

THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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**MORE Members
MORE Work
MORE Power**

Now 900,000 Strong,
the IBEW
Is a Force for Change

This summer, the IBEW surpassed 900,000 members, the largest the union has been in nearly 40 years.

We added more members last year than in any year since the high point in labor union power in 1969.

We have more journeyman wiremen, linemen and apprentices, and they are working more hours than at any point in history.

For the first time since we started keeping track, last year we surpassed 1 billion man-hours, up from nearly 600 million in 2023, which wasn't a bad year.

Those record numbers do not simply reflect growth in the construction industry as a whole. Unlike every other period when our membership has been growing, the percentage of the total work that is ours — our market share — is growing, too.

This growth translates directly into more money in members' pockets and in IBEW benefit funds. Members' wages went up 10% in 2023-2024, the most recent period we have data for, far outpacing inflation and the industry average.

"More workers and more of the work equal one thing: more power," said International President Kenneth W. Cooper. "That's power to protect our jobs, strengthen our benefits and defend our rights. But the ultimate goal of the labor movement

A CRUCIAL MOMENT

From the Officers, page 2

is bigger than that. A more powerful IBEW is critical to our larger goal of bringing power back to American working families."

The 2026 midterm elections are a decisive moment to translate power on the job into improving members' lives, Cooper said.

For the foreseeable future, corporations will have more money to buy politicians.

For working people, the only way to get and use power is through a union.

In this issue of The Electrical Worker, the focus is on how the IBEW is translating increased power over work into increased power over our nations' futures.

But in the political realm, the headwinds are severe.

"The last 18 months have been a betrayal of working families, but the damage goes back much farther," Cooper said. "Trump is just the latest

politician who wasn't one of us, who promised he alone could save us. It has always been a lie. No one will save us but us."

In the rest of this issue of The Electrical Worker, we show how we are taking power and using it, and how every member can use their own power.

We have the story of Tampa, Fla., Local 915 member Brian Nathan, who ran for office for the first time and won a seat in the Florida Senate with less money and less name recognition, but with a message laser-focused on working families and an army of his IBEW brothers and sisters.

Also read about Gainesville, Fla., Local 1205 member Jason Bellamy-Fults, who saw what Nathan did and decided to follow his example. They are both on the ballot this November and deserve your support.

We also have a story about the Faster Labor Contracts Act sponsored by Folsom, N.J., Local 351 member and U.S. Rep. Donald Norcross.

We explain why the IBEW was at the center of the Canadian announcement that it will double the size of its electrical grid.

Finally, we give every member five things they can do to take power now.

FORCE FOR CHANGE *continued on page 3*

WWW.IBEW.ORG

FROM THE OFFICERS

We Can't Slow Down



Kenneth W. Cooper
International President

Sisters and brothers, we are in a defining moment in the history of the IBEW. The hunger for energy is driving the biggest surge of blue-collar job creation in our lifetimes.

Over the next two years, there will be more than \$2 trillion in construction activity in North America. American utilities are expected to invest an additional \$1 trillion over the next five years.

The IBEW is already the largest we've been in decades, with the largest construction membership ever, and we're growing faster than anytime in the last half-century.

That growth in our ranks, and in the work we are winning, gives us tremendous power. With that comes the responsibility to use it to improve the lives of our members and their families, and the future of our two nations.

We've already translated that power to better conditions on the job. In the past couple of years, we negotiated the first increase in NEBF pension benefits in decades; the first entirely new pension plan since 1947; and agreements with the Laborers and Operating Engineers confirming that underground, transmission

and solar work is and will be IBEW work.

These changes make real and substantial differences for our members, now and for decades.

But, brothers and sisters, the future is already here. I'm still up nights thinking about how we organize faster, not just new workers but contractors and the work itself, because every lost job is a loss we can't afford. Why? Because politicians in Washington, D.C., are trying to suffocate us.

None of what we win in negotiations matters if the pillars of the labor movement — the right to be in a union, the right to organize and the right to come home safe — are rotting.

President Trump appointed a corrupt union-buster to run the Department of Labor. She was run out of town less than a year later, but he found another union-buster to replace her. He defanged the National Labor Relations Board and stripped collective bargaining rights from more than a million federal workers, including many IBEW members. Under the auspices of DOGE, his administration fired two-thirds of the staff at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

He killed hundreds of billions of dollars in tax incentives for clean energy union jobs already funded by Congress. On top of that, the president is spending \$2 billion to kill offshore wind projects we fought for and that our members were building.

Five years ago, the IBEW was at the center of the most consequential slate of pro-union legislation in almost 100 years: the Inflation Reduction, Infrastructure and Jobs, and CHIPS and Science acts.

Today, those laws' guarantees of labor standards on the projects that would rebuild America are in the garbage, trashed by President Trump and the Republican-led Congress. Those trillions of dollars of construction don't matter if every job is a low-wage job and all the rewards go to a smaller and smaller group of billionaires.

The IBEW has gone further than I ever could have imagined when I first became your international president, but we can't stop now before we've seized this immense opportunity for us and for the future.

This boom isn't slowing down, and neither can we. ■

Who's Got Our Back?

From the avalanche of headlines, AI-generated videos and nonstop ads, it already feels impossible to sort truth from fiction in today's political rhetoric. And the closer we get to November's midterm elections, the harder it's going to be.

But when it comes to Congress and the U.S. Senate in particular, there's an easy yardstick for measuring which candidates support the IBEW and working families and which don't.

This election year, it boils down to two vital pieces of pro-worker legislation: the Faster Labor Contracts Act, passed by the House and awaiting action in the Senate, and the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, or PRO Act.

In a nutshell, the FLCA, introduced by Local 351 member Rep. Donald Norcross, sets a 90-day clock for negotiating a first contract, with mandatory mediation for employers that don't comply. The PRO Act targets the many ways management illegally interferes with organizing drives and union elections and bans state right-to-work laws.

With one-third of the Senate on the ballot in November, along with the entire House, we have the power — and I'd argue the duty — to elect leaders who will pass these bills.

Has your senator or member of Congress signed on to the PRO Act and FLCA? Have candidates running for those seats pledged to back them?

If the answer is no or you've got a lawmaker on the fence, call their office. Tell them your vote depends on their support for the bills.

It's this easy: Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and give them the name of your senator or representative. If you get the office voicemail, leave a message. Staff listens to them and takes notes.

Even better, if you have the chance, pose the question at a town hall. Naturally, every politician will claim to support workers and working families. But it's all lip service if they're not championing the PRO Act and FLCA.

Our Government Affairs website is a great one-stop shop to learn more about the bills and the lawmakers who support them. Go to ibewgov.org for toolkits on how to advocate for these important bills.

The urgency can't be overstated. Today's assaults on our rights and our movement are more brazen than ever, from the White House to the courts to red-state legislatures passing union-busting laws at the behest of billionaires.

Our votes this fall can put the brakes on it. But it all starts with you. ■



Paul A. Noble
International Secretary-Treasurer

My IBEW STORY

Cori Lupton, journeyman wireman
Cleveland Local 38



“Before joining the IBEW, I spent three years working as a nonunion electrician while pursuing a pre-med degree in college. Growing up, I developed strong mechanical skills by helping my father, a NASA technician and car mechanic, work on cars. I enjoyed the hands-on problem-solving of electrical work. However, even though it was rewarding, I didn't see a clear path for career advancement or long-term stability in

the nonunion sector. I was looking to combine my technical skills with a career that offered growth, benefits and the opportunity to make a meaningful impact. That search ultimately led me to the union.

I first learned about the IBEW through the Hard Hatted Women pre-apprenticeship program in Cleveland. HHW is instrumental in opening doors for women in the trades and helped me understand the value of union membership, in terms of wages and benefits and the solidarity, training and support it provides.

Becoming a member of the IBEW was a rigorous process. I stood in line with more than 400 hopeful applicants, all eager for a chance to join. Then, I took a civil service test and had an interview with union officials. It was competitive, but I was determined, and I got in.

I went through an apprenticeship and worked on almost every substantial building in downtown Cleveland. I've had the privilege of working on projects like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and the Cleveland Cavaliers' arena. I've represented the IBEW at the North America's Building Trades Unions, Trades Women Build Nations and IBEW Women's conferences. These experiences have deepened my commitment to equity and inclusion in the trades and inspired my work in adult education and workforce development.

I always wanted to give back, never losing touch with the community at HHW, and I became an instructor. I started teaching a pre-apprenticeship class, and when work got light in Cleveland and I was laid off, there were teaching opportunities for me. Some of the training was run by Union Construction Industry Partners, affiliated through Cuyahoga Community College, where I'm currently employed.

My journey with the IBEW is the foundation of my work today. As program director for Aspire: Ohio Options for Adults at Cuyahoga Community College, I channel my values and standards as an IBEW member into the design of pre-apprenticeship programs to prepare adult learners for successful union-affiliated and industry-sponsored apprenticeships. These programs integrate construction math, jobsite safety, and essential soft skills, with a strong focus on underserved communities.

Holding an electrical journeyman certification through Local 38 continues to shape my approach to workforce development, grounded in equity, access, and learner-centered design. I carry the IBEW's legacy with me as a recipient of the Women in Aerospace Awareness Award for educational leadership at the NASA Glenn Research Center, adviser to workforce organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Rebuilding Together, and representative for Ohio as a state advocate for adult education fellowship.

The union didn't just give me a career; it gave me a platform to help others build theirs. I'm proud to be part of a movement that builds infrastructure along with prosperous lives and communities.”

Share your story at ibew.org/MyIBEWStory



5 WAYS You Can Use Your Power This Election

Not everyone can or wants to run for office, but everyone should want to use their power as a citizen and a union member to improve their own lives, their families' lives and the lives of other working men and women.

That means getting involved in politics.

"Just like power on the grid, political power can't be stored. You either use it or it's gone. There are no batteries in politics. All of us in the IBEW need all of us in the IBEW to do something and do it now," said International President Kenneth W. Cooper. "When our active and retired members unite and speak, it's extremely hard to ignore us."

The people who want to take away our rights to organize and bargain collectively try to make organizing as difficult and off-putting as possible. But it doesn't need to be. There are many simple and easy ways to get involved and make a difference, no matter where you start. **Here are five ways to get started:**

1 Register to Vote, Then Vote

The easiest, most important political action any citizen can take is voting. It isn't enough, but it is absolutely necessary. Double-check your registration now to make sure there won't be any problem on Election Day. It's as simple as going to nass.org/can-i-vote to confirm your voter status and polling place.

Once you know you're registered — vote.

Vote in every election, not just when the White House is in play. That freshman councilperson who supports labor issues can be a vital voice locally and possibly an influential candidate for higher office down the road.

Don't miss off-year or special elections. Ballot measures are an especially useful tool to get around elite gatekeepers and expand rights and economic opportunity for working families.



2 Call Your Elected Officials

Email and texts may be faster, and a huge donation may be more persuasive, but if you don't have thousands of dollars to hand over to a politician a phone call is the biggest bang for your buck.

If you're not sure what to say, check with your local union or ibewgov.org. There are almost always specific issues that need public comment that come with message suggestions to get you started.

Then look up your representative and their numbers and call. Clearly state your name, tell them that you're an IBEW member and that you're a constituent, and why you're calling. You don't have to deliver the official IBEW position, but if you do, make sure they know that.

If you end up talking with a staffer or assistant, be polite and thank them for their time. They will log your call and the reason for it. (Be just as ready to leave a voicemail message.)

It could make more of an impact to call a local district office when contacting your representative in the House or Senate. There often are more staff available there to speak with constituents.

Hi, I'm an IBEW Member...



3 Write Your Elected Officials

Writing an actual physical letter to your representatives, by hand or printed out, might take a little extra time, but physical mail that must be opened and read can have tremendous impact — especially compared with the thousands of emails that clog elected officials' inboxes.

A frequently cited study by the Congressional Management Foundation found that handwritten, mailed letters remain the best way to communicate with members of Congress. In a survey of Capital Hill staffers, 96% said that a personalized letter would influence senators and representatives on an issue if they have not reached a decision.

Follow the same format with letters as with phone calls: Include your name and that you're an IBEW member. Courteously and concisely explain why you're writing. Your investment of time, paper, an envelope and a first-class stamp — 63 cents — could leave an important and lasting impression.



5 Speak Up at Community and Party Meetings

Find out if there are any labor committees in your community and start attending their meetings.

The same goes for your city council, county commission, utility board and any other government body that holds public meetings. Become a familiar face and maybe even a familiar voice. Spend a meeting or two listening, getting a feel for how the board works and how it handles the time reserved for public comments. Then weigh in.

Boards and committees frequently make decisions with profound effects on working people and they are almost always sparsely attended. There are enormous opportunities to have real impact at the city, county levels, neighborhood and precinct level without having to actually run for office.

The best resource will be your business manager but so is ibewgov.org and the free IBEW Gov mobile app.

"And if you get really stuck, just give our department a call in Washington. We're here to help," said the Government Affairs Departments, Zapfel.

The Government Affairs Department main number is (202) 728-6046.



4 Meet With Your Officials

Face-to-face meetings with your elected officials can make a powerful impression on them. The Congressional Management Foundation report found that in-person visits from constituents — at offices, town halls, public meetings — are among the most persuasive ways to communicate with officials who are undecided on an issue.

