largest single construction groups organized, inside or outside, in a long time, Oakland said. And the majority of the credit goes to Boston Local 104.

“They get the kudos. They did the



door knocking; they held the meetings. This was their campaign and we helped however we could,” Oakland said. “For us, it was a way to shake off the cobwebs.”

The next target on Mings’ list — the drive that would show the true power of the fully operational organization — was coming, and the target would be a much tougher, much larger Quanta company in one of the most anti-union parts of the nation.

## Starting from Zero

If JCR was low hanging fruit, Sumter Utilities in the Carolinas is the opposite.

“We have, effectively, zero market share and none of the linemen there really know who we are. That’s not anyone’s definition of low-hanging fruit,” Mings said.

Sumter Utilities is a Quanta company, and for decades, founder Colson had said to Westerholm that they wouldn’t just hand companies over, but they wouldn’t play dirty.

“Colson said from the very beginning, ‘If you want a group, go after it. If they want

to go, they can go.’ And, for the most part, Quanta has been living up to it,” Westerholm said.

In the case of Sumter, Westerholm went further and negotiated an official neutrality agreement from Quanta. After that, it was time to bring every tool to the campaign.

First, the team got more help. Stephenson appointed the first outside organizer employed by the International, Shannon Davis from Nashville Local 429. Davis had been a utility lineman at a rural electric cooperative fired for trying to organize. Within a few months he was joined by two more new outside organizers: Will Schenk from Tulsa, Okla., Local 1002 and Jason Allison from Kansas City, Mo., Local 53. A fourth, John Harrell from Orlando, Fla., Local 222, was hired in January.

“It won’t be structured exactly the same way as inside. We won’t have people in every district because the numbers don’t justify it,” Oakland said. “They will be covering more ground and, because the major contractors work in many places, they’ll all help wherever a particular campaign is.”



*Outside organizing targets include line construction, maintenance and (left) substation work, among other specialties.*



*Nonunion line workers often work side by side with IBEW members, especially on storm work. This creates perfect opportunities to talk about the advantages of joining a union without anti-union management stepping in. But organizer Jason Allison cautions that talking paychecks before connecting personally can come across as arrogant.*

“Before we got there, hardly anyone was walking into our halls. We stripped hundreds of guys,” he said. “How many are still with us is hard to say, but we were hearing from the contractors. They were squawking about all the manpower they lost.”

that brings them to the table pretty quick,” he said. “If we see another nonunion company out there, we don’t just make a note and drive on; we’re stopping.”

### The Third Side of the Coin

Historically, there have two main ways to organize: bottom up and top down. You organize the workers, or you organize the company. Obviously, when done right, one leads to the other. But this is no longer the whole story.

“Business development is the third side of the coin,” Kasmak said. “A contractor needs workers and work. If we can organize the work, contractors have nowhere to go but us.”

It also makes Business Development’s outside construction representatives — Tiler Eaton and Joel Bell — indispensable resources during ground pushes and organizing drives.

“Joel and Tiler know all the projects on the books for the next 6 to 24 months: where they are, who is doing them and what the opportunities are,” Kasmak said. “We can answer linemen’s questions and convince a business manager that there is merit in growing.”

At the moment, there is so much opportunity everywhere, project owners and contractors are ready and willing to sign on if they get the manpower they need, Bell said.

“Our biggest limitation on organizing right now is that many outside locals don’t have the structure to support organizing,” he said.

It all comes back, Mings said, to what Stephenson means when he says the IBEW will become an organizing union again. Everyone, everywhere, is back in the game until we meet the goal of the IBEW’s founders: organize the whole electrical market.

“We don’t have one target, then another, then another. Our target is national. Our resources are sufficient to go after every part of the country,” Mings said.

See our video about the JCR Organizing campaign at [bit.ly/JCROrganizing](http://bit.ly/JCROrganizing)

### Making a Pitch That Resonates

Outside construction organizer Allison said it was all very familiar to him. From 1997 to 2004 he worked as a nonunion lineman.

“We lived paycheck to paycheck, me and my wife. We were literally budgeting for babies, but we couldn’t start a family,” he said.

A year after Allison joined the apprenticeship with Kansas City, Mo., Local 53, he and his wife finally started a family even though he was a few years from topping out.

“I knew I would make it. There was no way I was going back,” he said.

The message he and the other outside organizers bring to the nonunion linemen isn’t complicated, but he has learned that starting out by comparing

pay stubs turns many people off. Linemen are proud, he says.

“I start out by asking ‘How are they treating you?’ These folks sometimes hear ‘We make more money’ as ‘We are better than you,’” he said. “Then I listen. Once they know I care how they are being treated, then we can talk about money.”

Allison is now working on Mings’ third target, and likely the last before Mings retires this month, Great Southwest, an MYR company. Allison travels all over the Eighth and Eleventh districts, getting cards signed and stripping workers.

“If the company doesn’t want to talk to us, we’ll strip workers to our side and



Corn stepped into the circle.

“I told him, ‘I don’t know who you are walking onto my property saying that about my members, but you can turn your bleepity-bleep around and walk right out that gate,’” Corn said. “Well, that spread like wildfire.”

As word of the incident (and the utility’s refusal to discipline Corn) got around, he got plenty of questions from Sumter workers.

“‘Could you talk like that to the boss?’ You could if you were union. When they cross the line of the contract, they are wrong and you can tell them so,” he said. “Even after that we didn’t get a whole bunch of people signed, but they saw something there.”

Mings said he calls the campaign a first step.

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and concerns of some of the linemen they’d be talking to.

“I was hoping to show these non-union linemen that we are here to help, and to let them know we weren’t going anywhere,” Mings said. “Sumter will take a long, long time. It won’t be overnight, and that’s our fault. We left that part of the world alone for too long.”

That kind of personal connection is crucial in a state as historically hostile to unions as South Carolina. Former Gov. Nikki Haley once announced that she would not allow new unions in the state and would “run out” every union already there.

“It is hard here, very hard here,” Corn said. “You have the government pushing back at the state and federal level right now. These workers fear for their jobs. They’re afraid to sign cards. They think management is writing down license plates at meetings and, whether it’s true or not, they believe it.”

Corn told a story about a “safety meeting” that a Sumter foreman called in December. This caught his attention, because he had never seen one called on utility property.

“I was worried someone had died, and I didn’t want it to happen on our site,” he said. “Well, I go and he was talking about knives and gloves and I’m waiting to hear the big boss talk about the big deal. And then he starts going on about how bad unions are.”

*JCR was the first of multiple campaigns launched in the last year, with targets in the Carolinas, Texas, Missouri, Florida and everywhere in between.*



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

## Canadian Members Find Good Wages, Good Friends at Massive Pennsylvania Project

It's a nearly 2,100-mile drive from his home in Newfoundland to the jobsite in western Pennsylvania. But Damian Hogan jumped at the chance to join construction crews at the Shell Pennsylvania Chemical project north of Pittsburgh.

"There's not a lot of work in our local," said Hogan, a journeyman inside wireman and a 20-plus-year member of St. John's, Newfoundland, Local 2330. "The way my number was on the [call] list, I didn't see myself getting work of this nature anytime soon."

Geoff Wayne did not have as far to travel. He's a member of London, Ontario, Local 120, about six hours away. There is more work in his local's jurisdiction, but not as much as in most of the U.S. Wayne also enjoys working as a traveler and jumped at the chance to cross the border.

"The American brothers have treated us phenomenally," he said. "When you come down here, you wonder if guys might be talking about you taking their work. But there's been absolutely none of that."

In some ways, the moves by Wayne and Hogan are no different than any travelers within the IBEW.

With most U.S. construction locals at full employment, travelers often have their pick of big jobs. In the case of large-scale projects like Shell Pennsylvania, the help is welcome — and needed.

Officials from Beaver, Pa., Local 712, where the plant is located, have worked with the Construction & Maintenance Department to ensure contractors have enough workers to fill the calls. The small local has relied on travelers from the very start to help meet the demands of the US\$6.5 billion gas project [See "Building the Gas Boom" in the August 2019 Electrical Worker].

But cross-border travelers are still rare. That's why many Canadian wiremen, especially those in areas where the local economy isn't great, jumped at the chance to gain temporary visas and work south of the border.

"International' is in our name for a reason," First District Vice President Thomas Reid said. "We service two great countries. Our goal is always to strive for full employment, no matter if our members have to cross the border in either direction. We're meeting the needs of the contractor while also providing jobs with high wages and good benefits for our members. It's a win-win for everyone."

"We've been trying to find a way to get our members to go south because we're getting calls all the time from business managers down there," Executive Assistant to the First District Vice President Paul Dolsen said. "They tell us they have plenty of work and need wiremen. 'Can you get your people down here?'"

The short answer was no. Unlike

linemen, who can easily travel from Canada to help restore power after a natural disaster, wiremen are treated differently under U.S. government regulations and not allowed to do so. That meant companies looking to bring them in had to apply to the Labor Department through the H-2B visa program.

It's uncertain if programs like the one in Pennsylvania will continue, Dolsen said. But for now, the work is welcome. The Canadian economy is strong in some parts of the country but not nearly as strong as in the U.S., in large part due to low fuel prices that have dried up oil work.

Hogan said the approval process to travel south wasn't nearly as laborious as he expected. He met with First District International Representative Cordell Cole, who pointed him to forms he needed to fill out with the Canadian and American governments.

The process went smoothly, he said.

*Workers at the Shell Pennsylvania Chemical Project near Beaver, Pa., where one of the largest single construction projects in the U.S. is putting IBEW members to work from both the U.S. and Canada.*

His work visa was waiting for him when he crossed over into the United States at the border with Maine. He and others had to commit to working a year on the plant's construction. There were 295 visas filled, Dolsen said.

Hogan said the kindness shown by Local 712 and other members has been overwhelming. Local 712 member Phil Divittis gave him the name of a mechanic to work on his truck while he was gone for the Christmas holiday. When he returned, Divittis had paid the mechanic and told Hogan to reimburse him at his own convenience.

Wayne had tried in 2018 to work on the Vogtle nuclear plant in Georgia, but



those visas were not approved, so he especially appreciates the work in Pennsylvania. There are always challenges adapting to a new jobsite, but the benefits far outweigh that, he said.

"You're working six days a week and the money definitely makes it worthwhile," he said. "The retirement package is absolutely huge. When you add in the exchange rate, it's a good place to be." ■

## De belles occasions pour nos membres canadiens au grand projet en Pennsylvanie

C'est une route d'environ 2100 miles depuis son domicile à Terre-Neuve jusqu'au chantier de construction dans l'ouest de la Pennsylvanie. Mais Damian Hogan a sauté sur l'occasion pour aller rejoindre les équipes de construction au Shell Pennsylvania Chemical project situé au nord de Pittsburgh.

« Il n'y a pas beaucoup de travail dans notre local, » dit Hogan, un électricien compagnon et membre du local 2330 à Saint-Jean de Terre-Neuve depuis plus de 20 ans. « L'endroit où figurait mon numéro de téléphone sur la liste d'appel, je ne me voyais pas obtenir du travail de cette nature aussi rapidement. »

La distance que Geoff Wayne devait parcourir n'était pas aussi grande. Il est membre du local 120 à London en Ontario situé à environ six heures de route. Il y a plus de travail dans le territoire que couvre notre section locale, mais pas autant que dans la majeure partie des É.-U. Wayne aime bien voyager pour le travail et il a sauté sur l'occasion pour traverser la frontière.

« Nos confrères américains nous ont traités extrêmement bien, » ajoute-t-il. « Lorsque tu te rends ici, tu te demandes s'ils vont parler de toi pour avoir volé leurs emplois. Mais il n'y a absolument rien eu de cela ici. »

D'une certaine façon, ce que Wayne et Hogan ont fait n'est pas plus différent des autres voyageurs au sein de la FIOE.

Avec la plupart des locaux dans le

domaine de la construction aux États-Unis qui sont à plein emploi, les voyageurs ont souvent le loisir de choisir les grands projets. Dans le cas d'un projet d'une grande envergure comme celui de Shell Pennsylvania, l'aide est la bienvenue et elle est dans le besoin.

Les responsables du local 712 de Beaver, Penns., où la centrale se trouve, ont travaillé avec le département de la construction et de la maintenance pour veiller à ce que les entrepreneurs aient assez d'employés pour répondre à la demande. Depuis le début, le petit local comptait sur les voyageurs pour répondre aux besoins du projet de pétrole de 6,5 milliards dollars américains [voir l'article du mois d'août 2019 intitulé *Building the Gas Boom* dans l'Electrical Worker].

Mais les voyageurs transfrontaliers sont uniques. C'est pour cette raison que plusieurs électriciens canadiens, plus spécifiquement ceux dans les régions où l'économie locale n'est pas forte, ont profité de cette rare occasion et ont obtenu leurs visas temporaires en vue de travailler au sud de la frontière.

« L'International est dans notre nom pour une raison, » mentionne Tom Reid le vice-président international du premier district. « Nous desservons deux pays formidables. Notre objectif est de s'efforcer de parvenir à un plein emploi, peu importe si nos membres doivent traverser les frontières dans les deux directions. Nous répondons aux demandes des

entrepreneurs tout en fournissant à nos membres des emplois avec des salaires élevés et de bons avantages. Tout le monde en sort gagnant. »

« Nous essayons de trouver le moyen d'envoyer nos membres au sud, parce que les gérants d'affaires de ces locaux nous appellent tout le temps, » dit Paul Dolsen l'assistant exécutif au vice-président international du premier district. « Ils nous disent qu'ils ont beaucoup d'emplois pour le poste d'électricien. "Est-ce que tes membres peuvent venir ici ?" »

La réponse courte était non. Contrairement aux monteurs de lignes qui peuvent facilement voyager du Canada pour aider à rétablir le courant à la suite d'une catastrophe naturelle, les électriciens sont traités différemment sous les règlements du gouvernement des États-Unis, et ils ne sont pas autorisés à faire de même. C'est-à-dire que les entreprises souhaitant les embaucher doivent en faire la demande auprès du Labor Department pour obtenir le visa H-2B.

On ne sait pas si des programmes comme celui de la Pennsylvanie vont continuer, dit Dolsen. Mais pour le moment, le travail est la bienvenue. L'économie canadienne est forte dans certaines parties du pays, mais pas aussi forte qu'aux É.-U., en grande partie à cause du prix de pétrole trop faible qui est venu épuiser les emplois liés au pétrole.

Hogan nous informe que le proces-

sus d'approbation n'était pas aussi laborieux qu'il pensait. Il a rencontré le représentant international Cordell Cole du premier district qui lui a montré les formulaires à remplir auprès du gouvernement des États-Unis et celui du Canada.

Le processus s'est bien déroulé, dit-il. Une fois avoir traversé la frontière pour aller aux États-Unis avec le Maine, son visa de travail l'attendait. Lui et les autres devaient s'engager à travailler pour une année à construire la centrale. Il y a eu 295 visas qui ont été déposés, dit Dolsen.

La gentillesse démontrée par le local 712 et les autres membres a été incroyable, dit Hogan. Le membre Phil Divittis du local 712 lui a donné le nom d'un mécanicien pour réparer son camion lorsqu'il était parti pour la période des fêtes. À son retour, Divittis avait payé le mécanicien et avait offert à Hogan de le rembourser au moment qui lui conviendra.

En 2018, Wayne avait tenté de travailler à la centrale nucléaire de Vogtle en Géorgie, mais les visas n'ont pas été approuvés, il apprécie donc particulièrement le travail en Pennsylvanie. Il y a toujours des défis à relever lorsqu'il vient le temps de s'adapter à un nouveau chantier de construction, mais les avantages compensent largement, dit-il.

