

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1893

CONSTRUCTION • UTILITIES • TELECOMMUNICATIONS • MANUFACTURING • GOVERNMENT • BROADCASTING • RAILROAD

Printed in the USA

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Vol. 14 | No. 12 | December 2020

## IBEW News

### A Fight for Dignity

Film Brings Labor History to Life **3**

### The Electric Truck is Here



IBEW Members  
Will Deliver Future  
of Truck Industry **6**

### Combating Right-to-Work

Oklahoma Organizers' Success  
in the Face of RTW **8**

### A Sight on Rails

Special BNSF Locomotive Visits  
Nebraska Members **8**

## In This Issue

Editorials **2**

My IBEW Story **2**

PBF Summary Annual Report **5**

North of 49° **9**

Politics & Jobs **10**

Circuits **11**

Transitions **12**

Spotlight on Safety **13**

Local Lines **14**

Retirees **17**

In Memoriam **18**

NEAP Benefit Notice **19**

NEAP Summary Annual Report **19**

Who We Are **20**

## Chicago Local Teaches Area Firefighters How to Stay Safe with Solar



Credit: IAFF

*One of a firefighter's first jobs on the scene of a building fire is to punch holes in the roof to release smoke and fumes trapped inside. But solar panel installations can complicate that job and make it even more dangerous.*

It's among a firefighter's worst-case scenarios: An overnight call to a scene where the surroundings are dark and unfamiliar and every step poses life-threatening danger, not from flames or degraded structure — they're used to that — but from live wires, trip hazards and physical impediments to the most basic of firefighting strategies.

This safety worry has played out night after night across the world as the use of commercial and residential solar power has grown over the last few decades. As builders and customers have turned to low-cost, low-environmental-impact photovoltaic and battery technology, firefighters have had to wrestle with the added dangers presented by rooftop panels.

## LESSONS IN SOLIDARITY

It's why lawmakers and building-code regulators have increasingly turned to updating rules for solar installations and fire departments have sought out additional training for crews responding to fires where solar is part of the safety equation. And who better to help lead that training than the men and women who often install the panels themselves?

At Chicago Local 134, whose jurisdiction covers all of Chicago and 133 other incorporated municipalities in Illinois' Cook County, the opportunity to help neighboring fire departments navigate the potential dangers of solar power was one that local leaders couldn't pass up. It started when representatives from the Alsip Fire Department, located near the local's training center, reached out for help.

"They called us because they were starting to see more and more solar get installed within the last few years, and they knew we could help educate

them," said Local 134 business representative Robert Hattier, who worked to build a training curriculum around solar safety. "It made me realize, we're always thinking of the electrical inspectors who work with permitting authorities to prevent problems, but what about the first responders' safety?"

Already, Hattier has trained hundreds of firefighters at dozens of station houses throughout Illinois about the well-known and lesser-known dangers of solar power generation. He combines classroom-based lectures and discussions with hands-on experience when possible, giving first responders a chance to see and safely touch what they might be up against in an actual firefighting situation.

In July, Hattier trained Engine Company 115 of the Chicago Fire Department at a 10-megawatt facility on the city's South Side. "As the responding company to the 40-acre site, it was important to address the specific concerns raised if they receive a call," he said. In the course of three days, the first responders trained on and discussed procedures about gaining access to the site and how to mitigate potential hazards.

**STAY SAFE WITH SOLAR** continued on page 4



## FROM THE OFFICERS

## Looking to 2021



**Lonnie R. Stephenson**  
International President



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

**S**isters and brothers, we're coming to the end of one of the most challenging years we can remember, and we're proud to say that IBEW members across North America stood strong and rose to meet the moment together.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant enormous sacrifices on both personal and professional levels. For some of us, that meant lengthy work stoppages, layoffs and furloughs. For others, it meant reporting to essential jobs under the threat of illness for us and our families.

For all of us, it has meant missing birthdays and weddings and time spent with family and friends.

Tragically, COVID-19 has cost the lives of friends and family members as well as a great many of our IBEW brothers and sisters. If you're among those who have experienced loss from this horrible disease, know that all of us across this brotherhood join you in your grief.

But this pandemic has also laid bare the differences between people who work for a living and those who get rich from our efforts. The stock market has soared, but wages have stayed flat and unemployment checks are running out. CEOs and Wall Street bankers report they're doing better than ever, while Main Street workers have resorted to food banks and been forced to make other tough financial sacrifices.

We know we're not out of the woods yet, but hopefully there's an end in sight. Your IBEW sisters and brothers are hard at work as we speak putting the finishing touches on production lines that will soon be creating hundreds of millions of vaccines to combat this disease.

And when things do return to normal, whatever that looks like, we want each of you to be ready. Because the opportunities for the IBEW and its members in both the U.S. and Canada are going to be enormous.

Over the last year, we've seen some of the highest approval numbers for unions among the public in decades. Men and women across every sector of the economy have seen the value of having a voice on the job. When your safety is at stake, everything else matters a little less, and millions of working people across North America have had to learn that the hard way this year.

So, we need to be ready to spread the gospel of collective bargaining and unions far and wide as our economies recover and people get back to work. And believe us, working people are ready to listen.

We're also coming off the conclusion of one of the most divisive elections of our lifetimes here in the U.S. Whether your side won or lost, there are going to be opportunities for IBEW members during the Biden administration.

First, the foot that's been on the neck of union organizers for the last four years is going away. We'll have allies on the National Labor Relations Board and in the Labor Department, and we'll finally see some decisions that put workers ahead of corporate special interests. We expect to see Congress move to fix our troubled multiemployer pension system as well.

We also have a commitment from the incoming administration that something is finally going to get done on infrastructure and energy.

A massive investment in our roads, bridges, ports and airports should have been the one thing Republicans and Democrats could have agreed on over the last four years, but nothing happened. Our energy infrastructure is equally as important, laying the groundwork for the enormous technological changes that will be ushered in over the coming decades.

On each of these things, President-elect Biden understands the challenges and will work with Congress to finally get the ball rolling. And you'd better believe he will work to make sure the job is done union.

A huge part of making sure we win this work is also up to us. Our Code of Excellence puts us at a huge advantage to our nonunion competition. Employers and customers see the standards we hold ourselves to and can't help but be impressed. But it's on each of us to live up to those commitments each day on the job and to hold one another accountable.

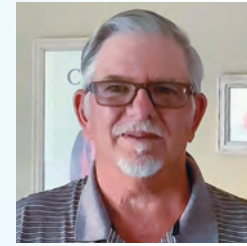
Another commitment to being our best is the pledge we've made to be IBEW Strong. Our union is at its best when it reflects the communities we serve, and we have made it a priority to recruit and train the next generation of electrical workers from as broad a pool of talent as possible. Our commitment to diversity is how we grow, how we man bigger jobs and increase market share. It's how we live up to our loftiest goals as a union — to represent every worker in the electrical industry.

The next few months will continue to be a struggle. This virus isn't going away for some time, and there are sacrifices yet to make. But in the not too distant future, 2021 will be a time for celebration, growth and, yes, a lot of hard work.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a joyful New Year to all of you and your families. ■

## My IBEW STORY

**David Cardy, Retired Gas Service Technician**  
Tuscon, Ariz., Local 1116



**“**I joined the IBEW in 2003 when Tuscon Electric Power bought the company I was working for. We looked at TEP's union staff and saw how the IBEW took care of them and we asked to join pretty quickly.

For me, joining the union wasn't about the money. It was about being treated fairly.

Before the IBEW, supervisors could play favorites, giving raises and choice assignments to certain people and stiffing the workers they didn't like. That stopped with our first contract, which I was lucky enough to help negotiate as a steward. Things evened out and got more fair.

The attention to safety changed, too. Before we joined the IBEW, safety was an afterthought. With the union, it was at the forefront, and union members were asked to serve on safety committees that wouldn't have been considered before.

More than anything, with the union I felt secure in my job and I never felt threatened, which was a big deal to me — I'd never been shy about speaking my mind to management.

Three neck surgeries forced me to retire early, but joining the IBEW was one of the best decisions I ever made. I had a great career, and I've got a secure retirement, and my IBEW membership helped make that possible.”

**Every member in every branch has a story to tell about how the IBEW has improved their life both on and off the job. Tell us yours today for a chance to be featured here.**

**[ibew.org/MyIBEWStory](http://ibew.org/MyIBEWStory)**



**ENTER TO WIN THE  
FISHING TRIP OF A LIFETIME  
WITH MARK ZONA**



**ENTER TODAY!**

**[WWW.USACONTEST.ORG](http://WWW.USACONTEST.ORG)**



# Bringing a Famous Strike to Life, Movie Tells Universal Workers' Story

“What if you could get ninety dollars in six months?”

“Quit dreaming, there's no union here.”

**R**age, misery, passion and purpose were building to a crescendo in 1919 Winnipeg.

The capital of Manitoba, then Canada's third-largest city, was combustible: poverty-level wages, injustice, dismal and dangerous working conditions, mass unemployment, soaring inflation, even starvation — desperation met with customary contempt from the rich and powerful.

All the ingredients a city needed for a historic uprising. And all the drama movie-makers could ask for a century later telling the story of the landmark Winnipeg General Strike on the big screen in “Stand!”

“The strike was a monumental turning point in Canadian labor history,” said First District International Vice President Tom Reid. “It unified workers and laid the foundation for life-changing labor reforms, the growth of unions and collective bargaining.”

Canadian IBEW members were among the first to see “Stand!” when the musical — songs, no dance — premiered during the Toronto International Film Festival last year, the strike's centennial. They also donated tickets to university students and young workers committees.

“It's really a lesson I think young workers need, whether Canadian or American — seeing what generations of workers before us had to fight for, what they were up against, why they decided to walk out and withhold their service,” said Matt Wayland, First District international representative.

“I'm not a musical guy,” he added, “and I loved the movie.”

“Stand!” came to U.S. theaters nationwide for a special one-night event Dec. 1. It soon will be available for many schoolchildren and their families to

download along with a study guide, and arrangements for wider streaming are in the works, said screenwriter, composer and co-producer Danny Schur.

His energy is palpable as he talks about bringing the story to an American audience, especially now.

“It's a labor story from a time with so many equivalents to the present,” Schur said. “You can watch ‘Stand!’ to see how far we've come, but also how far we have to go.”

**ON MAY 15, 1919**, more than 30,000 men and women, union and non-union, private sector and public, walked off the job in Winnipeg, one-sixth of the city's population.

They were factory and trade workers; dressmakers and household servants; transportation and postal workers; linemen and telephone operators whose successors one day would be IBEW members.

In fact, operators jumpstarted the citywide strike, which came on the heels of walkouts by tradesmen after contract talks broke down.

As immortalized by a banner headline in the morning paper on May 15, the strike was set to start at 11 a.m. But hundreds of “hello girls,” as they were called, didn't show up for their 7 a.m. shifts, leaving the city without telephone service.

By afternoon, a block-letter headline screamed, “67 Labor Unions Join in General Walk-Out; Industry Paralyzed.”



The historic walkout at the center of “Stand!” ended after six weeks with police assaults on strikers marching in silence. In the original 1919 photo, top, workers marched to protest the imprisonment of strike leaders.

Winnipeg's powerbrokers rapidly formed a “Citizens' Committee” to oppose the strike. They began printing their own newspaper to tar strike leaders and incite fear, declaring the walkout a criminal conspiracy led by “alien scum” trying to overthrow democracy.

The strike came to a bloody end after six weeks on a June Saturday as workers staged a peaceful, powerfully silent march. It was crushed by brutal “special police” armed with clubs, enforcers deputized after the city fired most of its actual police force for refusing to sign a loyalty pledge.

In the aftermath, two strikers lay dead and scores were jailed. A dozen spent up to two years in federal prison.

But revolutions aren't won, or lost, overnight. The labor movement was energized, buoyed by public support. Several strike leaders were elected to the Manitoba Legislature, another became Winnipeg's mayor and two eventually served in Parliament.

Their success planted the seeds for what became Canada's New Democratic Party, which plays a vital role today in the nation's coalition government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The Winnipeg General Strike, one of its historians said, turned out to be “the most dramatic event in Canadian labour history.”

**ITS STORY** originated as a stage musical called “Strike!” that Schur premiered in 2005. It's been performed continually since in theaters across Canada.

To call his opus a labor of love is no cliché.

He pays homage to workers' rights, social justice, women's rights, the power of solidarity, and the gifts and grief of sacrifice. Behind the scenes, he ensured the production — filmed entirely in Winnipeg — was “as union as union gets.”

It's also a personal story.

Schur's grandparents, Ukrainian Catholics, settled in rural Manitoba near the turn of the 20th century. They were among millions of immigrants to North America fleeing upheaval, poverty, and persecution in pre-war Europe.

A generation later, his trailblazing Aunt Jean married into a Jewish family, an interfaith relationship scorned by some of Schur's relatives. The story's fiery Jewish suffragette and her tumultuous romance with a penniless Catholic immigrant from Ukraine were inspired by Jean and her real-life love story. Schur just reversed their faiths.

“Stand!” celebrates strong women of the place and times who played leading roles in the strike and other progressive battles. It's a point of fact, not political correctness. Women in Manitoba won the right to vote in 1916 — the first in Canada



and four years ahead of the United States.

“Women were superstars in the progressive movement long before Norma Rae,” Schur said. “The 1920s make the '70s look like the '50s.”

**THE SOLIDARITY** in 1919 Winnipeg was in pursuit of rights and freedoms that workers and social justice allies in the United States and around the world are fighting to save today.

“Stand!” reflects the good, the bad and the ugly — then and now.

In a shameful chapter of Canada's history in the years leading to the strike, more than 8,500 Eastern Europeans were unjustly declared “enemy aliens” and held in prison camps during World War I.

Distrust and bigotry plagued foreigners, no matter their status. Tensions boiled over as soldiers returned after the war.

As the movie depicts, a perfect storm was brewing in Winnipeg in spring 1919. Inflation and unemployment soared as war-weary soldiers returned home to find desperate immigrants filling their jobs under six-month contracts that amounted to pennies an hour.

Characters in “Stand!” lyrically yearn for just \$10 more for a half-year's work. Women working in garment shops and household staff sing of \$50 growing to \$60. Men, filthy and sweaty from back-breaking work in a pumphouse, long for \$80 to become \$90.

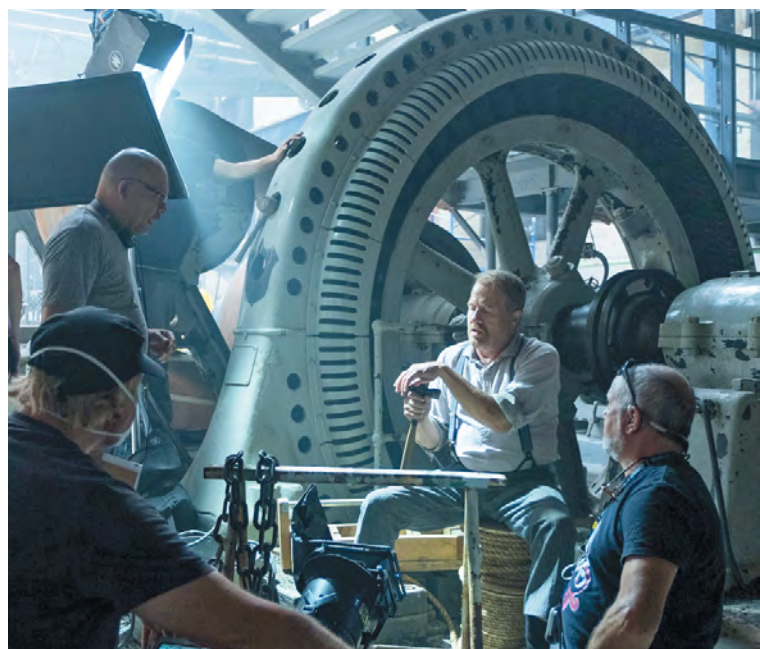
They seem unaware that a living wage for a small family in Winnipeg at the time would have required 10 times their income, Schur said.

The resulting turmoil wasn't unique to Winnipeg. People were struggling and suffering across North America. Survival meant standing together and fighting back.

While Canadian workers benefit today from the strong voice of the NDP and the federal Liberal Party, they aren't immune to assaults on their rights. They fear things could get worse, and watch the attacks on rights, freedoms, and economic security in the United States with grave concern.

Schur wants to entertain American audiences with “Stand!” but he and IBEW leaders also hope they'll be motivated by it.

“The aristocracy now are doing the same things they did back then,” said Winnipeg Local 2085 Business Manager Russ Shewchuk, a fan of the stage show and movie. “I think IBEW members will draw some similarities from the movie. History is repeating itself right in front of your own eyes.” ■



“Stand!” was filmed entirely in Winnipeg with an all-union cast and crew. The Manitoba capital is a favorite site for Hollywood filmmakers seeking a turn-of-the-century backdrop, including the city's 1907 pumping station, pictured.



Continued from page 1

# Lessons in Solidarity: Chicago Local Teaches Area Firefighters How to Stay Safe with Solar

## Modern Problems

For generations, a firefighter's first jobs on the scene have been to disconnect power and then send crewmembers to the roof to cut holes, allowing thick smoke and toxic fumes trapped inside to escape. The two steps are all about safety. Live wires, low visibility and toxic air are an immediate danger to both firefighters and anyone still stuck inside.

But rooftop solar presents obstacles to both of those critical steps. When placed closely together, panels often impede crews' ability to cut ventilation holes directly above the source of the fire, slowing the smoke-clearing process or making it completely impossible or exceedingly difficult in cases where panels cover an entire roof.

Plus, one of the greatest misconceptions about solar power — no sun, no power — can turn deadly, especially when fire crews turn up. Light trucks used by fire departments to illuminate nighttime scenes can quickly energize panels, which, when connected or hooked up to battery storage, can leave power running through wires that would normally be switched off at the street. Streetlights or nearby ambient light could even generate enough juice to pose a serious threat to rescue personnel.

**“It’s so hard to keep light sources from energizing a panel ... electrocution [is] an even bigger danger.”**

— Chicago Local 134 Business Representative Robert Hattier

“Firefighters can handle it when the panels themselves catch fire,” Hattier said. “But because it’s so hard to keep light sources from energizing a panel, it makes electrocution an even bigger danger for first responders.”

Emergency personnel responding to a blaze in the middle of the night can follow every procedure they know for shutting down the connections between the



Credit: IAFF

panels and the building's electrical systems, and it still might not be enough to eliminate the risk that current is continuing to flow throughout the structure.

“Solar is super dangerous,” said Aaron Kozlowski, battalion chief of training for the Joliet Fire Department, some of whose members have been through Hattier's training. “A lot of people don't realize how easy it is to energize a panel. A full moon can produce a charge. It doesn't take much.”

It's also easy to imagine scenarios, Kozlowski said, where firefighters finish their work, pack up and return to their stations, only to be dispatched back to the scene the following morning, as the rising sun causes fresh energy to flow into cut wires that are often left dangling against walls, rooftops and a variety of metallic surfaces.

“There are all these considerations that we're not used to,” said Kozlowski, who hopes to expand Local 134's training to more stations in his jurisdiction. “It really hit on the many hazards of solar — even things like the weight of panels on roofs.”

These considerations, when combined with a lack of proper photovoltaic training, have forced firefighters around the world to completely change their strategy when battling fires where solar electricity is a part of the equation. In many cases, instead of taking the usual decisive action to save a burning property, emergency personnel have had to take a more conservative approach.