It may take more work, but an especially effective way to make a lasting impression is to organize a site visit. Your business manager is an excellent resource to help make it happen.

"Worksite visits by these officials are also extremely influential," IBEW National Grassroots Coordinator John Zapfel said. "It makes a big difference when they can see where you work and what you do."

Whether you go to a town hall or organize a work visit that gets attention in local media, keep your local — especially the registrar — in the loop.



Prime Minister Counting on IBEW Members to Double Canada's Grid

First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk shared the podium with Prime Minister Mark Carney on May 14. It was much more than a photo-op.

Instead, it was to celebrate the federal government's plan to double Canada's electrical grid and create thousands of jobs for IBEW members in Canada during the next two decades.

"I was a little nervous, a little taken aback," said Shewchuk, who was asked to appear with the prime minister just one day earlier. "I did not want to leave the [First District] progress meeting. But in the bigger picture, this meant so much for our future."

So, he and his wife made the five-plus-hour drive from Niagara Falls, Ontario, the site of the meeting, to Ottawa to appear with Carney and Julie Dabrusin, minister for environment and climate change.

"This government has ambitious plans for the electrical future of this country," Shewchuk told the media and others in attendance. "As the number one stakeholder in Canada in electrical work, the IBEW is ready to build, and we can't wait to get to work."

"This announcement, as far I am concerned, is the greatest announcement since electricity itself," he added.

Carney thanked Shewchuk for "joining with enthusiasm for today's announcement, today and tomorrow's tasks, and for your workers to ensure Canada can deliver on it."

"The path to affordability is electrification," the prime minister added. "The path to competitiveness is electrification. The path to net zero is electrification. Electrification underpins everything: our emissions, our environment, our economy."

Powering Canada Strong, the government's name for the initiative, will double the grid by 2050 to meet the rapidly increasing demands on it.

That will create about 130,000 jobs for the skilled trades, many of whom will be IBEW members. Carney noted that the government will work closely with trade unions to meet the demand.

Shewchuk said the moment left him with an immense feeling of pride — not for himself, but for the work done by IBEW members across Canada being recognized at the highest levels of government.

"They have asked for our help in this plan for the future," Shewchuk said. "What an incredible honor. It's extremely humbling, and I'm proud of our locals across the country in all sectors."

The IBEW in Canada has built a close relationship with Carney's Liberal government since it took office in early 2025, similar to what the IBEW had with President Joe Biden, he said.

High-ranking officials, often



"The future of this country will be electric. And the IBEW will help build it, power it and train the next generation to carry it forward."

— First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk

including Carney himself, reach out for the Brotherhood's input on important public works projects. Shewchuk has spoken to Carney several times, he said.

From the beginning, there has been a commitment to invest in Canada and to have skilled trade union members perform the needed infrastructure work.

"That, for me, from the very get-go, was the foundation of the relationship," he said. "There's been a lot of trust on both sides."

"He [Carney] did not want an aide or a deputy minister to brief him on this," Shewchuk added. "He wanted to learn for himself what the IBEW and the building trades bring to this country."

Canada's relationship with the United States, its largest trading partner and historically its closest ally, is at its lowest point in decades due to the ongoing trade war initiated by the Trump administration.

That's convinced Carney and others of the importance of making better use of the country's natural resources and improving its infrastructure. That means opportunities for IBEW members across all sectors, Shewchuk said.

"The future of this country will be electric," he said. "And the IBEW will help build it, power it and train the next generation to carry it forward."

Carney said the plan is expected

to lower utility rates in 70% of Canadian homes. The government will spend the next four months consulting with provinces, utilities, private industry, unions and Indigenous groups across the coun-

try before deciding on a formal plan.

The four pillars are building infrastructure in a way that keeps energy affordable; connecting the nation's fractured electrical systems by

MORE Members MORE Work MORE Power

The future is everything electrified. It will be cheaper, cleaner and more efficient. But it won't necessarily be better for working people unless it is built and maintained by union labor. There is only one reason that First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk was invited to speak at the announcement of Prime Minister Mark Carney's plan to double the size of the electric grid: It cannot be done without the IBEW.

First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk joined Prime Minister Mark Carney in Ottawa on May 14 to announce a new initiative to double Canada's electric grid. The plan is expected to create thousands of jobs for IBEW members.

expanding transmission lines and breaking down barriers between provincial grids; creating a skilled workforce to build the grid; and manufacturing the parts and components for the work in Canada as much as possible.

"We have to unlock Canada's potential as an energy superpower," Carney said. "We have a golden opportunity to build a more sustainable and reliable energy system. In a much tougher world, we have to take care of our ourselves."

Shewchuk pledged that the Brotherhood and the Sisterhood will be a strong partner in doing so.

"The IBEW has the expertise and organizational skills to build these projects from coast to coast," he said. "When you take a deep dive into it, it's a big, big deal, and I'm extremely enthusiastic about it. I'm on the back nine of my career, but for our young people, I'm just so excited." ■

IBEW MERCHANDISE

IBEW GOLF BAG \$400.00

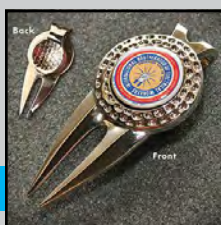
The IBEW Golf Bag combines classic style with premium craftsmanship. Made in the USA, this high-quality bag features IBEW initials and logo embroidery.

GOLF TEES \$3.00

2 ¾" black wooden golf tee with white IBEW initials (25 tees per pack).

DIVOT TOOL / BALL MARKER \$6.00

Combination divot tool, and ball marker with IBEW logo.



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

www.ibewmerchandise.com

Florida Senator, IBEW Brother: 'The Voters Can Smell if You're Authentic'

After a hard-fought special election sent him to the Florida Senate in March, the IBEW's own Brian Nathan is determined to beat the odds again in November.

Reporters and pundits declared his first win a major upset: a pro-worker, pro-union political newcomer prevailing in a deep-red district against a cattle rancher with rich and powerful backers. Even the chair of the state's Democratic Party considered it a "shocking victory."

The media called the race for Nathan when he was up by 408 votes, less than 1% of the ballots cast. A pub packed with his supporters erupted — family, friends and fellow union members jumping up and down, waving signs and chanting "Brian!"

"It was unlike anything I've ever experienced," the Tampa Local 915 organizer said. "We knew it was going to be close. She [opponent Josie Tomkow] out-fundraised and outspent me. But when we saw the early returns, we thought, 'OK, we're actually in this.' We did the work, and it was paying off."

Nathan had been thinking about a Senate run since 2025, when legislative attacks on unions and workers included a bill proposed by his then-senator, Jay Collins, to further erode child labor laws.

"As someone who has the same concerns and troubles that everybody in the community does, I said I can go up to Tallahassee and be your champion."

— Brian Nathan

The bill died in committee, but it still bothered him. "Knowing labor history, protecting children was one of movement's early motivating factors," he said. "It felt like we were regressing."

While he'd never been a candidate, he was far from a political novice. He'd been interacting with lawmakers for years, fighting for the IBEW and labor more broadly as part of the Florida AFL-CIO's Working Families Lobby Corps. The program expands the practice of lobby days to a week or longer, ensuring that there's always a union voice in Tallahassee when the Legislature is in session.

When Collins was appointed lieutenant governor last August, the door opened for Nathan to go from advocate to decision-maker.



Journeyman wireman Brian Nathan, an organizer for Tampa Local 915, is surrounded by his family at his desk in the Florida Senate. Championing workers, good jobs and the value of unions, Nathan won his seat during a special election in March and is running for a full term in November.

"I talked to my wife and said, 'I want to throw my name in the ring.' I explained the math of a special election, that in some ways it's easier — the dollar amount you have to raise isn't as much, and you get to own the news cycle," he said.

Knowing how upset he was each time he returned from the Capitol, she told him: "Go ahead and do it. We'll figure it out."

Nathan wanted to file right away, but Gov. Ron DeSantis waited until October to set a special election date, a delay that meant no one — let alone a Democrat — would be able to represent Senate District 14 during the regular 2026 session.

Over the next six months, Nathan raised \$109,000, mainly in small donations from workers. It was a fraction of what Tomkow, then a Florida House member, took in from faceless large donors.

"She walked in with a quarter-million dollars. I heard she out-raised me 10 to 1. Even as much as 20 to 1 if you roll in the political committees," he said, referring to Florida's term for PACs.

But Nathan had something Tomkow didn't: a genuine connection with working people.

"I relied a lot on my biography as a Navy veteran, as an electrician who's been on his tools, as a union member," he said. "It really was an economic message, that life in Florida has gotten very expensive, a lot of people are hurting, and the folks in Tallahassee don't seem to be doing anything to provide meaningful relief."

"As someone who has the same concerns and troubles that everybody in the community does, I said I can go up to Tallahassee and be your champion."

He was open about his struggles as a young father and the life he was able to build through the IBEW.

"I talked about how when my first daughter was born, we were on WIC," he said, citing the federal nutrition program for women, infants and children. "Both my wife and I were veterans going to college on the GI Bill and my time in the field working all over the state with the IBEW. That really resonated with people because it wasn't the regular biography you get from most politicians — college-educated in law or finance."

Nudged by his father-in-law, then a member of Orlando Local 606, Nathan joined the IBEW in 2008. He'd served previously as a Navy electronics specialist in cryptology, a vast security operation that includes intercepting communications and deciphering codes. He also graduated from the University of Tampa with a double major in sociology and philosophy — behavioral sciences that he said come in handy in politics.

As his new campaign heads into autumn's political whirlwind, Nathan is heeding lessons from his first run. Stretching his budget as far as he could, he built a grassroots operation with ever-more volunteers knocking doors and making phone calls. Many were recruited through pop-up events at Tampa-area coffee shops, sparing him a major expense.

"We'd say, 'Hey, can we basically sit in your place of business? We'll order

MORE Members MORE Work MORE Power

There are many paths to high office if you are willing to shill for the elite. But that's just borrowing their power, and if you fail to act in their interests, they can take that power back. If you want power they can't take away, you have to get it somewhere else. For most working people, the only route to power is through a union. As Tampa Local 915 member Brian Nathan found out, that can be enough to win.



Above: An image from Nathan's campaign materials expresses his union values. At left, the freshman senator connects with the crowd while marching with Equality Florida at a Pride Day parade in St. Petersburg.



relief myself," he said. "But this was a half-baked product. We don't know what it's going to do to our cities and counties. There were just so many holes in it."

Nathan hopes to support working people with his own bills come January. Priorities include bringing down the sky-high cost of Florida homeowners' insurance and repairing crumbling infrastructure.

"Updates have been deferred for a long time. It's expensive, but the more you defer, the more expensive it gets to fix," he said. "Water management is huge, delivering power is huge, transit is huge."

IBEW locals are pitching in again with fundraisers and volunteers, even outside his district. An early event during his first race was hosted by Gainesville Local 1205, some 130 miles north of Tampa. Now, one of its members, Jason Bellamy-Fults, is also running for the state Senate — a campaign inspired in part by Nathan's success. (See story 20.)

Nathan phoned him early on to offer support and guidance.

"I told him that people are going to want to put you in a box, but you can't let other people define you," Nathan said. "You can't be afraid to push back and say no, even if you think it might hurt you a little bit. The voters can smell if you're authentic or not from a mile away, and at the end of the day you have to remember that those are the people you're representing, those are the people you're fighting for." ■

coffee, we'll order food.' It was a place for volunteers to come and get literature, get signs without us having to open a campaign office," he said. "We'd put it out on social media: 'Want to come out and help the cause? This is where we're going to be.'"

Many IBEW brothers and sisters were among his volunteers and contributors. Local 951 Business Manager Jonathan Fielder said it was an honor.

"We stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with him," he said. "Decisions impacting labor are usually debated by politicians who have never worked on a jobsite. Brian bridges this gap. He is an experienced working-class voice now in the halls of power, ensuring that labor rights and middle-class economic struggles are prioritized."

Three special sessions this spring gave Nathan his first chance to legislate: In April, when he voted against redistricting; in May, when he voted for the state budget, which included job-creating infrastructure projects in his district; and in June, when he fought a now-passed constitutional amendment that significantly increased the homestead property tax exemption.

"To be clear, property taxes down here are expensive. I could use that

House Passes Bill to Shrink First-Contract Delays

A union-busting loophole in U.S. labor law got one step closer to elimination when a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives passed the Faster Labor Contracts Act.

"One of the most important tools a union has to get a seat at the table is the right to collectively bargain," said New Jersey Rep. Donald Norcross, a member of Folsom, N.J., Local 351 and a principal co-sponsor of the FLCA when it was introduced in the House in 2024.

The bill passed by a 230-193 vote June 9, with 20 Republicans joining nearly all Democrats in voting "yes."

A big problem for workers who want to form a union is that after they make the effort to get their unionizing elections certified, there are no deadlines for employers to agree to a contract with the new bargaining unit, Norcross said.

"It can take an average of 458 days for an employer to agree with a union on their first contract," said Norcross, a journeyman inside wireman and former Local 351 business representative who has represented New Jersey's 1st Congressional District since 2014. "Roughly a third of workers are forced to wait over three years before they can sign on the dotted line."