« Tu travailles six jours par semaine et l'argent en vaut vraiment la peine, » dit-il. « La taille de la retraite est immense. Et lorsqu'on y ajoute le taux de change, c'est un bon endroit pour travailler. » ■

# THE FRONT LINE: POLITICS & JOBS

## Workplace Organizing Gets Boost with PRO Act Passage

An effort in Congress to make it easier for working people to join labor unions like the IBEW took a big step forward on Feb. 6 when 234 members of the U.S. House of Representatives voted to approve the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act.

"It's unfortunate that workers need an act of Congress to get us back to the original intent of the National Labor Relations Act," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "But it's heartening that House members from both parties can agree on a strategy for strengthening this landmark law that has helped make the lives of countless working people better over the last 85 years."

Sponsored by Rep. Bobby Scott of Virginia and introduced last May, the PRO Act calls for modernizing the definition of unfair labor practices and for allowing fines or lawsuits against employers who keep workers from forming workplace bargaining units, among other reforms.

"Evidence and experience demonstrate that labor unions are one of the most powerful tools workers have to improve the standard of living for themselves and their families," said Scott, chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor. "The PRO Act is a comprehensive proposal to ensure that workers have the right to stand together and negotiate for higher wages, better benefits and safer working conditions."

The act, H.R. 2474, aims to repeal so-called "right-to-work" laws, enacted in 27 states, that openly discourage workers from organizing and allow employees to be free riders, reaping the benefits of union membership like contract negotiations and enforcement without contributing to their costs.

"The PRO Act would help stabilize the power balance in the workplace and empower the middle class to grow stronger," said Political and Legislative Affairs Director Austin Keyser, who noted that recent national polls have shown that approval of unions in general is trending upward, with about half of all non-organized workers saying they would join a union if they could.

Labor activists hope the stronger penalties prescribed by the PRO Act will make employers think twice before interfering with workers' rights to organize and bargain for contracts. The bill also targets the captive audience meetings that employers often use to bully workers who are thinking about unionizing.

The House Education and Labor Committee approved the PRO Act in September, and then it sat untouched for

months. But thanks largely to a steady stream of pressure from members of the IBEW and other labor unions, Keyser said, 76 representatives were moved to sign on to a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California in January asking for a full House vote on the measure.

Folsom, N.J., Local 351 member Donald Norcross, a former business agent who has represented New Jersey's 1st Congressional District since 2014, was among those who signed the letter to Pelosi. He was also one of the PRO Act's original co-sponsors.

"As an IBEW member and a lifelong labor leader, I can attest to the importance of giving workers a voice in the workplace by protecting them from violations of unfair labor law and practices," Norcross said. "The PRO Act restores fairness to an economy that's rigged against workers by closing loopholes in federal labor laws and increasing transparency in labor-management relations."



Among the original co-sponsors of the PRO Act was Folsom, N.J., Local 351 member Donald Norcross (in bucket), a former business agent who has represented New Jersey's 1st Congressional District since 2014.

Shortly after the letter was sent, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland promised, via Twitter, to bring the PRO Act to the House Floor for a vote prior to the President's Day district work period.

Next, the bill heads to the Senate, although the Republican majority there has shown little interest in considering worker-focused legislation. Even so, Stephenson said, IBEW members should be proud of the progress that we've made so far.

"It took years for working people to finally get the Cadillac tax repealed," Stephenson said. "But we won that fight against unfair taxes on our health benefits, and we'll win this one too."

"We can and should keep up the pressure on our senators by telling them to support H.R. 2474," Stephenson said, "and by reminding all of our legislators that working people will remember their support for our priorities — or their lack of support — on Election Day." ■

## Idaho Locals Helping Lead Statehouse Battles for Good Jobs, Workers' Rights

Lobbying for union jobs and workers' rights isn't easy in a state as red as Idaho, but IBEW activists are playing a robust role in bridging the divide.



Idaho IBEW members converged on the state Capitol in January to lobby for pro-worker bills and legislation vital to safety and quality in the building trades.

With about 35 members from six locals, IBEW members were a major contingent in the union army that descended on the Capitol in Boise for Lobby Day in mid-January.

"They always make us proud," said Idaho AFL-CIO President Joe Maloney, a journeyman wireman and organizer with Pocatello Local 449, who was elected to lead the state federation two years ago. "The IBEW is really strong here in Idaho."

In addition to Maloney's local and Boise Locals 291 and 283, Seattle Local 77, Spokane, Wash., Local 73 and Salt Lake City Local 57, all sent members. The out-of-state locals represent workers in Idaho.

Like many states, a major issue for Idaho's building trades is saving the journeyman-apprentice ratio on construction sites. While it's an uphill battle, and some damaging legislation has already passed, Maloney said, "we've got quite a few Republicans on our side."

Alicia Davila, president and co-founder of the women's committee at Local 291, had a unique perspective among IBEW members on the ratio, which ensures safe, quality construction while providing unparalleled training for apprentices.

"People were really curious, asking, 'Are you an electrician?' Davila said. "I work in telecommunications. I told them, 'I'm here because I don't want somebody who isn't trained in our registered apprenticeship to be working on my house.'"

Local 291 Business Manager Mark Zaleski said it's too early in the legislative session to know what all the 2020 challenges will be, but there's concern that state licensing requirements for tradesmen could be watered down, or worse.

"We haven't seen a bill yet, but we think there's a creeping attack, possibly doing away with licenses altogether," Zaleski said. "Many in Idaho government think that licenses are a hurdle for people to go to work. The fact is, we have people lining up to be apprentices. There's no hurdle there."

Assaults on licensing and on the journeyman-apprentice ratio are threats to good jobs and public safety, he said, and the IBEW will continue to be vigilant. "Lobby Day is a great opportunity — we lobbied during the day and had the meet-and-greet at night, with tons of representatives coming out. But we fight it out here every day."

It's an especially steep battle in Idaho, with supermajorities hostile to labor in both legislative chambers and a Republican governor.

But Maloney said there has been

progress, such as legislation last year giving workers more time to file claims for unpaid wages, and another bill that provides workers' compensation for first responders suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Gov. Brad Little signed both into law.

"We have a good relationship with the governor, where at least his door is open and he'll sit down and listen to what we have to say," he said. "He's not a champion for labor, but he's not out to hurt us."

Maloney is encouraging unions to spend more time with lawmakers on the opposing side, even by sponsoring tables at GOP fundraisers in their districts "so they see you in the public eye."

"We don't care whether you're a Republican or a Democrat as long as you're voting for labor," he said. "We strive every day to break those barriers down."

He noted that on the PTSD bill for police officers and firefighters, some legislators asked why unions weren't fighting for all workers to be included. Because, he explained, they knew the financial impact of a bigger bill would kill it altogether, and no one would be covered.

"The way you eat an elephant is one bite at a time, and that's what we're doing," he said. "We're getting little wins and building on those."

For Local 291's Davila, Lobby Day was a first. As she raised building trade and broader workers' issues, such as the fight for a higher minimum wage, she shared her own story — a mother of four who grew up in Idaho and strongly opposed the state's right-to-work law long before she was a union member. She eagerly joined the IBEW when she started working at an AT&T call center in early 2018.

She was exhilarated by her day at the Capitol. "I felt like it went really great," she said. "To be there as a union sister advocating for labor rights and for women's rights in the workplace, it was empowering." ■



Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, left, earned the support of Bluegrass State union leaders and rank-and-filers ahead of last November's statewide elections.

## Kentucky's New Labor-backed Governor Moves Quickly to Protect Workers

IBEW activists and other working people in Kentucky can claim another victory as labor-backed Andy Beshear, in one of his first official acts as governor, reinstated the state's Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board in January.

"Organized labor helped get out the vote for Gov. Beshear last November," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "And within months he brought back the standards board, showing us that when he said he'd stand up for working people and on-the-job safety, he meant it."

Established in 1972 and chaired by the governor-appointed Labor Cabinet secretary, the 12-member standards board is tasked with enforcing Kentucky's worker safety rules, required by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act to be at least as stringent as the national standards.

The previous governor, Republican Matt Bevin, was Beshear's polar opposite when it came to labor issues. In 2017, Bevin signed into law two bills that the General Assembly had rammed through as "emergency legislation:" one making Kentucky a right-to-work state, and the other repealing the law mandating payment of the prevailing wage on public construction projects.

The following year, Bevin issued an executive order eliminating the standards board and placing sole authority over workplace safety decisions in the hands of his labor secretary.

"The men and women who are most knowledgeable of the safety and health of our workers must, by law, make up the board, not an 'at-will' employee who answers to the governor and not our workers," argued Beshear, a Democrat who was serving as Kentucky's elected attorney general at the time.

Frank Cloud, a Fourth District international representative who supervises the IBEW's grassroots political and legislative activism program in Kentucky, agreed. "This order took labor out of the picture and made our workplaces less safe," Cloud said.

Not long after Bevin's order, an

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## POLITICS & JOBS *continued*

investigation by the Kentucky Center for Investigative Reporting discovered that the state's worker safety program had neglected to follow up on almost all of the workplace deaths that had occurred over the previous two years.

Fed-up labor activists around the state rallied to help Beshear defeat Bevin in last November's elections, emboldened after Bevin's proposal to replace teachers' pensions with a hybrid investment and defined-benefit plan, which prompted statewide teacher walkouts in 2018 and 2019.

"This was our first chance to respond to Bevin directly, and our members spoke loud and clear at the ballot box," wrote Bill Finn, a former business manager of Louisville Local 369 who now serves as director of the Kentucky State Building and Construction Trades Council, in an email to the members of Kentucky's AFL-CIO chapter.

Beshear's father, Steve, served as Kentucky's governor from 2007 to 2015 and was himself a noted friend of working people, so it came as little surprise to Gene Holthouser, Local 369's political director, that the younger Beshear didn't just re-establish the board at the very start of his term, he packed it with labor voices.

"He also didn't come into office thinking he already knew everything," Holthouser said. "He's relying on us to be the experts, and we have a seat at the table now. Before, we were kicked out of the room altogether. It's like night and day."

In fact, one-third of the board's members come from unions: Caitlin Blair, from United Food and Commercial Workers' Local 227 in Louisville; John Holbrook, business manager of United Association Local 248 in Ashland; Keith Murt, from UA Local 184 in Paducah; and John Stovall, president of Teamsters Local 783 in Louisville. And new labor secretary, Larry Roberts, is a former state director of the Kentucky Building Trades who previously served in that role from 2012 to 2013 under Beshear's father.

"This is just one step that we are going to take to make sure that when our Kentuckians leave their family in the morning and head to work, it's in the safest environment possible and that they know that they've got a state government that is looking out for their safety," Beshear told the Kentucky Center for Investigative Reporting.

But with worker-friendly representatives in Kentucky's General Assembly in the minority, other labor priorities like repeal of right-to-work and restoration of prevailing wage realistically seem out of reach for now.

"Elections have consequences, though," Holthouser said, "and we're never going to let those things get out of people's minds."

Bluegrass State voters will have a chance to select more advocates for working people in November, when every Kentucky House of Representatives seat is up for election as well as half of the state's Senate. "It's a chance for us to build on the gains we made in 2019," Holthouser said. ■

### IBEW Leader Appointed to Key Role in Michigan's Labor Department

Michigan's working families have a powerful new voice in government with the recent appointment of Muskegon, Mich., Local 275 member Sean Egan to the state's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

"We couldn't have a better representative of the IBEW in Michigan government than Sean," said Local 275 Business Manager Jonas Talbott. "His focus has always been on labor and working families over himself. It's evident in pretty much everything he does."

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer appointed Egan deputy director for labor in the Michigan Labor Department. The role is part of the executive leadership team and provides direct oversight of the state's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Michigan Workers Disability Compensation Agency, the Michigan Bureau of Employment Relations and the Michigan Wage and Hour Division. The larger department also encompasses the Unemployment Insurance Agency, the Workforce Development Agency and a new Department of Prosperity.

"The department touches on nearly all aspects of a person's working life, so it's imperative for labor to have a voice at the

table," Egan said. "We usually do have friends in the legislative halls, which is important, but the real work of government happens in the departments and the agencies that establish the rules of the game."

A journeyman wireman by trade, Egan served as business manager of Local 275 from 2007 to 2017, and as president and assistant business manager before that. During that time, he also attended law school, graduating from Western Michigan University's Cooley School of Law in 2013 with honors.

"Law school just kind of happened for me," Egan said. "There were times when I'd be in meetings with executives and realize that, while I had their respect, I felt they were still looking at the trades as less educated because I didn't have a college degree. Being a hardheaded Irishman, I decided I would get a degree with classes in the evenings and weekends."

Egan has also served as president of his local labor council and as the local building trades president. In 2017, Grand Rapids, Mich., Local 876 was going through a leadership transition and Business Manager Chad Clark asked Egan if he would come on board and assist the local as it navigated 30-plus contracts, the transition, operational needs and other issues. So Egan made the move to serve as the local's general counsel. He credits the move with giving him experience in the utility, government, and out-

side branches of the union.

"I had never really intended to leave Local 275, but a culmination of factors pushed me in a different direction," Egan said. "Having the ability and fortitude to pursue this level of education has proven invaluable for our brothers and sisters through negotiations, grievances, organizing and so much more."

Egan's background isn't one often found in government positions, even those tasked with overseeing the lives of working people. He and other Michigan labor leaders know he'll bring a unique pro-worker perspective to the role.

"I have not yet met an attorney on our side or management's that has the mix of experience I have," Egan said. "The most important thing we bring with us from the field to our leadership roles in our union, in politics, or in my case the department, is our experience. As a wireman, I fully understand what our brothers and sisters experience every day and the threats they face."

Egan also volunteers with the A. Philip Randolph Institute's annual "trunk or treat" event at Halloween, as a tax preparer through the United Way for low-income people to maximize the Earned Income Tax



Muskegon, Mich., Local 275 member Sean Egan will be a powerful voice for Michigan's workers in his new role with the state's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

Credit and Michigan-specific tax credits, Labor Day events, his local union audit committee, and with other service events through his local and labor council.

Whitmer, a Democrat, won election in 2018 and ended eight years of Republican leadership under Gov. Rick Snyder that was hostile to unions and working families, including pushing through a controversial right-to-work law in 2012.

"Gov. Whitmer has been a friend to working families for her entire life and fully comprehends the role that labor plays," Egan said. "After enduring eight years with an administration that had no interest in communicating, supporting or otherwise engaging labor or working families, she has opened the door. We have a seat at almost every table now." ■

## ORGANIZING WIRE

### In Quest for 'Someone to Advocate for Us,' New Jersey Librarians Turn to the IBEW

Literature lovers in Vineland, N.J., are getting their latest recommendations from IBEW-member librarians, and it's thanks to an unlikely organizing campaign brought on in the wake of the Supreme Court's anti-union Janus decision.

In 2018, Atlantic City, N.J., Local 210 Business Manager Anthony Petito and Financial Secretary Walt Young responded to the Janus decision — which made all public-sector workplaces right-to-work — by meeting with bargaining units across the local's jurisdiction to remind members of the value unions offer them and their families.

Neither expected it to add members, but that's just what happened following a meeting with municipal workers in the southern New Jersey city of Vineland.

Two employees of the city's library were sitting in the back of the room that day, curious about the IBEW and the potential of union representation. About one year later, they and their colleagues had finished off a successful organizing campaign and approved a two-year contract.