*Members of Chicago Local 134 have been helping Illinois firefighters understand some of the hidden challenges presented by rooftop and utility-grade solar installations.*

That's what played out during a well-publicized 11-alarm blaze at a refrigerated warehouse in Burlington County, N.J., in 2013. The building was destroyed, partially because fears of electrocution by the facility's 7,000-panel rooftop array kept firefighters from entering the building to attack the source of the fire. Instead, they focused on keeping crewmembers and neighboring buildings safe.

“With all that power and energy up there, I can't jeopardize a guy's life for that,” Delanco Fire Chief Ron Holt told NBC Philadelphia at the time.

## The Rise of Solar and Building Better

Humans have been finding different ways to harness the sun's light and heat for centuries, but it wasn't until the 1800s that people began generating electricity using rudimentary solar cells. By the 1950s, the efficiency of practical cells slowly started to improve to where their costs could compete with those of the electricity produced by coal-fired plants. The oil shortages in the 1970s helped interest in residential and commercial solar skyrocket, and the costs of solar panels have dropped about 10% a year ever since.

“We've been training in solar for at least 20 years,” Hattier noted. “Solar training used to be elective at our JATC; now, it's mandatory.”

The newer challenge has been how to help first responders stay alert to the various dangers presented by solar power generating systems. But even as more IBEW electricians are becoming experts on the components of these increasingly sophisticated solar power systems, a potentially dangerous reality for firefighters is that not every solar panel system is being installed by members of our union. And it's not just nonunion contractors that they must worry about: Plenty of



Credit: Creative Commons / Flickr user Sean Birmingham



Credit: Chicago Local 134

do-it-yourselfers are setting up residential panels on their own after watching homemade YouTube videos.

Fortunately, national fire and building codes, which get revised and updated every few years, have been addressing solar, thanks in part to expert input from members of the IBEW and other building trades. Recently, the National Electrical Code began to include requirements for the “rapid shutdown” of PV systems in new construction and installation, using easily accessible switches and other disconnecting devices to help reduce shock hazards for technicians and first responders alike.

Also, many jurisdictions in the U.S. have started to require rooftop PV arrays to be installed specifically with firefighters' safety in mind, including clear labeling and signage along with giving enough walkable space between rooftop panels. Others are addressing additional concerns, such as flammability of the batteries that store generated energy. And then there are the tripping hazards that can come from responders having to navigate around wiring conduits — something that can be especially difficult at utility-scale installations, where tall grass and underbrush are not only flammable, they can easily cover panel-to-panel connections.

But under the best of circumstances, national fire codes and standards can still take time to flow to the local levels, and even then, they can vary from one jurisdiction

to the next, as guidelines that localities can use or tweak as needed.

Training like that provided by Local 134 can help first responders deal with such issues, as well as with older residential systems installed before newer standards were adopted. Helping Hattier provide this deeper perspective during the seminars has been Robert Gisch, a fourth-generation electrical worker with more than 30 years of membership in Local 134. Gisch runs Detailed Inspection Service, a company that provides third-party and private commercial and residential inspection services to municipalities that might not be able to employ inspectors of their own.

“Firefighters gain a broader view of these issues viewed through the lens of being an electrician, and fire departments are very interested in learning about this stuff,” Gisch said. “It's an interactive training environment. We're there to learn from each other, and Bob and I have learned a lot.”

Gisch noted that first responders aren't always dealing with fires. “When they're dispatched, they're often at a disadvantage,” he said. “They might not have all the information they need when they arrive.”

Sometimes, it could be a scenario where someone working on a rooftop with solar panels has passed out. “If it's a fire, it increases the risk, of course,” he said. “That's how our training can help — they can perform their jobs better if they're properly trained.”



Credit: Chicago Local 134

*Through a combination of classroom-based and hands-on learning, trainers from Chicago Local 134 are hoping to help first responders to the variety of potential hazards in residential and commercial solar installations.*





Credit: Chicago Local 134



Credit: Chicago Local 134

*Chicago Local 134's Robert Hattier takes his first responder training where it's needed, whether that's onsite at a utility-grade solar installation or in a fire department's conference room.*

## Solidarity Among Unions

According to the International Association of Fire Fighters, a new solar installation is installed in the U.S. every two minutes, on average.

Nowhere is that more evident than in Illinois, where there's been an explosion of

solar panel installation in recent years thanks to the Future Energy Jobs Act, green-energy legislation that provides incentives like tax credits to encourage owners of commercial and residential properties to adopt solar and wind power generation.

"Passage of FEJA was a win-win for all residents and businesses throughout

Illinois," said Local 134 Business Manager Donald Finn. "Advancement of renewable energy technology and falling renewable energy costs have a huge effect on where this exciting clean-energy technology is going." FEJA also has enormous jobs potential for IBEW members, he said: "Its funding will help all 17 inside locals in the state to train our members to become skilled solar installers."

Under FEJA, Local 134 was awarded a grant to help fund workforce development efforts, part of a 10-year, multimillion-dollar statewide distribution of funding that targets high schools and

community colleges in Illinois to help provide solar training, with incentives to help students consider apprenticeships with the IBEW. The money also helped fund the creation of the Illinois IBEW Renewable Energy Fund.

Of course, the main advantage of Local 134's training is that it provides an electrical workers' perspective to help reinforce the training that firefighters receive. And it's clearly making a difference.

"All 60 of our firefighters went through the training in three shifts," Berwyn Fire Department Captain Joseph Lotito told the Electrical Contractor magazine. "Now we can tell by just looking at a house if there are going to be problems."

Some of those problems, Lotito said, might be a conduit that's installed too close to rafters, which can increase the shock risk should first responders need to poke ventilation holes in the roof, or a lack of proper labeling on solar conduits.

"With any new technology developed you can't foresee all the potential issues it can create," said Director of Safety and Health David Mullen. "But the foresight of the IBEW locals and the firefighters working together is a real testament to how our brothers and sisters in the labor movement work together to solve safety issues."

Training can only help firefighters get ahead — and stay ahead — of emerging technologies, said Rick Swan, director of Health and Safety Operations with the International Association of Fire Fighters. "The neat thing is, you guys know what's coming out of this stuff," Swan said. "These things are coming; we don't want to be ignorant about it."

Meanwhile, Hattier is working on training fellow IBEW members at Illinois's 16 other inside locals to serve as trainers

themselves, and there are already plans to expand the seminars to locals in neighboring Wisconsin.

"We don't charge for the training," said Hattier, who thinks of the two- or three-day courses as a workforce development program. "It's designed to bring allied professionals up to speed on current technologies and to encourage municipalities to adopt the most recent codes to ensure public safety," he said. He was even on track to train inspectors from nearly 100 Illinois municipalities at the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association's Fire and Life Safety Conference in March, but it was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. "But I'm on the agenda for the 2021 meeting," he said. "Fingers crossed."

**"Solar is super dangerous. A full moon can produce a charge."**

— Battalion Chief Aaron Kozlowski, Joliet [Ill.] F.D.

"Safety is probably the most important reason our union exists," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "Working around electricity will always be dangerous, but education and training are just as crucial as any of the other tools we carry with us to keep us safe."

"And it's such a terrific expression of solidarity to see us extending our knowledge to help our brothers and sisters in the IAFF," he said, "whose already extremely dangerous jobs are made even more so as commercial and residential solar energy systems continue to grow." ■

## Summary Annual Report for Int'l Brotherhood of Electrical Workers' Pension Benefit Fund

This is a summary of the annual report for the INT'L BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS' PENSION BENEFIT FUND, (Employer Identification No. 53-0088380, Plan No. 001) for the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

### BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Benefits under the plan are provided by a trust (benefits are provided in whole from trust funds). Plan expenses were \$170,667,699. These expenses included \$9,400,072 in administrative expenses and \$161,267,627 in benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries. A total of 508,564 persons were participants in or beneficiaries of the plan at the end of the plan year, although not all of these persons had yet earned the right to receive benefits.

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was \$2,163,333,316 as of June 30, 2019 compared to \$2,135,630,854 as of July 1, 2018. During

the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of \$27,702,462. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference between the value of the plan's assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year, or the cost of assets acquired during the year. The plan had total income of \$198,370,161, including employee contributions of \$82,623,264, losses of \$81,635,789 from the sale of assets, earnings from investments of \$198,466,156 and other income of \$-1,083,470.

### YOUR RIGHTS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed below are included in that report:

1. An accountant's report;
2. Assets held for investment;
3. Transactions in excess of 5 percent of the plan assets; and

4. Information regarding any common or collective trust, pooled separate accounts, master trusts or 103-12 investment entities in which the plan participates.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of the Plan Administrator

Kenneth W. Cooper  
International Secretary-Treasurer  
900 7th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-4089  
82-4445797 (Employer Identification Number)  
(202) 728-6200

The charge to cover copying costs will be \$13.50 for the full report, or \$0.25 per page for any part thereof.

You also have the right to receive from the plan administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and

expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover copying costs given above does not include a charge for the copying of these portions of the report because these portions are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan:

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers' Pension Benefit Fund  
900 7th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., or to obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Public Disclosure Room, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite N-1513, Washington, D.C. 20210. ■



# American Automakers' Billion-Dollar Bet on Electric

## The Truck of the Future is IBEW

Americans like trucks.

For every sedan sold in 2019, Americans bought more than two pickups and SUVs. One of every five cars sold was a midsize sedan in 2012; today it's barely one in 10.

Trucks are useful and roomy, and in terms of comfort, they have come a long way since Chevrolet sold its first pickup a century ago without a bed — the customer had to install his own.

But there is a problem with trucks and SUVs. Automakers are moving away from the internal combustion engine. Electric cars have fewer parts, no transmissions, no tune-ups, and, most important for meeting changing global regulations, no greenhouse gas emissions.

But electric cars, however simple and clean, never sold very well to Americans, in no small part because you couldn't get a truck.

Until now.

During Game 1 of the 2020 World Series, General Motors unveiled what it promises will be the world's first electric supertruck: the 1,000-horsepower Hummer EV with a Saturn rocket's worth of torque.

The Hummer is the first of at least a six-pack of electric pickups and SUVs that are expected on sales lots in the next two years, including the Tesla Cybertruck, the Rivian R1T and R1S, the Cadillac LYRIQ, the Volkswagen ID4 and, of course, the best-selling vehicle in the U.S., the Ford F-150.

And it isn't a one-off show-car promise that won't pan out. Each of them will be assembled in IBEW-built and maintained plants. Construction has already begun on many of them, and the trucks that roll off the lines will be plugged into an IBEW-built and maintained grid with power from IBEW-built and maintained nuclear, hydro, coal, wind, solar and gas powerhouses.

In addition to Rivian, Tesla, GM and Ford, there are a handful of hopefuls, lesser-known start-ups including the Bollinger B1 and B2, the Nikola Badger, the Lordstown Endurance and the Atlys XT, which may well come with an IBEW stamp next to their names.

Globally, automakers have announced \$300 billion in investments in EV technology over the next 10 years. Well over half of that is destined for China and Europe, but tens of billions will find its way into the pockets of IBEW construction members building new assembly plants and hundreds of supplier factories that will grow around their homes in North America.

And along with the stump-pulling attraction of an SUV you never have to gas up or tune up, there is a push.

Just weeks before what GM humbly called a short film launching the Hummer, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an executive order that will effectively ban the sale of cars and passenger trucks with internal combustion engines in the state by 2035, with a similar ban on gas and diesel-powered medium and heavy-duty trucks by 2045.

We are, wrote Pulitzer-prize winning automotive journalist Dan Neil, "living through the S-curve of EV adoption" and



*Automakers are investing tens of billions of dollars to make the pickups and SUVs consumers want with the electric powertrains the environment needs, including a billion-dollar make-over of Ford's Dearborn, Mich., Rouge Plant (left), which will make an all-electric version of the best-selling vehicle in America for nearly 30 years, the F-150 (bottom right). Major competition will come from the Hummer EV (middle) and newcomer Rivian's R1T (bottom left.)*

2020 could very well become "the year of the electric vehicle."

And all those millions of EVs will need power from millions of charging stations. The Edison Electric Institute, the association of investor-owned utilities and the unions that staff them, predicts that there will be 18.7 million EVs on the road in the U.S. by 2030 supported by 9.6 million charging stations.

Those, too, could be IBEW built.

### The Big Three

But first, manufacturers have to build the trucks somewhere.

In the days before the world premiere of the Hummer EV, GM held an equally important but lower-profile event, changing the name of the storied Detroit Hamtramck assembly plant to Factory Zero.

The name change was backed by an announcement that the company would invest an unprecedented \$2.2 billion to transform it into the showpiece production line for its electric vehicle future, the largest single investment in a plant in GM history.

The plant was stripped nearly bare at the beginning of the year, and wall-to-wall union craft will rebuild it with Detroit Local 58 installing new tools, conveyor lines, controls, a paint shop and battery assembly facility by November of next year.

Local 58 is also building a 30kW solar carport and 516kW ground-mounted PV array.

"There are going to be 400 to 600 people in all crafts," said Local 58 Business Manager Brian Richard. "It might go up to 1,400."

Richard expects there will be between six and eight Local 58 signatory contractors on the job.

"We have been talking about EV for a long time. Now the commitment is there, and all hands are on deck," Richard said. "We always get those auto jobs in on time. With our signatories, we get it done."

There are between 130 and 140 electricians on site already, Richard said, a number that will ramp up to 200 in the next few months.

The reality of working during a pandemic is changing some things. For the first time in his local, Richard said, everyone on the Factory Zero job is required to wear a portable location device that will emit an alarm if two devices are closer than 6 feet for 10 minutes, long enough for there to be an exposure issue.

"This is PPE. Masks are PPE. These contact tracing badges are PPE," said Local 58 Business Representative Byron Osborn.

And just like masks, it will take a little time to get used to it.

"When the pandemic started, we had a lot of people who thought COVID came through your chin," he joked. "Now, you can walk through a job site and it's, 'Hey brother, put that mask over your nose.'"

While most of the work will shift to the United Auto Workers once production begins, Richard fully expects IBEW members to remain on site. This job, like most in Detroit these days, works on accelerated timelines and commissioning, so troubleshooting and changes will happen as production begins.

"As they shake out production, we will be a mainstay at the plant," Osborn said. "The UAW has their scope of work; when something gets beyond their capacity, whether by cost or numbers, our guys will be there."

The Hummer EV is the highest profile,

but there are nearly two dozen new electric models on the way, including an expected but unannounced electric Chevy Silverado and GMC Sierra that may be built at Factory Zero.

GM also announced last year that it would invest \$300 million to produce an unnamed electric vehicle at the Orion Assembly plant just north of Detroit. The car — not truck — was originally going to be produced outside the U.S. but was brought back home after an agreement with the UAW.

Farther afield, GM is rebuilding the Spring Hill, Tenn., assembly plant to produce the new Cadillac LYRIQ, a fully electric SUV. Nashville Local 429 is doing that work.

"We haven't gotten anything official, but the building trades have a pre-job agreement so they are beginning this fall with about a dozen members," said Business Manager Randy Clark.

Clark isn't sure about the total size of the job, but the last time there was a retooling of the Spring Hill plant about a decade ago, a nearly \$800 million expansion, there were five or six contractors with more than 300 members.

Local 429 has about 1,700 members and is preparing for a busy 2021 with the assembly plant, a new MLS soccer stadium, a data center and an Amazon office complex.

"With all this going on this year we hope to blow past 2,000 members," he said. "If we are going to man all this work, we will have to."

Many of GM's electric vehicles will use batteries produced by a joint venture with LG Chem in Lordstown, Ohio, called Ultium Cells.

Work on the new \$2.3 billion, 3-million-square-foot plant began in May and construction will continue for at least the next two years, said Warren, Ohio, Local 573

Business Manager Mike Nemkovich.

"I sent the first man there in April and we have about 20 there now," he said. "They said they were manning up in September, but the pandemic has made timelines harder to predict and that was pushed to the end of the year."

Nemkovich said at peak there will be 300 to 500 electricians on the job, and that may come as soon as the summer.

The Ultium plant is next door to GM's former Lordstown plant, which closed in 2019 after 53 years.

"When they shuttered it last year it could have been devastating. Our man-hours reflected that we weren't working there anymore; it was the worst year I can remember. Worse than 2008," he said.

Then Nemkovich got better news when electric truck start-up Lordstown Motors bought the old building and started work. The Lordstown Endurance, their first model aimed primarily at fleet operators, not consumers, is supposed to begin delivery in 2021, but the timeline is not set in stone.

Nemkovich says he has had about 10 members on site since May with more expected as the refit of the old factory moves ahead.

Like Richard, he expects to see significant work from the factories after they begin production and has high hopes that some of the suppliers that moved away when GM Lordstown closed down will return as well.

"I assume that once it takes off, there should be spinoff industrial work we are ready and willing to do," he said.

The other members of the Big Three trail GM's electric truck announcements,





*Two years ago, GM announced plans to shutter its Detroit Hamtramck assembly plant; it reversed course this year, announcing a \$2.2 billion investment to build the new Hummer EV and a new name: Factory Zero. Detroit Local 58 already will have 300-500 members there starting this summer.*

but there is too much opportunity and too much competition for them to stay out of the electric truck gold rush.

In September, Ford broke ground on a new manufacturing plant outside of Dearborn, Mich., where it will build an electric version of its extremely popular pickup truck, the F-150.

The new facility, located within the Rouge Complex, will be completed in time to start production in mid-2022.

Again, this will be Local 58 work, Richard said, and will begin in earnest as work on Factory Zero winds down.

Ford also announced a full electric Transit van will begin production at its Kansas City, Mo., assembly plant, located in the jurisdiction of Kansas City Local 124.

"Commercial vehicles are a critical component to our big bet on electrification," Ford chief operating officer Jim Farley said in a statement. "The world is heading toward electrified products and fleet customers are asking for them now."

## The Upstarts

By embracing electric vehicles so slowly, however, the Big Three may have left the door open to something not seen for many years: independent domestic car companies.

AMC, the last American car company operating outside the Big Three, closed in 1988. When Rivian launched in 2009, American car brands were disappearing; Oldsmobile, Buick, Mercury, Saturn, Pontiac, Plymouth had joined DeSoto, Hudson and Auburn.



For nearly a decade, Rivian wandered in the wilderness, first focusing on electric self-driving cars, then "ecosystems" involving car sharing. It was one of many electric car companies that didn't have a factory and didn't actually make many cars.

Then, in 2017, it bought a shuttered Mitsubishi plant in Normal, Ill.

The factory had been built in 1988 — the last boom time in Normal that Bloomington, Ill., Local 197 Business Manager Mike Raikes could remember.

Normal dubbed itself "EV Town" when Mitsubishi had plans to start producing electric vehicles at the Normal plant. Local 197 members built 50 charging stations around the city, but it never led to much, Raikes said.

Rivian bought the factory a year after it closed, netting \$150 million in tax abatements in the process. Then it demolished everything to the bare walls and held a splashy reveal of what it had decided to produce: the R1T truck and R1S SUV electric.

And, again, Raikes said, there was not very much to get excited about. The problem with EVs is that there are so many problems.

But like most things, nearly every problem finds a solution when money is applied.

Unlike most of its competitors, Rivian found investors. In February of 2019, Amazon plunked down \$700 million and signed a contract for the delivery of 100,000 electric delivery vans in the next 10 years.

Rivian's prototype integrated battery, engine and suspension, called a "skateboard," found a fan in Ford, which invested \$500 million in the company. Cox Automotive, owner of Autotrader.com and Kelley

Blue Book, added another \$1.2 billion.