Employers know that if they hold up negotiations long enough, frustrated workers might decide unionizing wasn't worth the effort, he said. Meanwhile, employers know that making collective bargaining as painful as



Rep. Donald Norcross, a member of Folsom, N.J., Local 351, spoke before the House of Representatives on June 9 in support of the Faster Labor Contracts Act.

"One of the most important tools a union has to get a seat at the table is the right to collectively bargain."

— New Jersey Rep. Donald Norcross, a member of Folsom, N.J., Local 351

possible could discourage other workers from trying to organize.

Among the FLCA's key provisions is a requirement for employers to quickly begin contract negotiations — within just 10 days of a union election certification. If a new agreement is not reached after 90 more days, either

party would then be empowered to request independent mediation. Should another month go by with no agreement reached, the FLCA provides for parties to ask an arbitration panel to step in and decide on a binding, two-year first contract.

The bipartisan support for the

MORE Members MORE Work MORE Power

The rawest exercise of power in the United States is constructing the laws that control the balance of power between labor and the owners of capital. The IBEW is involved in politics because laws can make it easier for people to organize or they can make it harder. For the last half-century, new laws have been making it harder.

For the last 12 years, one of our own has been rising in the halls of Congress, New Jersey Rep. Donald Norcross, a member of Folsom Local 351. In one of the most unproductive, partisan Congresses in U.S. history, Norcross led a successful fight for a bill that would make it easier for millions of people to organize. That is power you can't ignore.

FLCA proved crucial when Norcross sought to force a House vote on the measure — after Speaker Mike Johnson failed to schedule it for consideration — through what's known as a discharge petition.

"Our bill reaffirms that collective bargaining is a fundamental right that even the richest billionaires must comply with," Norcross said in a speech on the House floor before the vote. "And by advancing this legislation, Congress can send a clear message that workers deserve a level playing field — and that organized labor is still capable of bettering the lives of everyone."

International President Kenneth W. Cooper applauded Norcross' work in getting the FLCA past this crucial legislative hurdle.

"Don's the only IBEW electrician in Congress, and his work on moving this bill forward shows why it's so important for more of our members to run for

public office," Cooper said. "Getting the FLCA passed and making good-faith bargaining a part of labor law will go a long way toward helping thousands of workers — in the IBEW and all the other unions — to start experiencing the benefits of a union contract in a matter of months, not years."

With no vote set for the FLCA's companion measure in the Senate, S. 844, Cooper encouraged IBEW members to call their senators at (202) 224-3121 and urge them to support its passage.

"Workers have a fundamental right to bargain collectively, but for too long, it's been far too easy for executives to run out the clock on workers' first union contracts," he said. "It's time for Congress to do its part and pass what might be one of the biggest advances in workers' rights in decades."

Visit ibewgov.org for the latest updates. ■

April 2026 International Executive Council Meeting

Minutes and Report of The International Executive Council's Regular Meeting

The meeting of the International Executive Council was called to order at 8:30 am on April 16, 2026, in Washington, D.C. The members of the council in attendance were Chairman Calabro, Cosner, Antonellis, Hamilton, Cassidy, Finn, Cunningham, Chincio, and Griffiths. Minutes from the last meeting were approved.

International President Cooper

International President Kenneth W. Cooper met with the members of the International Executive Council to discuss a variety of matters affecting all branches of the Brotherhood.

International Secretary-Treasurer Noble

International Secretary-Treasurer Paul A. Noble presented financial reports covering the IBEW Pension Fund, the Unity Fund, and the Investment Portfolio of the Brotherhood, both in Canada and in the United States.

Legal Defense

General Counsel reporting on legal activity and bills. Payments for legal defense made from the General Fund were examined and approved in accordance with the requirements of Article X, Section 1 of the IBEW Constitution.

Financial Reports

The International Secretary-Treasurer's Report on the various funds of the Brotherhood was presented to the members of the International Executive Council, which examined and approved those reports.

Article XX and XXI Cases

There were no Article XX or XXI cases to report during the second quarter of 2026.

Local Union Under International Office Supervision

There were no local unions under trusteeship to report during the second quarter of 2026.

IBEW Consolidated Balance Sheet/Income Statement ending February 28, 2026

Reviewed and Filed

IBEW Unity Fund Contributions ending February 28, 2026

Reviewed and Filed

IBEW Pension Benefit Fund Consolidated Statement of Net Assets ending February 28, 2026

Reviewed and Filed

Retirement of International Representatives

Alan Cutler, International Representative, Seventh District
Effective — February 1, 2026

Charles McKinney, International Representative, Tenth District
Effective — April 1, 2026

David Gonzales, International Representative, Seventh District
Effective — June 1, 2026

Retirement of International Officers

Brent E. Hall, International Vice President, Tenth District
Effective — April 1, 2026

Retirement of State Organizing Coordinator

Derek Mann, State Organizing Coordinator, Tenth District
Effective — April 1, 2026

Retirement of International Office Employees

Cristina DiValentin, Supervisor, Pension Department
Effective — May 1, 2026

Appeals Filed with the International Executive Council

The International Executive Council conducted a thorough review of the facts pertaining to an appeal from Local Union 304, Topeka Kansas member Jason Ianacone, card number 7771219, and it is the decision of the International Executive Council to uphold the decision of International President, Kenneth W. Cooper. Therefore, the appeal is denied.

This regular scheduled meeting was adjourned on April 17, 2026. The next regular meeting of the International Executive Council will commence on Tuesday, June 23, 2026.

For the International Executive Council

Donald Finn, Secretary
June 2026

The IEC acted on numerous applications under the IBEW pension fund. For a complete listing, consult www.ibew.org/iec-meeting-minutes. ■

W.Va. Locals Seize Momentum and Market Share Despite Anti-Union Obstacles

West Virginia has some of the least union-friendly policies in North America. In recent years, though, the state's IBEW locals have had so much success landing projects that put members to work that it reliably has one of the union's strongest market shares — even reaching No. 2 in recent months.

“Our locals in West Virginia didn’t just give up after a lot of big industries left the state,” said Fourth District International Vice President Austin Keyser. “Instead, our members worked even harder to increase market share, going after work that we weren’t getting before — small work, medium work, all of it.”

The state’s business managers credit strong community ties, education, and relationships with contractors and elected officials for playing crucial roles in capturing and retaining the kind of work that belongs in the hands of highly skilled IBEW members.

The timing couldn’t be better, said Fourth District International Representative Chris Samples.

“Work is about to be booming everywhere here,” said Samples, a former business manager of Charleston Local 466. “With everything that’s getting ready to come to West Virginia, from data centers, power plants and even a titanium production facility near Ravenswood, we’ve got our work cut out for us.”

Local leaders across the state say success in capturing market share relies in part on creating rock-solid working relationships with the IBEW’s signatory contractors.

“We have contractors that help us go after work and aren’t afraid to go up against nonunion competition to fight for it,” Wheeling Local 141 Business Manager Glenn Giffin said.

“Our contractors are our No. 1 supporters in keeping nonunion competition out of our jurisdiction,” added Kevan Brown, business manager of Steubenville, Ohio, Local 246, whose territory extends into West Virginia’s northern panhandle.

Good relationships, said Local 466 Business Manager Chris Tincher, “also help tremendously in trying to keep contractors going after smaller work, too.”

Parkersburg Local 968 Business Manager Lorne Mills agreed. “You have to get that partnership with someone that’s going to be aggressive,” he said.

In recent years, ensuring work for IBEW members — or any union worker — had gotten tougher in a state that was renowned for its unionized coal, steel and railroad workforces for most of the 20th century.

“I think there’s still a certain amount of pride in a lot of West Virginians about our history,” said Clarksburg Local 596 Business Manager John Young.



Cumberland, Md., Local 307 Business Manager Rodney Rice, left, leads a tour of a wind farm in his local’s jurisdiction, which includes West Virginia’s eastern panhandle.

“[Market share reflects] the tenacity and cohesiveness of our business managers there.”

— Fourth District International Vice President Austin Keyser



Outreach during National Apprenticeship Week allowed Charleston, W.Va., Local 466 to educate young people about careers in the trades.



Apprenticeship interest is high for Steubenville, Ohio, Local 246, which covers part of northern West Virginia.

In the 1990s, declines in demand for domestic coal and steel gutted the state’s workforce. A decade ago, West Virginia’s Legislature banned project labor and prevailing wage agreements on government-funded construction projects, eliminating a tool that favored hiring union workers. It also enacted “right-to-work” legislation that further weakened labor’s power by letting workers choose to enjoy union representation without having to contribute to the costs of it.

“And still, union support scores are really high in West Virginia because it’s such a legacy thing,” Keyser said. “Most people have family members who worked in a coal mine or in the building trades. There’s still that community support.”

Cumberland, Md., Local 307 Business Manager Rodney Rice, whose local also covers West Virginia’s five easternmost counties, often tries to help people understand some of what’s been lost.

“When we have to testify in front of a public service commission or anything like that, we push the fact that PLAs promote jobs for folks from the area,” he said.

Huntington Local 317’s organizers often find success in making that “local jobs/local people” connection, said Business Agent Greg Spears.

“One of the best tools we have is when we organize somebody and then their friends back where they were working find out that everything they’ve been hearing all these years [about the IBEW] is actually true,” Spears said. “Then we can try to pull some of those other guys in.”

“Local jobs for local workers” is an easy message to sell, said Giffin, who co-chairs Project Best, a nonprofit representing building trades unions and contractors in the upper Ohio River Valley.

“You throw that out on signs and billboards, and it gets out there,” he said.

For Young, building awareness of

the IBEW has helped Local 596 build connections with universities and businesses, which often translates into market share growth.

“We’ve relied on, over the years, relationships with refineries, powerhouses, Marshall University, the Cabell County school system, and most of the industrial places up and down the Ohio River,” Spears added.

Tincher said that political engagement at every level is also essential to any discussion about market share growth.

“Since we’re in the state capital, we’re very active with local politics, and we have a lot of friends in that world,” said Tincher, who was recently appointed to the Kanawha County Planning Commission and noted that Local 466 Training Director Dustin Vaughn sits on Charleston’s Workforce Development Board.

“You’ve got to use every tool in the toolbox to get every job,” said Rice, who is also president of Western Maryland Building and Construction Trades Council. “We fight for every man-hour we can get. We take nothing for granted.”

Meanwhile, Local 141 executive board member Cody Cumpston, who sits on Moundsville’s Planning Commission, and President David Cantrell are running for seats in the House of Delegates, while Local 596 President Shawn Young recently was elected to Buckhannon’s City Council and has since been appointed to the city’s water and sewage board.

For its part, Local 317 continues to maintain strong ties with House of Delegates member Evan Worrell, the chair

of the Republican Labor Caucus, and Democrat Sean Hornbuckle, the House Minority Leader.

“There’s not necessarily ‘Democrat’ or ‘Republican’ when you’re talking about jobs,” Spears stressed, noting that both delegates work together frequently to bring attention to workers’ issues throughout the state.

Another key selling point for the IBEW is its well-educated workforce.

Local 968’s Mills noted that his local’s training director also works as a teacher in Wood County. Recently, officials from several counties have asked about having the IBEW help improve their vocational programs’ electrical offerings.

“Some of the resistance in schools that we’ve had in the past is kind of dropping away,” Mills said.

Tincher, who ran a safety business before he joined the union, experienced some of that union resistance firsthand.

During training sessions, “non-union groups would bring firms in to say that unions are bad for businesses,” he said. “For a lot of older guys, that [message] has been drilled into their heads for years.”

Fortunately, Brown said, younger people seem to be better informed about the value of working in the unionized trades.

“They talk about how they’re looking forward to having some type of pension,” he said, “or they’re like, ‘Healthcare is ridiculously expensive, and I’d like to have that negotiated on my behalf.’”

Knowing that they could get that from an IBEW career is boosting growth in union training applications.

“We keep taking in apprentices, making sure we’re feeding into the union workforce,” Young said. “I don’t think we have as many private trade schools as other states, so our customers and contractors rely on us to provide skilled labor.”

Keyser applauded the local leaders’ work and acknowledged how it’s paying off for the IBEW.

“With all the things that have been diminished and taken away, we continue to grow in market share and drive good union density in West Virginia,” he said. “It’s a reflection of the tenacity and cohesiveness of our business managers there, really sticking together, using every tool and fighting through the political barriers to help keep more and more IBEW members working.” ■

GROUND^{ED} IN HISTORY

Atop the Washington Monument

In 1934, during the height of the Great Depression, members of Washington, D.C., Local 26 found themselves atop the Washington Monument. It had been 50 years since the completion of the 555-foot-high obelisk, and the monument was in need of structural and electrical repair. With tools and a camera in hand, Local 26 members documented their work in the November 1934 issue of *The Electrical Worker*.

In December 1799, 10 days after the death of President George Washington, a congressional committee proposed to build his tomb within the Capitol. Due to a lack of funds and disagreements with his family, the project was sidelined. Progress began anew in 1833, when a group of citizens formed the Washington National Monument Society to raise money for a design competition. After a long wait, the architect Robert Mills of South Carolina was selected in 1845 for his obelisk design.

Construction of the memorial began in 1848 using marble from the Cockeysville Quarry in Maryland. When the structure reached 150 feet, the project was suspended from 1854 to 1877 due to funding challenges. When construction resumed in 1878, this time with funding from Congress, the marble was harvested from a different Maryland quarry, resulting in the monument's two-tone color. The obelisk was completed in December 1884 and capped with an aluminum apex weighing 100 ounces. An internal elevator carried visitors to an enclosed observation desk at the top.