"This is actually a case of something positive coming out of a negative situation," Petito said.

Helen Margiotti, head of Children & Young Adult Services at the library and now a chief steward, said the library employees looked into organizing in the past. Nearly all of the city's other municipal employees are represented by Local 210. Margiotti and others thought it strange that library employees weren't.

But that work took on new urgency in 2017, when a private company proposed taking over management. Library employees would see their wages, pension and benefits determined by that company instead of the library's board of trustees.

The company eventually withdrew the offer, but it did serve as a motivating tool for Margiotti and her colleagues.

"At that point, a few of the staff joined together and said, 'I think we need a union,'" she said.

The Court's 5-4 decision in *Janus v. AFSCME* gave public employees who benefit from a collectively bargained contract the option to opt out of paying dues, overturning 40 years of judicial precedent. Many analysts expected it to devastate public-sector unions financially, but membership has remained stable and even increased in some unions.

Margiotti was aware of that decision, but the reason she attended the 2018 meet-



Juni Ruiz, a senior assistant, joined with the rest of his colleagues at the Vineland Public Library and accepted representation from Atlantic City, N.J., Local 210. The bargaining unit recently approved a first contract.

ing was the opportunity to meet with a Local 210 official.

"What they wanted was a voice," Petito said "They wanted security. They were OK with the status quo, but they wanted protection."

Even before the final vote was taken, Local 210 went to work for affected employees. Five library employees were laid off by the city in early 2019 due to a funding reduction, including four who would have been bargaining unit employees. Local 210 negotiated on their behalf to secure severance pay, Petito said.

The contract that was approved in October 2019 includes grievance and arbitration procedures as well as the new members having increased input into their schedules, which is important because they are expected to work some holidays and weekends. Librarians also saw their work hours increased to 37 ½ per week after they were cut to 30 in recent years.

As evidence that security was more important to them, there are no salary increases, although Local 210 hopes to negotiate that in a future contract. For now, the library employees have the respect they deserve, Petito said. Vineland is a city of 61,000, about an hour's drive west of Atlantic City.

"Local 210 went into negotiations optimistic and it's very clear that the community has an interest in the success of that library," Petito said.

Margiotti said the vote was unanimous in approving the first contract. About 14 employees are members of the bargaining unit, depending on how many part-timers — who also are covered by the contract — are employed.

"No one here has much experience with unions," she said. "We're still in the learning stage. It's nice to have someone in there advocating for us." ■



# CIRCUITS

## IBEW Members Deliver Another Super Performance on the World Stage

Football fans across the world aren't likely to realize it, but most years IBEW members are as critical to their Super Bowl viewing experience as chicken wings and guacamole.

This year's game on Fox marked the 29th time that IBEW professionals provided the pictures and sound from the big game. The Kansas City Chiefs beat the San Francisco 49ers 31-20 at Miami's Hard Rock Stadium, and the game was broadcast to 102 million viewers around the U.S.

More than 400 IBEW members were in South Florida working as camera operators, sound mixers, graphic artists, replay technicians and other responsibilities. The IBEW has had a relationship with Fox Sports since the early 1990s, when the network was just beginning its sports division. This was the ninth Super Bowl televised by the network.

"We're incredibly proud of our long-standing partnership with Fox Sports and thankful that it gives our talented and hard-working members a chance to work on the biggest stage of all," International President Lonnie R. Stephenson said. "They always do us proud and they did just that during this year's game. They're the best at what they do."

The IBEW has a relationship with another Super Bowl broadcaster, CBS, dating back to 1939, when it was a radio company. Members have provided the behind-the-scenes personnel for the 20 Super Bowls televised by that network. That means IBEW members have worked more than half of the 54 Super Bowls played.

Other IBEW members were in and around Miami working for local television stations and other production companies covering the game and events surrounding it.

"As I visited the stadium the week before the game, I saw firsthand all the hard work and knowledge required to prepare for the most-watched television event of the year," Broadcasting & Telecommunications Director Robert Prunn said.

"Fox Sports is a great partner of the IBEW, and our members contribute so much to the success of all sporting events on the network. The Super Bowl is always fun to watch, and I hope it meant a little more to the rest of our members knowing that their brothers and sisters were bringing the game into our living rooms."

The quality of the IBEW members' work was not lost on Fox Sports executives either.

"The Super Bowl is the day that we all live for as sports television professionals, and none more so than the talented men and women working with us down in Fort Lauderdale," said Michael Davies, Fox Sports senior vice president for field operations and technology. "We are truly grateful for our relationship with the membership and leadership of the IBEW, not to mention the amazing crew that's working



*New York 1212 members Matt McGahan, top, and Mario Zecca operate the Chapman camera crane, which allows for camera shots above the players on the sideline, during Super Bowl 54. The pair were a part of a 400-person Fox Sports crew.*

the game with us. It's what goes into making Super Bowl Sunday a huge success."

Hard Rock Stadium is in Miami but Fox Sports has much of its operations based in nearby Fort Lauderdale. ■

## Code of Excellence Boosts Safety and Morale at Colorado Utility

The energy running through La Plata Electric Association in southwestern Colorado these days isn't limited to the utility's power lines.

For nearly 70 members of Denver Local 111, which represents workers statewide, a new Code of Excellence agreement is recharging a workplace that had suffered for years from low morale.

"It's starting to heal the divide," said Derek Burns, one of the local's assistant business managers. "People are saying how refreshing it is to see the union and the company working together like this."

Flawed policies, unjust discipline and other mismanagement had long frustrated La Plata workers, leading to high turnover. Meanwhile, their ideas for improving safety and training went nowhere.

But the environment began to

change last summer when new CEO Jessica Matlock arrived.

"She's been a breath of fresh air for us on the union side," said chief steward Ryan Peacock, a substation foreman who's been at La Plata since 1998. "There was very little communication between the last CEO and employees. Hopefully now we're fixing some broken bridges."

On Matlock's first day at the cooperative in July 2019, Burns and Local 111 Business Manager Rich Meisinger drove six hours from Denver to Durango to meet her. They'd heard good things from IBEW leaders in Washington state, where she was a top manager at a large public utility. They weren't disappointed.

"She told us her biggest issue was safety — making sure that her people are safe and that they have the tools, equipment and training they need," Burns said.

With that door open, he and Meisinger brought up the Code of Excellence, the IBEW's trademark program bringing management and workers together on issues of safety, professionalism, accountability, relationships and quality.

Matlock embraced it. Growing up with a mother who was one of Colorado's first female firefighters, she said, "safety was just paramount to me. I want to make sure that all my employees, no matter

where they're at, are being cautious and that they'll come home safely."

She also saw the broader benefits of the Code. "It's a commitment to each other, how to treat each other and how to act," she said. "We all know that, but having it in writing, making a paper commitment that we're going to do our best for each other and our customers, is really important to me."

Within a few weeks, a core group of managers, union leaders and workers began meeting to hammer out the details, finding common ground in the process.

"There's accountability, honesty and integrity for our membership and the company," Meisinger said of the agreement. "There's no lip service from either side."

Steward Aubrey Gillespie, one of nine customer service representatives, was part of the COE committee.

"Honestly, when I first heard about it, I felt like it was going to be something that was talked about, but that the follow-through wasn't going to be there," she said. "The meetings, the collaboration, really opened my eyes. It was empowering."

Matlock also made the rounds individually, meeting one-on-one with every employee for about 45 minutes. Union leaders encouraged members to make the most of it. "We told them, 'If you have a beef with the company, this is the time to bring it up,'" Burns said.

Fairly quickly, he saw a shift in management's approach. "Driving was a big issue," he said, as an example. "We've got a lot of snow here in the winter, and we've had accidents with vehicles sliding off the road. In the past, it would get written up and there would be discipline. Now the focus is more 'let's learn from this.'"

The morning of Jan. 9, the entire staff at La Plata — about 100 union members and managers — gathered for breakfast burritos and a presentation that made the Code of Excellence official.

After 11 years at the utility, Gillespie said it feels like a new workplace, one with real connections and a shared mission.

"We're more a team now, and that's been so fantastic," she said. "Everyone plays such a critical role, not just the linemen, but customer service, the mapping department — without each other we're not complete."

"This is a great company and we want to have the respect, to let our community know that we care about safety and reliability. That takes all of us working together." ■



*Local 111 members at La Plata Electric Association gather to celebrate a new Code of Excellence agreement that workers and managers say is building morale and a spirit of a teamwork at the Durango, Col., utility.*

## IBEW MEDIA WORLD

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

### IBEW.org

Get the latest IBEW news, including the online version of the *Electrical Worker*, at [IBEW.org](http://IBEW.org).

### YouTube

The IBEW Canadian women's conference was full of "fierce, hardworking, loyal sisters" who are passionate about being sisters in the Brotherhood. Get inspired at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker).

### Vimeo

Sacramento, Calif., Local 340 has had a lot of ups and downs. Find out how they revitalized their local and doubled their market share at [Vimeo.com/IBEW](https://vimeo.com/IBEW).



### HourPower

The IBEW has partnered with Electrical Safety Foundation International to educate



our members on how to maintain safe and secure work environments. Watch the latest safety message at [IBEWHourPower.com](http://IBEWHourPower.com).

### ElectricTV

Allegiant Stadium, the new home of the Las Vegas Raiders, is on schedule thanks in part to IBEW members. It is set to open for the upcoming 2020 football season. Learn more at [ElectricTV.net](http://ElectricTV.net).



# TRANSITIONS

## DECEASED

### Susie Barber



Susie Barber, a retired Sixth District international representative and early member of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, died in

December after a long illness. She was 76.

Barber's IBEW career began in 1969 when she went to work at a Western Electric plant, rising to chief steward and executive board member for Local 1942, now Downers Grove, Ill., Local 21.

"She was larger than life," said Royetta Sanford, retired director of human services at the International Office, who worked with Barber on the EWMC and the Women's Conference. "Susie had the ability to communicate effectively with any and everybody; it didn't matter their race or ethnicity, whether they were women or men, young or old. People were drawn to her."

**"She was larger than life. People were drawn to her."**

— Royetta Sanford, Retired Director of Human Services

EWMC President Emeritus Robbie Sparks knew Barber as a "union sister, activist, organizer and friend" for more than three decades. They had the opportunity to work together in the early 1990s when Barber was assigned temporarily to the Fifth District for a union drive at Scientific Atlanta.

"Susie's mantra was 'Don't meet me there, beat me there,'" Sparks said, "It was a hard-fought campaign and although we were unsuccessful, we developed a lifelong friendship."

Barber joined the international staff in 1980, working on organizing campaigns in manufacturing, telecom and other fields. Though assigned to the Midwest's Sixth District, she also worked at times in Atlanta, where she was involved with the annual march honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Whether union business or civil rights, "Susie was always looking to help folks," said EWMC President Keith Edwards, retired business manager of Portland, Ore., Local 48. "She always tried to make sure she was mentoring younger folks, not so much in a formal way, but to talk with them about where they were at and share information with them."

Russell Ponder, retired vice president of Chicago Local 134 and past EWMC vice president, described Barber's "indominable spirit." "You always felt good being around her. She was always upbeat, she had that vibe. It was a privilege to be in her company."

Barber was instrumental in organiz-

ing the Caucus's first education conference, held in Atlanta in 1991. She, Sparks, Sanford and two other international representatives put in their own money to sponsor the event, which became the EWMC's annual conference. Previously, members had met only every four years at IBEW conventions since the Black Caucus, as it was known originally, was established in 1974.

Friends said Barber's creativity and reliability helped the EWMC grow and thrive. "She always thought outside the box and she could always be counted on when things got tough," Sanford said.

Barber, who was born in Tennessee and grew up in the suburbs southwest of Chicago, was active in the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and other organizations throughout her IBEW career.

She continued to serve workers and her Illinois community after retiring in 2004. Those roles included chairing the Joliet Housing Authority and being the first black woman elected to the Joliet City Council, where Sanford said she brought her "union sensibilities."

"When she was running for the council seat, she was way ahead of the game because she had her union organizing skills, her community skills, and she drew on all of those. It's no surprise that she won that seat."

Sparks, Sanford, and Edwards visited Barber last July in a Chicago-area nursing home. "As soon as we got there, we started talking about old times. She perked up and started laughing and talking. It was a wonderful experience for all of us," Sanford said.

Barber's survivors include her son, Shadon Barber, a past member of Downers Grove Local 15, and numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband of 38 years, Donald, an auditor for the Laborers union.

The IBEW joins Sister Barber's family and friends in mourning her loss, and will always be grateful for her generosity of spirit and tireless work on behalf of our union and the EWMC. ■

## RETIRED

### Richard 'Dick' Deering



Second District International Representative Richard "Dick" Deering retired on Feb. 1, capping the career of one of Maine's most respected

labor leaders.

"He's your typical guy from Maine," said retired Second District International Vice President Frank Carroll, who recommended to then-International President Edwin D. Hill in 2014 that Deering be added to the district staff. "They are laid back and have good values. He's one of those people. He's a trustworthy, hard-working guy."

Brother Deering's father served in

the Marine Corps and Dick was born at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, but the family moved back to Maine just two weeks later. The younger Deering grew particularly close to his grandfather, Sam Day, an electrician and member of Portland Local 567.

"He took me under his wing on a lot of occasions," Deering said. "He was a foreman and when he visited jobsites, I went with him. When he went out of town for something like checking on a bridge, he took me with him."

After two years of community college, Deering began his apprenticeship and became a Local 567 member in 1976, topping out as a journeyman inside wireman three years later.

"I saw very early in my apprenticeship the importance of attending union meetings," he said. "I had a say in what was going on."

That caught the eye of some of the leaders running the union.

"I was very fortunate," he said. "I had the opportunity to be mentored by the most capable, solid IBEW members at the time. They were able to share, and I was the sponge. Later, I always felt an obligation to mentor young people and share what I had learned."

By the early 1980s, Deering was a member of Local 567's examining board and later served one term as president beginning in 1990. He returned to the field in 1993, served three years as a business agent beginning in 1996, and decided in 1999 to return to the tools again while also serving as a JATC instructor.

**"He's never had a situation he couldn't handle. Having Dick on staff made my job a whole lot easier."**

— Second District Vice President Michael P. Monahan

"I was very confident in my responsibilities as a general foreman for a large employer," he said. "But a lot of people approached me and asked me to run [for business manager], and I saw a lot of things that were important and needed to be addressed."

Deering was appointed business manager in 2008 at a time when Local 567 needed strong leadership. Like much of the country, Maine's construction industry collapsed during the economic crisis. He cut travel and expenses for the local office staff — all while not eliminating any staffers — and took the politically unpopular step of promoting alternative job classifications into the union.

The addition of those construction wiremen allowed signatory contractors to successfully bid on jobs they might have previously bypassed. [Workers in CE/CW alternative classifications have not com-

pleted apprenticeship training but have performed lower-level work at jobsites, usually nonunion ones, and their wages are lower.] The move helped those contractors survive, and many are thriving today — along with Local 567.

"There were a lot of dark days during the recession, to be honest with you," Deering said. "But we survived and came out in one piece."

In 2014, having been re-elected twice without opposition, Deering moved to the Second District office. He finished his career servicing 15 locals throughout Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire in a variety of branches, including construction, government, broadcasting, utility, railroads and manufacturing — the latter of which includes paper mills, which are vital to the state's economy.

Carroll said Deering was respected by management because of his low-key, thoughtful presence and he took his concerns seriously while also being able to argue forcefully for members.

"There was no running your mouth with him," Carroll said. "He was a calming presence who always found a way to get things turned around."