Total investment over the last three years has topped \$3 billion.

Then the calls began coming in to Local 197 and members started going out to the Rivian site just over a year ago.

"The last time we had a project this big was when State Farm was building a new headquarters back in the late '90s before I was in the local," Raikes said. "We haven't seen anything like this in my whole career."

When the pandemic hit, Local 197 had six members on site building out the show line for prototype production.

Then everything seemed to slow and the promise seemed like it was only that.

But on Oct. 8, Rivian rolled out the foundation of its business, the order that makes the risk of a new brand selling an unproven kind of vehicle straight to consumers plausible. It introduced the prototype of the all-electric Amazon delivery van.

By the fall, work was well underway. There were 150 journeyman wiremen and apprentices on site, working on conveyor projects and bus duct work. Another 120 were set to arrive mid-November and stay on through the spring.

"It's going like gangbusters," Raikes said.

Later will come the substation, then production on the SUV and pickup will begin and then the final line to make the delivery vans: 10,000 in the first two years.

"Our contract is to get those lines ready, and they will be ready," he said.

GM, Ford and Rivian may be the farthest along, but they are far from alone.

The highest-profile electric truck claim probably goes to Tesla's Cybertruck, which was revealed to great fanfare in 2019.

Production isn't expected to begin until late 2021.

The company announced that its futuristic interpretation of a pickup truck and its electric semi-truck will be made in the Gigafactory Texas. Construction on the plant began in the summer of 2020 in the jurisdiction of Austin Local 520.

Arizona-based start-up Nikola Motors broke ground on a \$600 million assembly plant in Coolidge, north of Phoenix, in July.

The company will make the Tre, an electric "cab-over" truck, and the long-haul Nikola Two, which will have joint hydrogen fuel cells and batteries.

As of early-November Phoenix Local 640 had no members working on the project, but construction will continue for the next two years.

If all goes according to its plan, the consumer-focused Nikola Badger SUV will go into production, though the company says it will likely be sold under the badge of another company.

"Electric cars are the future and that is good news for the IBEW," said International President Lonnie Stephenson. "But it is important to understand this goes far beyond the assembly lines."

## Electrifying Transport and IBEW Jobs

Stephenson pointed to vast work that will be required to prepare North America's power grid for the influx of electric vehicles. "Those lines, the substations, the power houses, will be needed more with every electric car sold. The IBEW is the union of the future because the future is electrified," he said.

The scope of work goes far beyond the walls of the assembly plants.

"It all comes back to the grid, and that's ours," Stephenson said. "We are a diverse brotherhood, but our foundation is building and maintaining electric power across North America. Connecting the entire transportation infrastructure to the grid will keep IBEW members busy for decades."

Electric cars and trucks are only the start, he said. There are thousands of ports and airports, millions of vehicles in corporate fleets, taxis and long-haul trucks.

"If we do this right and make sure green jobs are union jobs, every single charging station represents an opportunity," said Construction and Maintenance Department Director Mike Richard.

In California, for example, PG&E, Edison and SDGE all hired signatory contractors to build their public charging facilities and they are maintained either by utility workers or those same contractors.

Utilities also have the resources to build out residential charging stations affordably, said Utility Department Director Donnie Colston, with a common standard that works well with the grid and all brands of cars. Many utilities will need state public utility commission approval to do so, and the backing of labor is often necessary to get it.

"There are so many wins here for the IBEW, but let's not forget something very important: these trucks are making electric vehicles cool," Stephenson said. "The F-150 prototype towed a million pounds. The Hummer EV has 1,000 horsepower. They're American-made and many of them union-built, and every time you plug one in, you're creating jobs for IBEW members. What could be better than that?" ■

## IBEW MEDIA WORLD

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

### www.ibew.org

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

### YouTube & Vimeo

You can easily watch and share our growing library of short videos that vividly show how IBEW members across the U.S. and Canada are continuing to safely get their work done despite the lingering concerns about COVID-19. Get started at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker) and [Vimeo.com/IBEW](https://www.vimeo.com/IBEW).

### HourPower

Denver Local 111 members have been installing



and testing new railroad crossing signals necessitated by recent changes to Interstate 10. Check out the story at [IBEWHourPower.com](http://IBEWHourPower.com).

### ElectricTV

At [ElectricTV.net](http://ElectricTV.net), learn how Canton, Ohio, Local 540 members recently helped



their city — home of the Pro Football Hall of Fame — celebrate the NFL's 100th anniversary.



# In Oklahoma, Right-to-Work Is No Impediment to Organizing Success

**D**on't count Trentice Hamm as a right-to-work supporter. The IBEW's Oklahoma state organizer would much prefer his home state got rid of the law that hinders working people's opportunities for a better life.

Same with Don Mullens, marketing coordinator at Oklahoma City Local 1141. Same with Tulsa Local 584 membership development coordinator K.J. Payton.

But all of them know the right-to-work law isn't going away anytime soon in the deeply conservative state. So, they have tried to use it to their advantage.

That out-of-the-box thinking and two massive construction projects helped grow inside construction membership there more than 30% in the last two years, making Oklahoma one of the bright spots for organizing in the entire IBEW.

"Instead of right-to-work," Hamm said, "we call it union by choice."

Added Payton: "Our new members have really bought into the culture of the IBEW. They were nonunion electricians and might not have gotten a raise for a long time. Now, they see themselves being treated well and they've been accepted by our other members."

"When word of that gets out, it's a heck of an organizing tool."

"We believe we have an excellent union culture that we've tried to build on," Mullens said. "Any success we've had is a credit to our membership. They're the ones that have made us successful."

Local 584 and Local 1141 were aided in their efforts when union contractors landed construction and maintenance contracts at an Amazon distribution facility in Oklahoma City and a data center in Tulsa.

But that also presented a challenge, especially for Local 584. It didn't have enough wiremen to meet the demand. Securing travelers was difficult because construction across the U.S. was doing so well at the time.

That put even more emphasis on organizing nonunion wiremen locally. It wasn't an easy task in a state that isn't particularly kind to organized labor. But to meet the demands of the new projects, there was no choice.

Fortunately, both 584 and 1141 were ready to meet the challenge.

"I encourage all my organizers to realize we are friendly competitors with the nonunion workers and to always have that mentality when you deal with them," Hamm said. "Mutual respect is critical in communication."

Organizers make sure not to disrupt nonunion construction projects. Instead, they often approach workers as they leave their jobsites. Phone numbers and email addresses are exchanged and conversations set up.

Another part of Hamm's strategy was removing what he calls "barriers to membership."

In a state like Oklahoma, which does not have a strong union tradition, that meant working with business managers to



*A group of nonunion electricians just before they were initiated into Tulsa, Okla., Local 584, helping the IBEW meet an increased need for wiremen in the Sooner State.*

reinforce the value of union membership. Dues adjustments and detailed breakdowns of value for money were a big part of making the case to working people unfamiliar with the advantages of a union paycheck and benefits.

Such a strategy might not be necessary in some states. But in a right-to-work state, it's essential, Hamm said. "Without it, you're encouraging them to stay nonunion."

At Local 1141, Assistant Business Manager Jim Griffy said those large construction projects have helped but added the local's membership has been growing for years.

He attributes that primarily to members understanding their role in organizing. Neighbors and nonunion electricians are more receptive to their message than any officer or lead organizer, he said. It's been a key part in educating members on the value of IBEW membership.

"Most of the people that we organize come through our membership, being out in the community all the time organizing," Griffy said. "We have embraced the ideal that we represent everyone in the electrical industry, whether they are union or not. So we have a good relationship with the nonunion workers and we got rid of the animosity."

Growing membership also has helped Local 1141 get through the pandemic. Work has continued uninterrupted on a six-story addition to the OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City, keeping more than 100 members at work — with most of them also getting overtime pay.

"It seems as if we have a good workforce and a good mix of agreements in classifications," Griffy said. "We have good relationships with our contractors. Success builds success."

Once new members are initiated, organizers work with training directors and instructors to quickly upgrade their skills so they can adapt to working on a union job site. Many came on as construction wiremen. Payton said about 10 have already completed Local 584's apprenticeship program and more are on the path to do so.

Payton said potential new members also respond favorably when he presents data showing that strong unions help close the wage gap and are an effective tool in battling income inequality.

Organizers don't talk politics unless asked. Instead, they focus on bread-and-butter issues that are more likely to reso-

nate with new members, no matter who they vote for. Some prospective members were excited to have a chance to work on two huge projects.

"You're never disingenuous with them," Payton said. "You always sell them the total wage and benefit package. You build relationships with them. Any success I've had is because of the personal connec-

tion I've had with each and every member."

Mullens agreed that honesty is essential.

"I can talk to them all day long until they're blue in the face and I'm blue in the face and not get through to them," he said. "But everyone knows somebody. We have an army of organizers. If they hear from somebody they know, they'll take it

to heart."

Mullens, Hamm and Payton noted this type of effort wouldn't be possible without the support of the business managers — including D. Dewayne Wilcox at Local 1141 and Dustin Phelan at 584 — along with Seventh District International Vice President Steven Speer. Local 1141 organizer Jennifer Duncan has also played a key role.

"Unfortunately, most of the states in our district have right-to-work laws, but our staff and organizers in Oklahoma are so creative," Speer said. "Their work helped us meet our commitments on two important projects and will allow our signatory contractors to be more competitive when bidding on future work."

"I want to thank our business managers and all our brothers and sisters for supporting this effort and welcoming our new members. This was a team effort by everyone involved in the IBEW in Oklahoma and will make us a stronger union for years to come." ■



## Nebraska Members Get a Close-up Look at a Special Locomotive

**M**embers of Alliance, Neb., Local 1517 recently got a treat when one of BNSF Railway's special 25th anniversary commemorative locomotives passed through the railroad's shop.

"We've worked on these locomotives for years," said Local 1517 President Dave Brennan, "so this was obviously something special."

BNSF is the result of more than 400 railroad line mergers and acquisitions that have happened since 1849. It became BNSF in 1995 when the Burlington Northern and Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway companies merged.

Over the summer, BNSF began rolling out 10 of these special locomotives throughout its network, which covers the western two-thirds of the mainland United States. The GE Evolution series model pictured above, Brennan said, had been freshly painted and emblazoned with decals honoring some of the largest railroads that have been brought under the BNSF umbrella over the years.

"I caught this one coming through and had to get some pictures of it," Brennan said.

Brennan described the Alliance shop as the largest operating BNSF facility in Nebraska, with the 100 or so members of Local 1517 handling repairs and maintenance of many of the railway's locomotives operating throughout the Cornhusker State as well as neighboring Wyoming and Colorado. ■



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

## Ontario Local Winterizes Scouts Canada Campsite

**M**embers of Sarnia, Ontario, Local 530 got the chance to give back to a piece of their childhood when they volunteered to help upgrade Camp Attawandaron, part of Scouts Canada.

“We’re pretty big on giving back,” said Business Manager Frank Harris. “Especially for something like this, since a lot of us have a personal connection to it.”

Scouts Canada is the leading youth organization in the country, with co-ed programs for Canadians ages 5 to 26 that allow campers to have fun in the outdoors while also building friendships and leadership skills. Camp Attawandaron serves the youth of Sarnia and Lambton County in southern Ontario. A number of Local 530 members have been involved with the organization, said Harris, as former campers themselves as well as volunteer leader scouts.

“For a lot of members, working on this project was like getting back to their roots. It’s why they wanted to participate.”

Local 530 member Jeff McRae, who is also a Scout leader, told Powering Communities that he and Kris Osborn, owner of signatory contractor Christopher Electric, both attended the camp when they were young. It’s why they decided to take on the project. McRae also noted that Osborn’s grandfather was a camp caretaker and built some of the original buildings like the chapel.

“It’s fair to say the community is very involved with the Scouts and Camp Attawandaron,” Harris said. “It’s huge here in Sarnia.”

Despite its popularity, and a demand for year-round facilities, the camp was only able to operate during the warmer summer months. And this year, because of the coronavirus, the camp wasn’t able to host campers at all and had to temporarily close. So Harris, Osborn and McRae led the project to winterize the campsite so it will eventually be able to serve more of the community throughout the year.

About two dozen Local 530 members, including apprentices and journeymen, offered their time and skills to help. They installed all the necessary electrical equipment including underground cabling, distribution panels, lights, receptacles, smoke detectors and heaters.

“The camps aren’t just set up for year-round service, they’re also safer now,” Harris said. “And now the campers can even charge their phones.”

The work began in 2019 and was completed around the end of July. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 threat however, the camp has thus far only been able to offer small-group day trips, Harris said.

Funding was provided by the IBEW Construction Council of Ontario and the Electrical Contractors Association of

Ontario, with about \$35,000 worth of materials being donated, Harris said.

Located in one of the few Carolinian forests left in North America, Camp Attawandaron is a valued environmental educational facility and was designated a Scout Centre of Excellence for Nature and Environment by the World Scouting Organization, according to Powering Communities.

“We’re really happy to help the camp grow,” Harris said.

The campsite project is one of many that the roughly 500-member local has done for its community. Members have also wired scoreboards for area schools, handed out hand sanitizer to a women’s home, worked with boys’ homes and local health centers, and sold carnations on Mother’s Day for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. They’ve also participated in charity bike rides, powered lights for Christmas and donated junior hockey tickets to low-income students.

“That’s what the IBEW is, a big family,” Harris said.

Usually for the holiday season, Local 530 would host a Christmas party and give out gifts to members’ children. Harris would even play Santa. But this year, they’re planning to do a drive-through-style event instead.

“We’re just trying to do our part, and make sure nobody’s left out at Christmastime,” Harris said. ■

*Members of Sarnia, Ontario, Local 530 volunteered their time to winterize Camp Attawandaron, part of Scouts Canada, making it accessible year-round.*



## La section locale en Ontario aménage le camp des Scouts du Canada pour l’hiver

**L**es membres de la section locale 530 à Sarnia en Ontario ont eu la chance de redonner à un souvenir de jeunesse lorsqu’ils se sont portés bénévoles pour améliorer le camp Attawandaron qui fait partie des Scouts du Canada.

« Nous insistons beaucoup sur les actes de générosité », mentionne le gérant d’affaires Frank Harris. « Surtout pour une occasion comme celle-ci, étant donné que la plupart d’entre nous ont un attachement personnel avec le camp ».

Les Scouts du Canada est la principale organisation pour les jeunes au pays, ils ont des programmes mixtes destinés aux Canadiennes et Canadiens âgés de 5 à 26 ans qui permettent aux campeurs de s’amuser en faisant des activités en plein air tout en créant des liens d’amitié et acquérir des compétences en leadership. Le camp Attawandaron est au service des jeunes de Sarnia et le comté de Lambton dans le sud de l’Ontario. M. Harris nous informe qu’un certain nombre des membres du local 530 ont été engagés dans l’organisation, en tant qu’anciens campeurs eux-mêmes ainsi qu’en tant que chef scout bénévole.

« Pour beaucoup de membres, la participation à ce projet a été un renouement avec leurs racines. C’est pour cette

raison qu’ils ont voulu y participer ».

Le membre Jeff McRae du local 530, qui est également un chef dans les scouts a mentionné à Powering Communities, que lui et Kris Osborn, le propriétaire de l’entrepreneur signataire Christopher Electric, ont fréquenté le camp à leur jeune âge. C’est pour cette raison qu’ils se sont portés bénévoles pour le projet. M. McRae fait aussi remarquer que le grand-père de M. Osborn était un gardien du camp et il a construit l’un des bâtiments d’origine comme la chapelle.

« On peut dire que la communauté est très engagée avec les scouts et le camp Attawandaron », dit M. Harris. « C’est énorme ici à Sarnia ».

Malgré sa popularité et la demande d’installations pour toute l’année, le camp pouvait seulement être fréquenté les mois d’été les plus chauds. Et cette année, en raison du coronavirus, le camp n’a pas pu accueillir de campeurs et devait fermer temporairement. Afin de mieux servir une plus grande partie de la communauté tout au long de l’année, M. Harris, M. Osborn et M. McRae ont donc mené le projet pour permettre au camp d’être fréquenté l’hiver.

Environ une vingtaine de membres du local 530 y compris des apprentis et des compagnons ont offert leur temps et

leurs compétences pour aider. Ils ont installé tous les équipements électriques nécessaires, y compris du câblage souterrain, des panneaux de distribution, des lumières, des prises, des détecteurs de fumée et des chauffages.

« Les camps ne sont pas seulement aménagés pour être fréquentés tout au long de l’année, mais ils sont maintenant plus sécuritaires », ajoute M. Harris. « Les campeurs peuvent même charger leurs téléphones. »

Le travail a commencé en 2019 et a été achevé vers la fin du mois de juillet. En raison de la menace continue de la COVID-19, le camp pouvait seulement offrir des excursions d’une journée en petits groupes, a déclaré M. Harris.

Le financement a été possible grâce au Construction Council de l’Ontario de la FIOE et à l’Electrical Contractors Association de l’Ontario, avec un don de matériel d’une valeur de 35 000 \$, dit M. Harris.

Situé dans l’une des rares forêts carolinienne subsistantes en Amérique du Nord, le camp Attawandaron est estimé être une installation éducative environnementale de grande valeur. Selon Powering Communities, elle a été désignée « Centre scout d’excellence pour la nature et l’environnement » par l’organisation mondiale du scoutisme.

« Nous sommes vraiment heureux d’aider le camp à grandir », dit M. Harris.

Le projet de camping est l’un des nombreux projets que les quelque 500 membres de la section locale ont mis en place pour leur communauté. Les membres ont aussi installé des tableaux d’affichage pour les écoles de la région, distribués du désinfectant à un centre pour les femmes, travaillés avec des centres pour les garçons et avec les centres de soins de santé locaux, et ont vendu des œillets pour la fête des Mères au profit de la Société de la sclérose en plaques. Ils ont également participé à une promenade en moto de bienfaisance, ils ont alimenté des lumières de Noël et ont donné des billets de hockey junior à des étudiants à faible revenu.

« Voilà ce que la FIOE est : une grande famille », dit M. Harris.

Habituellement pour la saison des fêtes, la section locale 530 organise une fête de Noël et donne des cadeaux pour les enfants des membres. M. Harris se déguise même en Père Noël. Cette année, ils envisagent d’organiser un événement de type « drive-through ».

« Nous essayons seulement de contribuer, et de nous assurer que personne n’est laissé pour compte à Noël », dit M. Harris. ■



# THE FRONT LINE: POLITICS & JOBS

## Rail Talks Continue Amid COVID-19 Concerns

Slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings remain underway to reach terms on a new national freight rail agreement — a pact that will directly affect the pay, benefits and working conditions of thousands of IBEW members.

“It’s a slow process,” said Railroad Department Director Al Russo Jr., “but we’re paying close attention to what’s going on.”

The IBEW and the other nine members of a coordinated bargaining coalition formally started negotiations on a new agreement shortly before the previous pact expired at the end of 2019.

“We are on the threshold of the most critical round of national bargaining in a generation,” the committee said in a statement. “We understand the importance of each union’s autonomy to pursue membership-specific goals within a framework of broad solidarity to defend and improve the wages, benefits and working conditions of our members.”

The first formal negotiating session toward a new national agreement took place, in person, toward the end of February. The second meeting, scheduled for a month later, was canceled shortly after the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus a global pandemic, as were all subsequent in-person meetings.

The parties spoke formally in July, when bargaining teams from the 10 unions participated in a video conference with National Railway Labor Conference Chairman Brendan Branon and representatives from the participating rail carriers to review the sides’ positions.