After 50 years, the first restoration of the monument began as a public works project in 1934. Using funds provided by the federal Public Works Administration — a creation of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal — the National Park Service hired several union contractors for the job, including the H.P. Foley Co. for scaffolding and the Alexander Howie Co.



Washington, D.C., Local 26 wrote an article, attributed only to "The Crew," in the November 1934 Electrical Worker chronicling its members' work on the Washington Monument project. Above is Local 26 member E.A. Fritz at work on the project. This photo, along with the other photos accompanying this Grounded in History article, were printed in the November 1934 Electrical Worker.

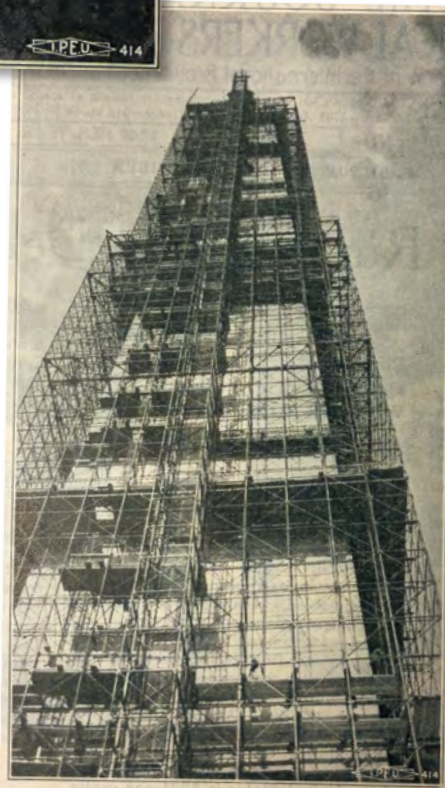
for electrical. A tubular steel scaffold was erected, which completely covered the shaft of the monument.

"Well, boys, top o' the morning to you!" began the 1934 article submitted by Local 26, the author listed only as "The Crew." The bulk of the maintenance work was in repairing the mortar "courses" between the marble blocks, many of which had begun leaching through the walls. "All the courses both lateral and vertical, up to the line of demarcation (150 feet) were cut out with carborundum wheels to a depth of one and one-third inches deep and one-fourth inch wide," the author wrote. "Above the line of demarcation, the vertical joints only had to be cut." This was

because the mortar on the lower portion, being much older, had long since disintegrated due to the great weight on it.

The final repair was for the aluminum apex. Surrounding the apex was a wide gold-plated copper band holding eight lightning rods 3 inches in length. After 50 years of lightning strikes, most of the rods were damaged. "The work of Old Thor could be noted quite plainly," said the author. "The rods were bent and slightly burned, and the aluminum point was five-eighths of an inch shorter."

The Local 26 crew removed the old rods, replaced them with new 6-inch rods and polished the apex. When lightning did strike, the rods carried the current into the monument itself through four larger copper rods embedded in the stone, which in turn were connected to four iron columns supporting



The National Park Service's 1934 restoration of the Washington Monument brought in union contractors including the H.P. Foley Co. for the scaffolding.

the internal elevator. The current is then discharged through a sand-filled cavern sitting at the bottom of the columns.

Repairs were completed in February 1935, and the monument was reopened to visitors. The author ended the article by acknowledging the Local 26 members who braved the heights: J.F. McDonough, E.R. Leister, E.A. Coppage, James W. Beall, J.I. Creager, A.T. Bartlett and E.A. Fritz. Thanks to these brothers, the world's largest stone structure continues to stand tall and inspire the millions who visit the capital city every year. ■

Visit ibew.org/our-history-museum for more on how to support the IBEW's preservation of its history. Have an idea for this feature? Send it to Curtis_Bateman@ibew.org.



The November 1934 Electrical Worker captioned this photo of Local 26 members "On top of the cone of the tallest monument in the world."

Cooper: Members Must Seize Every Organizing Opportunity



Leaders from every part of the IBEW gathered in Atlanta recently to renew their commitment to organizing every worker in the electrical industry during the annual Membership Development conference.

"Because of your hard work, your commitment and your determination, the IBEW is bigger, stronger and more powerful than it has been in generations," International President Kenneth W. Cooper said to the gathering, after announcing that the union had added more than 30,000 new members over the past year.

"For the first time since 1991, IBEW membership has climbed above 900,000," he said. "That's not just growth. That's momentum."

Cooper noted that there are practically countless organizing opportunities in every branch of the IBEW.

"Seizing those opportunities will take every local union and every member stepping up and doing their part," he said. "Because if we're not doing this work, someone else is."

To wrap up the conference, awards were presented to IBEW activists and locals that have excelled at growing the union's ranks and market share across North America.



Business Manager of the Year

Van Mumford, Wilmington, N.C., Local 495



Local Union Organizer of the Year

Steven Perez, Phoenix Local 640



Rank & File Organizer of the Year

Brody Rutledge, Newark, Ohio, Local 1105

Organizing Impact Awards

First District

Business Manager	Mark Cherney, St. Catharines, Ontario, Local 303
Rank & File Organizer	Stephanie McLean, Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804
Local Organizer	Brian Andrews, Kamloops, B.C., Local 993

Second District

Business Manager	Mike Nealy, Hartford, Conn., Local 35
Rank & File Organizer	Jeremy Rose, Meriden, Conn., Local 457
Local Organizer	Mick Van Natta, Boston Local 104

Third District

Business Manager	Travis Flint, Watertown, N.Y., Local 910
Local Organizer	Ryan O’Boyle, New York City Local 1212

Fourth District

Business Manager	Dan Gallagher, Cleveland Local 38
Local Organizer	Rico Albacarys, Baltimore Local 24

Fifth District

Business Manager	Chris Simpson, Miami Local 349
Rank & File Organizer	Demitrius Bass, Meridian, Miss., Local 917
Local Organizer	Jacob Ezell, Atlanta Local 1997

Sixth District

Business Manager	Mike Leda, South Bend, Ind., Local 153
Rank & File Organizer	Jason Burcham, Indianapolis Local 481
Local Organizer	Joel Akre, Rockford, Ill., Local 196

Seventh District

Business Manager	Johnny Johnson, Beaumont, Texas, Local 2286
Rank & File Organizer	Elden Rivas, Houston Local 66

Eighth District

Business Manager	Thomas Kelley, Pueblo, Colo., Local 12
Rank & File Organizer	James Bernal Jr., Pueblo, Colo., Local 12
Local Organizer	Gordon Noggle, Wheatland, Wyo., Local 612

Ninth District

Business Manager	Jeff Bode, Ventura, Calif., Local 952
Rank & File Organizer	Rylan Grimes, Kennewick, Wash., Local 112
Local Organizer	Josh Weis, Kennewick, Wash., Local 112

Tenth District

Local Organizer	Brandon Yates, Charleston, S.C., Local 776
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Eleventh District

Business Manager	Shane Nelson, Des Moines, Iowa, Local 55
Rank & File Organizer	Jeb Venable, Springfield, Mo., Local 453
Local Organizer	Matthew Shebek, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Local 1362

Highest Three-Year Average Market Share Growth

Inside Locals

1	Local 557, Saginaw, Mich.	19.1%
2	Local 1516, Jonesboro, Ark.	13.6%
3	Local 873, Kokomo, Ind.	10.7%
4	Local 112, Kennewick, Wash.	10.5%
5	Local 38, Cleveland	10.4%
6	Local 146, Decatur, Ill.	9.8%
7	Local 474, Memphis, Tenn.	9%
8	Local 917, Meridian, Miss.	8.8%
9	Local 13, Burlington, Iowa	8.5%
10	Local 175, Chattanooga, Tenn.	8.3%

Outside Locals

1	Local 1426, Grand Forks, N.D.	21.7%
2	Local 104, Boston	13.3%
3	Local 222, Orlando, Fla.	10.3%
4	Local 291, Boise, Idaho	9.9%
5	Local 84, Atlanta	9.5%
6	Local 852, Corinth & Tupelo, Miss.	9.2%
7	Local 681, Wichita Falls, Texas	8.7%
8	Local 378, Charlotte, N.C.	8.2%
9	Local 776, Charleston, S.C.	8.1%
10	Local 322, Casper, Wyo.	7.7%

Total One-Year Membership Growth

1	Local 26, Washington, D.C.	+1,932
2	Local 20, Dallas-Fort Worth	+1,424
3	Local 602, Amarillo, Texas	+1,366
4	Local 24, Baltimore	+736
5	Local 1105, Newark, Ohio	+724
6	Local 640, Phoenix	+657
7	Local 481, Indianapolis	+640
8	Local 401, Reno, Nev.	+640
9	Local 666, Richmond, Va.	+616
10	Local 369, Louisville, Ky.	+588
11	Local 681, Wichita Falls, Texas	+565
12	Local 353, Toronto, Ontario	+524
13	Local 278, Corpus Christi, Texas	+515
14	Local 160, Minneapolis	+505
15	Local 258, Vancouver, B.C.	+480
16	Local 47, Diamond Bar, Calif.	+476
17	Local 291, Boise, Idaho	+450
18	Local 220, Arlington, Texas	+396
19	Local 238, Asheville, N.C.	+384
20	Local 683, Columbus, Ohio	+374

Percentage Membership Growth

1	Local 238, Asheville, N.C.	+176.15%
2	Local 1791, Wausau, Wis.	+123.81%
3	Local 681, Wichita Falls, Texas	+73.19%
4	Local 278, Corpus Christi, Texas	+70.55%
5	Local 602, Amarillo, Texas	+67.59%
6	Local 583, El Paso, Texas	+65.72%
7	Local 2048, Butler, Ala.	+60.87%
8	Local 2221, Iron Mountain, Mich.	+60.40%
9	Local 401, Reno, Nev.	+56.09%
10	Local 855, Muncie, Ind.	+44.58%
11	Local 576, Alexandria, La.	+38.03%
12	Local 584, Tulsa, Okla.	+37.90%
13	Local 20, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas	+37.85%
14	Local 995, Baton Rouge, La.	+35.59%
15	Local 1833, Horseheads, N.Y.	+34.38%
16	Local 666, Richmond, Va.	+34.28%
17	Local 303, St. Catharines, Ontario	+33.68%
18	Local 738, Longview, Texas	+33.67%
19	Local 220, Arlington, Texas	+31.71%
20	Local 1015, Weslaco, Texas	+31.18%

NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

IBEW Members Power Firefighter Rodeo

The small town of Gillam in northeastern Manitoba is home to the longest-running firefighter rodeo in North America, and it features almost all IBEW members.

The 45th annual Nelson River Firefighters Rodeo took place in June, and just as in previous years, the vast majority of participants were card-carrying members of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Local 2034.

About 2,570 of Local 2034's 2,615 members are employed by Manitoba Hydro. Members build, maintain and troubleshoot the electrical system from start to finish. This work brings electricity to homes and businesses across the province.

Additionally, Local 2034 represents employees of the towns of Gillam and Snow Lake, which are about 480 kilometers apart.

"It's a truly unique environment," said Local 2034 Vice President Kristi Arbuckle, who has participated in the rodeo in previous years.

Because of the location — Gillam is roughly 10 hours north of Winnipeg by car — it has emergency response firefighters on staff who are also workers in the stations.

"We're so remote that it would take hours for any other emergency first responders to get to us if there was a situation," Arbuckle said, noting that the crews are trained for water rescue, spill response, hazardous materials, and search and rescue, in addition to fires.

The rodeo trials include hose lay, search and rescue, bucket brigade, sprinklers, and a specific form of soccer.

"Picture a combination tetherball and reverse tug-of-war, but with fire hoses," Chris Giles, a mechanical team lead at the Kettle Generating Station, said of the rodeo's version of the beautiful game.

There are also surprise technical, physical and fun contests, which are closely guarded secrets until the day of the event. Additional recognition is given at the evening's awards dinner for safety, the lowest number of penalties, the most sportsmanlike, and the hardest-working team. There's even an award given to the team or participant who first manages to soak the fire marshal.

"It is a physically demanding day, but an incredibly fun one that strengthens your camaraderie with your fellow crew members," Local 2034 President Ryan Stewart said.

Contestants come from all over the province, including those who aren't Manitoba Hydro employees, like the Tataskeweyak Cree Nation. There are usually about eight to 10 teams of four or five members each.

The family-friendly event starts in the morning with a pancake breakfast and concludes with the awards ceremony.

"It's a very rewarding day where



Nearly everyone who competed in the longest-running firefighting rodeo in North America were members of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Local 2034.

your nerves from the beginning have completely washed away and a sense of pride sets in," said Stewart, who's competed in the rodeo eight times.

The event is educational, fun and competitive, in that order, Giles said.

"I've learned more by competing over the years than by any of the formal training we've received," said Giles, who

first competed in 2009. "The events give you an opportunity to employ skills that would be theoretical otherwise."

The rodeo has even been a recruiting opportunity.

"I've had people compete on my team with no training and who had never even put gear on before. But they did very well and ended up joining the crew



shortly after," said Giles, who's also an emergency response crew instructor and rodeo co-organizer with Arbuckle.