Added current Second District Vice President Michael P. Monahan: "If you know Dick, you can believe everything he tells you. He is right to the point in an easy calming way."

Carroll retired in 2015 and Deering finished his career under Monahan, who worked with Deering for many years when Monahan was serving as business manager of Boston Local 103.

"He's just a steady hand, and that's exactly what you want from a business manager or an international rep," Monahan said. "The guy just handles everything in a professional manner. He's never had a situation he couldn't handle. Having Dick on staff made my job a lot easier. I think the world of the guy. He's just a decent, decent human being."

In retirement, Deering and wife Debbie plan to spend more time with four adult children and three grandchildren. Two children live in Maine, another in Michigan and another across the Canadian border in New Brunswick. The couple plans to keep their home near Portland.

"I was blessed with those three grandchildren later in life and I absolutely adore spending time with them and their families," he said.

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

## DECEASED

### Donna Myron



Donna Myron, a retired Sixth District international representative whose many achievements included helping the union's first-ever women's conference at the district

level, died Jan. 16. She was 74.

Myron was initiated into then-Chicago Local 1427 in 1966 while working in a clerical unit at ComEd. She quickly became involved in lobbying and organizing committees and served as a steward, recording secretary and executive board member. Her local is now part of Downers Grove, Ill., Local 15.

She joined the international staff in 1986 and managed a wide range of assignments in organizing, bargaining, arbitrations and more, while also helping lead efforts to empower women and minorities inside the IBEW and the larger union community.

"She was a mentor and a role model for a lot of young female representatives in the labor movement," said retired Sixth District Vice President Pat Curley. "You'd see young women who were just getting involved always gravitating toward her, questioning her about how she got involved and what they should they do."

**"She wasn't afraid to tackle things that were new."**

— Retired Sixth District Vice President Pat Curley

Recognizing Myron as a rising star in her local, then-Sixth District Vice President James P. Conway tapped her in 1984 to organize a conference for the district's many women in utility clerical units, telecom and manufacturing.

The conference encouraged women to get more involved in their union and included workshops on discrimination, pay equity, job safety and advancing workers' issues through political action.

Until her retirement, Myron helped plan all subsequent women's conferences in her district, as well as the union's international women's conferences in 1997, 2001 and 2004. She was also active in the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Meanwhile, she thrived with a heavy workload as an international representative, Curley said. "Any assignment she had, she went into it wholeheartedly. She wasn't afraid to tackle things that were new."

Myron had a hand in many of the district's organizing victories, he said. One that made her particularly proud was the campaign to affiliate the Independent Communication Telephone Workers Union, bringing more than 2,000 members into the IBEW in 1987.

In a story when she retired in 2005, she marveled at how much had changed during her four decades in the union. "We are seeing more and more women with bigger roles at the IBEW, more women reps and more women involved on the construction side and on the local level," she said.

Myron's survivors include four sisters and many nieces and nephews. The IBEW sends sincere condolences to her friends and family, and gratitude for decades of service that touched many lives. ■

# LOCAL LINES

## Apprenticeship Social Club's Trivia Night Benefit Event

L.U. 1 (as,c,ees,ei,em,es,et,fm,i,mt,rs,s,se,spa,st&ws), ST. LOUIS, MO — The IBEW Local 1 Apprenticeship Social Club held their first ever Trivia Night at the union hall on Saturday, March 7.

Tables of eight for the Trivia Night event were \$240. Beverages and snacks were provided. There were 10 categories. Each category had 10 questions. The top three tables were awarded the following prizes: first prize — \$300; second prize — \$200; and third prize — \$100. In addition, there was a 50/50 raffle and also silent auctions. All proceeds were donated to the IBEW Local 1 Relief Committee.

Special thanks to IBEW Local 1 Apprenticeship Social Club Pres. Bill Clements for chairing this event. Bro. Clements said, "We hope events like these will get the word out about how we are trying to help members and have a good time. We'd like to encourage union brothers and sisters to participate in more Local 1 events."

We mourn the loss of the following members: Larry Carlton, Ralph Freund Jr., Byron Utley, George McLean Jr., Claude Coffman, Virgil Lee, Lester Dudley, Robert Grobe, Daniel Smith, Howard Miller, Gerald Pritchett, Robert Snyder, George Reid, Richard Thurman, Donald Julien and Harold Kingston Jr.

Jan Bresnan, P.S.



At a safety awareness class hosted by Local 35.

## Safety Awareness Class

L.U. 35 (i), HARTFORD, CT — Local 35 hosted a "SAFE" (Situational Awareness & Fundamental Empowerment) class last fall. It was a safety awareness class for women and was offered to our female members. The class was a four-hour workshop that explored the nature of real-world violence and offered a practical approach to personal safety.

The instructors were Jennifer Thornell, who holds a 2nd degree black belt in karate and has over 25 years training in various martial arts, and Frank Dawson, who has over 30 years of law enforcement experience. They are located in the Groton, CT, area.

The class included both a PowerPoint presenta-

tion and hands on self-defense practice. The attendees were pleased with the class and the skills they learned. Several commented on the feeling of empowerment after taking it. All felt that it was a worthwhile experience.

William Moriarty, B.M./F.S.

## IBEW Members Volunteer For American Legion Project

L.U. 41 (em,es,govt,i,se&spa), BUFFALO, NY — Local 41 was honored to volunteer at American Legion Post 735 in West Seneca to modify the bathrooms there to be ADA accessible. Steve Gaiser took the lead, performing the work and coordinating with multiple contractors on site to ensure the project stayed on schedule. Bus. Mgr. Mike Gaiser accepted a plaque from Post 735 and from Erie County Clerk Mickey Kearns honoring Local 41 for the electrical work our members volunteered. Thanks to Steve and all who helped our veterans at American Legion Post 735!

Our union and others are under attack every day from businesses and the politicians who do their bidding. Any employer is in business to make money, and as much as they can. They do not want to have to negotiate how much they pay for wages and benefits; they want to tell you what you are worth. They can accomplish this by weakening unions, especially through right-to-work for less laws. With another important election year ahead of us, and as I have written in the past, please strongly consider the politicians we endorse. We have vetted them and believe they are the best option for our union and our paychecks. There are many days where we are working with our local elected public officials attempting to gain opportunities for our members to go to work. When elected officials do not believe in what we do, it becomes more difficult to work with them. Vote for your paycheck and lobby for your hobby.

Gregory R. Inglut, A.B.M.



Local 41 Bus. Mgr. Mike Gaiser (sixth from right, front row behind railing) with veterans of American Legion Post 735 and contractors who participated in a volunteer project.

## Contract Negotiation Updates

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

We have reached a three-year agreement with the City of Anaheim for the new professional management group; the agreement features wage increases of 3.5%, 3.0% and 2.5%. For the City of Colton — electric side, as of this writing we are waiting for the city's response after the union rejected the city's last best and final offer.

At Southern California Edison (SCE), members ratified a two-year general contract extension by an 89% margin. It includes wage increases of 4% and 3% and features a third-year opener. The contract extension also includes a 7% increase for meals and shift differential, with a provision for a committee to be started by the end of January 2020 to discuss double time and meal waiver for state law.

The line clearance tree trimming agreement is complete, with Senate Bill 247 requiring contractors to pay line clearance tree trimmers at the 1st step apprentice prevailing wage posting (full package). Also, the centralized line clearance tree trimming training regimen will start in June 2020. For the San Bernardino Water and Sanitation (WAS) Unit: At press time we are beginning to meet for bargaining.

Congratulations to Bros. Wil Robinson, Jacob Lyb-bert and Ramon Garcia on their 1st place trophy from the 2019 International Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City.

We're sad to report the deaths of Bros. Andy Salcido and Bill Blake. Our condolences and prayers are with their loved ones.

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

Mitch Smith, A.B.M.

## 'Welcome to Tree Trimmers'

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL — We would like to welcome the line clearance tree trimmers from Endruzzi Contracting, which recently signed a project labor agreement with the local union. Line clearance tree trimming remains at full employment and at this writing was expected to be steady all winter.

Former retired Local 51 business managers Dominic Rivara and Jim Bates received their 55- and 50-year pins, respectively, in December. Congratulations, brothers.

With 2020 being a presidential election year, now is the time to get registered to vote if you aren't already registered. Please be sure to vote pro-labor and protect your pay and benefits!

We were a collection site for the Toys for Tots campaign this past holiday season and collected many toys and donations. Thank you to everyone who helped out. Make it your 2020 resolution to attend your union meeting and give eight hours of work for eight hours of pay.

Karlene Knisley, B.R.



Local 51 retired former business manager Dominic Rivara (center) with his sons Jeff (left) and Mike.

## St. Patrick's Day Float

L.U. 55 (c,lctt,o&u), DES MOINES, IOWA — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Our local held its annual Christmas party on Dec. 13. Over 150 attended, and everyone had a great time.

We are saddened by the death of two members. Bro. Gail Ralph, who passed away Nov. 12, was a member for 57 years. He was the first apprentice to graduate from Missouri Valley Apprenticeship. Bro. Eric "Coop" Marsden passed away Nov. 26. Both of these guys were very well liked. Take a moment of silence for them!

We welcome our new Asst. Construction Rep. Cody Eigenheer. He will be getting out and visiting members at different job sites. Say hello and get to know him.

The work outlook for us this year is much better. If any travelers are looking for work, give us a call.

Our local will have its first float in the St. Patrick's Day parade this year. If you want to lend a hand, call the hall and sign up! It will be fun!

I'd like to ask a favor of everyone. If you know of a member who has passed away, please get that information to me so we can include it in upcoming articles.

Most of you are used to the snow and cold. Just remember it's easy to get frostbitten or fall on the ice. Be careful and stay safe. Make sure you allow plenty of space between vehicles.

## Submitting Local Lines Articles

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

## Trade Classifications

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

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

## LOCAL LINES



Members and their families enjoy Local 55's December 2019 Christmas party.

At the press time, Local 55 was making plans for the Feb. 27 banquet.

Our local is known for training some of the best linemen in the world. Good job!

Myron Green, P.S.

## A New Union Hall; 2019 Political Conference

L.U. 77 (lctt,mt,o,t&u), SEATTLE, WA — Local 77 delegates had an opportunity to meet with all our Washington state elected officials while attending the 2019 IBEW Political/Legislative Affairs Conference in Washington, D.C. We continued to discuss the issues that matter to labor, maintaining the prevailing wage and the right to organize. In addition, we stressed our concern for multi-employer pension plans and eliminating the excise tax on our healthcare plans. The November conference hosted an exceptional lineup of speakers ranging from U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R) from Pennsylvania's 1st congressional district. Our IBEW Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson hosted a town hall-style session with presidential candidates Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders. **[Editor's Note: To read more on legislative updates, see news article "Two Major IBEW Priorities Finally Made Law," posted Jan. 23, 2020, on the IBEW website at [www.ibew.org/media-center/Articles](http://www.ibew.org/media-center/Articles).]**

The purchase of a new property in Spokane Valley is finalized. The upgraded 5,200-square-foot main building is the new home for our Spokane union hall. We are currently renting the smaller 3,000-square-foot building and will review our building needs in the future. This property will better serve our membership and allow room for training, general meetings, conferences and adequate parking. The sale of our old downtown union hall is complete, and the treasury has been dedicated to the purchase of our new Spokane union hall. Stay tuned for our open house.

Damian Hernandez, R.S.



At 2019 Political/Legislative Affairs Conference, from left: Matthew Hepner, executive director, Certified Electrical Workers of Washington; Local 77 Pres. Rick Johnson; IBEW Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson; U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA); and Local 77 Rec. Sec. Damian Hernandez.

## 2020 Construction Projects

L.U. 103 (cs&i), BOSTON, MA — 2019 is a wrap, in the books and put away. We're on to 2020 and looking forward to another solid year of construction work in Boston.

This year, we will welcome 10 new projects of 40 stories or higher. Whether under construction or set to break ground, these projects will include the long awaited 55-story South Station Tower and a new 46-floor signature office tower, which is part of the redevelopment of the Congress Street Garage and future home and headquarters of State Street Bank.

This project is owned by National Real Estate, the development arm of our NEBF Pension fund. Investing our pension assets into construction projects is a win-win for IBEW members. The return on investment

(ROI) on real estate projects, like this one, have been among our portfolio's best and most reliable performers. At the same time, it puts our members to work on good, union-built projects. Office, residential, education, biotech, health-care, transportation, hospitality, retail, sports and entertainment projects continue to drive our diverse Boston economy forward. #LetsGetToWork #PoweringBoston #2020.

Jimmy Fleming, P.S.

## Transitions at Union Hall

L.U. 111 (em,govt,lctt,mt,o,rtb,spa&u), DENVER, CO — It is an honor to announce the retirement of Bro. Duane J. Lawlor, a 44-year member, who also served on the staff representing the membership since June 2014. The Lawlor family has a long-standing history with Local 111. Duane's father, Gordon Lawlor (who passed away in 2018), and brother Bruce Lawlor were very active in the labor movement. Bruce served on the staff for 25 years until his retirement in 2014. The Lawlor family has a total of 96 combined years of service with the IBEW.

Bro. Duane spent his career with Public Service Company of Colorado in the Gas Department. He also served as Local 111 steward, chief steward, treasurer, president, assistant business manager, and senior assistant business manager. His experience and mentorship have been a great asset to the local and we most sincerely wish him the very best on his retirement and future endeavors.

We also welcome Suzann Kuhns and Allen Goff to the union staff. Sister Kuhns brings 18 years of service and experience to the position and came from the Design Department. Bro. Goff brings over 10 years of experience in the Pawnee Power Plant. These new union representatives are both from Public Service Company of Colorado. More information will be provided on all new faces at the hall in our next newsletter.

Patrick S. Quinn, P.S.

## Solidarity for Working People

L.U. 125 (lctt,o,t&u), PORTLAND, OR — As we get into spring, there are a lot of distractions for us all — changing weather, yardwork, increased projects at work, and oh, yes, primary elections will be in full swing. Many people think the IBEW is anti-Republican; that simply is not true. The IBEW is against any person or entity who does not support working people — and their rights to organize and collectively bargain. Regardless of your political opinion, please remember to respect others' opinions and avoid attacking each other due to differences. The IBEW does not tolerate harassment, discrimination, workplace bullying, or hostile work environments. Those types of actions simply don't promote our founders' values, and this local won't accept them either.

Join us March 14 for our annual Casino Night. This is a great opportunity to fellowship while raising money for the local's Brotherhood Fund and contributing to a local food bank. Also, don't forget about our other annual events to support the Oregon Burn Center — golf tournament (Hood River), the Pacific Northwest Lineman's Rodeo, and the local's golf and softball tournaments. We hope to see you there!

It's a new year, but our priority — our members' safety — hasn't changed. Be safe every day.

Marcy Grail, A.B.M.

## 2019 Holiday Festivities

L.U. 141 (ees,i,o&u), WHEELING, WV — Greetings, brothers and sisters! As of this writing work is slow, with 56 members on Book 1. Dirt is being moved at the site of a very large petrochemical complex tentatively planned to be built in our jurisdiction, although at press time an official announcement has yet to be made by company and government officials.

December was a very busy month for Local 141, with lots of holiday events for the membership and their families to enjoy. The local participated in several area holiday parades, with our own Local 141 holiday float. The local also held a very nice Christmas dinner for our retirees, had a Christmas breakfast with Santa for the members' children and grandchildren, and hosted a Christmas dinner/dance for the membership and their families. Many thanks to Bros. Art Oakland, Dave Jurovcik, Joe Donovan, and all the members of the Local 141 Social Committee and all others who helped organize all of these events.