“The meeting was beneficial to both sides in our effort to keep the process moving forward in a good faith effort to achieve a voluntary agreement,” Russo said, adding that informal lower-level meetings have been taking place as well.

On negotiators’ minds are the nearly 50,000 railroad workers who have lost their jobs over the past four years. Layoffs have directly affected hundreds of IBEW members within that time period, thanks largely to the efficiency scheme known as “precision scheduled railroading.”

First experimented with on the Canadian National railroad, PSR has been in use on some of the largest freight rail systems in the U.S. since 2017. The strategy drastically consolidates rail services, costing jobs while deferring crucial equipment and facility maintenance.

Workers who manage to keep their positions must then deal with a raft of issues, such as needing railroad supervision to make power, crafts getting crossed and maintenance being deferred, with inspections often performed by unqualified or untrained individuals. The potentially less-safe working conditions that result are complicated by railroads’ increasing reliance on heavier and longer trains.

“Meanwhile, the furloughs caused by recent rail business slowdowns have directly resulted in railroads using the coronavirus as camouflage for obtaining Federal Railroad Administration waivers to lay off more workers,” Russo said. “This has only exacerbated an already dangerous situation.”

At the same time, the billions of dollars in emergency funding allocated in the March coronavirus stimulus package to help keep U.S. rail systems running were almost completely spent by October, and there had been no sign of progress toward approval of a second stimulus package as The Electrical Worker went to press.

Russo noted that other major issues going forward in contract negotiations will naturally include general wage increases as well as health and welfare concerns including vacation time and sick time.

“Railroad workers know that they’re essential employees from the moment they’re hired,” he said. “They might not have signed up to risk their lives day in and day out on the job, but they’re doing it anyway because they know how important their jobs are.”

Jointly, the coordinated bargaining coalition unions represent more than 105,000 railroad workers covered by the various organizations’ national agreements, and they comprise more than 80% of the workers who will be affected by this round of negotiations.

The other unions in the bargaining coalition are the American Train Dispatchers Association, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, the International Association of Machinists, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers, the Transport Workers Union of America, the Transportation Communications Union, and the transportation division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers (better known as SMART-TD).

Members of the unions participating in the coalition will be kept apprised of further developments on contract negotiations as developments warrant, Russo said. The conditions of the most recent contract remain in force until a new agreement is implemented.

In August, 12 rail unions collectively sued the largest rail systems in the U.S. over efforts to forcibly reconfigure health care networks and to restrict access to certain medications.

The dozen-union coalition involved in the pending lawsuit includes the 10 organizations in the Coordinated bargaining coalition, plus the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and representatives of SMART’s mechanical division. The coalitions’ members and families are covered by the National Railway Carriers/United Transportation Union Plan and the Railroad Employees National Health and Welfare Plan. ■



Three new rulings from the Federal Labor Relations Authority make it harder for unions to negotiate on behalf of their members, the latest in a years-long attack on workers’ rights by the Trump administration.

## New Attacks on Federal Workers Part of Administration’s Anti-Worker Agenda

The Federal Labor Relations Authority has issued three new rulings regarding federal employee unions. What’s not new is its disregard for the rights of union members.

The decisions, which Government Executive reported as overturning decades of precedent and hampering the ability of unions to negotiate, deal with the standard for what triggers a duty to bargain, what can happen during midterm bargaining, and how expiring union contracts are handled. The rulings, handed down in early October, were decided along party lines by a majority-Republican board.

“These decisions further degrade employee rights and union rights in the federal sector,” said Government Employees Department Director Paul O’Connor. “Taken as a whole, when you combine these new, anti-union FLRA rewrites and reinterpretations with other administration rewrites and reinterpretations, obviously, President Trump’s goal is to destroy federal labor unions and demoralize our national workforce by stripping away rights and benefits and silencing the collective voice of federal employees.”

The first decision changes the standard for when an agency policy change triggers a duty to bargain, effectively raising the bar and making it more difficult for unions to protect their employees. O’Connor noted that the new standard is a moving target that will require numerous court cases to define. And beyond that, a lot of issues that used to require management to negotiate with unions will now be imposed.

The second ruling determined that federal labor law “neither requires nor prohibits mid-term bargaining” and makes zipper clauses, which limit negotiations during the term of a union contract, mandatory subjects of bargaining.

“By making the zipper clause negotiable, the FLRA is saying, ‘Unions, if you want it in your contract, you need to negotiate it in.’ That usually means, to put something in, you need to give something up,” O’Connor said.

He also pointed out that the Civil Service Reform Act states that “labor organizations and collective bargaining in the civil service are in the public inter-

est” and that the CSRA draws no distinction between initial collective bargaining agreement negotiating and mid-term negotiating.

“The FLRA’s change presumes midterm negotiating is not in the public interest, which flies in the face of decades of precedent and the law,” O’Connor said.

The third ruling states that when an expiring contract is renewed indefinitely while parties negotiate a new one, that is effectively a new agreement and subject to agency head review. Usually, O’Connor said, parties agree to roll over the existing CBA until negotiations on the new version conclude. Not so with the new interpretation. O’Connor says the agency head could conceivably shoot down the rolled-over CBA — the same one they would have approved when it was initially negotiated.

“A lot remains to be seen, but I’m envisioning having to renegotiate the rolled-over CBA while the new CBA is being negotiated or the rolled-over CBA being voided altogether,” O’Connor said. “Either option would leave the employees and unions extremely vulnerable with little recourse.”

The new language also allows management to impose current government-wide rules and regulations into those rolled-over CBAs, further opening the door for limiting employee rights.

“What we don’t know yet is if the changes will affect current rolled-over CBAs or only rolled-over agreements that will begin after the date of implementation,” O’Connor said. “What we do know, however, is that this is an extremely dangerous decision by the FLRA.”

These rulings follow on the heels of earlier attacks on workers by the Trump administration. The National Labor Relations Board has issued an onslaught of anti-union orders, all conspiring to make it harder to have rights and protections on the job. And despite the rising toll of infections and deaths from the coronavirus pandemic, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has done next to nothing to protect workers from the deadly virus.

The IBEW is part of the Federal Workers Alliance and has been reaching out to members of Congress about the new rulings.

“It is imperative that we connect the dots from all these adverse policy changes and executive orders all the way back to Trump and the people he put in charge to impose all this carnage,” O’Connor said. ■



Meetings to reach terms on a new national freight rail agreement are continuing slowly, with negotiators mindful of the nearly 50,000 railroad worker jobs lost over the past four years.



# CIRCUITS

## Upstate NY Program Provides a Career in the Trades to Underserved Communities of Color

There's a lot of talk about helping those who are less fortunate break the cycle of poverty, but the Rochester Multi-Craft Apprenticeship Preparation Program is actually getting it done.

"M.A.P.P. is the beginning of generational wealth," said Executive Director Kereem Berry, who's also a member of Rochester, N.Y., Local 86. "It's the only organization I know of in this area that's offering a true career at the end."

M.A.P.P. works with the Rochester Building and Construction Trades Labor Council to provide pre-apprenticeship programs to historically marginalized communities in the Rochester area. Participants receive training and certification in First Aid and CPR as well as the standard 10-hour safety training from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and 80 hours of construction-related math. They also get hands-on experience, from using power tools to climbing ladders. Those who complete the program and meet the minimum requirements are given direct entry into their program of interest.

"One of the things M.A.P.P. does well is it gives the participants exposure to all the trades. That way, the students can pick which is the best fit for them," said Local 86 Business Manager Michael Bader. "And that exposure, and the training that M.A.P.P. provides, helps those students secure jobs that provide a living wage and can end the cycle of go-nowhere, minimum-wage jobs."

At one time, the city of Rochester, located on Lake Ontario and roughly equidistant between Buffalo and Syracuse, was home to major corporations including Bausch & Lomb, Kodak and Xerox. Those companies provided good-paying jobs, but they've all left. Now, the jobs come from call centers, temp agencies and nonunion construction jobs, Berry said.

"That 'Big Three' economy has long since left us," Berry said. "Consequently, the inner city of Rochester has seen a plunge in residents' opportunities to earn a living wage, making poverty the overwhelming norm."

Enter M.A.P.P. At a time when the average age of a construction worker is inching closer to retirement and unions are looking for new pools of talent, Berry and his team are there, training the next generation. And as unions like the IBEW take concrete steps toward being more diverse and inclusive, M.A.P.P.'s work with people of color becomes even more important.

Berry notes that M.A.P.P. doesn't just teach hard skills like math and how to safely handle a power tool. They train the whole person. Alongside ladders and blueprints, students are learning soft skills like discipline and professionalism, taking a page from the IBEW's Code of Excellence.

"Simply put, it's about maintaining your sense of professionalism at all times. We have rules that go from attendance, to appearance, to hygiene," Berry said.



*The Rochester Multi-Craft Apprenticeship Preparation Program works with historically marginalized communities to train and prepare them for a career in the trades.*

M.A.P.P. also has Project Phoenix, its sister program that provides an on-the-job component that mimics a typical construction day, beginning at 7 a.m. and going until 3:30 p.m. Students go five days a week, from June until the end of the year, Berry said.

"It instills a sense of discipline that they may not have had prior to enrolling with us," Berry said. "As we all know, construction isn't for everyone, so Project Phoenix doubles as a filter to see who is actually cut from the duck cloth of a union construction worker."

And, like a union apprentice, the students earn while they learn. M.A.P.P. provides a stipend of \$12 an hour.

Berry is also working with Local 86 to offer M.A.P.P. participants affordable access to the Electric Prep online training course which helps them prepare for their assessment test.

"It's a pretty easy lift for us, and Electric Prep is a great program," Bader said. "Anything we can do to help M.A.P.P."

What makes M.A.P.P. really stand out, though, is how it takes the curriculum one step further. Its leaders also teach self-love, a beneficial concept for everyone, but one particularly important for a group that's been denied opportunity and discriminated against. It's especially important for young people entering an industry where many of their coworkers won't look like them.

"The truth of the matter is that there's still a lot of racial tension on job sites," Berry said. "You'll hear off-hand remarks, see racist statements written in the port-a-potty, be assigned the least desirable tasks. All these things are realities on construction sites across the trades, and unless you have a base value of who you are, you may very well come to believe, and even accept, that you are less than. Not graduates of M.A.P.P."

"We show them you are beautiful just the way you are. And when a person feels that type of self-worth, there isn't much anyone can say or do to throw them off course."

M.A.P.P.'s success is even being modeled by the Workforce Development Institute, the New York state AFL-CIO's nonprofit arm, to launch a similar program in the capital area around Albany. Berry is serving as a consultant. WDI has noted

that M.A.P.P. is the only pre-apprentice program it has seen that combines pre-employment training, labor history and placement into a union apprenticeship with a strong community development component.

"It's that community development piece that reinforces how union labor floats all boats, and that we're interested in improving the lives of others," Berry said. ■

## 'Contactless Office' Program Aims to Help Chicago Bounce Back

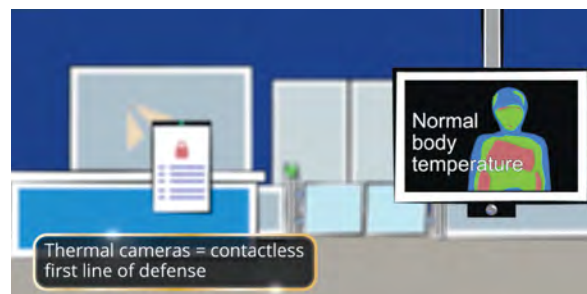
The Loop is Chicago's heartbeat, 35 snug blocks of landmarks and skyscrapers that draw hundreds of thousands of workers, shoppers, diners and tourists on a normal day.

At "peak corona," as Local 134 steward Jimmy Aiello put it, "it was like the Twilight Zone."

The journeyman wireman has spent every workday for a decade at the 54-story Blue Cross Blue Shield Tower overlooking Millennium Park and Lake Michigan. "It was eerie," he said. "You'd look out the window and it was like, 'Where is everybody?'"

While there's still a long way to go, Aiello's been on the front lines of reviving America's Second City. He's carrying out a commitment made by Local 134 and Powering Chicago, the dynamic partnership between the local and the city's Electrical Contractors' Association.

Alarmed as their city shut down in late March and early April, Business Manager Don Finn and Powering Chicago leaders were determined to be part of the solution.



*An animated video from Powering Chicago guides employers through the steps they can take to safeguard offices against COVID-19 and other contagions.*

"There was a screeching halt to work going on downtown," Finn said. "All the offices were working remotely."

"We knew the more we can get employers set up to reopen downtown, the more people will come back, and that's what makes Chicago's economic engine run," he said.

They put their heads together and came up with "The Contactless Office: Powering Chicago to a Better Workplace for All."

Getting there took several months of brainstorming and strategy, said Elbert Walters, Powering Chicago director and a former Local 134 business agent. "The question was posed: how to return to work in some capacity and restore some semblance of the economic community that we had that was thriving before COVID-19," he said.

Their program includes webinars that have been attended by hundreds of people, a detailed guidebook online, and personal outreach, all of it teaching businesses how technology can minimize contact with surfaces, promote social distancing and otherwise protect workers' health as offices reopen.

The technology itself isn't new. But it's being adapted and upgraded to meet the demands of a contagious disease.

Coded keycards long used for entries and exits can be programmed for secure, contactless movement through office suites and elevators. To promote social distancing, there are digital panels that show how many people are inside a conference room and doors that stay shut from the outside when the new, lower capacity is reached. Thermal cameras in lobbies can check body temperatures. UV lights can be installed to kill germs.

"Behind the scenes, it's still the same devices; it's how they're being utilized that's different," said Gene Kent, director of Local 134's IBEW-NECA training center.

As the program helps steer the city toward a new, safe normal, it's also starting to create work for Local 134 members and signatory contractors.

"Part of our marketing effort is to really get out there and create knowledge so that our contractors can go out and sell to existing customers, 'This is what we can do for you,'" said John Donahue, executive director of Powering Chicago.

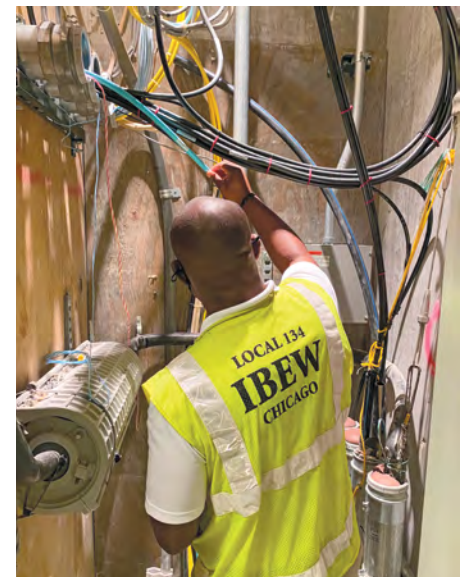
Generating jobs for his members right now, and in the months ahead, is imperative, Finn said. The

pandemic has taken a huge toll, grounding non-essential construction, shrinking building maintenance crews and cutting jobs at other Local 134 worksites.

Just as things were starting to look up, the local's out-of-work list began growing again with fall's fierce new wave of COVID-19 infections.

Finn is hopeful that as more businesses embrace contactless office technology, more members will be drawing a paycheck again.

"Think about it," he said. "If you got up out of your cube on a normal day, you touched the door in the hallway, you touched the bathroom door, the lobby door, you hit the light switches and elevator buttons — with everything being a pass-through, it has the potential to create a tremendous amount of work."



*Elbert Walters, Powering Chicago director and former Local 134 business agent, checks out cables at a downtown high-rise where IBEW electricians are installing and upgrading equipment that will help employers protect workers from COVID-19 exposure, including technology to improve the communications network between the office and employees working from home.*

The crew at the Blue Cross building can operate with as few as seven electricians, "but with all the projects right now, there are 32 of us," Aiello said.

Their major focus is upgrading the building's cellular antenna signals to increase data speeds, and also installing new radio-frequency identification (RFID) readers.

The technology has many functions. But in terms of COVID-19, RFID can be used for contact tracing in the event of an outbreak. The stronger antenna signals will improve cellular and data transmission as some employees return to the office and others continue to work remotely.

By October, Aiello was seeing more people in the neighborhood, more signs of life, and his own building was humming with a few more of its 6,000 workers. But it's still empty enough that the installation project — originally scheduled for overnight shifts — is getting done ahead of schedule during the day.

CIRCUITS continued on page 12



## CIRCUITS *continued*

The crew's tasks directly related to COVID-19 have included wiring a system that checks temperatures as people peer at a screen on a pedestal, then sends the result to the lobby desk. Other building trades are busy, too, Aiello said, including union carpenters who are moving desks and remodeling office suites for social distancing.

Word is spreading about Powering Chicago's innovative approach to the COVID-19 crisis. Leaders and staff are getting inquiries from other states, spurred by ads in area building-trade publications with far-flung readership.

No matter how the pandemic — or whatever comes next — affects technology and how it's deployed, Local 134 members are ready, Kent said.

"The training we do instills confidence in our apprentices that they have the skills to negotiate any challenge," he said. "Even if it's brand-new technology, we're ready to install it with very little learning curve because we're so well trained." ■

### Ontario Local Raises Money for Area Women's Shelter

Members of Hamilton, Ontario, Local 105 have a history of supporting a local women's shelter. And while they couldn't sport their usual pink high heels this year, they still raised a lot of money.

"Our membership has always been very generous and supportive of our community," said Business Manager Steve Fox. "Although we are getting better, like a lot of building trades, our local is still mostly men, so this is a great way for us to show our commitment to our sisters in a visible and meaningful way."

Local 105 has supported Halton Women's Place for the last six years. The center provides emergency shelter and crisis services for abused women and their children, as well as counseling and other support programs, including education on breaking cycles of abuse. Each year in September, they put on their "Hope in High Heels" event to raise money by asking men to wear the iconic shoe and walk in solidarity. But this year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the event shifted to a week of wearing pink and encouraging participants to do walks from home.

"It was different this time, but the support poured in as usual," said Local

105 Executive Board Member Brendan Smyth, who also sits on the board of Halton Women's Place. "We have zero tolerance for discrimination."

Unfortunately, the coronavirus has created what the United Nations is calling a "shadow pandemic" of domestic abuse. The lockdown orders, intended to keep people safe from the deadly virus, have also locked up victims with their abusers, making the work of places like Halton Women's Place all the more important. Data from Statistics Canada found an increase in calls to police for domestic disturbances as the coronavirus was taking hold and forcing Canadians indoors.

"It's a horrific situation, but it's nothing that can't be fixed with help from the community," Smyth said.

In addition to the walks and wearing pink, Smyth and his daughters got creative and built miniature picnic tables — think just the right size for a hungry squirrel to catch a quick bite — to raise additional money.

"It was a welcome reprieve from everything going on to have this project to do with my daughters," Smyth said. "And they turned out to be really popular."

They were so popular that they got about 170 requests for the tiny tables, Smyth said, which were offered for a donation of any amount.

All told, Local 105 raised about CA\$3,000 for the shelter, with around \$2,000 coming from the tables and \$1,000 from the local's philanthropy fund.

Local 105's commitment to women in its community includes support for other organizations including the Hamilton YWCA; Interval House Hamilton, another shelter; and the Sexual Assault Centre, Hamilton and Area.

"Supporting women both inside and outside of the trade is a priority for Local 105," Fox told the IBEW Construction Council of Ontario. "We take a lot of pride in helping these organizations provide the necessary supports. Everyone deserves to be safe, empowered and respected, whether in the workplace or the community. We want to be part of the solution."