Before being a hydroelectric power hub, Gillam was a railroad town as it's a main stop between Thompson and Churchill, which are reached only by rail or plane.

Construction of Kettle, the first

hydroelectric generating station, began in 1966. It was then that Manitoba Hydro began harnessing the power of the Lower Nelson River and over the years built three more generating stations: Long Spruce, Limestone and Keeyask. Combined, they produce over 4,200 megawatts of clean, renewable power, over 80% of the province's capacity.

All of the stations are maintained and operated by Local 2034 members.

In addition to the rodeo providing a day's worth of entertainment and camaraderie, it also serves as a fundraiser for the Firefighters Burn Fund, with the funds coming from sales of raffle tickets and clothing with the event's logo, which changes every year. ■

Share your IBEW news!

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

La force des membres de la FIOE — Rodéo des pompiers

La petite ville de Gillam située au nord-est du Manitoba est le berceau du rodéo le plus ancien en Amérique du Nord et presque toutes les personnes présentes sont des membres de la FIOE.

Le 45e Nelson River Firefighter Rodeo annuel a eu lieu en juin et comme dans les années passées, la grande majorité des personnes étaient des membres en règle de la section locale 2034 de Winnipeg au Manitoba.

Environ 2 570 des 2 615 membres du local 2034 sont employés par Manitoba Hydro. Les membres construisent, entretiennent et effectuent un diagnostic du système électrique du début à la fin. Ce travail contribue à alimenter les résidences et les commerces dans toute la province.

De plus, le local 2034 représente la main-d'œuvre des villes de Gillam et de Snow Lake, qui sont séparées d'environ 480 kilomètres.

« C'est vraiment un environnement unique », déclare la vice-présidente Kristi Arbuckle du local 2034, qui a participé au rodéo par le passé.

En raison de l'emplacement, Gillam est située à environ dix heures de route au nord de Winnipeg, le service public compte des pompiers d'urgence qui travaillent aussi dans les centrales.

« Nous sommes si isolés que les premiers répondants auraient pris des heures à arriver en cas d'une situation », mentionne Mme Arbuckle. Elle souligne

que les équipes sont formées pour le sauvetage nautique, pour l'intervention en cas de déversement, pour les matières dangereuses, pour la recherche et le sauvetage en plus des feux.

Les épreuves du rodéo comprennent : le déploiement des tuyaux, les opérations de recherches et de sauvetages, les chaînes, les systèmes de gicleur et une forme particulière de soccer.

« Imaginez-vous un mélange de spiroballe et de tir à la corde inversé, mais avec des boyaux d'incendie », Chris Giles, le responsable de l'équipe mécanique à la centrale électrique de Kettle, en parlant de cette version unique créée pour le rodéo.

Il y a aussi des épreuves techniques, physiques et amusantes surprises, toutes des secrets bien gardés jusqu'au jour de l'événement. D'autres distinctions sont remises lors de la soirée des remises de prix, notamment : pour la sécurité, pour le plus petit nombre de pénalités, pour le meilleur esprit d'équipe et pour l'équipe la plus travailleuse. Il y a même un prix remis à l'équipe qui réussit à arroser le commissaire des incendies.

« C'est une journée exigeante physiquement, mais une journée incroyablement amusante qui renforce l'esprit d'équipe avec les autres membres de votre équipe », formule Ryan Stewart, président du local 2034.

Les participantes et les

participants proviennent de toute la province, même ceux qui ne sont pas employés par Manitoba Hydro comme la Nation crie de Tataskeweyak. Habituellement, on compte environ huit à dix équipes de quatre ou cinq membres.

L'activité familiale commence le matin par un déjeuner de crêpes et se termine par une soirée de remises de prix.

« C'est une journée très gratifiante où le stress du début n'est plus qu'un souvenir pour laisser la place à une immense fierté », exprime M. Stewart, qui a participé au rodéo huit fois.

Cet événement est éducatif, amusant et compétitif, dans cet ordre, ajoute M. Giles.

« J'ai plus appris en participant aux compétitions que toute autre formation formelle reçue », déclare M. Giles, qui y a participé pour la première fois en 2009. « Cet événement te donne l'occasion de mettre en pratique des compétences qui seraient autrement que théoriques. »

Ce rodéo a même été une occasion pour recruter.

« J'ai eu des personnes dans mon équipe qui n'ont jamais fait de compétition et qui n'ont jamais porté d'équipements. Mais elles se sont très bien débrouillées et on finit par rejoindre

l'équipe peu après », mentionne M. Giles, qui est aussi un formateur d'équipe d'urgence et est coorganisateur du rodéo avec Mme Arbuckle.

Avant de se faire connaître pour sa centrale hydroélectrique, Gillam était avant tout une escale ferroviaire entre Thompson et Churchill, qui ne sont qu'accessibles par train ou par avion.

La construction de Kettle, la première centrale hydroélectrique, a commencé en 1966. C'est à partir de ce moment que Manitoba Hydro a commencé à exploiter la basse rivière Nelson et au fil des ans, ils ont bâti trois autres centrales électriques : Long Spruce, Limestone et Keeyask. Ensemble, ils génèrent au-dessus de 4 200 mégawatts d'énergie propre et renouvelable, soit plus de 80 % de la capacité de la province.

Les membres du local 2034 sont responsables de tous les entretiens et de toute l'exploitation des centrales.

En plus d'offrir une journée de divertissement et de camaraderie, le rodéo est aussi une journée de collecte de fonds pour le Firefighters Burn Fund. Ces fonds proviennent de la vente des billets pour le tirage ainsi que des vêtements portant le logo de l'événement, qui change tous les ans. ■

Racontez-nous vos nouvelles FIOE!

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



THE IBEW'S 2026 PHOTO CONTEST

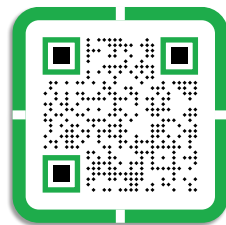
Top Prize: \$1,000
Second Place: \$750
Third Place: \$500

A \$200 Honorable Mention will also be awarded for EACH BRANCH of the IBEW:

- Broadcasting
- Inside Construction
- Outside Construction
- Government
- Manufacturing
- Railroad
- Telecommunications
- Utility

The IBEW Photo Contest has been The Electrical Worker's way to ride shotgun with brothers and sisters for a quarter of a century. Your pictures bring us closer together and are a showcase for the critical role members play in the life and work of North America.

The hundreds of submissions we receive every year are a priceless contribution to our story: the story of working people that is too often ignored or, worse, hidden. But just because something is priceless doesn't mean a value can't be put on it.



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

Entries MUST be submitted electronically by Oct. 31 via the Photo Contest link on [IBEW.org](https://www.ibew.org). Please contact the Media Department at [media@IBEW.org](mailto:media@ibew.org) or 202-728-6102 with additional questions.



CIRCUITS

Detroit Member Opens Local's Doors to Mental Health Resources

Detroit Local 48 member Craig Shilling endured one of the hardest experiences a parent can have when his son, Justin, was fatally shot in a school shooting. Instead of ignoring the pain or spiraling down a dark hole of mental crisis, he created a nonprofit organization to help others cope with mental health challenges.

"Craig has made it his life's mission to get people to realize that seeking help is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness," Local 58 Business Manager James Soosik said.

Shilling, a journeyman wireman, started Car-ing and Helping Others Often Creates Hope, or CHOOCH, about three years ago. CHOOCH, a nickname of Justin's, offers a variety of wellness methods, including programs for children and for coaches and other adults who work with students.

include Mindful Minis, designed to work with elementary school students on better ways to cope with things that may be difficult for a young person.

CHOOCH also has a Coaches Care program that helps adults identify signs of mental stress in their students.

"Coaches and parents have different roles," Shilling said. "This is a way to have another set of eyes on their kids and guide them on how to help. There are a lot of good people out there. We just need to show them what to do."

Soosik and Shilling are talking about what they could do the next time they hold a mental health fair, including opening it to other building trades.

"We need to remind people that mental health struggles are part of the human experience," Soosik said. "No one is immune."

CHOOCH is one way to get those difficult conversations started, Shilling said.

"The more you talk, the more you help. And once you start talking, it becomes a chain reaction that can lead to healing." ■

With N.D. Members' Help, a Presidential Library Rises in the Badlands

Backers of a new library dedicated to President Theodore Roosevelt recently sought the craftsmanship of some highly skilled electrical workers from western North Dakota, Local 714 to help build a carbon-neutral facility respecting the historic legacy of one of the U.S.'s most influential conservationists.

"This has been a great project for us," said Minot Local 714 Business Manager Robert Wolf. "It's a historic deal here in North Dakota."

Since 2023, more than four dozen of the local's members, working with signatory contractors Archkey Solutions and Northern Valley Electrical Service, have had a hand in just about every aspect of the library's construction in Medora, next to the national park in western North Dakota that also bears the name of the 26th president.

"One of the things that was unique about this facility is that they wanted it to have zero impact on the environment," Wolf said. For example: "The insulation on the wires couldn't be petroleum-based because they didn't want that impact."

According to the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation, the 96,000-square-foot building, which officially opened to the public July 4, is powered solely by renewable geothermal and solar energy, and it relies on a closed-loop wastewater system similar to those used on cruise ships. The library's two-acre "living roof" is planted with thousands of native species, while its interior spaces are designed to allow in as much natural daylight as possible.

"The audio-visual in there is incredible," added Wolf, who became business manager about



Photo courtesy of Oswego Creative

Minot, N.D., Local 714 Business Manager Robert Wolf, left, joined Braxton Rootes with IBEW signatory contractor Archkey Solutions for a jobsite tour of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library.

a year before construction began. "They took me into one of the rooms where they had designed the acoustics to where, if you stand in one spot and speak, your voice echoes around that whole chamber, just as if there were speakers in there. The whole facility is like that.

"And we did it with our contractors. I think that says a lot," he added. "When you go into a job like this, you don't have to go look for specialty contractors. Our construction people will go in, they'll bid that work, and they'll do it competently."

A native New Yorker, Roosevelt's connection to Medora began when he established a ranch there after visiting in 1883. A year later, he returned to the region seeking solace following the sudden, hours-apart deaths of his mother and his wife, just two days after the birth of his first child.

As president from 1901 to 1909, Roosevelt helped cement his legacy as a conservationist by setting aside for protection millions of acres of land, establishing several national parks and bird reservations, and signing into law the creation of the U.S. Forest Service.

Most of Roosevelt's documents and memorabilia after his death in 1919 were distributed to institutions such as the American Museum of Natural History and the Library of Congress.

A presidential library in Roosevelt's name had been planned for construction on the campus of North Dakota's Dickinson State University, which has been working since the 2000s on digitizing Roosevelt's documents and memorabilia. But in 2019, the state's Legislature approved plans for a privately funded nonprofit facility in Medora instead.

Wolf said that the finished facility fully honors the president's legacy.

"Roosevelt was the environmental president, and I think they adhered to his mentality," he said.

Most of the nearly 900 members of Local 714

work in inside construction, outside construction and telecom, Wolf said, with numerous compressor station projects over the last few years helping to keep the local close to full employment.

"We had a little bit of trouble [staffing the library project] over last summer because we had so much work going here," said Wolf, whose local essentially covers the western half of a state that has a reputation for its remoteness.

"And in the winter, we're a little less than desirable," he added, noting that the wind chill there can sometimes fall to -70 degrees. "It's not for the faint of heart, that's for sure."

The business manager credited Local 714's experienced organizers for their ability to handle such challenges. Maintaining good relationships with contractor partners is crucial, too, he said.

"Archkey and Northern Valley really stepped up," Wolf said. The library was a commercial project, but both contractors "moved the pay scale to 'industrial' to help attract people."

Now that the library is open, Wolf hopes visitors will appreciate the role Local 714 played in bringing it to life.

"We've tried to promote it from our end and across our state because we want people to visit," Wolf said. "We've done challenge coins that show Roosevelt on a horse. We've done T-shirts, and they're selling like hotcakes."

Wolf and his wife even celebrated their wedding anniversary in Medora, where they witnessed firsthand the lasting impact of Roosevelt's conservation legacy.

"We drove through the park where we could look at all kinds of wildlife out there," he said. "You still see bison, coyotes, wild horses and deer running through the fields."

Visit [ElectricTV.net](https://www.electrictv.net) to see more about the IBEW's work on the library. ■



Photo courtesy of TRPL

Thanks to the work of dozens of electrical workers represented by Local 714, the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora opened in time to take part in semiquincentennial celebrations.

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The wellness options include meditation and breath work; sound healing and movement-based stress reduction; and creative arts therapy including dance, music and visual arts.

"People don't know what's out there. They think therapy is just one thing, or they picture insane asylums and other outdated techniques," Shilling said. "Now there are options that can help you deal with day-to-day stress, as well as healing for larger, more specific circumstances."

Local 58 and CHOOCH co-hosted a mental health and wellness fair in June that brought together mindfulness practitioners alongside licensed therapists and mental health professionals who were available for confidential conversations. The fair also had information on therapy dogs and other emotional support offerings.

"Traditional therapy isn't for everyone," said Shilling, an IBEW member for 28 years. "We want to bring awareness to other practices that may be more appealing. The more options we can offer, the better."