Local 141 congratulates Bro. Fred Russell, who received his pin for 70 years of service to Local 141 in December. Fred's son, Jim, is also a recent retiree from Local 141. Congratulations and thank you to both of these fine men for their dedication and service to Local 141!

Kurt "Bug" Reed, P.S.



Local 141 retired member Fred Russell (left) receives his 70-year service pin presented by Bus. Mgr. Tom Conner.

## 'Welcome to New Contractor'

L.U. 177 (bo,ees,govt,i,mo,o&pet), JACKSONVILLE, FL — During the holiday season, Local 177 had a successful Christmas Party for the kids and another successful Christmas luncheon for the retirees. Many thanks to Pres. Luis Cano and his army of volunteers who made both parties a huge success. After playing Santa for 42 years, Bro. Bill Gehm passed the duties of Santa over to Bro. Carlos Nunez. Although we missed Bro. Gehm as Santa, Bro. Nunez did a great job and the Santa position is in good hands.

We recently signed contractor J. Williams Industrial Electric and we look forward to contributing to the company's success.

As we begin 2020, I think of this being a big election year, and I think of the upcoming legislative session in Florida. Brothers and sisters, if you do not contribute to PAC, I ask why? If you have questions about the PAC fund, please do not hesitate to ask me or someone at the hall. These funds are absolutely necessary to help give us a voice in politics. We know



Local 257 awarded service pins at 2019 annual picnic. From left: Ken Polly, Stace Stokes, Don Stokes, Glen Kinkade, Paul Cope, Carl Nichols, Don Bruemmer, James Breid, Charles Farris, Mark Schroeder, Lloyd Libbert, Jerry Petershagen and Gary James.

what we will get if we do nothing, but I will not write it here.

Hoping for a happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead for all of my brothers and sisters.

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



At Local 177's holiday Christmas party are members Bill Gehm (left) and Carlos Nunez, as Santa.

## Contract Negotiations

L.U. 245 (govt,lctt,o,rtb&u), TOLEDO, OHIO — On the outside work is pretty slow right now. There are several contract negotiations going on as of this writing: WTOL (Channel 11) with TEGNA, Fourth District Teledata Agreement, Nelson Tree, The City of Bryan, Bryan Wastewater Treatment, and Hancock Wood. Hopefully some of these negotiations will be wrapped up by the time you read this.

At Davis-Besse, at the time of this writing the new company was slated to take over in mid-January with a name change from First Energy to Energy Harbor — and the plant should be in its refueling outage by publication date.

There are two important elections this year. First there is the Local 245 election of officers, with all the offices up for election as well as delegates for the next International Convention. In case you haven't noticed, there is a lot of gray hair among your officers, many of whom will not be seeking reelection. This presents an opportunity to get involved; there's no time like the present to start thinking about it.

Next is the 2020 national election, which is very important to all of us. If you like or don't like what's going on in this country, this is your opportunity to be heard. Study the issues and the candidates and vote your choice.

Until next time work safe. Spring is on the way.

Ray Zychowicz, P.S.

## Annual Picnic & Service Pins

L.U. 257 (em,i,rtb,rts,spa&t), JEFFERSON CITY, MO — Over the summer last year, 88 members of Local 257 were awarded IBEW years-of-service pins at our annual picnic at Riverside Park in Jefferson City. The event was a great success and enjoyed by all.

Congratulations to everyone who received their service pin awards. Some of those who attended the annual picnic are pictured below.

Anthony Edwards, P.S.

## Memorial Site Created

L.U. 269 (i&o), TRENTON, NJ — The membership recently approved the creation of a memorial park in front of the main building housing the union hall and main offices. The park is intended as a space dedicated to the memory of all our union brothers and sisters who died while on the job working to provide for their loved ones and helping build stronger communities. The park features reflective benches set amongst an intimately landscaped sitting area adorned with landscape bricks with donor names inscribed on the face of each brick.

All members will have the opportunity to have a donated brick placed in the memorial grounds. The memorial itself is 6,500-pound boulder with a polished face that has the names of members of IBEW Local 269 who lost their lives doing their job, dating back to 1974. It is a fitting and enduring memorial to our fellow brothers and sisters who made the ultimate sacrifice while simply performing their chosen trade and doing to the best of their ability. It is a solemn reminder that this field we have chosen can be rewarding one moment and unforgiving the next.

The membership can be proud to have the creation of this memorial as part of their legacy.

Brian Jacoppo, P.S.



A 6,500-pound memorial boulder installed outside the IBEW Local 269 union hall.

## Dedicated Career of Service; 'Welcome to New Members'

L.U. 309 (i,lctt,mo,mt,o,rts,spa&u), COLLINSVILLE, IL — Beginning with the new year, Local 309 welcomed our new Training Dir. Chris Huckins. Over the last eight years, Bro. Huckins and outgoing director Dave Kokotovich have transformed our apprenticeship program by launching a new standard of excellence — distinguished at both the local and International level. It is impossible to overstate the energy and dedication that Bro. Kokotovich devoted to his post. Dave has always been respected for his academic integrity, forward-thinking mentality, and concern for producing the best apprentices. Local 309 will forever be grateful for his leadership and the new trajectory that he has set for us. Thanks, Koko!

Back in November, the professional staff at Clinton County Cooperative voted unanimously to be represented by IBEW Local 309. The new members were concerned about keeping their current benefits package and having a grievance procedure. Thanks to assistant business agent Steve Duft, organizer Chris Hankins, shop steward Mike Faust, and the existing members at the cooperative for a successful organizing effort.

Congratulations to Executive Board member Jimmie Wildhaber on his retirement. Initiated in 1984, Bro. Wildhaber spent much of his career in line clearance and finished for the City of Highland as a utility locator and storekeeper.

Carlos S. Perez, R.S.

## 'Play the Long Game'

L.U. 313 (i&spa), WILMINGTON, DE — Our retirees enjoyed another Christmas meeting last year (see photo at top, right). They are glad to see Local 313 continue to prosper and their pensions funded. However, we have learned that not all trade union pensions are doing as well.

The American Mineworkers' pension fund has averted insolvency as a result of the bipartisan American Miners Act passed by Congress as a provision of the end-of-year spending bill — so that was good news. However, the Teamsters' Central States pension fund is reporting to become insolvent in five to seven



Local 313 Retirees Christmas Party in 2019 was a great success.

years if no action is taken, and that still has to be solved. This will certainly shed a spotlight on multiemployer pension plans once again in the near future.

**[Editor's Note: To read more, see recent news articles — "There's a Terrible New Plan to Tax Your Retirement — Help Us Fight It Today" (Dec. 6, 2019); "Tell Your Senators, Don't Tax My Retirement" (Dec. 10, 2019); and "Two Major IBEW Priorities Finally Made Law" (Jan. 23, 2020) — posted on the IBEW website at [www.ibew.org/media-center/articles](http://www.ibew.org/media-center/articles).]**

I am glad to report that when the I.O. asked business managers to get their memberships to respond, we did — and we should every time initiatives come out against the working people. We can never let the opposition see us wear down. As long as the powers that be try to attack any of our benefits that we have fought for, they will get a fight each and every time. Be ready ... they will keep coming.

So I ask you, if we don't fight against them, who will?

Bruce W. Esper, P.S.

## 'Happy St. Patrick's Day' Labor Leaders & Activists

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LE SUEUR, MN — Happy St. Patrick's Day, brothers and sisters! As March 17 approaches, it seems we all claim to have a "wee bit" of the Irish in us. Over the course of history, a number of notable labor leaders were known for their Irish roots. One female activist was Irish-American Mary Harris Jones. She earned the nickname "Mother Jones" during her nearly 50 years of labor, community and political activism. She helped organize coal miners in 1873 and railroad workers in 1877. She was a founding member of the Industrial Workers of the World, known as the "Wobblies." Mother Jones gave inspiring speeches across the country during Knights of Labor strikes. She fought to end child-labor abuses until her death in 1930.

Labor unions continue to be the voice of the working class. Membership is our ticket to financial security and family stability. We all can be leaders, activists and organizers within our communities, our politics and our local unions. Follow the contract, attend a union meeting, volunteer at a local union function, assist a brother or sister in need. "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living" is a quote from Mother Jones.

We remember the Local 343 brothers who passed away in 2019: Alan Kestner, John Gleisner, Charles Born, Patrick Simmons and Steven Shane.

Buy "Made In USA" — American workers depend on it.

Tom Small, P.S.

## Making Strides in 2020

L.U. 347 (em,i,mt,rtb,rts&spa), DES MOINES, IOWA — At this writing we're basking in the afterglow of the holiday season. Local 347 thanks all the brothers involved in the set-up and tear down and packing up of all the Jolly Holiday displays. The local also participated in the Toys for Tots gift collection drive. And lastly we celebrated the holidays with a party for the kids, but aren't we all kids during the holidays? The Christmas party was a huge success. These social events are some of the best ways we can ensure that families of the members are able to see the value of our union.

Having just closed a license cycle, the JATC is preparing for the next round of journeyman courses. A tip from Mr. Obvious: "Take classes early to keep the pressure off." Watch for the schedule of classes to be announced soon.

Many of the brothers and sisters are feeling pretty good about the direction the local is headed. The local has purchased a piece of commercial property in Ankeny, Iowa, with plans to build a new union hall. This bodes well for the future of the local. It will provide more space for meetings, and preliminary sketches indicate that the new building can also display some of the energy efficient technology we are installing for our customers. Another enticing aspect of the building is the high visibility we will have on the I-35 corridor. We will have a building with our own private billboard.

By the time this article is published, Iowa's spotlight on the political stage will have diminished. The Iowa caucuses will already have taken place. Yet we want to encourage all brothers and sisters across the nation to get involved in the political process. Having our voices heard is extremely important. Keep speaking up. Enthusiasm can't be bought.

Mike Schweiger, P.S.

## Projects Underway; Local Union Transitions

L.U. 357 (c,i,mt&se), LAS VEGAS, NV — There is a lot going on in Local 357.

Last fall, Bro. Al D. Davis stepped down from his role as business manager/financial secretary and went to work as an international representative in the IBEW Construction and Maintenance Department in Washington, D.C. Bro. Davis successfully led the local union through the worse construction recession in our local's history. Despite the challenges, our local was able to increase market share and union density under his leadership. We are grateful for his years of service and wish him well in his new position.

We would also like to welcome Bro. James Halsey



IBEW Local 357 volunteers, who replaced old smoke detectors for retirees, are joined by residents of Sun City Summerlin, NV, for a group photo.

# IBEW MERCHANDISE



### Quilt Lined Carhartt Jacket \$80.00

Navy blue duck with quilted flannel lining. Attached hood with adjustable drawstring. Two large front pockets and two inside pockets. IBEW initials with fist and lightning bolts embroidered on left chest.

### RENEW T-Shirt \$12.00

100% cotton charcoal long sleeve t-shirt with IBEW logo on back and RENEW / NextGen logos on shoulders.

### Women's Initial Watch \$100.00

Women's gold-tone watch with embossed IBEW initials on face, expansion band, stainless steel backing and water resistant. Watches have a two-year manufacturer's warranty.

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

[www.ibewmerchandise.com](http://www.ibewmerchandise.com)

## LOCAL LINES

as our new business manager/financial secretary. He previously served the local as assistant business manager and political director for the last nine years.

We are in the midst of a building boom in Las Vegas. Ongoing projects include the \$2 billion Las Vegas Raiders stadium, the \$4 billion Resorts World Hotel & Casino, the \$1 billion Las Vegas Convention Center expansion, and a \$1 billion MSG Sphere Arena.

In December the local union was honored by the City of Las Vegas for its volunteer action work in Sun City Summerlin. We had 40 union brothers and sisters come out on a Saturday to replace outdated smoke detectors for retirees. We take pride in keeping our community safe.

Hope everyone has a safe and successful 2020.

*Jennifer Templin, P.S.*

## New Five-Year Contract With Service Electric Cable TV

L.U. 375 (catv,ees,et,govt,i&mo), ALLENTOWN, PA — On Dec. 31, 2019, we had a contract set to expire with Service Electric Cable TV & Communications. We represent 165 members and their families at this location and getting a fair contract was our top priority. It was a pleasure to work with the management team from Service Electric during the negotiation process. Not only were they fair and honest in their approach at the table, they also showed their understanding that their employees are what make the machine run properly.

Local 375 members Rich Byrne (SE Unit chair), Brayden Winters (SE Unit vice chair), and Chris Liberto (SE Unit scribe) did a wonderful job of representing and explaining the needs of all the members from all departments. For those three gentlemen, it was their first experience negotiating a contract and they were naturals.

Congratulations to all the members from Service Electric on your new five-year contract and thank you for standing behind your officers as they negotiated on your behalf. Once again, we must also say a sincere thank-you to the management from Service Electric for their professionalism, and we look forward to a continued partnership.

*Justin Grimshaw, A.B.M.*



From left: IBEW Local 375 member Rich Byrne; Joe Macus, Service Electric vice president; Jack Capparell, Service Electric general manager; John Walson, Service Electric president; Local 375 Bus. Mgr. Paul Anthony; Asst. Bus. Mgr. Justin Grimshaw; members Brayden Winters and Chris Liberto.

## Work Picture Steady

L.U. 401 (c,i,rts&st), RENO, NV — The work picture in Reno, Nevada, is steady with the hope of some large companies moving to the area and starting projects in the spring of 2020.

The apprenticeship has 60 new pre-apprentices ready to go to work.

Pictured in the photo (below) are Bro. Eric Keller and Bro. Josh Cantu, working in the service department for a local contractor, installing a generator at the top of McClellan Peak, Nevada. At 7,800 feet in elevation in December, you need to ride to work in a Snow Cat. To members: Please remember that there is always work in the service department.

*Scott Betz, P.S.*



Local 401 members Eric Keller and Josh Cantu on a job site at the top of McClellan Peak in Nevada, working to install a generator for a contractor.

## Membership Grows; New Contractors Welcomed

L.U. 449 (catv,em,i,o,rtb,rts,spa&u), POCA TELLO, IDAHO — Brothers and sisters, Local 449 had one of our best years ever in 2019. Our membership grew, our hours worked was near the best ever, and we saw a couple of new contractors join our contractor base. As of this writing, it looks like we will have a bit of a lull at the beginning of the year, but some larger projects are expected to get going as we move closer to summer.

We closed out 2019 with a fantastic turnout for our annual Christmas party and had a great time of food, fun and visiting. It was great to get together and catch up with everyone who could make it to the party.

Now we are looking forward to 2020 summer events. We will have our annual summer picnic on July 18. And we will have the Chuckers baseball night on June 26.

Congratulations to our most recent retirees: Tod Humberger, Hal Blake, Roger Kim Grover and Robert Reno.

*Ned Jones, B.M.*

## Annual Service Pin Night; New Journeyman Linemen

L.U. 455 (em&u), SPRINGFIELD, MA — Local 455 recently held its annual service pin night at our December union meeting. Pictured (below) is Bro. Bill Smith receiving his 40-year pin from Pres. Dan Hamel. Congratulations, Bro. Smith!

Also pictured: Pres. Dan Hamel congratulating



LEFT: Local 455 member Bro. Bill Smith (left) receives his 40-year pin from Pres. Dan Hamel.

RIGHT: Local 455 Pres. Dan Hamel (left), Ryan Serrella, Dave Williams, Executive Board Member Connor Pularo, and Shane Kasala.

recently topped out first-class journeyman linemen: Ryan Serrella, Dave Williams, Executive Board member Connor Pularo, and Shane Kasala. Congratulations to all on your accomplishment!