The 1,150-member local is also working on setting up a women's committee and has applied for government funding to help increase its recruitment of women, Indigenous groups and veterans.

"True unionism means being invested in your community," Smyth said. "We'd like to see our membership better reflect the communities we come from." ■



*Hamilton, Ontario, Local 105 has continued its support of Halton Women's Place, an area shelter for women in domestic violence situations, despite the coronavirus.*

## TRANSITIONS

### RETIRED

#### Gary V. Buresh



Seventh District International Representative Gary V. Buresh retired effective Sept. 1

Brother Buresh was born and raised in Miles City, Mont., joined the Army after high school and went to Germany as a cook.

"I thought I wanted to own a restaurant," Buresh said. "I discovered I just like to eat."

His ascension into the ranks of the IBEW was, he says, timing and luck. He was working in Wichita, Kan., as a carpenter in 1979. Wichita Local 271 ran an ad in the Eagle, the local paper, for two weeks at the beginning of the year.

"I joke that I saw the electricians on the job and they weren't working near as hard as we were driving nails," Buresh said. "But really what stuck out was the word 'career.'"

When he turned out in 1983, though, the economy was in a tailspin.

"The local ran a food bank for three years. When you were paid on Tuesday you took a sack of groceries to the hall on Wednesday," he said.

It was hard, but it built a deep connection with his local and a clear understanding of the purpose of the IBEW.

"It created a feeling that 'I don't get ahead without you getting ahead,'" he said.

Buresh was a foreman, general foreman and superintendent for the next 10 years. He also began his lifelong passion for teaching when he started as an instructor at the Wichita IATC.

In 1989 he was elected recording secretary, joined the organizing committee and was then appointed president of the local. In 1993 he came on staff as the local's first full-time organizer.

"There had been almost a generation with no organizing. There was no training. How to do it was forgotten and not passed down," he said.

What was remembered, he said, were crude and often self-defeating tactics that could alienate contractors and nonunion workers alike.

The belief of many of the older members who came out of the '60s and '70s was that we will take nonunion electricians when we are short on labor, but not let them join, he said. Instead of giving them yellow dues receipts like members, they got scraps of white paper and were called "white ticket journeyman" or "half-brothers."

"The attitude was, 'What are they going to do? They don't know how to be electricians,'" he said. "What did they do? They formed nonunion companies."

Coming on as an organizer coincided with the launch of the Construction Organizing Membership Education Training, a program designed to return the IBEW to a tradition of organizing.

"COMET was one of the best ideas we ever had," he said. "It answered the question, 'Why do we have to change?'"

Buresh became a district-wide COMET instructor. He knew it was a success when a brother who had been organized in ran for the examining board in the late '90s and won.

Then, one day in 1994, he came into the local and was told he wasn't the organizer anymore.

"I found out on a Monday that I was going to be business manager the next day. The business manager called the assistant in and said 'I'm quitting,' and the executive board chose me," he said.

In the coming years he'd serve as president of the Kansas Building and Construction Trades Council and the Kansas State Association of Electrical Workers.

Seventh District International Vice President Steve Speer met Buresh at a new business manager training when they were both freshly minted in the position.

### "[The Foreman Development Series] is my baby. Eternal education is how we thrive."

— Gary Buresh

"We made a fast friendship. We always shared a philosophy of how this work should be done. It's based on relationships," he said.

Speer said there was a moment for him that captured who Brother Buresh was. There was a dispute between Speer's local and another about the status of a member. Buresh was already an international representative at the time.

Both locals had legitimate claims, but the fight meant the member couldn't work.

"Gary said, 'We need to find a way to say yes rather than be right and keep saying no,'" Speer said.

It was like they all snapped out of a spell. They found a solution that required everyone to back down a little.

"We all got to be a little right, but the member was taken care of. I always have that in my mind. When I talk to my 50 local unions in the district, I repeat that like a mantra, 'Find a way to say yes,'" Speer said.

In early 2001, then-International President Edwin D. Hill hired Buresh to be a Seventh District international representative, specifically the desk rep, the person in the district office that everyone can turn to to get questions answered.

That same year he graduated Magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in labor studies from the National Labor College.

His nearly two decades as desk rep may be unprecedented in the IBEW, Speer said. He became the person everyone turned to, the reverence almost an inside joke.

"Everyone would tease him, saying, 'I called Gary. I talked to my preacher,'" Speer said.

Buresh also expanded from teaching COMET to developing and then teaching the district's Code of Excellence program in 2004.

"Gary is an exceptional educator. He's a good friend and, like a lot of people in our trade, he can be a little rough, a little cynical. But when he is in front of a classroom, there was no one more empathetic. He always met people where they were," said Seventh District International Representative Chris Wagner. "I have known him for almost three decades but his skill as a trainer could still surprise and impress me."

His crown jewel, Buresh says, was the next step in the progression that started with COMET and continued with the CoE: the lead foreman development series.

At the turn of the millennium, the importance of foremen was increasing. New construction methods required well trained and flexible supervisors.

"When I was a foreman, I made a list of supplies we needed on a cardboard box or a piece of sheet rock," Speer said. "I would make guesses off drawings."

New building techniques like design-build and fast track construction, put greater demands on and gave new tools to foremen. They became indispensable, and without a corps of qualified foremen, the IBEW was losing work.

"By the mid-2000s, our growth was limited. Contractors would call and tell us, 'I am bidding all I can, but I just don't have foremen,'" Speer said. "We realized that every available, qualified foreman meant 10 more journeymen and apprentices on a job."

Then-International Vice President Jon Gardner decided the Seventh District couldn't sit by and wait for contractors to take on the training.

"If we are saying foremen make the job successful, well, what union do they belong to? We needed to develop our own solution that we would implement," Buresh said.

Gardner was the dreamer, Speer said; Buresh was the legs on the ground.

"Gary wrangled it to make it go," Speer said. "He had the horsepower of Gardner's business card, but all the influence wouldn't make a difference unless Gary was in the hall getting locals to implement and use it."

In less than two years, Buresh had a six-module program known as the Foreman Development Series. It is now taught across the IBEW.

"This is my baby," he said. "Eternal education is how we thrive."

Buresh and his wife, Deborah, have put their retirement travel plans on hold until the COVID-19 crisis passes. In the meantime, Buresh is deeply involved in political efforts to turn Texas blue.

"We have a real opportunity to make this state a place that works for working people," he said.

Please join the officers and staff of the IBEW in wishing Brother Buresh a long and healthy retirement.

"He certainly did the IBEW proud. No one can say he didn't," Speer said. ■



# SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

## In Federal Vacuum, Pro-Worker States Act To Protect Workplaces from COVID-19's Spread

Labor activists and public officials are making strides at the state level to reduce workers' risk of exposure to COVID-19, piecemeal but vital efforts in the absence of a national game plan nine months into the pandemic.

Their actions have led to virus-specific requirements on employers in at least 14 states through emergency orders and guidelines that offset the Trump administration's refusal to issue a federal standard.

By default, the virus falls under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's general duty clause, stating that employers must maintain a work environment "free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm."

Using the broadly interpreted language to crack down on COVID-19 violations is challenging at best, and often futile.

"Like trying to perform surgery with a butter knife," is how Sean Egan puts it, and he would know.

A journeyman wireman, lawyer and former business manager of Muskegon, Mich., Local 275, Egan was appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to manage Michigan's battle plan for COVID-19 workplace safety.

He helped develop an emergency standard that went into effect Oct. 14 as the state's infection rate was rising, rules that even won support from business associations for their specificity.

They understood that an enforceable standard evens the playing field and helps them stay open, Egan said, "because not all employers would take precautions on their own, and that spreads the virus."

OSHA's ambiguous clause isn't the only federal barrier to safeguarding workers in the COVID-19 era.

Years of budget and staff cuts, and more recent political neglect, have created an unmanageable backlog at the agency, impairing its capacity, and will, to investigate and penalize law-breaking employers.

"We've seriously undervalued workplace safety in this country for so long," Egan said, summing up both cause and effect.

In Iowa, Dubuque Local 704 Business Manager Tom Townsend said state and federal inspectors were stretched to the breaking point long before the virus first raced through meatpacking plants in April.

"They'd be inspecting for 20 years here just to inspect every facility right now, without any new job sites," he said. "You have to tell them that someone's going to die, and then maybe they show up in a couple of days."

He doesn't blame the inspectors. "It's not their fault," Townsend said. "Those guys are doing the best

they can."

An October report from the National Employment Law Project illustrates what else is falling through OSHA's cracks in the wake of the pandemic.

Between March and early August, NELP researchers found that 1,744 workers formally complained of retaliation for reporting unsafe working conditions related to COVID-19.

Just 348 of the complaints were forwarded to investigators and more than half of those were never touched. Ultimately, only 35 of the original complaints were resolved, but OSHA hasn't revealed whether outcomes favored employees or employers.

Either way, researchers said, "resolving a mere 2% of OSHA retaliation complaints in six months is a dismal record under any circumstances, but especially egregious during a pandemic."

As the Electrical Worker went to press, the United States had surpassed 10.3 million COVID-19 infections and 240,000 deaths.

Oregon has had more success than many states in managing the virus, but like the nation at large, its infection rate rose sharply this fall.

The state AFL-CIO says workers are bearing the brunt of it, as they have all along, and elected leaders aren't doing nearly enough about it.

"Seven grueling months into the pandemic, Oregon workers are still without a clearly defined set of rules to prevent the spread of this deadly virus in workplaces," federation president and Portland Local 48 member Graham Trainor said in a column published by The Oregonian.

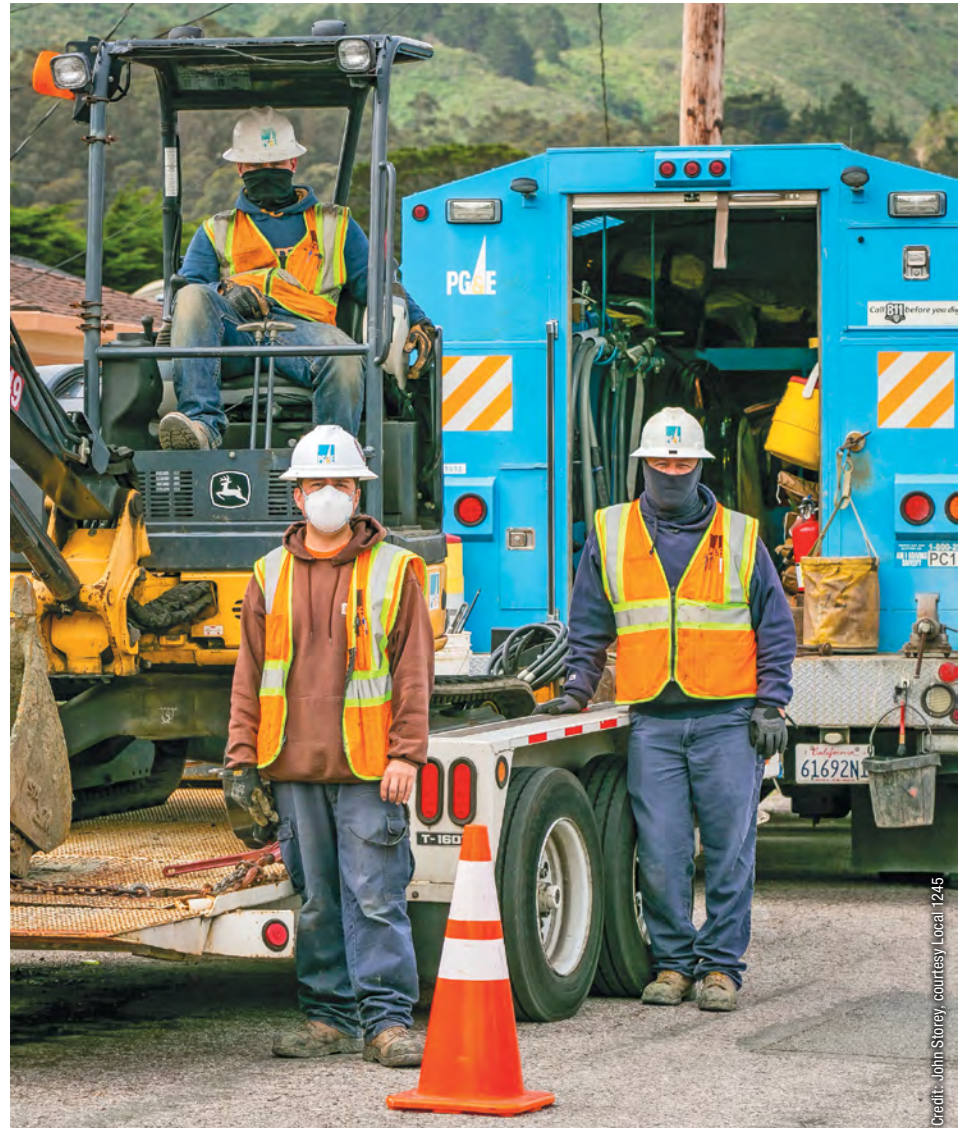
He cited two dozen deaths in Oregon and more than 5,000 infections linked to exposure at work.

"Working Oregonians need swift action, because without the assurance of safety we cannot truly reopen our economy and start to recover," Trainor wrote.

In Michigan's worker-safety apparatus, Egan wears multiple hats. In addition to his COVID-19 duties, he is deputy director for labor in the state's Labor and Economic Opportunity Department, including oversight of the occupational safety and health agency known as MIOSHA.

Prior to the standard issued in October, MIOSHA used the OSHA general duty clause to apply the virus-related emergency orders that Whitmer signed between April and September.

When the state Supreme Court struck down the orders Oct. 2 in a partisan ruling that said the gover-



Credit: John Storey, courtesy Local 1245

*In California, members of Vacaville Local 1245 demonstrate proper mask use on the job. Several worker-friendly states are working to fill in the gaps in OSHA's response to the COVID-19 crisis.*

nor exceeded her authority, Egan's team flew into action. Twelve days later, under its own authority, MIOSHA issued the standard.

Tailored for different types of businesses, it spells out rules for masks and other personal protective equipment, social distancing, hand-washing, sanitation, minimum days that sick or exposed workers must stay home, record-keeping, training and more.

Similar language is the foundation of safeguards adopted in other worker-friendly states. In addition to Michigan, NELP put 13 other states on that list — California, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington.

Virginia was the first state, and only other so far, to issue an emergency standard. Like Michigan's, it expires after six months but can be renewed.

With input from unions, Virginia's safety and health codes board passed the standard 9-2 in June over the strident objections of business groups.

"Workers should not have to sacrifice their health and safety to earn a living, especially during an ongoing global pandemic," Gov. Ralph Northam said. "In the face of federal inaction, Virginia has stepped up to protect workers."

Workers in many red states aren't so lucky. In Iowa, Townsend decried the state's abject failure to combat the virus's spread.

He pointed to Gov. Kim Reynolds' threat to strip unemployment benefits from fearful workers who failed to return to meatpacking plants that swiftly reopened last spring, flouting the warnings of medical experts.

State leaders' defiance continued even when Iowa's infection rate rocketed to twice the U.S. average

as the pandemic's autumn surge gripped the nation.

"It's been a joke the way that Iowa has handled COVID," Townsend said.

But no battle is too steep for labor to fight. Townsend is proud that one of the people on the front lines is former Local 704 organizer and executive board member Pete Hird, now secretary-treasurer of the Iowa AFL-CIO.

"He's such a voice for those who don't have a voice," Townsend said.

A journeyman wireman, Hird was appointed and then elected to his post last spring, just as COVID-19 was taking the country hostage.

He has been working with unions, social justice allies and legal groups on strategies to push the state to live up to its obligation to workers.

"It's always been more about the economy here than the people who keep the economy moving," Hird said.

OSHA's regulatory authority varies widely across the country. In Iowa, most power rests with state officials.

On paper, at least, "that means we can create standards that are stronger than the federal guidelines," Hird said. "Maybe even standards like Virginia's and Michigan's."

It's a sky-high bar, but he's driven by the reality that a majority of Iowans have no choice but to get up every day and go to work outside their homes, no matter the risk.

"You think about people working in plants or grocery stores," Hird said. "They're facing the disease every day. There's no mask mandate, nothing enforceable. Knowing that they could be bringing the virus home to their families is terrifying for them." ■

### Construction Safety Snapshot

#COVIDWorkplaceSafety



Discourage workers from sharing tools and equipment and sanitize between use



Minimize contact of worksite deliveries



Restrict unnecessary movement between project sites

For other workplace safety guidelines and resources visit [Michigan.gov/COVIDworkplaceSafety](https://Michigan.gov/COVIDworkplaceSafety).



Social media graphics are among a wealth of online tools, worksheets, data, webinars and other information provided by Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, where former Muskegon Local 275 Business Manager Sean Egan heads the state's comprehensive program to protect workers from COVID-19 exposure.



# LOCAL LINES

## Work Updates, New Members & Holiday Wishes

L.U. 8 (as,em,i,mar,mt,rts,s&spa), TOLEDO, OH — I want to express our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Fourth District International Vice President Brian Malloy. To Susie, Breanna and the entire Malloy Family, the brothers and sisters of Local 8 collectively mourn this ever-too-soon loss.

2020 was to have been a historic year for Local 8, and then COVID-19 happened. In the first three quarters of this year, we lost 26 active or retired members, some directly from COVID-19. Our sympathies go out to all their families. We have to de-escalate this pandemic now, put it behind us and hope that no more fall to it.

Workwise, Local 8 peaked at 300 travelers, and most projects were overtime. After 2 months of stay-at-home orders, we managed to get projects up and running again. We rebounded with over 200 travelers working through fall, and our biggest projects should be nearly complete by the end of the year. We expect 2021 to be slow however, due to the unknowns of the economy and the pandemic.

On a lighter note, we swore in 143 new members so far this year: 46 CE/CWs, 24 residential, 9 VDV, 45 inside and 19 meter technicians, a new classification for Local 8. Welcome to all our new members.

On behalf of our officers and staff, Business Manager Roy Grosswiler wishes all of the IBEW a joyous and safe holiday season, and a prosperous new year.

Mike Brubaker, P.S.

## Congratulations, Graduates!

L.U. 16 (i) EVANSVILLE, IN, — The IBEW congratulates the following graduates of the 2020 Inside Wireman program: Evan R. Adkins; Scott E. Barmes; Nicholas A. Behrman; Reece R. Brooks; Andrew J. Davidson; Nicholas S. Davidson; Keith A. Dewig; Caleb S. Duncan; Bryan W. Ellison; Jared M. Estes; Chelsea M. Freeman; Thomas M. Goeltz; Timothy R. Golike Jr.; Michael L. Helgesen; Chase W. Keller; Lucas M. Kelly; Colton A. Kyle; Jeffrey A. Lemasters Jr.; John J. Lester; Jonathan E. Lutz; Cody M. Matsel; Nathan S. McNeece; Drew B. Phebus; Andrew D. Robinson; Sara A. Schapker; Nathan R. Spriggs; Jeremy A. Stratton; Corey M. Titzer; Ryan M. Turner; Jason R. Vaught; Taylor R. Watkins; Kurt R. Weatherholt and Jerad G. Williams. This year the John D. Brenner and the Top Graduate Awards were both won by Sara A. Schapker.

Local 16 would like to welcome Mr. Cody Matsel and Oxbow Electric as one of its newest local contractors.

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the 134th Labor Day Association's celebration was forced to limit its activities.