Local 58 has had members die by suicide, like far too many other locals. The statistics on mental health challenges and substance misuse in construction are striking. Building trades workers have significantly higher rates of injuries, fatalities, death by suicide and overdose deaths than American workers overall.

According to the Center for Construction Research and Training, construction workers account for roughly 7% of the workforce but 20% of on-the-job fatalities and 16% of opioid overdoses.

"There's a strong stigma in construction that the best way to deal with mental health issues is through drug use and never talking about what you're going through," Soosik said. "Sometimes one member will reach out about another member who seems stressed. We need to have as many options available as possible to not only help that one member, but to encourage more members to speak up when they see something."

CHOOCH's school-age-oriented programs



The Tacoma, Wash., Local 483 members of the Grit City Grinders fell just short of a threepeat in the American Water Works Association's pipe-tapping competition.

'Stubborn as Hell' Women Water Workers Represent IBEW at Annual Competition

When most people think of what an IBEW member looks like, they will likely envision a lineman or wireman, someone whose skill level is widely respected. A team of three women members from Tacoma, Wash., Local 483 have just that, and they prove it repeatedly. They just aren't lineworkers or wirewomen.

"A lot of people don't realize that the IBEW represents more than just electricians," said Local 483 member Sami Pielak, who, like her teammates, is a water service worker for Tacoma Water. "The IBEW is huge, and I think the more the merrier. There's more power in numbers, right?"

Pielak, Sarah Degidio and Jessa Messer are Grit City Grind, a nationally recognized team that has competed in the American Water Works Association's annual pipe tapping competition for the last four years and has yet to place lower than second.

"We're dedicated, committed to improving and stubborn as hell," said Jessa Messer. "We're kind of badass — and we're proud of that, as well as each other."

This year's competition, which took place in June in Washington, D.C., has a women's category as well as a men's. The Grit City Grind team came in second, after taking the top prize in the last two contests. One penalty, an instance of miscommunication, kept them from having the fastest run time and taking first place for the third year in a row.

Like any IBEW member striving for excellence and never backing down, taking second this year only gives them more education and experience

that they'll take with them for 2027.

"We'll approach next year's competition just like we have every other year. We're always looking for ways to be better, get faster, shave off mere seconds, and that won't change," Messer said.

Competing again next year also means more top-level representation for Local 483 and the IBEW.

"We appreciate the support we get from our union, especially being able to gain exposure through [Electrical Worker] articles like this," Pielak said. "We'd love to see more women's teams compete. Maybe someone reading this will get inspired and join us."

While winning may be the best thing to come out of competing, Pielak, Degidio and Messer noted the sense of solidarity between the women's teams.

"The solidarity is there because we work in a male-dominated industry. We're a small group of people in a big industry and I think that brings us together at competitions," Messer said. "Even though not all the female competitors work out in the field like we do, there is still that connection as women, executing this task at a competitive level."

The Grit City Grinders are quick to share that they get a lot of support from the men who coach them, as well as other men in the competition. But being women in a male-dominated field, in a profession not often featured in their union, leaves a lot of people in the dark about what they do.

"I would like people to understand that this is a small snapshot of work we do in a competition setting with ideal conditions," Messer said. "The reality is that we do pipe and dirt work in less-than-ideal conditions every day for our jobs. We work in the rain, snow and heat."

"We are also a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week, 365 days a year operation, so just because we compete two times a year indoors on carpet in a

clean environment, our foundational knowledge and skills come from the 12th hour in a muddy, water-filled hole at 3 a.m. where we do our best each day to keep the water flowing for our customers. We are proud of that work, and each one of us loves what we do." ■

Google Funding Means More Jobs, Training for IBEW Members

Google.org, the charitable arm of Google, announced June 11 that it is providing \$50 million to support skilled construction training programs, including those offered by the IBEW and its partners.

The funding helps to address the construction worker shortage as Google and other companies build the infrastructure to support the technological backbone of the modern economy. That's meant thousands of jobs for IBEW members, who are building and maintaining electrical systems in data centers across North America.

Roughly \$20 million in funding designated to train electricians is going to the Electrical Training Alliance, the official training partner of the IBEW and the National Electrical Contractors Association. The grant comes after Google.org awarded the ETA \$15.75 million in early 2025.

"There is unprecedented demand for skilled electrical workers, which is why we welcome Google's continued commitment to the energy workforce of tomorrow," International President Kenneth W. Cooper said.

"For more than 100 years, the IBEW and our partners have trained the best, most skilled electrical workers in North America, adapting to new technologies constantly over the last century," Cooper added. "We welcome the support of industry leaders like Google to create good, family-sustaining jobs and meet the growing energy needs of our economy."

Construction and Maintenance Director Matt Paules said the funding reflects a strong, ongoing relationship between the IBEW and the tech giant.

"Google has been a good partner, and this only strengthens that relationship," he said. "We work with the company to identify upcoming projects as far in advance as possible, which gives us time to prepare for them and to ensure their projects have the manpower they need."

"This funding to improve our training pipeline shows the strength of that relationship," Paules added.

Todd Stafford, executive director of the Electrical Training Alliance, said the funding will give

more people an opportunity for a career with good wages and benefits.

IBEW apprentices already take on virtually no debt during training, unlike many college students. Google.org's funding will make apprenticeships available to more applicants.

"Through Google's commitment to workforce development and our shared investment in expanding awareness of and access to careers in the IBEW-NECA electrical industry, we are creating opportunities that strengthen workers, support families and build a brighter future for communities across the country," Stafford said.

NECA CEO David Long also applauded Google's decision. He has called meeting the demand for skilled electricians during this technological ramp-up one of the biggest challenges the IBEW and NECA have faced in their history.

"This continued commitment by Google.org into the training of our electricians today and tomorrow is critical for the success of American infrastructure," Long said. "As project size and scope grow to levels never seen before, working with an industry leader like Google that recognizes the need to support workforce development and apprenticeship has allowed us to dream big together."

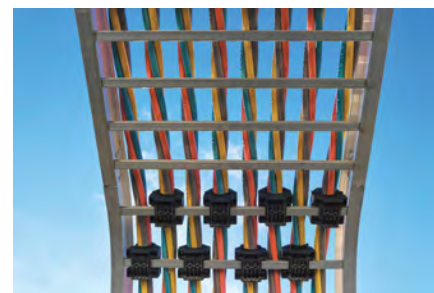


Photo courtesy of Google

Electrical cables identified by color that provide backup power in case of interruptions at Google's data center in Midlothian, Texas.

"Efforts like this have the potential to improve the quality of life for workers and their families across America and improve the industry landscape at the same time," Long added.

The IBEW has more than 900,000 members and retirees across the United States and Canada, nearly 150,000 more than it had 10 years ago.

Unions representing sheet metal workers, plumbers, pipefitters, welders and service techs also will receive funding. Google.org also is sending money to the North American Building Trades Union's TradesFuture program, which works to place applicants in apprenticeship programs across the country. The IBEW is a member of the Building Trades. ■



Photo courtesy of Google

A Google data center in Douglas County, Ga., near Atlanta, at sunset. The company is investing \$50 million in training for the skilled trades.

TRANSITIONS

RETIRED

Gene O'Kelley



Fifth District International Representative Gene O'Kelley, whose family ties to Atlanta Local 613 extend to its founding

more than 100 years ago, retired May 15.

"Gene has a pretty blunt, matter-of-fact kind of personality, and I think that served him well," said Fifth District International Vice President Glenn Brannen, a longtime friend.

"Coming out of a local the size of Atlanta, you've got to be pretty tough," Brannen said. "You have to deal with a lot of large employers and longtime members. You've got to have a thick skin, and Gene certainly has that."

That might have something to do with his family background, O'Kelley said. "We had some explosive Sunday dinners with an Italian great-grandfather and Irish great-grandmother," he said.

Francisco Saverio Daprano, his great-grandfather, immigrated to the U.S. from Italy in 1903. He eventually settled in Atlanta, learned English and taught himself electrical skills by reading books and doing jobs on his own.

He helped organize Local 613, and he signed the charter under his Americanized name, Frank S. Daprano.

"He was poor, and there wasn't a lot going on over there as far as career and family," O'Kelley said. "He heard about this new country and a new way of life. He came over and got plenty of work."

After high school, O'Kelley headed to Jacksonville State University on a wrestling scholarship. He stayed for two years before returning home following

the death of his mother at the age of 40.

"When she passed away, my goals kind of changed," he said. "I wasn't really [going to college] for myself at the time. I was doing it for her."

O'Kelley worked as a helper on jobsites after turning 16 on the advice of his grandfather, a Local 613 member. He enjoyed the experience and working with his hands, especially on motorcycles.

After leaving college, he applied and was accepted into the Local 613 apprenticeship, becoming a member in February 1982.

"Atlanta did some really good things under his watch as business manager. He made it stand out a little brighter on the map, especially in the Southeast, a tough union area."

— Fourth District International Representative Neil Gray

"I was already somewhat mechanically inclined," he said. "But what really got my attention is how the union took care of people, even at that point in my career when I was working as a helper."

O'Kelley noted that he majored in history and minored in political science while in college, so it probably comes as no surprise that he eventually ran for business manager.

He returned to the Atlanta area in early 2004 after working as a traveler in Chicago. He put together a campaign

committee and began reaching out to members. His supporters handed out T-shirts and hardhat stickers and held cookouts promoting his candidacy.

He was elected to the position 15 months later, defeating a three-team incumbent in the process.

"When you sit in that seat, you've got a lot of push. You can do something for [a member] and their family. That part of being business manager was very rewarding," he said.

O'Kelley was reelected three times, and he's especially proud that Local 613 emerged from the 2008 economic crisis in good shape. He accepted a position as Fifth District international representative in 2016, in large part because "everything was going good at the local," he said.

Local 613 had 3,900 members when he left, making it the largest local union in the Fifth District. It now has about 6,000 members.

As an international representative, O'Kelley serviced eight locals in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi and found that he loved working with business managers and other IBEW activists.

"Even though you spend a lot of windshield time" driving from local to local, "it's still the best job," O'Kelley said.

"To work with a young business manager and help him become the best he could be, I loved that," O'Kelley said. "It's almost like a sport. I was the coach and I was helping the key players become All-Pros and All-Americans. I got as much reward from watching them as when I was [a business manager] myself."

Brannen noted that O'Kelley played a key role in the IBEW meeting the intense manpower demands during construction of the Vogtle nuclear plant in Waynesboro, Ga., the largest in the U.S.

That was due to the strong relationships he had built with Bechtel, an

IBEW signatory contractor on site, and Georgia Power, the plant's owner. Atlanta Local 84 represents maintenance and operations employees at the facility.

"You knew he was not going to pander to anyone," said Brannen, who also was working as an international rep at that time. "He was going to tell you the truth, whether you liked it or not."

Fourth District International Representative Neil Gray met O'Kelley when he was working a temporary assignment in the Fifth District in 2016. The two have become close friends since.

Gray said O'Kelley had a presence and aura on the job few other leaders could match.

"Atlanta did some really good things under his watch as business manager," Gray said. "He made it stand out a

little brighter on the map, especially in the Southeast, a tough union area."

O'Kelley and his wife, Jennifer, have been married for 42 years and have one daughter, Megan, and three grandchildren. Chris Sherlock, his son-in-law, is a member of the International Union of Elevator Constructors.

He and his wife live on Lake Oconee, about 85 miles east of Atlanta, and O'Kelley plans to spend more time hunting and fishing, two of his life-long passions, in retirement.

"The Fifth District is in really good shape," he said. "There's a lot of talented young brothers and sisters there. I know it's good hands."

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Memories From the Bridge

I retired three years ago in July after 38 years as a working member of IBEW Local 58 in Detroit. Shortly after retirement, my wife and I moved to northern Michigan.

I remain tethered to metro Detroit: having family, friends, doctor's appointments and an occasional show with my band downstate. I was recently passing over the I-75 Rouge bridge heading back up north when I was hit with a sense of melancholy.

Anyone familiar with this bridge knows it crosses over a vast industrial landscape. The view from the bridge is exactly what many people envision for Detroit: a mecca of factories and industry. To my immediate left, I see the Marathon refinery with its many stacks shooting flames and billowing smoke into the sky. Just beyond it, I can see the historic Ford Rouge industrial complex and the old Dearborn assembly complex in the distance. On the opposite side (the river side), I see the landscape filled with foundries, including the renowned Zug Island.

Between the bridge and the river lay steel mills, powerhouses, shipping canals and rail yards. As I crest the bridge, I see the new Gordie Howe and long-standing Ambassador bridges traversing across the Detroit River to Windsor, Ontario. The Detroit skyline lies before me, with the Renaissance Center towering above the river's edge.

I am struck by the realization that throughout my career (especially as an apprentice and young journeyman), I worked in so many of the places I see as I pass over this bridge. It seems long ago and yet, in some ways, like yesterday.

I remember the many fellow electricians I worked alongside, some long gone from this world and others who became and have remained lifelong friends. We had a great deal of pride in our work and a strong sense of camaraderie among the tradesmen working in these facilities under and around this bridge.

These were harsh and dangerous environments, and there was a shared sense of toughness and earned respect in our ability to cope with and remain productive despite the challenges of these worksites.