*Brian E. Kenney, B.M./F.S.*

## Tribute to Retirees; New Opportunities Ahead

L.U. 481 (ees,em,i,mt,rts,s&spa), INDIANAPOLIS, IN — IBEW Local 481 closed the year with our annual Retirees Christmas Lunch and Pin Ceremony. It was great to see all the retired members come together in the same room and share stories of their days in the industry. Without their sacrifice and dedication, we would not be where we are now. It was an honor to be present in the room with such great history that these retirees represent. One day we will all be there, and we must continue to do our part to advance Local 481, as well as the IBEW.

Like many locals I am sure, we are thankful for the many accomplishments in the year 2019. IBEW Local 481 has been pleased with all the work in our jurisdiction and the work projected for the future. With that being said, Local 481 looks forward to the new opportunities that 2020 will bring.

Hope you all had a merry Christmas and a happy New Year's. Here at Local 481, we look forward to seeing what all the locals have in store for 2020.

*Blake A. Andrews, B.R.*



From left, IBEW members Mary Sands, Amanda Cooling and Karen VanDusseldorp. Not pictured Sue Kinsbury.

## Volunteers Active & Involved

L.U. 499 (u), DES MOINES, IOWA — The following 11th District sisters deserve a huge shout out for all their efforts on getting fellow sisters more involved with the IBEW. Mary Sands (Local 204), Amanda Cooling (Local 405), Karen VanDusseldorp (Local 204) and Sue Kingsbury (Local 204) have been working diligently to help other sisters by holding quarterly meetings, attending conferences, volunteering on labor boards and hosting fundraisers just to name a few. In October they organized a T-shirt fundraiser and are donating the money to the Iowa chapter of the Susan G. Komen foundation. They are enthusiastic about their futures with the IBEW and their hard work is greatly appreciated!

*Sarah Faber, P.S.*



Local 569 membership made a contribution of \$10,000 to the Labor Food & Toy Drive.

## IBEW 569 Gives Back To Support Working Families

L.U. 569 (i,mar,mt,rts&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA — 2020 is a big year for IBEW 569 — we're celebrating our 100th anniversary and we're negotiating our Inside Agreement. We'll be sure to keep you updated on our progress and anniversary events, including our big Local 569 100th Anniversary Gala Celebration on Saturday, May 30.

In other news, we are proud of our collective efforts to give back and support working families!

IBEW 569 members helped the San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council distribute toys and food to hundreds of local families in need of a little help during the holiday season. Thank you to all the union members who helped light up the holidays! Additionally, we supported the Diaper Drive with California Assembly member Lorena Gonzalez with a contribution of 5,000 diapers!

Lastly, our IBEW 569 retirees took action to "Protect Our Pensions," and met with the district directors of U.S. Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris. Thank you to Joe Heisler, Nephi Hancock, Steve Wilcox, Tom Kunde, Jaime Leon, Alan Paul and William Stedham for delivering IBEW's strong message. [Editor's Note: To read more, see three news articles — "There's a Terrible New Plan to Tax Your Retirement — Help Us Fight It Today" (Dec. 6, 2019); "Tell Your Senators, Don't Tax My Retirement" (Dec. 10, 2019); and "Two Major IBEW Priorities Finally Made Law (Jan. 23, 2020) — posted on the IBEW website at [www.ibew.org/media-center/articles](http://www.ibew.org/media-center/articles).]

We're heading into 2020 as a stronger local thanks to you and your hard work! Together, we will continue to make a difference and build stronger communities.

*Gretchen Newsom, Political Dir./Organizer*

## JATC CLASSES

L.U. 611 (catv,es,govt,i,lctt,o,spa,t&u), ALBUQUERQUE, NM — Our annual Children's Christmas Party was Dec. 7 at the Wool Warehouse. The event has become so popular that at some point we will have to start looking for a different venue. In the last couple of years, it has attracted a large number of people. A huge thank you to all the people who have volunteered over the years to put this successful event together.

The JATC is always putting on classes for those of you who need to keep up your 16 hours of continuing education courses (CECs). For a list of classes, dates and times, please contact the JATC during normal business hours.

Just a reminder: The regular Local 611 union meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m.

On behalf of the local, I would like to send condolences to the friends and families of two members who recently passed away: Dane M. Woodard and

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Local 611 members at the 2019 annual Children's Christmas Party.

Vincent Gallegos. They will be missed.

Remember, this is an election year. Please get out and vote. If you are not registered, please contact Santos Griego at the union hall.

Darrell J. Blair, P.S.

## Strength in Solidarity; Annual EWMC Conference

L.U. 617 (c,i,mo&st), SAN MATEO, CA — Greetings, sisters and brothers. We have been blessed to be living in the Bay Area, where the work picture continues to grow, especially in the tech and health sectors.

In December 2019, Santa and his elves arrived just in time for our annual holiday party. Sounds of laughter filled the hall, as bright-eyed children took photos with Santa and decorated cookies.

The 30th annual Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Leadership Conference was held in Chicago, IL, on Jan. 15-20. Thirteen delegates from Local 617 participated in the many workshops, seminars and other activities, while renewing old friendships. One of the most rewarding events was the Day of Giving/Service where participants serve the community by helping with local projects. Much gratitude to all who attended.

With great sadness, we report the sudden passing of Nancy Thompson, a 30-year member. A beloved sister who exemplified what it meant to be an IBEW journeyman electrician with her passion and humanity. Also rest in peace to Bro. Joseph Radetich, who passed away at age 100 and was a member for 79 years. They will be dearly missed.

The 2020 presidential elections are fast approaching. We are strongest when united, not divided. Please vote for those who support unions and act upon it.

May the Great Spirit bless your home with peace, joy and abundance in the new year.

Kenn Perfitt, P.S.



Mrs. Klaus (Kathy Havenler, Local 617 bookkeeper) attends the local's annual holiday party in 2019.

## Local Union Updates

L.U. 649 (i,lctt,o,rts,spa&u), ALTON, IL — Local 649 has been engaged with the events listed below.

Service pins were awarded as follows: for five years of service — Cole Strasen; for 10 years of service — Jeffrey Senko; 15 years — Jacob Goebel, Mark Loftus; 30 years — Mark Behme, James Bowler, Tracey Jones, Carol Lord, Timothy Stinson, Scott Wagner,

Dennis Weaver; 35 years — Alan Rubenstein, Larry Becker, Christopher Beiser, Dana Morrow, Frederick Stutz, Michael Wright; 40 years — Dan Kruse, Thomas Albrecht, Terry Wilhite, Rodney O'Dell, Bradley Wheaton, David Renner; 45 years — Bernard Hanners, Robert Frank, William Striegel; 50 years — Gabriel Bourland; 55 years — James Parker; and 70 years - William Rister, whose son Joseph Rister accepted on William's behalf.

Negotiations were completed as follows: P66 Refinery/eight-year agreement; Inside Agreement/four-year agreement; Outside Agreement/four-year agreement; Outside Commercial/Industrial Powerline, four-year agreement.

At press time negotiations are ongoing for a Tree Trimmers agreement, and a Donco agreement.

The 2020 work outlook includes the following projects: P66 Refinery; Roxana City Hall and Safety Building; Warehouse work; and Capital Projects/State of Illinois.

New members include: 18 operators at Veolia North America (three-year agreement through June 2022; and three employees at Wood River Levee District (two-year agreement through September 2021).

Community service: Local 649 retirees donated time to help area communities with electrical issues/projects.; and local members donated time to Jersey County Animal Rescue.

Thank you to Bro. Alan Rubenstein for compiling the information included in this article.

Terry Wilhite, P.S.



Local 649 service award recipients were honored at a Dec. 11, 2019, service pin presentation dinner.

## Community Service Projects

L.U. 697 (c,es,i,mt&se), GARY AND HAMMOND, IN — The Sisters of 697 made sure everyone in northwest Indiana stayed warm this winter by hosting a Coat Drive. Over 50 bags of coats, hats, gloves and boots were donated to those in need. The Veterans of 697 hosted a Christmas Toy Drive to make sure every kid in our jurisdiction had a good Christmas. And the 697 RENEW Committee hosted their annual Holiday Diaper Drive to stock the local shelters in need. We appreciate everyone who donated to make these events a total success.

Additionally, the Local 697 EWMC did their day of service on Saturday, Nov. 16, to assist with residential electrical repairs for those in need.



IBEW Local 697 volunteers installed new wiring and LED lights at Boys & Girls Club. From left: Teresa Baranowski, Mike Matusik, Nick Hardesty, Donald Bullock, Mike Jongmsa, Frank Mikolajczyk, Aaron Mikolajczyk (Frank's son) and Matt Finger.



IBEW Local 827 received 2019 Union of the Year Award presented by the American Labor Museum/Botto House in New Jersey.

And lastly, we would like to thank the Local 697 members who donated their time on the Saturday before Christmas to add all new wiring and LED lights to the Boys & Girls Club classroom (see photo at bottom).

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

## 'Union of the Year' Award From American Labor Museum

L.U. 827 (catv&t), EAST WINDSOR, NJ — On Sunday, Sept. 2, last year, Local 827 was honored by the American Labor Museum/Botto House as the "Union of the Year." The landmark Botto House museum is located in Haledon, NJ. [Photo at top, right.]

The recognition was a result of Local 827's leadership within the labor community and the local's extensive community service. Many members of Local 827, along with unions from across the state, participated in the museum's annual Labor Day parade followed by a barbecue for all. A special write-up about Local 827 appeared in a program handed out to attendees at the parade and barbecue.

It was a great event and Local 827 was humbled by the recognition.

Suzanne M. Wallin, R.S.

## JATC Training Director

L.U. 1015 (em&i), WESLACO, TEXAS — IBEW Local 1015 would like to send out a big Texas salute to the Rio Grande Valley Laredo Electrical JATC, headed by its new Training Dir. Osvaldo Cabada Jr. since January 2019.

Mr. Osvaldo Cabada Jr. is a Mission native, and he and his wife have two grown sons who are following in their father's footsteps. He has made a great impact at the RGVLE-JATC in the past year by restructuring said department for the challenges of 2020 and a new decade. Finding a good training director with a good electrician background is hard to do, but one who is also a great educator and has great rapport with his students is a great plus.

Mr. Cabada has brought to the RGVLE-JATC his years of experience in the electrical field and his great talent for teaching the students in a way they understand, from hands-on training to instruction

regarding what it takes to stay on a great electrical road to success.

Mr. Cabada has already put into practice some of his new projects for the Local 1015 JATC school and is gearing up for a fresh start in 2020 preparing for new opportunities as well as any challenges ahead.

Tammy Casas, P.S.



Local 1015 Training Dir. Osvaldo Cabada Jr. (left) and Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Sergio A. Salinas.

## Community Outreach — Opportunities to Participate

L.U. 1049 (lctt,o,u&uow), LONG ISLAND, NY — At several recent general meetings, Bus. Mgr. Ronald Bauer has encouraged members to become more engaged and involved. There are several clubs and committees in which one can participate. The newest of these clubs is the Veterans Club, chaired by Bro. Joseph DiLiberto. The aim of the Veterans Club is to promote solidarity amongst the members who are veterans of the U.S. armed services. One of their goals is to support veterans and their families, not only within the local, but in the Long Island community as well.

If you are looking to give back to the Long Island community, you can get involved in either the Community Affairs Committee, the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC), the Motorcycle Club, or the Sportsman Club. These committees/clubs work to promote Local 1049 in the community by contributing to and participating in numerous charitable community outreach programs. In 2019, the combined groups raised and donated several thousand dollars to Local 1049 members in need, as well as to various charitable organizations. If interested in participating in any of the committees or clubs, please contact the hall.

In March, on behalf of our members in the Electric Craft Division, we will be negotiating our NECA Agreement.

At the March general meeting, we will hold nominations for the offices of business manager/financial secretary, president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer and for all Executive Board seats, as well as nominations for delegates to the 2021 IBEW International Convention.

Thomas J. Dowling, R.S.

## IBEW Donates Toys To Cincinnati Children's Hospital

L.U. 1347 (ees,em,ptc&u), CINCINNATI, OHIO — For a fourth year in a row, the children staying at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital during the month of December received stuffed animals as a gift from Local 1347. This donation is made possible by selling pins for the local

union and puts a smile on every child's face. We plan to continue this tradition for many years to come!

*Andrew Kirk, B.M.*

## Tribute to Life of Service

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA — IBEW Local 1579 is saddened by the loss of former longtime business

manager Tommy Yarbrough. Tommy passed away Nov. 18, 2019, at the age of 84.

Tommy Yarbrough was our business manager for 27 years. He served this local and dedicated his life from 1979 to 2006. He saw this local through both good times and bad. He kept his cool throughout the Reagan years, when union membership was declining at a rapid pace. He built relationships with our political friends and was the voice of the membership. He served the local by sitting on many other boards and councils. He served as an officer on the Augusta Building Trades Council, the Georgia Electrical Workers association and the Central Labor Council just to name a few. He was a great leader!

Tommy was a great business manager to us all, as well as a great family man. He was widely respected and a friend to many, but his best friend was his beloved wife, Helen; she made him an even better man. Tommy often bragged about his family and we all knew how proud he was to have the family life that he had.

We will miss our former business manager and will look forward to seeing him again someday in heaven.

Until next time, God bless!

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



*Local 1759 retiree Donald W. Kelly receives 55-year service pin.*

## 55-Year Service Pin

L.U. 1759 (u), CASPER, WY — I recently had the privilege of presenting an IBEW 55-year service pin award to retired member Donald Kelly. Bro. Kelly is 89 years old. He started as a lineman, then finished his career as a high-voltage electrician. Congratulations to Bro. Kelly on his longtime service.

*Andrew Dendinger, R.S.*



*Local 1347 donates toys to Cincinnati Children's Hospital. From left: Children's Hospital Dir. Sara Coyle; Local 1347 Executive Board member Don Scott Smith; steward Bob Allen; office coordinator Rachel Glover; Bus. Mgr. Andrew Kirk; and steward Tom Messamer.*

# RETIREES

## Important Election Year

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 1, ST. LOUIS, MO — Happy new year from St. Louis. It's 2020 — holy cow! I hope everyone had a good holiday season. Try to get out of the house and get some exercise as the weather will be warming up.

Remember to send or drop off your annual contribution to the Voluntary Fund. Very important elections are coming up. Make sure you and your family are informed about labor-friendly candidates.

The Retirees Club meetings for this year are March 18, May 20, July 15, Sept. 16 (luncheon), and Nov. 18. Meetings start at about 10 a.m. There should be an open house for our newly remodeled union hall soon.

*Neal McCormack, P.S.*

## 2019 Summer Picnic

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, NASSAU COUNTY CHAPTER — Nassau County Chapter Local 3 Retirees had their well-attended annual summer picnic in beautiful Brady Park. Brady Park is located in the Town of Massapequa Park, a part of Nassau County. Mother Nature blessed us with a warm and sunny day. The day's activities began with a bocce ball tournament, followed by bean bag and horseshoe tournaments. At lunchtime a bountiful catered gourmet barbeque meal was served and ended with ice-cold watermelon. The activities continued after lunch with an egg-toss tournament followed by a water-balloon-toss tournament. The water balloons washed off the remnants of missed egg catching. Spending a warm

summer's day with longtime friends and family made it a special day for all the retirees to remember.