Member unions were only able to drive through the Princeton downtown. Hopefully, things will return to normal for next year!

Donald P. Beavin, P.S.

## Labor Power Mobile App Launched

L.U. 24 (es,i&spa), BALTIMORE, MD — We have launched a new phone app to help members stay in touch during these trying times and give them greater flexibility in the future. The app is available to all active members of Local 24 as well as our retired brothers and sisters. The app allows members to update their contact info, pay dues, view important announcements, check their position on the out-of-work list and much more. To register, please visit [www.ibewlocal24.org](http://www.ibewlocal24.org).



Brother Jon McLaughlin is the latest addition to Local 24's organizing staff.

I am pleased to announce that I have hired Jon McLaughlin as an organizer. Having grown up in a union household, Jon understands the value and necessity in spreading our message to those not yet unionized. I look forward to working with Jon, and I am confident that he will do a great job.

It's sad to say, but it appears we still don't have a hold on COVID-19, and according to health professionals, it appears things will get worse this winter before they get better. For the safety of our members and their families I have decided to cancel the annual Children's Christmas Party.

Peter P. Demchuk, B.M.

## Happy Holidays & Remembering Lost Friends

L.U. 26 (i,es,ees,govt,em&mt) WASHINGTON, DC — On August 22, 2020, International Vice President Brian Malloy lost his battle to cancer and passed away. Please continue to keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.

On September 1, 2020, Gina Cooper was appointed as the new international vice president for the Fourth District. Congratulations!

All of the Local 26 holiday parties have been canceled because of the pandemic. The December general membership meeting will still be held on Friday, December 11, 2020.

Best wishes to the following new retirees: Rogers O. Alexander; Gregory Arnold; Bruce E. Baldwin; John S. Barret III; Mark E. Birch; Steven W. Blackman; Timothy J. Brown; William D. Brunson; Derek H. Clark; Michael J. Delsanto Jr.; Christopher S. Donati; John K. Ewusie; Gary W. Good; Daniel M. Grabill Sr.; Daniel T. Hall; John A. Heizer; Robert K. Iddins; Eric W. Johnson; Joseph L. Keglovich; Stanley J. Kowal; Craig E. Leary; Richard E. Mackenzie; Abraham Matthews Jr.; Mark L. Meeks; John P. Murray; Brett E. Noone; Frank W. Rainey; Cristobal Soro Sanchez; Donald J. Simmel; Michael S. Sparks; Richard M. Spicer Jr.; Keith A. Sutphin; Michael E. Tangy; Donald R. Thorne; Richard D. Tucker; Marcus A. Underwood; Robert G. Vinning; Jeffrey A. Watson and Robert F. Zikowitz.

The following members have passed away since our last article: Marvin D. Daniels; Richard T. Farrell Jr.; Conrad P. Gyuras; Frederick M. Hanel; Robert K. Iddins; Jay K. Inglish; Leonard W. King; Gervis H. Mullins; David K. Peterson; Robert S. Redding; Robert D. Rutan; Donald L. St. Clair; Robert N. Stickman; Randall Thompson Jr.; John C. Vorce; John W. William and Willie F. Woods.

With the holidays approaching, we hope that you and your family are remaining safe and healthy as much as possible, and we wish everyone the best in 2021!

George C. Hogan, B.M.

## Hospital Hiring & New Developments Planned

L.U. 38 (i), CLEVELAND, OH — Hiring continues for projects such as Metro Hospital. Between Zenith Systems, Irazar Electric, Alternelite, US Communications, Einheit Electric and North Electric we have over 100 members working on the project. Bids are also out for the apartments that Metro is building across the street on W. 25th St. Zenith is slowly starting to ramp up at the



Brother Jeff Nenadal is sworn in to a vacated seat on the Examining Board at an outdoor Local 38 meeting.

new Ahuja Hospital in Beachwood and at the Market Square mixed-use development at W. 25th and Lorain. There are plans for more development in the W. 25th area with 200 apartments called Waterford Bluffs.

Dennis Meaney, B.M./F.S.

## Wildfires Devastate Northwest & New Member Orientation

L.U. 46 (as,c,cs,em,es,et,i,mar,mo,mt,rtb,rts&st), SEATTLE, WA — Local 46 is very excited to resume our new member orientation training and swear-in. We scheduled four days in August, the 24th through the 27th, for orientation training and swearing in. Local 46 is happy to announce 94 new members participated and were sworn in. We welcome these new members and their families with open arms to our Local 46 family.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis we have an increased backlog of applicants waiting for their interviews to enter into our apprenticeship program. We have expanded our Local 46 interview committee to include our rank and file members. They will participate and have direct say and ownership in the process. We welcome these members to Local 46's interview committee and appreciate the time they will give back.

The devastating local wildfires have displaced many families in our communities. Local 46 has



New Local 46 members take the IBEW oath during a socially-distanced August ceremony.

## Submitting Local Lines Articles

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

## Trade Classifications

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



implemented a Disaster Relief Squad (DRS). We have secured housing for any Local 46 member displaced due to the local wildfires. We are here for you. True solidarity is the key to our union power.

*Deva Nelson, P.S.*

## Leading in Our Community

L.U. 68 (i), DENVER, CO — The pandemic continues and although restrictions still limit what we can do and how we conduct our meetings, the work of Local 68 continues. Our membership has stepped up and taken on a couple of projects to help those in need.

Through the Colorado Building and Construction Trades Council, we were made aware of a family in dire need of help. There are 10 members of the family, eight of whom are children all with special needs, whose home was in total disrepair. The county had to step in and considered some tough decisions, such as splitting the family up. That's when the call went out. One of the county commissioners reached out to the Building Trades to see if there was anything that we could do to keep this family together.

Local 68, along with other volunteers from the Building Trades, stepped up. There is much work to be done: The house needs to be totally gutted and rebuilt on the inside to make it livable and bring it up to code. By the time you read this, the work should be completed and hopefully the family will be back in their home. We would like to thank everyone who volunteered time or donated to help out: NECA, Sturgeon Electric, our organizing staff, our agents, our RENEW crew and our SOC who volunteered.

Through our organizing department, Local 68 is also volunteering with a local food bank, the Denver Inner City Parrish. This is a continuous and ongoing outreach effort, so if you'd like to get involved, please call the hall. You may also donate food and clothing, diapers, etc. at the hall and we will make sure that they get to the food bank.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of our recently deceased brothers and sisters: Norman D. Lautenschlager; James A. Englund; Gary W. Whitehead; Barry Brumbaugh; Kenneth F. Waechter and Lyle L. Muir.

*Morgan J. Buchanan, Pres.*



*Local 68 members recently volunteered their time and service at a local food bank.*

## Big Solar Project & Best Wishes to Our Retirees

L.U. 90 (i), NEW HAVEN, CT — Rosendin Electric was awarded the 20-megawatt solar project in Wallingford, Conn. The project will employ 70-90 members. I would like to commend Local 90 members and Rosendin Electric for their efforts and teamwork! The project is projected for completion in December 2020.

Local 90 will have several projects ramping up



*Local 90 members at the Wallingford Solar project under construction in Wallingford, Conn.*

this winter and spring. The COVID-19 pandemic has slowed or delayed work in our jurisdiction. Due to the pandemic, many functions and events have been canceled. Our annual retirement dinner slated for October 22nd was canceled; this year's retirees will be honored at next year's event.

This year's retirees are: Jonathan Perotti, Peter Serano, J.T. Joyner Jr., Michael Lonardo, James Drury, Gordon Ives, Gregory Shadle, Robert DeCaprio, Joseph Fagan, Kurt Startz, Timothy Manuel, Andrew Tokarski, Joseph Fernicola, Ronald Gosselin, Peter Reilly and David Caperino. Best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement!

The officers and staff of Local 90 would like to wish all a safe and joyous holiday season!

*John Bellemare, Pres./Bus. Agent*

## Goodbye 2020

L.U. 150 (es,i,rts&spa), WAUKEGAN, IL — Well, thank goodness that 2020 is at an end. I think we should all take a drink on New Year's Eve and never speak of this year again.

Recently 11 members' children were awarded \$500 scholarships. They are: Molly Robbins, Granville Anderson, Melissa Tekampe, Geneva Gomez, Lyndsey Bassett, Rebecca Curley, Kristi Kauth, Davin Cummings, Caitlyn Coty, Rebecca Funderburk, and Reid McNeill. We wish them much success in their educational endeavors.

We also lost the following retired members this year: Brothers Denver Kelly, Chris Lazzaretto, Tom Gad, Steve Craft, John Kolar, Joe Gerald, Steve Lahey, John Foli and Tom Bock. We also lost active members Bill Letkey and Damian Ravis. They were all good brothers and wonderful friends to many of us. We wish them Godspeed until we meet again.

Now that the elections are over — and hopefully with a good result — we can get on with the business of righting our ship and bringing our country back on course. Please be safe out there and follow all the proper physical and social distancing guidelines or we will never get out of this pandemic situation. We are all in this together, folks. Don't be selfish and don't be stupid.

*Wendy J. Cordts, P.S.*

## New Pre-Apprenticeship Program Opens Doors of Opportunity

L.U. 236 (catv,ees,govt,i,mo,rtb,t), ALBANY, NY — 2020 has been quite a trip, but we are trying to return things to as normal a state as possible. Our first union meeting since March was held in September and went off without a hitch. It was a welcome return to the way things should be.

The work picture has held steady in this area, but we expect the typical slowdown during the cooler months. Looking to the future, we are working with area leaders to secure large-scale offshore wind projects. Additionally, a pre-apprenticeship program established as part of these efforts will spell opportunity for the men and women of our community, opening the door to a long, fulfilling career.

We've been rooting out the bad actors abusing the Small Works program as well, thwarting attempts to improperly expand the established scope of work. A recent decision from the Council on Industrial Relations deemed pre-fabrication done at an employer's shop outside of the defined scope; this work going forward shall be done by journeymen and apprentices as it should have always been.

Thanks to everyone who has been a part of Local 236 as we strive to make it a better place for electricians every day.

*Michael Martell, Exec. Board*

## Fires Leave Members Homeless, IBEW Steps in to Help

L.U. 280 (c,ees,em,es,i,mo,mt,rts&st), SALEM, OR — Just as we started to see some normalcy begin to surface from the onset of this pandemic, Local 280 was hit with numerous historically unprecedented wildfires on the west coast of Oregon.

The governor declared a state of emergency, up to half a million people were evacuated statewide, and as of October approximately 2,500 homes have been destroyed and over 1 million acres have been burned in Oregon.

Local 280's Lane, Linn and Marion counties had two of the largest, most devastating fires. Evacuees sought refuge in the valley where a powerful east wind pushed over an ominous column of smoke, settling in the valley for a week. Smoke was so hazardous jobs shut down. State officials warned of the toxic, smoke-filled air.

Local 280 went into damage control. Members immediately stepped up with whatever they could offer: housing, animal shelter, help evacuating. With the cooperation of the IBEW/NECA partnership within LMCC, a donation of \$15,000 was made towards the people impacted by the wildfires.

Thoughts are with our neighbor to the south, Local 659, who lost two electrical businesses as well as the towns of Talent and Phoenix. Our neighbor to the west, Local 932, had towns that sustained major losses of property and economic impact.

*Zac Bakke, Mbr. Dev.*



*Wildfires raged on Oregon's coastline, leaving destruction in their wake. Photo by Local 280 member Yuriy Murashko.*

## Giving Back to Our Community

L.U. 292 (em,govt,i,rtb,rts&spa), MINNEAPOLIS, MN — As we head into winter, calls for work have slowed. Local 292 is dependent upon a strong community, and we are proud and humbled to be a strong participant in our community. This fall, Local 292



*Local 292 members pitched in to improve the electrical service at their community food bank.*



## LOCAL LINES

members participated in helping change out an electrical service for our community food shelf in Rockford, Minn. Proudly, 18 Local 292 members showed up over the weekend to help. Many hands made light work as we all pitched in to dig a 100-foot trench to install the new feeder for the upgraded 200-amp service. Members volunteered their time and our LMCC Committee provided the funds to purchase the materials to complete this project. We also want to thank Olympiatech Electric for supporting this project by pulling the permit and donating tools and other resources for the completion of this volunteer effort. The RiverWorks Community food shelf serves clients in the town of Rockford and many other surrounding communities in the far western suburbs. During this time of a slow-down in work and the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, our members rely more on our community for assistance. We are more than happy to return the favor and gratitude by helping our community stay strong and supportive.

Andy Snope, P.S.

## Largest Renewable Transportation Fuels Plant in the World Announced

L.U. 302 (i, rts&spa), MARTINEZ, CA — 2020 will be remembered as a year of change for a great many reasons. Here in Contra Costa County, in part because of the economic impact of COVID-19, Phillips 66 has announced plans to turn their Rodeo Refinery into the largest renewable transportation fuels plant in the world. This upgrade would produce sustainable gasoline, diesel, jet fuel and renewable hydrogen, and would transition 15% of the plant to solar power. This plan includes 400 green jobs and 500 construction jobs over the life of the project while using local union labor, including Contra Costa County Building & Construction Trades. The refinery has been part of our community's history since 1896, and we are looking forward to building the future at Phillips 66 in the spirit of innovation that this change in business model represents.

Melissa Vaughn, P.S.

## Lots to Be Thankful For

L.U. 364 (catv,ees,em,es,i,mt,rts&spa), ROCKFORD, IL — As we enter into the Christmas season, we have much to be thankful for. Though 2020 will be among the most challenging years on record, we have had plenty of work opportunities for our membership.

In October, we completed another successful refuel outage at our Byron Generating Station. Many thanks go out to our members and our Book 2 brothers and sisters who contributed to our success amidst all the challenges that an outage encompasses.

Local 364's Facebook project is off and running

with approximately 80 wiremen onsite. We are expecting many more calls to come in regarding this project as we enter 2021. As of this writing, we have not received word on the Hard Rock Casino project, which, once approved by the Illinois Gaming Board, should begin construction right away.

With the COVID-19 pandemic putting a stop to most of our member activities in 2020, we are obviously looking forward to 2021 as our work picture remains strong. We are hopeful that a return to larger-scale activities is on the horizon.

Happy Holidays!

Brad Williams, Mbr. Dev.

## Unions Matter, Especially During a Crisis

L.U. 494 (em,govt,i,mt,rts,spa&t), MILWAUKEE, WI — The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a reality that U.S. workers have long confronted — U.S. labor law fails to protect working people. The pandemic has underscored the importance of unions in giving workers a collective voice in the workplace.

COVID-19 has fueled strikes, protests and union organizing efforts in response to mass layoffs and concerns of safety protections for essential workers since economic shutdowns began in March 2020. Café workers at Colectivo Coffee saw the value of being in a union and approached Local 494 in Milwaukee and Local 1220 in Downers Grove, Ill., to improve working conditions during the pandemic. The group of café workers at Colectivo is undertaking a campaign to gain support from co-workers for the union. Colectivo, across its cafés, production and corporate staff, has about 500 employees. The majority who work in the café, production, warehouse, roasting and bakery areas would be represented by the proposed union. Colectivo Coffee café workers are gaining support from elected officials as we work toward unionizing the local chain of cafés. If you go to a Colectivo Coffee café, please order your coffee "IBEW Strong" to show your support for the café workers.

John T. Zapfel, Pol. Dir.



Volunteer Organizing Committee member Ryan Coffel stays IBEW strong in front of a local Colectivo Coffee.

## Congrats to New Journeymen

L.U. 540 (i), CANTON, OH — Local 540 is proud to recognize our new journeymen for 2020.

Congratulations to our graduating apprentices on successfully completing their JATC apprenticeship programs. This year has definitely had its share of ups and downs, and we are so proud of our graduates.

The following brothers graduated from our Inside program: Nicholas Bogunovich, Tomas Calez, Tyler Couto, Garret Crislip, Tyler DeBord, Joseph Detore, Austen Evans, Tyler Grosenbacher, Nathan Heppie, Jeremy Herndon, Jeremiah Kocsis, Matthew Merrick, Trevor Shetler, Greg Tice, Scott Tweedy, Heath Williams and Ross Young.

The following brothers graduated from our telecom program: Justin Deluca, Charles Oakes and Isaac Wright.

Trevor Shetler (inside) and Justin Deluca (telecom) were 2020 Apprentice of the Year recipients.

Nathan Heppie, Matthew Merrick, Trevor Shetler, Justin Deluca, Charles Oakes and Isaac Wright were all winners of the "Vern Wolgamott" Perfect Attendance award.

Rick Waikem, P.S./R.S.



Brothers George Horn, Ben Chandlee, Mike Hagner and Pete Acquarola were among those who enjoyed Local 654's annual golf tournament.

to look forward to, and it turned out great."

Timothy McLaverty, R.S.

## Buy American This Holiday Season

L.U. 1116 (em,lctt&u), TUCSON, AZ — As of this time, many of us are still working remotely or under modified working rules. Our employers are doing what they can to help keep us safe, and we appreciate their efforts. Union meetings are being held, so please attend if you are well.

Negotiations are being held via videoconferencing. Business Manager Scott Northrup and our leadership team are working hard to help us keep the benefits we currently enjoy. Remember to speak to your co-workers about joining the union. As members, it is our responsibility to organize those around us.

The landscape of our work environment changes daily. We need to accept the changes that are occurring and grow with them. As Charles Darwin said, "It is not the strongest or most intelligent who will survive, but those who can best manage change." Let's look at the challenges we face and find new, improved ways to approach them. We can help to shape our future.

As the holidays approach, remember those less fortunate. Please be as generous as you are able to be. While shopping, read labels. If there is an American-made option, please buy it. Let's all do our part to keep people employed here in the U.S.

Local 1116's leadership wishes you and your families a safe, healthy, happy holiday season. Thank you for all that you do each day, for working hard and showing those around you what it means to be a member of the IBEW. Remember, this is your local and you have a voice. Looking forward to better things in 2021!

Sharon Williams, R.S./P.S.

## Attention Business Managers, Press Secretaries and Retirees' Clubs: The 2021 submission deadlines for Local Lines articles are as follows:

Odd-Numbered Locals:	Even-Numbered Locals:	Retirees' Clubs:
March 2021 – Jan. 4, 2021	April 2021 – Feb. 1, 2021	March 2021 – Jan. 8, 2021
May – Mar. 1, 2021	June – Apr. 1, 2021	June – Apr. 8, 2021
July – May 3, 2021	Aug. – June 1, 2021	Sept. – July 8, 2021
Sept. – July 1, 2021	Oct. – Aug. 2, 2021	Dec. – Oct. 8, 2021
Nov. – Sept. 1, 2021	Dec. – Oct. 1, 2021	
Jan. 2022 – Nov. 1, 2021	Feb. 2022 – Dec. 2, 2021	

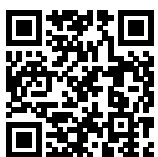
You'll also be receiving this information via email/mail in the coming weeks.

Go  
Green

Get your  
**ELECTRICAL  
WORKER** delivered  
each month *via email*.

It's convenient & helps cut down  
on paper waste. Go to

[www.ibew.org/gogreen](http://www.ibew.org/gogreen)  
and sign up today!



Scan with a QR reader



# RETIREEES

## Hoping for a Return to Normal

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 1, St. Louis, MO — Hello from St. Louis. I hope next year will be a lot closer to a normal year than this one has been. I miss our retiree meetings. Because of COVID-19, I didn't get to go to the union hall and get my 50-year pin and a picture standing next to Business Manager Frank Jacobs. I did attend the health fair, and I'd advise everyone to go. Stay warm and wear your mask.