I recall working a night shift at Zug Island in the mid-'90s, and it reminded me of a strange scene from a science-fiction movie: smoke rising, intense heat and the dancing orange light of molten metal. All around us, there was floating graphite dust like sparkling snowflakes, slowly falling to the ground, ankle-deep in places.

I learned many valuable skills on these worksites along the river, and it gave me confidence in my abilities when I had to travel outside Michigan to work in other local jurisdictions during the difficult economic downturn in the 2000s. I see the many faces, hear the voices, and remember the laughter.

As I continue my drive north on I-75, memories run through my mind like a movie reel of a life and time long ago.

Jay Fiondella
Lupton, Mich.
Detroit Local 58, retired

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



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"I think it's imperative that your leadership be able to communicate with the rank and file and let them know why we do what we do."

— International Secretary-Treasurer Paul Noble

In Memoriam

Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death
1	Holmes, A. L.	12/6/25	46	Mendenhall, J. C.	12/13/25	234	Mowery, J. G.	1/6/26	649	Ames, W. H.	4/24/26
1	Metzger, P. D.	5/10/26	48	Chanprakit, A.	4/12/26	236	Kenitz, E. P.	5/16/26	659	Couch, E. D.	8/21/25
1	Reinhardt, D. E.	3/12/26	48	Hopkins, B. H.	4/27/26	245	Gadsby, J. L.	3/20/26	666	Freeman, T. D.	4/27/26
1	Spitler, R. V.	2/18/26	48	Vogel, F. J.	4/27/26	254	Lehr, O.	2/24/26	666	Gary, R. L.	5/2/26
3	Benish, J. G.	4/23/26	51	Bradshaw, M. D.	4/14/26	258	Anderson, R. L.	9/18/25	666	Mitchell, W. B.	12/7/25
3	Carnella, F.	5/9/25	55	Yarolem, G. G.	1/30/26	258	Martin, A. A.	3/29/26	688	Alley, S. E.	4/30/26
3	Cortez, T. P.	4/29/26	57	Ronayne, T. A.	11/24/25	265	Mueller, F. J.	1/6/26	692	Dixon, J. W.	4/29/26
3	Crowley, P. K.	4/16/26	58	Allen, C. A.	5/4/26	270	Trentham, B.	8/4/25	692	Gruszczynski, E. E.	5/4/26
3	Ferrara, K. D.	5/9/26	58	Amrhein, W. J.	5/16/26	280	Dummitt, R. E.	3/23/26	697	Dates, H.	5/5/26
3	Guarineri, A. G.	5/11/26	58	Baker, D. G.	5/5/26	280	Ebert, J. L.	4/9/26	701	Bushby, D. H.	11/24/25
3	Hart, J. J.	5/1/26	58	Barrett, C. P.	4/28/26	292	Atkinson, M. E.	3/20/26	701	Horky, J. S.	4/2/26
3	Hinkson, H. P.	1/11/26	58	Bryant, L. J.	5/13/26	292	Glas, C. M.	2/11/26	701	O'Connor, J. J.	9/29/25
3	Kelly, S. A.	4/1/26	58	De Fillipi, G. B.	4/19/26	292	Halonon, W. M.	4/8/26	701	Spinelli, J. J.	2/5/26
3	Maliszewski, C. V.	4/24/26	58	Durand, G. P.	2/13/26	301	Merritt, A. P.	4/17/26	704	Phillips, H. J.	2/19/26
3	Miller, R. M.	4/13/26	58	Lemond, J. W.	5/14/26	303	Etienne, A.	5/11/26	704	Willging, J. J.	5/12/26
3	Ostrowe, M. J.	4/21/26	58	Nicolai, J. L.	5/7/26	303	Zylstra, J. S.	4/30/26	714	Lindteigen, W. L.	4/5/26
3	Paraskevopoulos, N.	12/19/25	58	Spadafore, F.	4/30/26	304	Wolfenberger, B. K.	8/10/23	714	Schaan, L. C.	4/27/26
3	Pasciutti, L. R.	4/12/26	60	Banta, L. F.	4/6/26	306	Stoltz, C. R.	4/21/26	714	Zacher, D. S.	4/24/26
3	Polo, A. J.	10/27/25	68	Giardino, R. J.	4/21/26	309	Fuchs, K. T.	4/7/26	716	Harding, J. R.	3/26/26
3	Roberts, B.	5/1/26	68	Reales, A.	4/4/26	309	Sauerhage, F. W.	4/28/26	728	Farr, J. A.	4/28/26
3	Saccone, L. M.	1/30/26	77	Augustine, K. A.	4/22/26	309	Thomas, R. R.	5/22/26	728	Young, D. A.	2/28/26
3	Savino, E. A.	3/15/26	96	Morrill, J. D.	4/20/26	317	Dixon, P. L.	2/26/26	733	Ready, A.	1/5/26
3	Schlamp, W. A.	5/5/26	98	Galliera, R. L.	11/19/25	332	Hinkle, L. A.	2/4/26	760	Lewis, R. M.	4/27/26
3	Trzaska, A. T.	4/27/26	98	Henry, J. R.	2/10/26	332	Sperbeck, J. E.	4/27/26	770	Wright, R. J.	1/12/26
3	Urban, J.	3/1/26	98	Lee, H. C.	4/2/26	342	Mills, C. W.	4/18/26	773	Pahomey, J. D.	1/18/26
3	Watson, C.	4/13/26	98	Smith, J. M.	8/9/25	347	Beeler, R. L.	3/5/26	804	Pyatt, P. J.	4/27/26
3	Weglarz, J.	4/23/26	98	Thomas, J.	2/21/26	347	Hill, R. R.	12/11/25	852	Glover, T. L.	12/24/25
6	Baumann, C. R.	1/12/26	99	Griffin, G. T.	3/31/26	347	Kruse, M. C.	3/24/26	861	Domingue, R.	4/14/26
6	Lucian, R. F.	3/31/26	99	Lennon, K. J.	1/29/26	349	Fried, M.	2/14/26	876	Flynn, M. G.	3/17/26
6	Marquez, R. L.	5/9/25	102	Bentley, M. H.	3/8/26	351	Ludwig, P. W.	8/25/25	876	Roth, B. F.	3/21/26
7	Lagoy, J. B.	4/17/25	102	Craig, T. S.	4/10/26	351	Richman, F. C.	3/14/26	890	Rappold, F. G.	3/7/26
8	Murphy, R. J.	5/17/26	102	Giordano, C. P.	2/21/26	353	Constable, D. W.	4/5/26	903	Baker, R. L.	3/26/26
9	Fisher, B. P.	4/10/26	102	Heston, J. G.	4/29/26	353	Dawson, F. S.	5/10/26	903	O'Neal, D.	10/27/25
9	McCann, C. M.	4/17/26	102	Hilger, T. J.	3/27/26	353	Hayletts, H. S.	3/28/26	968	Davis, C. E.	1/3/26
11	Buss, K. B.	3/21/26	102	Keegan, B.	3/23/26	353	Sawler, C. R.	4/20/26	993	Bolton, G. M.	3/7/26
11	Coppolino, C. A.	3/12/26	102	Van Nest, J. W.	3/30/26	353	Valiquette, R. C.	4/2/26	993	Egger, E. S.	2/19/26
11	Embry, R. E.	4/6/26	102	Wittke, R. K.	2/17/26	354	Kennedy, R. D.	4/24/26	993	Skultety, S.	4/7/25
11	Farris, K. A.	4/29/26	103	Baker, R. J.	3/26/26	354	Langston, L. E.	5/24/26	995	Hand, M. J.	4/16/26
11	Gentry, C. W.	2/2/26	103	Driscoll, F. L.	5/14/26	354	Pitts, R. K.	3/2/26	1002	Stanton, A. D.	4/4/26
11	McElvy, S. M.	3/9/25	103	Gomez, R. M.	5/17/26	357	Jefferson, T.	1/20/26	1077	Holloway, D. M.	3/4/26
11	Rohr, D. P.	4/23/26	103	McHugh, M. J.	5/22/26	357	Kelso, L. H.	3/30/26	1141	Carpenter, J. F.	2/23/26
11	Sferlazza, J.	3/8/26	103	Tarr, R. S.	5/11/26	369	Parfitt, J. C.	4/23/26	1141	Taylor, J. F.	2/17/26
17	McDonald, J. L.	12/20/23	105	Kiczula, K.	1/2/26	369	West, H. R.	2/23/26	1186	Caoagas, F. B.	6/19/25
20	Cain, A. T.	4/27/26	105	Orgel, M.	7/27/25	402	McCollum, R.	4/22/26	1186	Chang, L.	3/16/26
20	Kubelka, R. F.	4/16/26	105	Wilson, A. R.	5/25/26	415	Vigus, L. R.	4/27/26	1186	Tom, A. W.	3/29/26
20	Stephan, C. V.	5/1/26	105	Wilson, J. R.	12/6/25	424	Gaalaas, B. D.	4/23/26	1205	Cassidy, A. T.	3/7/26
20	Thompson, T. W.	5/12/26	113	Scott, M. A.	8/31/25	424	Jensen, R. F.	6/1/21	1245	McCall, J. M.	4/10/26
24	Dixon, R. J.	4/17/26	117	Adelphia, M. J.	4/18/26	426	McCart, M. E.	5/13/26	1316	Rigby, H. C.	4/29/26
25	Krauss, E. W.	5/11/26	124	Bleil, T. J.	5/18/26	428	Gamboa, A. T.	4/20/26	1377	Tandoo, F. A.	10/15/25
25	Murphy, A. P.	1/15/26	124	Drake, E. L.	4/21/26	428	Spears, C. A.	3/30/26	1547	Adams, G.	3/5/25
25	Pitkowitz, J. E.	5/4/26	124	Forsythe, G. E.	2/1/26	429	Cartwright, J.	3/5/26	1547	Caskey, R. S.	3/22/26
26	Fancey, J. R.	1/7/26	124	Holiman, J. M.	4/17/26	429	Lewis, W. R.	4/12/26	1547	Decker, Z.	4/17/26
26	Ferguson, C. E.	12/31/24	126	Ammerman, B. D.	12/31/25	443	Carswell, R. E.	4/25/26	1547	Harrold, E. N.	3/12/26
26	Gleason, P. L.	4/2/26	130	Bargky, K. W.	2/21/26	466	Hammock, A. R.	5/4/26	1547	Trapp, D. S.	3/24/26
26	Johnson, M. J.	4/30/26	130	Hernandez, D. D.	4/5/26	466	Jeffers, P. W.	2/3/26	1555	Gallant, R. G.	12/2/25
26	Keatts, C. W.	4/26/26	130	Stevens, C. A.	4/25/26	474	Bullington, J. D.	5/10/26	1579	Wallace, G. P.	4/28/26
26	Thomas, G. L.	3/25/26	134	Bornhoeft, J. S.	5/4/26	479	Cannon, J. Q.	1/18/26	1687	Culberson, W.	9/8/25
29	Dugan, R. E.	4/13/26	134	Goeth, F.	2/27/26	479	Gooch, G. L.	12/9/25	2088	Judah, N. H.	4/10/26
35	Amon, A. A.	2/3/26	134	Kopinski, M. P.	4/23/26	479	Guillot, R. A.	1/10/26	2113	Counts, L. L.	3/3/26
38	Klein, R. J.	1/7/26	134	Magro, J.	2/18/26	481	Arthur, J. L.	4/25/26	2150	Malitz, G. R.	10/23/23
38	Malek, D. J.	5/13/26	134	Swiatek, S.	10/3/25	481	LaBolle, B. J.	3/3/26	2330	Marche, D. M.	5/6/26
38	Polenske, H. P.	5/12/26	134	Vorderer, C. R.	5/3/26	490	O'Neal, L. A.	4/25/26	2330	St.Croix, E.	9/21/21
38	Rawls, A.	4/18/26	134	Wesolowski, W. W.	4/30/26	494	Buechler, R. A.	4/28/26	2330	Sutton, H. W.	5/15/26
43	Klamm, R. P.	5/4/26	134	Wright, A.	3/13/26	505	Williams, J. E.	2/5/26	2359	Wintrow, R. N.	4/24/26
46	Lindberg, H. J.	10/30/25	136	Brown, R. E.	3/4/26	508	Furlong, D. P.	4/6/26	I.O. (5)	Pennington, R. H.	4/23/26
46	Maxfield, J. E.	3/9/26	136	Elliott, C. E.	5/22/26	520	Ortiz, A. G.	4/19/26	I.O. (134)	Baker, R. C.	2/27/26
			141	Shaw, B. M.	5/11/26	530	Frauley, J. E.	3/8/26	I.O. (134)	Thames, P.	4/10/26
			146	Smith, R. L.	2/23/26	540	Lepley, W. O.	5/22/26	I.O. (208)	DiPietro, J. F.	3/23/26
			146	Spires, R. D.	2/22/26	540	Milarcik, D. A.	5/7/26	I.O. (869)	Porter, L. E.	4/14/26
			150	Justice, C.	1/9/26	547	Good, W. D.	12/6/25	I.O. (1263)	Dyess, W. B.	3/7/26
			159	Gander, G. D.	5/3/26	551	Quinto, J.	8/31/25	I.O. (2249)	Roberts, B. R.	3/11/26
			160	Hubbard, J.	4/14/26	568	Brunetta, S.	4/2/26	Pens. (I.O)	Harry, D. R.	3/28/26
			160	Peck, J. L.	4/16/26	569	Glaze, K. L.	4/18/26	Pens. (I.O)	Jacobs, R. L.	3/26/26
			163	Miller, T. F.	2/22/26	569	Richardson, A. K.	4/26/26	Pens. (I.O)	Manos, C.	4/16/26
			164	Cabrera, F.	11/18/25	584	Young, B. R.	4/30/26	Pens. (I.O)	Marr, D. M.	4/21/26
			175	Chastain, H. D.	4/4/26	586	Bulmer, R.	5/3/26	Pens. (I.O)	Ogborn, J. P.	3/25/26
			175	Fuller, P. L.	3/20/26	586	Emmerson, R. B.	2/4/26	Pens. (I.O)	Ristrom, E. J.	3/1/25
			177	Davis, L.	1/29/26	595	Pete, A. E.	11/29/25	Pens. (I.O)	Sanford, C. K.	4/25/26
			177	Jolly, T. A.	4/25/26	611	Garcia, J. O.	4/24/26	Pens. (I.O)	Singh, M.	5/1/26
			194	Camp, T. C.	3/13/26	611	Santillanes, J.	5/1/26	Pens. (I.O)	Spangler, J. L.	11/24/25
			194	Friend, G. R.	2/3/25	613	Folden, A. W.	5/6/26	Pens. (I.O)	Strotman, T. J.	3/20/26
			210	Wiener, N. S.	4/13/26	625	Sampson, M. L.	1/25/26			
			212	Koch, G. T.	5/2/26	639	Goshay, P. M.	4/7/26			
			213	Anderson, J. D.	11/12/25	640	Meixsell, M. P.	1/17/26			
			226	Allen, M. R.	11/16/25	640	Wheeler, D. E.	2/25/26			