*John Milligan, P.S.*



*At Local 3, Northern New Jersey Chapter, Retirees Club holiday party, attendees congratulated Anthony "Tony" LaBate (left) on his 100th birthday. At right is club Vice Chair Les Rothstein.*

## Holiday Luncheon

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, NORTHERN NEW JERSEY CHAPTER — Greetings and a happy, healthy new year to all! Everyone enjoyed our Holiday Luncheon and dancing to a lively DJ, along with the delicious food at Season's in Washington Township!

A highlight of the day was celebrating member

Anthony "Tony" LaBate's 100th birthday, with a beautiful cake and singing a rousing birthday song to Tony! We wish Tony all the best of health and happiness!

We continue our monthly meetings through the winter, although missing our many snowbirds! We're looking forward to our spring luncheon, and many of us will be enjoying a week at Woodloch Pines resort in June!

*John Krison, P.S.*



*Local 3, South Jersey Chapter, Retirees Club members assisted with 2019 Toys for Tots project. From left: Dennis Hessler, Bob Andreasi, John McNickolas, Don Gallagher, Vice Chmn./Rec. Sec. Charles DeSaro and Vice Chmn. Lou Cohen.*

## Toys for Tots & Holiday Party

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, SOUTH JERSEY CHAPTER — We had a fantastic end of the year season for 2019. From Dec. 1 through Dec. 24 last year, retirees led by Vice Chmn. Lou Cohen and Vice Chmn./Rec. Sec. Charles DeSaro, along with members of the U.S. Marine Corp. Reserve - Red Bank, NJ, received, packed and distributed over 500,000 toys for kids in New Jersey.

On Dec. 18, 2019, we had our holiday party. Our raffle winners were Joe Cronin, Tom Viola and Charles DeSaro.

Thank you to everyone who helped make these events a great success.

*Nancy Savarese, P.S.*

## Retirees Donate to Food Bank

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, SUFFOLK CHAPTER — Our Annual Holiday Party was a great success — thanks to the hard work of our Holiday Committee (pictured below, left to right): John Arendt, Eileen Crisostomo, Frank Bono, Loretta Bono, Chmn. John Schoenig, Lois Weis, Cathy Schoenig, Vice Chmn. Andrew Weis and Walter Kern. It was great to see new and old friends. There was lots of food, music for dancing and raffle prizes. Everyone had a fun time.

John Vodicka reported that we donated over 400 pounds of food for the Long Island Cares, Harry Chapin Food Bank.

We look forward to planning some interesting trips for our club as well as scheduling some informative guest speakers. We hope everyone enjoyed a happy holiday season.

Our Pres. Richard Duva and his wife wished everyone a happy and healthy new year.

*Harvey Goldman, P.S.*



*Local 3, Suffolk Chapter, Retirees Club holiday committee.*

## Christmas/Hanukkah Luncheon

RETIRES CLUB OF L.U. 3, NEW YORK, NY, WESTCHESTER-PUTNAM CHAPTER — The Westchester/Putnam Retirees' 30th annual Christmas/Hanukkah Luncheon was Dec. 11, 2019. For the past four years we've held this event at the Leewood Golf Club, in



*Local 3, Nassau County Chapter, Retirees Club's annual summer picnic was once again a great success.*



## RETIRES

Eastchester, NY, the same location that we hold our two golf outings every year.

The cocktail hour and the lunch, as always, were excellent. The highlight of the day was the unexpected visit by Local 3 Asst. Bus. Mgr. Elliot Hecht, and newly elected Local 3 Pres. Thomas Cleary. Although they could not stay for the luncheon, they were able to meet many of our members during the cocktail hour.

As always, at the luncheon, we present any member who has turned 80 years of age with a plaque, honoring that member. This year there were three recipients present, Ed Frisone, Ron Celentano and George Wintermuth; four other recipients could not attend.

At every Christmas/Hanukkah luncheon we have a 50/50 raffle, to benefit the Fisher House Foundation. This year's first-prize winner was Pat Mucci, and oddly enough, the second prize was won by Pat's wife. Both winners graciously donated their winnings, a total of \$500, to the Fisher House Foundation.

Richard Mills, Treas.



At the Local 3, Westchester/Putnam Chapter, Retirees Club's Christmas/Hanukkah Luncheon, from left: Dominic Malandro, David Torres, Robert Celentano, George Wintermuth, Edward Frisone and Richard Mills.

## Travels & Activities

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 26, WASHINGTON, DC — We cannot celebrate the new year and the new decade without remembering the members we have lost this past year. May they rest in peace.

Retired members keep on traveling and meeting. In December we honored five members receiving 50- and 60-year service pins. Brian H. Brigden and Gerald Harrington received their 50-year pins; and William L. Markley, Rudolph Christopher Worch and Robert Hughes received their 60-year pins. Congratulations to all, and we hope they will continue to attend our meetings as they are able!

In December we had our annual holiday meeting and luncheon with over 80 members in attendance. Although some retirees decide to move to warmer climates, many others stay in the area, as their families have stayed nearby as well. It is only early 2020 and already our numbers are over 300 contributing members. We mail our meeting minutes to all our members for whom we have good mailing addresses. Remember to notify all when you move: the EWTF, the finance office, the International Office and the retired members club. As many members may not know, due to the federal restrictions on sharing personal information, these offices cannot share your personal information, so you need to notify each office.

Although the 2020 European cruise is full for our special group rate, there are still cabins available. Please contact our travel coordinator Bro. Rick Warner (240-272-0438) if you are interested in joining our crew.

Susan Flashman, P.S.

## Annual Retirees Luncheon

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 35, HARTFORD, CT — We would like to recognize our retired members who passed away during 2019. They are: Harland Cramer, Charles Francis Jr., Richard Kent, John Kowalchuk, Edward Kowalski, Robert Mancini, Robert Moody Sr., Louis Renna, and Carmen Scollo. Our condolences go

out to their families and friends.

Local 35 hosted our annual Retirees Luncheon in October at the Chowder Pot IV restaurant. A record number of members and guests attended and enjoyed the camaraderie and a wonderful lunch. Many thanks to Local 35 for sponsoring the annual event.

Dennis Machol and Charlie Rose attended a recent Alliance for Retired Americans meeting. They discussed a bill that Connecticut recently passed which lowers the income tax paid on pensions and annuities over the next five years.

The Retirees Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month beginning in March 2020 at the Elks Club in Rocky Hill.

Kenneth R. White, P.S.

## An Event Filled Year

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 53, KANSAS CITY, MO — Greetings to all! By the time you read this, spring will be here! Hope you all have a happy, healthy and prosperous 2020.

We had our Retiree Luncheon on Oct. 29 hosted by Local 53. We had a great turnout. Thank you to everyone who donated for Toys for Tots, and a big "thank-you" to Joe Padilla for organizing this every year. The local's annual

Christmas Party on Dec. 20 had the largest crowd so far with over 900 people. It was a good time with great food and entertainment. Thank you to Local 53 and the staff for all their hard work.

A lot will be going on this year. The annual Crap-pie Tournament and Fish Fry will be May 2 at Truman State Park. Contact the local for more information. At our May Retiree Luncheon, we will elect officers. The local will be electing officers this year also. This is a big year for local, state and national elections, so get informed, get involved and vote. We have to get rid of some of these anti-union/anti-worker politicians!

We still have our Retirees Club meetings at the Lumberyard Bar & Grill in Urich, MO, at 11 a.m. on the second Thursday of the month. We did make one change — instead of meeting every other month, we now meet every month. Please come join us.

Sadly, since our last article we lost some brothers: George Drabek, Les Irwin, Bruce Brundage, Dean Dymond, Greg VanHooser and Terry Gilbert. Rest in peace, brothers.

Duane Pearce, P.S.

## Annual Spring Fling Party

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 58, DETROIT, MI — Greetings from the Association of Retirees, Wives and Widows. Our Christmas Party was a success with a good crowd and generous donations. Our members collectively donated over \$1,000 divided between our four children's charities, and Local 58's benevolent fund.

Saturday, April 25, is our Annual Spring Fling Party, which honors members with 40 years or more of IBEW membership with a presentation of service pins. Honorees receive lunch, with guests attending for \$15 each. This is always a great celebration, bringing together members, friends and family to celebrate these milestones. Invitations will go out to honorees, so be sure to reserve your seats by calling Ray Owen at 248-348-3626 with an rsvp. All retirees and their guests are welcome to attend.

Let's remember that this is a very important election year. 2020 will bring us numerous opportunities to



Local 58 retirees volunteered for Forgotten Harvest Greenhouse project. Front row (kneeling), from left, Jim Hamlin, Pat Nuznov, Norm Jaworski; back row, Andy Folgman, Jim Dunn, Pat Dunn, Percy Redd, Joe Pi, Randolph Porzondek and Tom Weertz.

assist in the political system that our country employs. Be sure to consider some volunteer work and/or donations to the candidates who most support our union brothers and sisters and our communities. 2020 brings us the most important presidential race to date.

Be sure to exercise one of your most precious rights as an American — vote!

Pat Nuznov, P.S.

## Club Participation Grows

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 60, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS — Retirees are looking forward to a new year and the continued growth in attendance. The club's attendance at their monthly meetings has almost doubled this past year. Everyone enjoys a catered meal, or a meal furnished by the members, and the dessert table is always full. After a short business meeting, the fun continues with 10 games of bingo. Camaraderie and fellowship best describe the purpose of these monthly meetings. The club meets the second Thursday of each month at Local 60's new hall, 3518 N. Loop 1604 E., starting at 11:30 a.m. The months of June, July and August the club takes a summer break and does not meet. Local 60 retired members, please join us.

The Golf Tournament committee members are making preparations for another very successful fundraiser. This year's fundraiser will be held May 9, at the Pleasanton Golf Club. Details will be outlined in the Local 60 newsletter.

Club members honored the memory of the following members, wearing their wings, with a moment of silence in 2019: Jason Hough, John Langendorf, John Weber, Ernest Knappick, Thomas Kazak, Thomas Frazier, Clyde Day and Mike Wright. Rest in peace, brothers.

Sandy Rogers, P.S.

## December Holiday Party; Pension Improvements

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 134, CHICAGO, IL — At the start of a new, exciting decade — happy 2020, every-

one. Last December our club had our Annual Holiday Party for the first time at our new Local 134 building at 2722 S. Martin Luther King Drive in Chicago. The party took place in the Memorial Hall. We had our holiday raffle, our traditional meal of corned beef/cabbage and chicken, with apple pie for dessert. It was decorated beautifully, the luncheon was delicious, and attendees were full of holiday cheer.

Our pension trustees have made epic pension improvements for us retirees and beneficiaries. Many pension plans in our country have experienced deficits from the Great Reces-

sion. Due to the hard work of our trustees and membership, we are on strong, solid ground. A letter last December from Local 134 Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Don Finn gave us the news from our pension trustees for improvements passed on to active members, retirees, and beneficiaries. Pension Plan #2 recipients, retirees, and widows will begin to receive increases to their monthly pension benefit starting the first quarter of 2020. In addition, all members (including Pension Plan #4 and #6) who retired after July 1, 2007, will receive a 13th pension check for 2020.

Thank you to our electrical trustees and Bus. Mgr./Fin. Sec. Don Finn for working so hard for our Local 134 members.

Sue Kleczka, P.S.



In December 2019, the Memorial Hall in Local 134's new building was transformed into a holiday ballroom for a festive occasion.

## 2019 Holiday Dinner Party

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 141, WHEELING, WV — Hello, brothers and sisters! On Dec. 13 last year, the Local 141 Retirees Club, along with the Local 141 Social Committee, held a Christmas dinner for the retirees and their spouses at the Wheeling Island Casino Racetrack. The dinner was well attended, with 50 retirees and spouses, along with several of the local's officers and guests. Retirees enjoyed a buffet dinner, live music, gifts/door prizes, and a lot of reminiscing. Service pins were awarded to eligible retirees in attendance. Currently, Local 141 has three retirees



Retirees attending IBEW Local 141 Retirees Holiday Dinner Party, at the Wheeling, WV, Island Racetrack Casino in December 2019.

## RETIREES

with 70+ years of service, and 12 retirees with 60+ years of service. Local 141 currently has 135 retirees with a combined total of 6,146 years of service! The Local 141 Social Committee wishes to extend its gratitude to Bro. Joe Donovan and his wife, Cheryl, for the terrific job they have done putting this dinner together over the past several years.

The Local 141 Retirees Club would like to remind all active retirees that the club meets at the Guest House restaurant in Moundsville, WV, on the third Tuesday of every month, at 8:30 a.m., for breakfast.

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

## Community Service Donation

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 160, MINNEAPOLIS, MN — Our local retiree group donated \$1,000 to the Firefighters for Healing-Minnesota Chapter. Thank you to all who contributed for this worthy cause in service to the community.

*Fran Stade, V.P./Treas.*



Local 160 Retirees Club Pres. Pete Sandberg (right) and Vice Pres./Treas. Fran Stade (left) present donation to Firefighters for Healing representative Jake Laferriere.

## Gala Dinner Dance; Community Service Project

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 164, JERSEY CITY, NJ — Big events happened in December 2019. The Local 164 Retirees Association was invited to the Local 164 Gala Dinner Dance, where our 50-year members were honored with a pin, watch and certificate, receiving a standing ovation. And we danced the night away to a great band.

We followed two weeks later with our own holiday party with fine food and smiles galore. Many thanks go to Tom and Eileen Barry and the greatest kitchen crew ever. But rest assured, many people helped make it happen. And we raised donations for needed holiday toys, too.

Besides our monthly luncheons, this April we will start our 164 Retirees Golf League followed by seasonal fishing trips, an Atlantic City summer excursion, and scholarships for children/grandchildren with funds being raised from our Annual Golf Outing.

We also conducted our annual charitable project his past November where our association helped collect over 200 winter coats for New Jersey families in shelters and the homeless through Jersey Cares.

*David Judovin, P.S.*



Local 164 Retirees Club Rec. Sec./Treas. Tom Barry, Pres. Jerry Rider, and kitchen chefs Glenn Allen, Don Eckhardt and Jim Meyers.

## 1913 Monument in Tribute To Fallen IBEW Member

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 212, CINCINNATI, OHIO — Local unions 134 and 212 share a bit of IBEW history. Many of Local 212's early records were destroyed by a flood, but the facts remain unchanged.

In the early 1900s, Brother Joseph H. Alandar was obligated as a member of Local 212. What year Brother Alandar transferred to Chicago Local 134 is unknown. A search of "The Electrical Worker" online archives proves fruitless as to the date Joseph "was murdered by a cowardly assassin." Joe was 27 years old. However, in the November 1913 issue of "The Electrical Worker," a detailed account, with photos, of the unveiling of a memorial monument erected in his honor (on Oct. 6, 1913) is recorded.

Then-Int. Pres. F. J. McNulty delivered the eulogy. Local 134 purchased an impressive monument at Spring Grove Cemetery honoring Joseph. Local 212 assumed maintenance care of the monument. Several years ago, we had it pressure-washed to a like-new appearance. After 107 years, trees have grown — shading Joe's final resting place, peaceful and serene. His father, mother, sisters, and IBEW Brother Eugene Alandar are buried with this IBEW hero. Rest in peace, Brother Joe.

For more information, go to IBEW website [www.ibew.org](http://www.ibew.org), and under "Media Center" click on "Archives" — then go to year-1913, month-November, Page 1116, and also Pages 1135-36.

*Bob Schaefer, P.S.*



A monument erected in 1913 in tribute to late IBEW member Joseph H. Alandar, who initially was obligated into Local 212 and later transferred to Local 134.