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year!

Neal McCormack, P.S.



The IBEW 50-year pin awarded to Local 1 retiree Neal McCormack. Sadly, this year's pin presentation was canceled due to COVID-19.

## Taking One Day at a Time

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 26, WASHINGTON, DC — I will try to make up for the missed article due to COVID-19 coverage. Our club had to cancel our annual Crab Feast, which was so sad, as it is one of most popular events.

We continue to stay in touch and managed to still send out our annual raffle tickets — but later than ever! We did manage to have a few Saturdays for volunteers to help, with adequate face masks and distance and the help of our Business Manager George Hogan. The need for medical equipment does not go away during the pandemic. Now that doctors can perform more essential health care than when the pandemic started, the need for recovery equipment remains.

As most readers know, this election is VERY IMPORTANT to retired members on Social Security and Medicare! Hopefully, Biden and Harris will prevail!

As everyone knows, it is hard to make plans when the world is suffering. So now everyone — retirees and those still working — is taking one day at a time. It's not easy, but we do what we must to survive. Hopefully, the saying, "this too shall pass" will still apply.

In the meantime, stay safe, wear your face masks and keep the 6-foot rule for separation! Until we have a cure, these are the best ways to lower your risk and the risk for everyone around you!

Susan Flashman, P.S.

## What a Year

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 53, KANSAS CITY, MO — By the time you read this 2020 will be coming to an end. All I can say is, "What a year!" A worldwide pandemic, record fires, the worst year on record for hurricanes and political chaos. Hopefully everyone has stayed safe and healthy.

Thank you to all the men and women who have been out there on the front lines keeping this country going through the pandemic, fires and hurricanes. You are the backbone and heroes of this great country.

Hopefully by the time this issue runs we will have elected people who will support working men and women and unions. We have been under attack

for four years, and I'm not sure we can survive another four if we are stuck with the current administration.

On a happier note, we did finally get to have our annual crappie tournament/fish fry on October 10th. We had a smaller turnout than usual, and the fishing wasn't great, but it didn't keep us from having a good time. Can't wait until next year.

Sadly, we lost another retiree: Clyde Webster. Rest in peace, brother.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Duane Pearce, P.S.

## Keeping our Land of Opportunity

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 58, DETROIT, MI — Greetings from Detroit. Our retirees' group is still not gathering, as is prudent with the COVID-19 issues swirling around us. We are continuing to publish our monthly newsletter and work to keep our members up to date on any possible happenings surrounding our group. The Labor Day Parade was canceled, but our local union volunteers were on hand at the hall distributing food, t-shirts and election signs to those who "drove thru" our parking lot.

Making the most of summer, the incredible Great Lakes has allowed many of our members to get out on the water, enjoy vacation homes, boats, jet skis, family visits, picnics and fishing. Hunting season is upon us, and our members who hunt will continue to be safe and enjoy their sport.

With the election behind us, it is a time to heal from this recent campaign and continue to support those elected officials that are our friends. There is never a time to sit back and expect things to run smoothly: We must continue our grassroots work to keep America our land of opportunity.

With the holidays soon upon us, Merry Christmas and happy 2021!

Pat Nuznov, P.S.

## Gratitude for our Union Home

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 60, SAN ANTONIO, TX — Grateful and blessed best describes the feelings of Local 60 retirees for the opportunity to call the local's new union hall "home." Gary Aiken and his staff have been most accommodating to the retirees' needs, showing true warmth and respect. Pictured below is a gift from Local Union 60's staff and members.



Local 60 Business Manager Gary Aiken (right) presents Retiree Club President Coy Rogers with a plaque at the local's new union hall.

March 12, 2020, was the date of the club's last meeting due to this horrible virus, and to quote a member's feelings, "Surely do miss our social life and seeing and enjoying friendships with all those tasty meals." These are truly uncertain times, with unknown dates as to when the club's meetings will start again. The club's 2020 golf tournament fundraiser had to be completely canceled. When the time comes to safely start up the Local 60 Retirees Club meetings, a notification will be posted in the Local 60 monthly newsletter.

Several Local 60 active and retired members and their family members have tested positive for COVID-19, and our prayers go out to these brothers and sisters for a full and speedy recovery.

Sandy Rogers, P.S.

## New Executive Board Members and Loss of a Friend

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 134, CHICAGO, IL — Our last luncheon election meeting, featuring a St. Patrick's Day theme, took place March 11, 2020, in the Memorial Hall of our Local 134 home. This election brought some new faces to the Executive Board, and the newly elected board members were sworn in by Kevin Connolly, recording secretary, business representative and union trustee for Local 134. This meeting took place just a few days before Illinois put the stay-at-home order into place because of COVID-19. The Executive Board continued to hold their monthly meetings, following all safety protocol rules. All other meetings, activities and gatherings, including the December holiday party, have come to a halt.

This paragraph is dedicated to Louis Rodriguez, whom we lost on July 30, 2020. Lou had 56 years of loyal service with the Local 134. He retired in 1995 and immediately joined the 134 Retirees Club. He served on the Executive Board from 1998 to 2015. His job titles during this long stretch of service included sergeant at arms and co-editor from 1998 to 2000; commentary from 2002-2006; president from 2008 to 2010; and vice president from 2012 to 2014. After that term, Lou was elected to serve the organization as a member of the Executive Board and later resigned in March of 2015. He still did the duties as press secretary, writing articles for The Electrical Worker from 2012 to 2016. Lou then turned those duties over to me, Sue Kleczka. Even with his many words of encouragement, I knew that I had some pretty big shoes to fill. Lou was a warm and kind man with a big heart. He remained an active dues-paying member of the IBEW until his death on July 30, 2020. R.I.P., dear Lou Rodriguez. You will be missed by all retired members.

To all members and all affiliated with our great IBEW, stay well and safe. God bless America and the whole world during this COVID-19 crisis.

Sue Kleczka, P.S.

## When Will We Ever Learn?

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 212, CINCINNATI, OH — A recap of what our "Dear Leader" has accomplished in his first term as president: Because of his policy failure to quickly contain COVID-19, by October 2020, 210,000 of our fellow citizens have died from the COVID-19 "hoax." Because a pandemic playbook had President Obama's name on it, our insecure leader chose to ignore the early action plan. Yes, he has a "huge, perfect brain."

The pandemic has caused the economy to collapse, unemployment to skyrocket, bankruptcy of many small and mid-sized businesses, \$4 trillion of new national debt, farmers struggling to survive, a Supreme Court and Federal Appeals Court stacked with conservative judges who often rule against working people. What we have suspected for many years is proven true. Many wealthy taxpayers and businesses pay little to no federal income taxes. A constant flow of lies from the White House has eroded our trust in government and free press. Benefits we have paid for are endangered by threatening cut to these programs. To quote a 1955 Pete Seeger folk song: "When will we ever learn? When will we ever learn?"

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy New Year!

Bob Schaefer, P.S.

## Gratitude for Members Past and Present

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 353, TORONTO, ON, CANADA — Since our last letter in the March issue, the whole world has changed due to COVID-19.

We have canceled all Local 353 retiree events. This has saddened those who enjoyed these planned events.

A recent cancellation letter to our over 2,500 retired members and their spouses highlighted that at this time of Thanksgiving, even with all the sad news in 2020, we have so much to be thankful for: All the benefits that we fought and paid for, that presently working members and their families enjoy and continue to support and pay for are also Local 353 retiree health and welfare benefits at no cost. Thanks to the working members of the past and the working members of today.

This virus has brought interesting changes in the workplace and our lives. I can remember negotiating contracts with employers, and when sanitary or personal protection equipment was mentioned, they all balked at the costs. Today, they are part of everyday life. Also, the government laid off health and safety inspectors, which broadened the gap between union and nonunion work. Today, they are hiring.

Robert Rynyk, P.S.

## Safety, Health & Family

RETIREEES CLUB OF L.U. 649, ALTON, IL — The outlook for our retiree groups — as with all groups, of course — has been affected by the impact of COVID-19, but most bargaining units continue with limitations set forth by the governor's mandates.

As a reminder, Local 649 Retirees Club monthly meetings take place the last Thursday of each month. Meetings are altered to account for holidays.

When the monthly meetings resume as usual, these meetings will take place at the Bethalto Eagle's Nest restaurant.

To all of our IBEW family everywhere, stay safe, be healthy, enjoy family.

Terry Wilhite, P.S.



In Memoriam

Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in October 2020

Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death
1	Thurman, R. E.	10/11/19	43	McKusick, C. T.	9/8/20	134	Huening, D. T.	8/9/20	332	Armendariz, A. R.	6/24/20	558	Watson, T. J.	8/2/20	756	Fleenor, C. J.	5/16/20
3	Apotsos, M.	8/3/20	43	Pagano, G. F.	6/26/19	134	Jastrzemski, W. F.	8/5/20	332	Olsen, R. E.	4/7/20	558	Williams, N. R.	8/26/20	756	Rousey, R. A.	7/21/20
3	Armstrong, R. J.	8/9/20	44	Blessing, L. W.	8/14/20	134	Jensen, W. A.	7/10/20	332	Perez, M. S.	6/25/20	567	Adams, M. L.	6/17/20	756	Snowden, G. E.	8/14/20
3	Belmonte, L. P.	8/2/20	44	Kessner, R. P.	8/29/20	134	Malone, W. J.	8/21/20	340	Enloe, J. E.	8/12/20	567	Wilder, R. S.	7/5/20	756	Sutton, J. C.	7/16/20
3	Blain, W. H.	6/24/20	44	Mullaney, J. J.	7/30/20	134	O'Grady, T. F.	7/7/20	340	Hunziker, G.	8/18/20	568	Malenfant, O. J.	4/15/20	760	Bryson, G.	8/4/20
3	Burke, K. M.	7/15/20	46	Baker, J. A.	8/23/20	134	Rode, A.	7/17/20	343	Johnson, M. D.	7/18/20	569	Chandler, G. E.	8/9/20	776	Driggers, C. L.	6/28/20
3	Cohen, M.	8/12/20	46	Bathurst, M. D.	9/1/20	134	Rodriguez, A.	8/2/20	343	Murphy, D. S.	8/6/20	569	Elliott, J. C.	12/10/17	804	LaLonde, K. D.	8/5/20
3	Collins, M.	8/31/20	46	Blaylock, W. H.	7/18/20	134	Shelven, T. N.	4/26/20	347	Sparks, K. W.	5/25/20	595	Casarez, M.	5/1/20	852	Morgan, J. P.	12/31/19
3	Conte, L.	6/14/20	46	Hasling, K. S.	7/23/20	134	Tanta, S.	7/12/20	347	Welsher, R. J.	7/5/20	595	Christner, D. L.	6/22/20	852	Tigner, R. J.	7/28/20
3	Cruz, C.	3/27/20	46	Quinn, D. A.	7/27/20	136	Dorough, A. W.	3/30/20	349	Hedstrom, R. W.	4/17/20	595	Couch, R. E.	5/17/20	861	Myers, H. J.	6/19/20
3	DeBrew, R. C.	3/10/20	46	Ulberg, D. G.	5/16/20	136	Harris, W. R.	8/1/20	349	Hilderbrand, N. E.	6/26/20	595	Durkee, B. L.	8/4/20	870	Evans, E. N.	5/24/20
3	D'Elio, F. A.	7/27/20	47	Fray, J.	9/25/19	136	Jones, D. R.	4/10/20	349	Wilson, W. P.	8/6/20	595	Robinson, L. K.	3/14/19	917	Rollins, K. M.	7/20/20
3	Diamond, D.	8/25/20	47	Sanchez, L.	7/10/20	136	Perry, M. E.	7/23/20	351	Armbruster, E. J.	8/20/20	596	Weaver, D. B.	6/11/20	934	Greer, D. J.	7/20/20
3	Gargano, S.	8/30/20	48	Johnston, A. T.	8/13/20	136	Vaughan, R. K.	7/26/20	351	Childs, J. W.	3/5/20	601	Peters, J. G.	6/7/20	934	Hickman, D. R.	7/29/20
3	Gonzalez, C.	8/21/20	48	Prince, T. V.	9/6/20	139	Chalker, M. H.	11/27/19	353	Bahadoor, R. J.	8/5/20	602	McCulloch, J.	8/1/20	948	Bowdish, A. M.	3/5/20
3	Grasso, C. J.	3/3/20	48	Rice, D. C.	7/25/20	141	Smith, C. K.	8/18/20	353	Balding, S. W.	6/3/20	605	Riley, J. L.	7/28/20	948	Combs, C. A.	7/10/20
3	Guarino, R. A.	4/22/20	51	Simmons, D. L.	8/9/20	150	Geraldi, J. J.	6/13/20	353	Kuehne, W. E.	7/13/20	606	Roberson, J. A.	6/28/20	948	Dunkel, L. K.	12/2/19
3	Hamilton, A. C.	7/17/20	51	Sparling, L. L.	7/18/20	153	Ostertag, A. B.	7/16/20	353	Lynn, W. J.	6/23/20	611	Deskin, W. T.	4/21/20	948	Linn, R. B.	6/26/20
3	Hansen, R. W.	5/31/20	53	Harris, C. M.	9/23/20	158	Lannoye, G. R.	6/6/20	353	MacNaughton, B. M.	9/8/20	611	Rucker, W. D.	1/27/20	948	Sparks, J. P.	3/14/20
3	Kelly, E. A.	6/22/20	55	Coghlan, J. A.	6/9/20	159	Anthes, R. D.	7/8/20	353	Stevenson, T.	8/17/20	611	Scholes, H. R.	6/8/20	948	Wendling, T. R.	5/31/20
3	Levey, S.	8/11/20	57	Felix, D. J.	5/18/20	160	Carpenter, K. R.	7/6/20	353	Thomas, R. W.	8/27/20	613	Christian, B. F.	5/31/20	952	Allee, B. C.	7/22/20
3	Lovejoy, C.	4/27/20	58	Bott, G. K.	6/20/20	164	Andrews, T. D.	5/23/19	353	Thompson, T. S.	5/16/20	613	Hood, G. L.	4/21/20	952	Baker, B. L.	7/28/20
3	Lowy, J. P.	5/24/20	58	Cain, C. E.	7/18/20	164	Butto, A. J.	7/23/20	353	Traianovski, S. P.	8/25/20	613	Hopkins, W. L.	7/8/20	972	Radabaugh, S. F.	6/29/20
3	Mc Grath, E. F.	7/25/20	58	Landorf, C. L.	8/22/20	164	Franco, B. P.	6/22/20	353	Trude, W. F.	7/9/20	613	Kennedy, E. M.	1/2/20	972	Wasson, C. M.	6/6/20
3	Merced, H.	5/19/20	58	Novack, R. E.	8/6/20	164	Scaltrito, V. L.	4/23/20	354	Christensen, R. D.	7/24/20	613	Kuhlman, C. D.	8/19/20	993	Scherre, K. E.	8/15/20
3	Parisen, E. J.	6/12/20	58	Rideout, L. E.	7/31/20	164	Schroeder, M. S.	5/20/20	354	Devoe, K. M.	8/22/20	613	Zupp, R. D.	8/27/20	1141	Clinton, J. W.	1/6/20
3	Pemberton, A. M.	4/4/20	58	South, D. W.	5/12/20	164	Venable, C.	7/23/20	354	Gallegos, E. J.	7/31/20	617	Kelly, L. F.	7/31/20	1245	Duguay, R.	7/3/20
3	Rosado, D.	8/6/20	60	Rogers, L. C.	8/8/20	164	Verniero, P.	6/21/20	357	Compton, T. L.	6/27/20	617	Padilla, J.	4/27/20	1245	Edwards, W. G.	8/13/20
3	Ruzbarsky, F. J.	8/19/20	66	Flanagan, W. M.	6/9/20	176	Cerney, W. H.	6/26/20	357	Lebfrom, E. F.	6/29/20	617	Stewart, C. R.	4/8/20	1245	Whitfield, J. M.	5/23/20
3	Saladino, M.	8/16/20	66	Mendoza, F. P.	3/14/20	177	Anderson, J. W.	7/1/20	357	Linville, L. D.	5/4/20	640	DeMille, E. A.	11/21/19	1249	Clancy, G. T.	4/12/20
3	Taylor, L.	8/15/20	68	Burtis, D. V.	7/7/20	177	Hilton, J. W.	3/5/20	360	Sandoval, J.	6/19/20	640	Erickson, J. R.	7/29/20	1249	Farnsworth, M. P.	8/15/20
3	Tocci, C. D.	4/13/20	68	Goodson, C. B.	7/11/20	177	King, W. N.	7/13/20	363	Quinn, M. D.	6/8/20	640	Millan, J. R.	7/14/20	1253	Dupont, D. S.	5/16/20
3	Wald, G.	7/19/20	68	Haden, H. G.	5/10/20	180	Huss, E. J.	4/3/20	369	Bennett, K.	6/29/20	640	Rodriguez, N. V.	8/1/20	1253	Sirois, R. A.	3/9/20
3	Zulaybar, A. A.	7/24/20	68	Pries, R. C.	7/9/20	180	Van Fleet, J. E.	3/25/20	369	Hamilton, C. L.	6/30/20	640	Sheridan, J. T.	7/21/20	1379	Bowers, D. C.	1/13/20
5	Bennett, C. W.	3/28/20	70	Logue, R. J.	7/28/20	191	Monroe, R. R.	5/27/20	369	Rothgerber, D. A.	8/16/20	640	Tilley, R. G.	8/21/20	1393	Allen, J. E.	8/11/20
5	Drake, S.	7/31/20	70	Whalen, C. D.	1/12/20	194	Evans, C. D.	8/24/20	379	Deas, W. D.	7/5/20	648	Brush, T. G.	3/19/20	1393	Earp, T.	5/13/20
5	Krah, E. C.	4/7/20	72	Clark, G. M.	7/23/20	196	Nicometi, C. P.	8/7/20	388	Portz, A. R.	7/19/20	648	Cox, J. T.	7/14/20	1547	Hagen, C.	6/18/20
5	Stivers, J. R.	7/17/20	73	Kendall, D. E.	7/8/20	197	Seggerman, J.	8/1/20	388	Reid, L.	7/30/20	648	Flaig, M. J.	11/4/19	1579	Bell, J. F.	7/31/20
8	Alberts, F. J.	2/2/20	73	Owen, M. C.	7/3/20	212	Olding, B. H.	7/28/20	388	Young, N. M.	10/14/15	649	Pleasant, J. N.	4/25/20	1579	Henderson, J. W.	9/9/20
8	Hine, B. K.	4/24/20	76	Niemi, D. E.	7/2/20	212	Peters, L. R.	8/27/20	402	Ramanen, R. J.	6/3/20	659	Hopewell, R. E.	7/14/20	1579	Walker, F.	7/29/20
8	Isaacson, C. W.	8/3/20	77	Armstrong, D. E.	7/28/20	213	Decock, D. C.	4/11/20	413	Jouett, J. R.	8/3/20	659	Stoops, T. L.	4/29/20	1583	Echols, L. E.	3/31/20
9	Gonzales, J. R.	7/28/20	77	Bankson, D. E.	4/21/20	213	Fabbro, E.	4/5/20	424	Konash, J.	7/26/19	665	Coil, C. E.	12/11/19	1687	Paquette, N.	1/21/20
9	Johnson, Z. M.	8/14/20	77	Jones, C. L.	7/15/20	213	Long, J. W.	6/18/19	429	Eden, W. B.	3/28/20	665	Heiler, R. C.	7/18/20	1925	Sims, C. L.	6/24/20
9	Tothunter, W. H.	8/17/20	77	O'Connor, D. D.	3/19/20	213	Timbres, K. R.	10/13/19	429	Robertson, R. L.	1/16/20	666	Barnes, T. E.	8/17/20	1937	Henderson, J. W.	8/24/20
11	Bodman, H. C.	6/1/20	82	Rhude, B. L.	5/20/20	230	Haggard, D. L.	8/13/20	441	DeRobbio, J. A.	5/18/20	666	Berlin, D. F.	8/18/20	2085	MacKay, L.	7/2/19
11	Cox, J. L.	6/18/20	86	Clifford, J. J.	6/10/20	230	Wolfgang, J. E.	5/15/20	441	Sanders, B.	6/14/20	666	Bryant, K. M.	6/22/20	2085	Praetsch, G. A.	6/30/20
11	Mitchell, W. A.	7/31/20	90	Gontarski, P. D.	7/16/20	231	Petty, R. L.	8/2/20	443	Ledbetter, H. S.	8/20/20	673	Freeman, R. N.	5/13/20	2286	Lilly, J. B.	7/9/20
11	Oliver, R. L.	7/5/20	90	McCormack, R. F.	4/16/20	236	Feil, J. D.	5/17/20	446	Hill, C. R.	7/26/20	676	Douglas, C. B.	7/27/20	2295	Tschirhart, J. C.	7/27/20
11	Travis, R. L.	6/10/20	98	Arrigale, C. J.	4/25/20	236	Plaskon, J. G.	2/25/20	446	Sellers, B. J.	8/2/20	681	Terral, L. D.	8/17/20	2330	Keough, M. J.	7/15/20
16	Schmitt, N.	6/9/20	98	Berky, G. E.	7/9/20	237	Perkins, C. J.	7/3/20	466	Reed, H. V.	7/25/20	683	Strong, M. A.	8/12/20	I.O. (5)	Crowley, J. H.	6/4/20
16	Stock, H.	8/6/20	99	Berg, K. A.	2/28/20	245	Long, R. G.	2/26/20	473	Gray, G. E.	7/5/20	697	Bair, J. B.	8/17/20	I.O. (134)	Look, T.	5/13/20
17	Durden, W.	7/28/20	99	McGinn, T. J.	1/28/20	252	Blair, R. J.	8/24/20	479	Gaspard, D. P.	8/31/20	697	Boling, E. B.	8/13/20	I.O. (400)	Shropshire, J. M.	9/24/19
17	Matson, P. A.	5/20/20	102	Bochicchio, J.	6/6/20	254	Bizot, J.	6/28/20	480	Bishop, R. E.	7/22/20	697	Fingar, M. E.	8/16/20	Pens. (1245)	Conrad, T. F.	8/24/20
17	Oaks, J. M.	4/13/20	102	Macniven, A. N.	6/4/20	258	Robertson, S. I.	6/13/19	481	Button, J.	10/26/18	697	Keen, H. V.	6/13/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Balaja, A. J.	6/6/20
18	Burke, D. M.	3/24/20	102	Zubal, P.	3/29/20	270	Tweed, N. Y.	9/7/20	481	Cooper, H. K.	8/27/20	697	Williams, T. C.	8/5/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Barnett, J. R.	6/14/20
18	Thompson, L. M.	3/24/20	103	Ahearn, D. P.	5/16/20	275	Hall, C. K.	6/20/20	481	Hinkle, J.	7/17/20	701	Johnson, R. M.	7/26/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Brown, R. N.	7/31/20
20	Crites, J. K.	7/15/20	103	LeBarre, E. E.	7/20/20	275	Koeman, M. S.	8/11/20	481	Hoffman, H. G.	9/13/20	701	Jones, K. F.	7/24/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Connors, R. A.	7/11/20
20	Short, B. L.	7/18/20	103	Meade, W. A.	3/21/20	278	DeLane, J. M.	6/2/20	481	Lickey, R. J.	5/30/20	701	McCormick, C. G.	7/18/20	Pens. (I.O.)	De La Rosa, R.	6/24/20
22	Abel, C. C.	8/9/20	103	O'Brien, P. J.	7/29/20	280	McCall, G. G.	7/8/20	488	Ross, C.	8/2/20	701	Mertens, L. J.	4/20/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Dennis, A. R.	7/17/20
22	Lantis, L. L.	8/6/20	103	Richards, R. E.	2/22/20	291	Waltman, R. L.	7/14/20	494	Schroedl, G. W.	7/28/20	701	Ratcliff, M. E.	7/15/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Frerichs, H. R.	1/28/18
22	Sears, S. D.	5/7/20	103	Tsoi, P.	7/14/20	292	Burger, K. M.	3/5/19	495	Collins, F.	7/11/20	702	Adams, B. J.	8/7/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Gordey, G.	5/14/20
24	Bond, W. H.	2/24/20	105	Bryce, J. R.	8/7/20	292	McGuire, T. M.	6/25/20	499	Haltermann, D. G.	5/16/20	712	Schultheis, J. E.	4/25/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Hamilton, W. E.	7/9/20
25	Donaldson, G. E.	6/6/20	105	Traynor, T.	7/16/20	295	Brucks, B. A.	8/21/20	502	Comeau, D.	7/19/20	714	Hanson, G. L.	7/3/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Heise, W. L.	7/7/20
25	Walker, D.	8/30/20	106	Willey, R. L.	3/26/20	295	Hubbard, J. L.	8/14/20	508	Hatcher, A. S.	8/13/20	716	Bonifacini, R. P.	7/7/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Martin, V. P.	4/4/20
26	Edwards, G. W.	5/28/20	111	Michels, R. A.	8/20/20	295	Wingard, R. D.	8/30/20	508	Lewis, E. A.	4/3/20	716	Bottorf, P. J.	7/3/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Myers, E. M.	7/14/20
26	Mullins, G. H.	8/3/20	124	Jones, L. E.	5/6/20	301	Hadaway, T. M.	8/11/20	527	Thomas,							



# 2019 Summary Annual Report for the National Electrical Annuity Plan

This is a summary of the annual report for the National Electrical Annuity Plan, #52-6132372, for the year ended December 31, 2019. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

### Basic Financial Statement

Benefits under the plan are provided by a trust. Plan expenses were \$300,863,777. These expenses included \$18,282,685 in administrative expenses and \$282,581,092 in benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries. A total of 124,765 persons were participants in or beneficiaries of the plan at the end of the plan year, although not all of these persons had yet earned the right to receive benefits.

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was \$9,654,750,185 as of December 31, 2019, compared to \$7,861,656,586 as of January 1, 2019. During the plan year the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of \$1,793,093,599. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets; that is, the difference between the value of the plan's assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year or the cost of assets acquired during the year. The plan had

total income of \$2,093,957,376, including employer contributions of \$745,766,367, gains of \$100,580,261 from the sale of assets, earnings from investments of \$1,243,748,746, and other income of \$3,862,002.

### Minimum Funding Standards

Enough money was contributed to the plan to keep it funded in accordance with the minimum funding standards of ERISA.

### Your Rights to Additional Information

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed below are included in that report:

- an accountant's report;
- financial information and information on payments to service providers;
- assets held for investment;
- transactions in excess of 5 percent of plan assets; and
- information regarding any common or collective trusts, pooled separate accounts, master trusts, or 103-12 investment entities in which the plan participates.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of the Trustees of the National Electrical Annuity Plan, who are the plan administrators, 2400 Research Boulevard, Suite 500,

Rockville, Maryland 20850-3266, (301) 556-4300. The charge to cover copying costs will be \$15.25 for the full annual report, or \$.25 per page for any part thereof.

You also have the right to receive from the plan administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and expenses of the plan and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover copying costs given above does not include a charge for the copying of these portions of the report because these portions are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally-protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan at 2400 Research Boulevard, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland 20850-3266, and at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., or to obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Public Disclosure Room, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-1513, Washington, D.C. 20210. ■

Lonnie R. Stephenson  
NEAP Trustee

Kenneth W. Cooper  
NEAP Trustee

David Long  
NEAP Trustee

Dennis F. Quebe  
NEAP Trustee

# Notice to Participants in the National Electrical Annuity Plan Explanation of Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit

If you are married and die before retirement, NEAP will provide your spouse with a Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit. Your spouse will receive this benefit if: (1) you have satisfied the minimum eligibility requirement of 160 hours of service; (2) you have a balance in your Individual Account; (3) you die prior to receiving a pension benefit; (4) you are married; and (5) you have not previously declined the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit.

If you are entitled to a Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit, NEAP will purchase an annuity contract from an insurance company for your spouse. The annuity contract will pay your surviving spouse a monthly benefit for life. Monthly payments will start within a reasonable period of time after your death. The amount of the monthly benefit depends upon (1) the amount in your Individual Account; (2) your spouse's age (and, therefore, his/her life expectancy and prospective benefit payment period); and (3) the insurance company's price for annuity contracts.

### Elections/Consents

If you are under age 35, your spouse will automatically receive the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit upon your death (unless your spouse selects a lump sum payment instead of the annuity). You may not decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit unless you have permanently stopped working in Covered Employment.

However, beginning the year you reach age 35 and at any time thereafter, you may decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit. Your spouse must consent in writing and the consent must be witnessed by a representative of NEAP or by a notary public. Consent given by a spouse is not effective as to a subsequent spouse.

You may revoke your election to decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit at any time. You may again decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit at any time by executing the appropriate form and obtaining your spouse's consent. Your spouse may also revoke his/her consent at any time. Contact the Plan Administrator's Office for the appropriate forms.

### Lump Sum

If you decline the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit, your Individual Account balance will be paid to your designated surviving beneficiary in a lump sum. If your designated surviving beneficiary is not your spouse, your spouse must also consent to that as well, in order for it to be valid. If you have not designated a beneficiary (or your designated beneficiary is not living at the time of your death), the balance will be paid to the following persons, if living, in the following order of priority: (1) your spouse, (2) your children, (3) your parents, or (4) your estate. The total amount of money received as a lump sum may ultimately be different (either greater or lesser) than the total amount of money your spouse would have received under the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit. This is because the Preretirement Surviving Spouse Benefit is an annuity and depends on the time value of money and how long your spouse lives. Additional information is available from the Plan Administrator's Office. ■



*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.

### EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Lonnie R. Stephenson  
International President

Kenneth W. Cooper  
International Secretary-Treasurer

### INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Chairman  
Christopher Erikson

First District  
Joseph P. Calabro

Second District  
Myles J. Calvey

Third District  
James Burgham

Fourth District  
William W. Riley

Fifth District  
Frank Furco

Sixth District  
Dean E. Wine

Seventh District  
Patrick Lavin

Eighth District  
Ross Galbraith

### INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

First District  
Thomas Reid

Second District  
Michael P. Monahan

Third District  
Michael D. Welsh

Fourth District  
Gina P. Cooper

Fifth District  
Brian K. Thompson

Sixth District  
David J. Ruhmkorff

Seventh District  
Steven Speer

Eighth District  
Jerry Bellah

Ninth District  
John J. O'Rourke

Tenth District  
Brent E. Hall

Eleventh District  
Mark D. Hager

### THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

Editor  
Lonnie R. Stephenson

Mark Brueggjenjohann

Matt Spence

Alex Hogan

Curtis D. Bateman

John Sellman

Erin Sutherland

Asifa Haniff

Ben Temchine

Sean Bartel

Colin Kelly

Rix Oakland

Colleen Crinion

Michael Pointer

Janelle Hartman

Joe Conway



### HOW TO REACH US

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:

Letters to the Editor, *The Electrical Worker*, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

Or send by email to: [media@ibew.org](mailto:media@ibew.org)

©2020 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The Electrical Worker (print)  
ISSN 2332-113X

The Electrical Worker (online)  
ISSN 2332-1148

All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. on Union-made paper.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Electrical Worker*, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

The Electrical Worker will not be held responsible for views expressed by correspondents.

Paid advertising is not accepted.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40011756.  
Canada Post: Return undeliverables to P.O. Box 2601,  
6915 Dixie Rd, Mississauga, ON L4T 0A9.



## WHO WE ARE

# Local 1220 Member's 'Purposeful Walk' Takes Him to Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame

**D**on Cornelli's father had a successful career as a General Motors executive, so he understandably encouraged his son to study accounting before he left for Central Michigan University in the early 1980s.

Once the younger Cornelli hoisted a television camera over his shoulder, however, it was clear that wasn't going to happen. The closer he got to the action, the more alive he felt.

"I'm constantly moving," he said. "If I'm sitting around, my leg starts shaking. People tell me I have a purposeful walk."

Now, nearly 40 years later, Cornelli's work as a camera operator for Fox Sports and others has led the Chicago Local 1220 member to perhaps the highest honor in his field: a spot in the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame. Cornelli, 57, is one of nine inductees in this year's class. The induction ceremony has been postponed until December 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"To me, it's special because your peers are the ones who vote on it," said Cornelli of the honor selected by others working in the sports broadcast industry. "When you're recognized by them, it just honestly means more."

The Hall, which inducted its first class in 2007, has its share of big names. Basketball legend Charles Barkley and CBS' James Brown are members of this year's class.

But it also honors the best among camera operators and technicians, the usually anonymous faces who bring the sound and pictures to viewers. Cornelli has worked as a freelancer for more than 30 years, primarily for CBS and Fox Sports, but he's particularly well known for his hand-held camera work along the sideline during Fox's NFL coverage.

He's been part of the network's No. 1 broadcast team since it secured NFL rights after the 1993 season. He currently works on the crew fronted by play-by-play man Joe Buck and color commentator Troy Aikman. If you remember a memorable sideline shot during a big game televised by Fox, it's likely Cornelli provided it. A profile of him last year by The Ringer referred to him as the "Magician of NFL Broadcasts" because of his ability to be in the right place at the right time.

"I've seen Don move five feet," Andy Mitchell, another camera operator on the Fox crew, told the website. "The guy literally caught the ball right where he was standing. He had it perfectly framed. I'm going, 'He practically threw it to him.'"

While he appreciates the honor, Cornelli admits he's a little taken a back by the notoriety. He agreed to be profiled for this story only if he could honor the crews he works with. He also wanted to salute wife Karen and children Sara and Andrew, who have spent considerable time without him at the family's home in suburban Detroit.

Cornelli estimates he spends about 200 nights a year traveling for work. With Fox now having a Thursday night game, he's routinely gone five to six nights per week during football season.

"I'm nothing but a spoke on a big wheel," he said. "It takes a lot more than one person to put on a network television show. There's a lot of working together between the union and management, different departments, other co-workers. There really is so much that goes on."

Such comments didn't surprise Neil Ambrosio,



*Chicago Local 1220 member Don Cornelli, who has worked the sideline camera for Fox's top NFL crew since 1994, will soon be inducted into the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame. Cornelli has been called the "Magician of NFL Broadcasts" because he always seems to be in the right place for the perfect shot.*

an international representative in the Broadcasting Department who has known Cornelli for years.

"He's one of those guys who is ridiculously good at his job because he has tremendous instincts," Ambrosio said. "He's also humble about it and you just don't see that too often. He's understands the game and he's always in the right place."

Cornelli was a fan of all sports growing up and his love of television really took off at Central Michigan. At the time, when ESPN was still in its infancy and the onslaught of other cable sports networks had yet to begin, the Mid-American Conference — of which Central Michigan is a member — had few football and basketball games shown on national television. That left it to local stations and even student-run television to produce and air them.

Cornelli got involved as a camera operator and loved it. He soon found himself doing work for the local PBS affiliate and got into freelancing when ESPN hired him to carry the parabolic microphone — the round microphone used to catch sounds on the field and along the sideline — for games involving the Michigan Panthers in the old United States Football League.

That led to more freelance work for Detroit outlets televising games of baseball's Tigers, basketball's Pistons and hockey's Red Wings, where he found himself as a full-time camera operator. He also did work for CNN.

Someone at CBS took notice. In 1986, Cornelli was hired on a fill-in basis for an NFL game at the Metrodome in Minneapolis. By 1988, he was part of the top crew, headlined by the legendary announcers Pat Summerall and John Madden. It was there he became an IBEW member.

He moved to Fox when it lured away the NFC

football broadcast rights, although he has continued to work for CBS on other assignments because of his freelance status. He's involved in the network's golf and NCAA Tournament coverage. Fans likely will see him underneath a basket during the Final Four. He's worked 23 Super Bowls, including some for CBS.

Cornelli has also shot three Winter Olympics when CBS had the rights to the games in the 1990s, focusing mostly on hockey, and worked a camera during Fox's coverage of golf's U.S. Open.

"One of his best qualities is his demeanor," said Fox Sports sound mixer and Hollywood, Calif., Local 45 member Fred Aldous, who has worked and been friends with Cornelli for 30 years and was inducted into the hall himself in 2015. "He's one of the nicest and most loyal people in the business. Along with his camera work, his honesty and integrity are second to none."

Along the sideline, Cornelli hauls around his camera while avoiding other photographers and anyone else — all while making sure he's in position for the perfect shot on a big play. He says he still loves it, even though his lower back acts up more than it did earlier in his career. He walks or runs about 15,000 steps during a typical game — equivalent to 7 miles.

"I like being close to the action," he said. "It's like an adrenaline rush for me to be down there."

Cornelli's dedication was on full display in 2018, when he was inadvertently run over along the sideline by Los Angeles Rams receiver Brandin Cooks.

Cornelli got up and insisted he could continue working the game. Only when sideline reporter Erin Andrews told Fox officials that Cornelli was bleeding from his mouth did they insist he go to the hospital. He was diagnosed with a concussion and missed his next two games.

"He doesn't like people doting over him," Ambrosio said. "He got absolutely destroyed on that sideline and they had to coerce him to go to the emergency room."

Local 1220 Business Manager John Rizzo calls Cornelli a "surgeon" because working the sideline camera requires a calm, steady hand, even when things get noisy, crazy and chaotic around him.

Rizzo asked Cornelli to join the IBEW's negotiating committee during its last round of contract talks with Fox Sports because of his stature within the industry and his history of excellent work. It was Cornelli's first time taking part in negotiations. He said it served as a reminder of the importance of a good working relationship with management.

"Don is a perfectionist at everything he does," Rizzo said. "He expects everyone who works with him to be of that caliber. I'm just really happy for him that he's being inducted into the Hall of Fame. [He's] just a great representative for the IBEW."

Cornelli said retirement has slipped into his mind at times. He and Karen now have three grandchildren. Plus, the physical wear and tear is becoming more noticeable.

But he's reluctant to do so because "honestly, I really think about how much I would miss it." The excitement level of being close to the action hasn't changed one bit since his days at Central Michigan.

All that work has led him to the Hall of Fame, where he'll soon be mentioned in the same breath with legends of the industry. His peers already consider him one.

"He wants to be the best at what he does and he's there," Rizzo said. "He's at the top of his game and he's at the top of his field." ■

## IBEW MERCHANDISE



### THERMO LINED CARHARTT JACKET - \$70.00

12 oz. ring-spun cotton brown duck with thermal lining. Attached thermal lined hood with adjustable drawstring. IBEW initials with fist and lightning bolts embroidered on left chest.

### STAINLESS STEEL TUMBLER - \$9.50

16 oz. stainless steel and neoprene travel mug featuring the IBEW initials with fist and lightning bolts.

### DENIM SHIRT - \$40.00

100% cotton denim with button down collar and 2 button cuff. IBEW initials along with fist and lightning bolts embroidered above pocket on left chest.

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

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