## Annual Holiday Luncheon; Say 'No' to Attack on Pensions

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 257, JEFFERSON CITY, MO — Thanks to everyone who made 2019 a success. A few trips were taken in 2019 and we plan more trips for 2020. We thank everyone who volunteered their time last year for our retiree group. A special thank-you to Pres. Ron Holtzhauser and Sec. Treas. Judy Holtzhauser, who do a wonderful job keeping us on track.

We extend condolences to the family of retired member Alice Murry, who passed away recently. She was a Local 257 member for 20 years. Her son, Otsie Murry, is also a retired Local 257 member.

Our annual Christmas luncheon was Dec. 10, hosted by Local 257 members. We appreciate all their help and thank them for the great food. After the luncheon, we had a sale of items brought by members to raise money for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. Through our members' generous donations and proceeds from the sale, we sent \$1,500 to St. Jude's. We thank Mike Fanning, Local 257 organizer, for auctioning off the items.

Local 257 Bus. Mgr. Don Bruemmer talked about the



Retirees Club members enjoy Christmas Luncheon provided by members of Local 257.

Multiemployer Pension Recapitalization and Reform Plan proposed by Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa and Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee. Bus. Mgr. Bruemmer asked that we all write our senators and tell them we oppose this proposal. The Grassley-Alexander proposal in the short run will drastically raise fees on healthy multiemployer plans (such as the IBEW's) and in the long run will make it nearly impossible for unions and employers to provide quality retirement benefits. Please write to your senators and tell them to reject the Grassley-Alexander proposal. **[Editor's Note: To read more, see three news articles — "There's a Terrible New Plan to Tax Your Retirement — Help Us Fight It Today" (Dec. 6, 2019); "Tell Your Senators, Don't Tax My Retirement" (Dec. 10, 2019); and "Two Major IBEW Priorities Finally Made Law" (Jan. 23, 2020) — posted on the IBEW website at [www.ibew.org/media-center/articles](http://www.ibew.org/media-center/articles).]**

Happy new year to everyone!

*Delores Melloway, P.S.*

## Service Pins Awarded

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 306, AKRON, OHIO — On Dec. 20, the Retirees Annual Christmas Breakfast was held at our Training Center. Attendees enjoyed a nice breakfast while catching up on the happenings of the past year. Later that evening, many attended our local union meeting, where numerous retirees received awards for their longtime service to the IBEW.

Citations and pins were awarded to the following honorees: for 65 years of service — Harold Albright, Franklin Bowers, Donald Kingan, Ronald Peck, Alvin Tasker, Joseph Tassone, Paul Textor and John Weber; for 60 years of service — Frank Bindreiter, Gary Carpenter, Richard Dewitt, Gerald Ferrell and Glenn Stoltz; for 55 years — Myron Stewart; for 50 years — Harold Baker, Eugene Beckes, James Betz, Leonard Bolls, Joseph Corrado, Edward Fenton, Kenneth Fett, Thomas Fredholm, Bentley Hudson, James Huston, John Johnson, John Kee, Patrick Manion, Charles Nanna, William Neilson, Stephen Schilling and David Strabel.

To all our retirees, Local 306 thanks you for your many years of dedicated service.

Although we gained many retirees this past year, we also lost quite a few.

With sadness we report the passing of the following retired brothers: Russell Beahn, William Deshon, Michael Tanaska, Roger Casseday, Silvano Maiorano, John Weber, Richard Muha, Robert Fitt, Donald Combs, Daniel Popa, Richard Coeey, John Spangler, James Carney, Edward Fenton, Donald Kromer and William May. We send our deepest condolences to their families.

*Thomas Wright, P.S.*



At the Local 306 Retirees Annual Christmas Breakfast.

## 55-Year Service Pin

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 317, HUNTINGTON, WV — The Local 317 retirees have a luncheon on the second Tuesday of every month, at 1 p.m., at the union hall on Madison Avenue in Huntington, WV.

We would like to congratulate Bro. Doug Plybon (pictured below) on receiving his IBEW 55-year service pin recently.

*Jerry Booth, Pres.*



Local 317 Retirees Club Pres. Jerry Booth (left) presents 55-year service pin award to member Doug Plybon.

## 2019 Holiday Festivities; Upcoming Pin/Award Breakfast

RETIREES CLUB OF LOCAL 353, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA — We began our new year after celebrating all our 2019 successes, such as the events that we have shared with Locals 105, 303 and 804 — including our largest Retirees Annual Christmas Dinner/Dance with over 700 retirees present. A special guest at the party was Bro. Peter Reed, who previously served as a Local 353 rep working for the building trades; as a result of an auto accident some time ago he was paralyzed. Peter and his nurses enjoyed attending this event.

We are presently planning our Annual Pin/Award Breakfast for Wednesday, April 15, where we will honor our 50- to 70-year members for their service.

This year, a total of 410 Local 353 members are eligible to receive IBEW service awards. These include 151 50-year members; 209 55-year members; 37 60-year members; five 65-year members; and eight 70-year members. If half of the eligible award recipients show up for the Pin/Award Breakfast, this will be the largest breakfast to date, thanks to the organizing in the past.

As we give thanks for all that we have, we will continue to acknowledge and contribute to the needs of our community, as without the contributions from unions, our society would be in dire shape.

All the best for 2020 and continue to "build our communities with dignity."

*Robert Rynyk, P.S.*

## 'Fellowship & Camaraderie'

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 443, MONTGOMERY, AL — We held our retiree meeting on Dec. 6, 2019, with 30 members and guests in attendance. The meeting went very well with lots of camaraderie and fellowship. All enjoyed a delicious pot-luck lunch prepared by our members and their spouses. We had a short business meeting followed by "Dirty Santa," and everyone had an enjoyable time.

Our next scheduled meeting will be April 3 at the Local 443 union hall starting around 11 a.m., with a pot-luck lunch to follow at about noon.

If you are IBEW retired (or over age 55) we would love for you to come fellowship and have lunch with us. In brotherhood,

Barry W. Harrison, P.S.

## Activities & Events

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 649, ALTON, IL — The Local 649 Retirees Club's recent events, activities and updates include those reported below.

Retirees Club monthly meetings take place the last Thursday of each month, except for schedule changes due to holidays.

The Retirees Christmas Party was Dec. 14, with 70 retired members and guests attending.

Retirees volunteered their time to assist projects at Gordon Moore Park, the Salvation Army, St. Mary's Parish in Alton, and the Jersey County Animal Rescue.

Retirees Club Pres. George Stumpy has problems with his knee but is improving at the time of this writing.

Local 649 transmits email notices to members both active and retired. For any members (including retirees) who are not receiving emails, please contact the union hall to provide updated email addresses.

Thank you to Vice Pres. Bill Gotlib for presiding in Bro. Stumpy's absence. Thanks also to Rec. Sec./Treas. Marlin Wagner for keeping us abreast of Bro. Stumpy's progress as he recovers.

Our thanks and appreciation also go to Bro. Jack Tueth, who compiled and submitted the Retirees Club's "Local Lines" articles in the past.

Thank you to each of you retirees for your participation, and also thanks to Bro. Alan Rubenstein for compiling the information for this article.

Terry Wilhite, P.S.

## Meeting Updates

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 702, WEST FRANKFORT, IL — The Retirees Club met on Oct. 3 and Dec. 5, 2019, at Golden Corral in Carbondale, IL.

Pres. Gary King welcomed those in attendance. Minutes from the previous meetings and the financial report were read and approved, followed by the reading of the deaths and a moment of silence for those dearly departed.

Under old business, the club discussed the great Labor Day picnic at Rent One Park in Marion, IL, and the possible return of the picnic to the DuQuoin State Fair. A thank-you was extended to all those who helped with the Labor Pavilion. At the December meeting, it was decided to present a placard to Bro. Jim Campbell at the Annual Retiree Luncheon in Mt. Vernon, IL, which will be held Tuesday, April 7.

In new business at the October meeting, retired Executive Board member John Sims joined the club for the first time since his retirement, and he informed attendees about the Home-

coming Tailgate at Southern Illinois University. Additionally, the club voted unanimously to spend \$200 for the purchase of a plaque that shows when the Retiree Club was founded, etc.

The raffle drawings were held and the deposit for both meetings was announced, followed by adjournment.

Mark Baker, P.S.



At Local 702's union meeting in October 2019, Bus. Mgr. Steve Hughart (right) presents a 50-year service pin to retiree Brent Taylor.

## 'Happy New Year 2020'

RETIREES CLUB OF L.U. 756, DAYTONA BEACH, FL — We wish you all a happy and healthy new year! We love seeing each and every one of you! We want to thank Greg Stone, George Pettigill and all the others who help make such wonderful meals — we are so blessed to have them.

We had a good showing of our retirees at the Local 756 Christmas Party, and we thank the local for inviting us for a wonderful evening!

Congratulations to our annual January Chili Cookoff 2020 winners: 1st place — Greg Stone; 2nd place — Bonnie Pettigill; and 3rd place — JoAnn Gardner.

With sadness, we send our condolences and prayers to families and friends of members who recently passed away: Bros. Robert W. Nelson III, Frederic Z. Due, Daniel L. Gray and Larry R. "Butch" Frohock.

We invite any retired or unemployed brothers and sisters and their spouses who are in the area to come and join us. Our meetings are the second Thursday of each month (September through May), 11:30 a.m. at the Local 756 union hall, Port Orange, FL.

Diane Gibbs, P.S.



Local 756 Retirees Club Treas. Dow Graham (left) presents IBEW 65-year service pin to retired member Don Carter.



*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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# WHO WE ARE

## IBEW Members Dominate ‘Super Bowl for Electricians’

In what has become a yearly tradition, IBEW members dominated the competition at the fourth annual Ideal National Championships, which draws union and nonunion electricians from across North America and is considered the top competition of its kind for inside wiremen.

Leading the way in 2019 was Greg Anliker, an inside wireman from Elgin, Ill., Local 117, who finished first in the individual pro competition for the second consecutive year. Longtime friend and former competition partner Clay Noga from Somonauk, Ill., Local 701 finished third in the same division.

Portsmouth, Ohio, Local 575 member Jordan Finrock finished first in the apprentice competition, leading an IBEW sweep of the top three places. He was followed by Watertown, N.Y., Local 910 member Benjamin Budd and Le Sueur, Minn., Local 343's Marty Evans.

Noga joined with Aurora, Ill., Local 461 member Keith Runkle to win the contractor challenge, which pits teams from a single employer against one another. Minneapolis JATC students and Minneapolis Local 292 members Jacob Theonnes and Angela Bissonnette-Penna won the student competition. The finals were held Nov. 7-9 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

**“I just take it easy and do it methodically ... and I still get finished before guys jumping around like a maniac.”**

—Elgin, Ill., Local 117 member and Ideal national champion Greg Anliker

“This has become an annual highlight for me, and I congratulate all the winners and participants who represented our brotherhood,” International President Lonnie R. Stephenson said. “Their success reaffirms what we and our signatory contractors already knew: IBEW electricians are the best in the industry. I'm honored to represent the men and women proving it.”

Contestants must advance through state competitions before qualifying for nationals, where they complete a series of electrical tasks over two days. Speed is one of the criteria, but less emphasis was put on it than in the past, Anliker noted; it only comprised about 10% of the



Greg Anliker, a journeyman inside wireman and member of Elgin, Ill., Local 117, accepts congratulations after winning the individual pro competition at the Ideal National Championships in November.

score in 2019. The rest was based on quality and safety.

Anliker walked away the big winner, earning the \$75,000 first prize and continuing his dominance of the event. He finished first in the pro competition in Ideal's initial competition in 2016. He followed that up by finishing second in 2017 before the first-place finishes during the last two years.

“I honestly thought they wouldn't let me win anymore,” he said with a laugh. “I figured they would just yank off a wire breaker so something wouldn't work. They put a lot of money out there, and I'm sure they would like to give it to a lot of people instead of just one guy.”

But Anliker still earned the top prize, which he credits to his IBEW training and habits instilled while working in the field during a nearly 20-year career. He lives in Elgin, Ill., a western suburb of Chicago, and usually serves as a foreman on large-scale commercial projects.

“By nature, I am a pretty hard worker,” he said. “When you get to the competition, you see some guys jumping around and flying around. I just take it easy and do it methodically like I do at work and I still get finished before guys jumping around like a maniac.”

Fellow Illinoisan Noga earned \$10,000 with his third-place finish. Like Anliker, he's employed by signatory contractor Kellenberger Electric.

“My philosophy in my 16 years in the trades is that you have to be good before you can be fast,” Noga said. “You can run around like a chicken with its head cut off

and look like you're flying. But someone working at a moderate pace next to you can get it done quicker because they're making every step count.”

While it may not be apparent to outsiders, the competition itself is a draining experience, Noga said. Competitors have to eat right throughout the three days and make sure they get enough rest. Like athletes, he tries to stay in good physical shape throughout the year.

It was an even longer competition for him because he combined with Aurora, Ill., Local 461 member Keith Runkle to win the contractor's competition. Each man earned \$20,000 and Kellenberger Electric received a Ram commercial van. Noga combined with Anliker and Elgin, Ill., Local 117 member Will Barnett to win the professional team category in 2018. The name of the competition was changed and teams were cut from three members to two after that.

“It's a huge physical and mental commitment,” Noga said. “If you do it, you have to go all in.”

Noga worked a team with Anliker and Barnett in last year's contractor competition, but this year's changes required him to break off from that team and join with Runkle for 2019.

“I just followed Clay's lead and we both went about doing what we do every day,” Runkle said. “I couldn't really point to one reason or another as to why we did so well. We apparently made fewer mistakes than everyone else.”

The future is bright for the IBEW if the results of the apprentice competition

are any indication. Finrock said his goal was to improve on the previous year's 18th-place finish. He did that in a big way, taking home \$30,000 for winning the title.

That money allowed him to splurge a little more on Christmas gifts this year, particularly for his wife and 4-year-old son. He also put some of it toward a home he and his wife recently purchased in northern Kentucky.

“It was exciting,” he said. “It still hasn't really set in. Everyone you've looked up to the past few years watching the competition, you still don't feel like that kind of person.”

“Getting a little bit of experience and knowing what it's like when you go down there helps. It's not like going to work every day. You've got all the pressure of everyone looking at you. Each competition, the hour segments feel like a full day of work. You're hurting and it takes a lot out of you.”

He was followed by Budd, who earned \$20,000 for his second-place finish; and Evans, who pocketed \$10,000 for finishing third.

For Evans, it was further proof he made the right choice by pursuing an apprenticeship. He has a bachelor's degree in biology from Bemidji State

(Minn.) University, but opted for a career in the trades after he realized he would need graduate-level education to make better use of his biology training.

“I don't think I would be where I am if I didn't go to college,” said Evans, who lives in Cannon Falls, Minn., about a 45-minute drive southeast of Minneapolis. “That helped me mature as a person. But I'm definitely happy with what I am doing now.”

Evans improved on an eighth-place finish in last year's Ideal competition. He is on track to top out and earn journeyman status later this summer.

“Minnesota is a really hard place to keep qualifying from,” he said.

Fellow Minnesotans Thoennes and Bissonnette-Penna won \$20,000 and earned the Minneapolis JATC \$10,000 by winning the school competition.

Sometimes called “the Super Bowl of the craft,” the 2020 Ideal Nationals will be held Nov. 3-5 at Music City Hall in Nashville, Tenn. Electricians have to advance through state competitions to qualify. Visit [IdealNationals.com](http://IdealNationals.com) to register.

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