This list shows members for whom PBF death claims were approved in June 2026. ■



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LOCAL LINES

Busy Days for Local 16

L.U. 16 (i), EVANSVILLE, IN — In late April, our local’s retirees were given a private viewing of the Henry Miller Museum. This exquisitely restored structure, formerly close to demolition, now stands as the historical heart of the IBEW and is a must-visit for all members. Many thanks to Brother Steve Muehling of Local 1 in St. Louis for giving a very informative tour of the museum.

This spring, Local 16 held elections for officers to serve in various positions. Thank you to all who were willing to make this commitment to see that the Brotherhood is well-served.

Sister Sara Schapker has been instrumental in establishing a gear exchange of lightly used items that can be of service to people who are just starting out and for those who are hard-pressed to purchase everything new. For more information on what is available, please contact the hall at (812) 867-9670 or dispatch@ibewlocal16.com.

On May 30, Local 16 sponsored the fifth annual Professional Bull Riders Rodeo. Proceeds from this exciting event were used to offset the cost of new shoes for more than 40,000 area school children.

Donald P. Beavin, P.S.



Local 24 Training Director Neil Wilford is retiring after 41 years in the industry.

help shape the next generation of electricians. He began teaching part time in 1996 and became a full-time instructor in 2003, training coordinator in 2009 and training director in 2015.

Neil often reminded apprentices and members alike, “If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.” Local 24 thanks him for his years of leadership, mentorship and dedication to the IBEW, and we wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Live Better/Work Union.

Mike McHale, B.M.

The 401(k) gives members another way to save for retirement by making voluntary contributions from their paychecks. Members can decide how much they want to contribute and use the plan as another tool to build long-term financial security.

Winning benefits matters, but making sure members understand how to use them matters just as much. Local 40 will continue to educate members on the benefits we have fought for so they can make informed decisions for themselves and their families.

Thank you to everyone who came out, asked questions and helped make the barbecue a success. We hope to see more members at the next meeting later this year.

Juan Rodriguez, A.B.M./Pres.



Local 46 Business Manager Sean Bagsby and members pose with a pride flag designed and built out of conduit.

The float was built by our members, including a pride flag fabricated entirely out of conduit and a hand-built miniature Space Needle. It’s the kind of work that shows what this trade can do and what this union stands for: skilled hands and a place for every worker.

Thanks to everyone who came out, marched and represented Local 46. We’ll be back even bigger next year.

Seamus Anglin, P.S.



Local 16 retirees at the Henry Miller Museum in St. Louis.

Graduations and Goodbyes

L.U. 24 (es,i&spa), BALTIMORE, MD — Greetings from Charm City! This summer, nearly 70 apprentices completed their training and joined the ranks of our journeyman wiremen and VDV installer technicians. Their graduation marks the beginning of the next chapter in their careers and reflects years of hard work, sacrifice and commitment to the trade. We congratulate this class and wish them success as they carry forward the standards and traditions of Local 24.

This graduation also marked the retirement of Training Director Neil Wilford after 41 years in the industry. Neil was indentured into the apprenticeship in 1986 and topped out in 1991. During slow times, he worked as a boilermaker and spent time on the road before returning to

Historic New 401(k) Benefit for Motion Picture Agreement Members

L.U. 40 (em,i&mps), HOLLYWOOD, CA — In May, our local held a barbecue and educational meeting about its 401(k) plan. This meeting was held to educate members about the new 401(k) benefit now available under the motion picture agreement.

It was a great opportunity to bring members together, share a meal and talk in plain language about how this benefit can help strengthen retirement security. For years, motion picture members have asked for access to a 401(k) plan to help supplement their pension. We were able to secure the plan during last year’s contract negotiations, and that is something we should all be proud of.

Built by Members, Carried With Pride

L.U. 46 (as,c,cs,em,es,et,i,mar,mo,mt,rtb,rts&st), SEATTLE, WA — Our local’s members lit up the Seattle Pride Parade on June 28, marching with our Pride With a Spark committee, an EWMC subcommittee focused on LGBTQ+ member engagement. Members turned out in force, handing out 7,200 Otter Pops to the crowd along Fourth Avenue.

Summer Fun With Local 68

L.U. 68 (i), DENVER, CO — Hello, brothers and sisters. I hope everyone has been having a great summer and has been able to enjoy the outdoors. I know Local 68’s brothers and sisters have.

During Memorial Day weekend, Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and Veterans Committee members gathered at Fort Logan Cemetery to assist with placing American flags to honor our veterans.



Local 68 retirees, from left (front row): Rodney J. Hahler, Morton T. Stinnette, Howard D. Hall and Larry Pacheco, (middle row) Hobart L. House, John M. Ramirez, Robert E. Hartman, Steve A. Romero and Douglas D. Lundberg, and (back row) Michael Fortin, Donald F. Threlkeld, William C. Thomas, Lawrence R. Brown and Steven R. Ashlock.

Submitting Local Lines Articles

Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd local number schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officers via our online form. For deadlines and questions, please visit ibew.org/submitting-local-lines or email locallines@ibew.org.

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

Trade Classifications

(as) Alarm & Signal	(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.

On June 6, the members gathered at the hall for the first annual car and bike show. We hope to see more of these in the future.

On July 17, eight members represented Local 68 at the fifth annual Kays4Kids, which benefits the Children's Hospital. And on the following day, we held an apprentice appreciation barbecue to congratulate all the apprentices on making it through another year of schooling.

The fun continues: On Aug. 15, we will have our annual picnic at the Elks Club. Hope to see everyone there! And Aug. 29, the Wireman's Brotherhood Fund will host its annual golf tournament. Events continue into the next month, with the WBF hosting its annual clay shoot Sept. 19.

As for other milestones, Local 68 retirees had their final monthly potluck lunch in May. Retirees received pin awards for 50 to 75 years of service, and there was a combined total of 820 years of service among those who received their pins. Local 68 retirees will gather again on the last Thursday of September.

We look forward to the potluck lunches starting back up in September. Enjoy the rest of your summer, and have a safe Labor Day weekend!

Debbie Tikka, Pres.

180-Degree Turnaround

L.U. 80 (i&o), NORFOLK, VA — Since June 2022, Training Director Meghan Hurt has been transforming the once-struggling Tidewater Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee into a model of excellence. Leveraging her 13-year background in public education, Meghan has modernized the program to meet growing electrical industry demands.

Key milestones include the relocation in September 2025 to a renovated 10,000-square-foot facility, which provides vital hands-on lab space. Additionally, a new 3,000-square-foot JATC facility in La Crosse, Va., now offers training for regional data center projects.

Under Meghan's leadership, the JATC expanded its instructional team, secured major educational grants and built recruitment pipelines with local trade schools. The program also prioritizes veterans by partnering with initiatives like the Veterans Electrical Entry Program.

Through strategic collaboration with IBEW locals, contractors and vendors, Tidewater JATC has successfully built a powerhouse training center ready to fuel the next generation of the electrical workforce.

Shawn D. Bruce, A.B.M.



Collaborating with Local 80 and the IBEW, Tidewater JATC Training Director Meghan Hurt has helped expand the instructional team, secure educational grants and build recruitment pipelines.

Congratulations to Brother Fiore and Our Officers

L.U. 102 (em.govt,i,mt,o,ws&ptc), PATERSON, NJ — On May 5, a meeting was held to nominate officers for Local 102 and delegates to the International Convention. The full slate of incumbent officers was unopposed.

We offer special congratulations to David Fiore, who, after 40 years as a member and 25 years as



The IBEW and Local 102 is in their blood: (from left) Dave Fiore, Paul Fiore and Nico Fiore.

our local's treasurer, enjoyed the honor of being nominated for the position of business manager. Dave is proud to continue the family tradition of service to Local 102, as Dave's father, Joe, was the president of the local from 1987 to 2002.

Brother Fiore assumed the role vacated with the retirement of Brother Patrick DelleCava in December 2025. Pat's retirement closed the book on a nearly century-long run of leadership in the building trades for the DelleCava family.

A special note of gratitude goes out to the members of the DelleCava family, who called Local 102 home. Patrick, Patsy and Bob, the impact you had on Local 102 will always be remembered. We thank you and wish you well!

On behalf of all the officers and delegates, our most sincere gratitude goes out to the membership of Local 102. We appreciate and value your continued support.

Bernard Corrigan, Pres.



Local 104 President James Foster, Business Manager/Financial Secretary Brian Murphy and Assistant Business Manager Hugh Boyd open the local's new training facility in Norton, Mass.

Local 104 Norton Grand Opening

L.U. 104 (lctt,o,u&ptc), BOSTON, MA — We are proud to announce the grand opening of the Local 104 Training Center in Norton, Mass., held June 13.

It was a great day, filled with family, friends, barbecue and pride as we celebrated this state-of-the-art training facility. This center provides an exemplary level of classroom and hands-on training, supported by expert instruction. It will serve not only our apprentices but also Local 104 members through continuing education and ongoing skills development.

The ceremony began with remarks from Business Manager Brian Murphy, who thanked everyone in attendance and reflected on how far we

have come, from a utility pole in the middle of a farm field to this outstanding new facility.

Brother Murphy was joined by Local 104 President James Foster and Assistant Business Manager Hugh Boyd for the ribbon cutting.

It was especially inspiring to speak with our retirees and hear their reflections on how far Local 104 has come from its humble beginnings 126 years ago.

Stay safe, brothers and sisters, and thank you to everyone who helped make this day possible.

Stay tuned for the next unveiling: our 30,000-square-foot OSHE facility in Epping, N.H., coming in September!

Hugh Boyd, A.B.M.

New Royals Stadium

L.U. 124 (ees,em,i,mar,rt,se,spa,t&ptc), KANSAS CITY, MO — Brothers and sisters, a new era of baseball — and construction — is coming to Kansas City.

The Kansas City Royals have announced a transformational partnership with Hallmark, bringing a new stadium and entertainment district to the Crown Center area. This is more than just a ballpark. It's a \$3 billion public-private investment that has the potential to reshape a core part of our city and drive economic activity for decades.

The stadium is projected at approximately \$1.9 billion, with the remaining investment focused on a mixed-use entertainment district surrounding it. The development will span roughly 85 acres, making it one of the largest and most significant projects Kansas City has ever seen.

Current plans aim for completion around the 2030 season. That timeline is ambitious and much remains to be finalized, but it underscores the urgency and scale of the effort.

For us, the most important takeaway is what this means for our membership. Because this project includes public financing, it will require prevailing wage standards. In addition, there is strong potential for a community benefits agreement between the city and the Royals, a critical tool to ensure that workers and the community share in the benefits of this investment.

None of the work is guaranteed, and every major project brings competition. But projects of this scale, backed by public investment and community expectations, create the conditions where union labor can compete and win.

Wade Kiefer, Bus. Rep.

Local 134 Members Compete in Hockey With the Stars

L.U. 134 (catv,em,go,vt,i,mt,rtb,rt,spa&t), CHICAGO, IL — Our local and many other trade unions in Chicagoland gathered in May to support a very worthy cause, providing resources for students affected by dyslexia. The Sopol Foundation, founded by former Chicago Blackhawk and Stanley Cup

champ Brent Sopel, provides financial and educational support, early detection, and intervention for people with dyslexia.

On May 16, Local 134 and the organized labor community showed up in an incredible way to support the Sopol Foundation. The unions competed in a hockey tournament inside a packed Orland Park ice arena where eight labor union teams faced off.

Hundreds of fans and players united for dyslexia awareness and in pursuit of the coveted Sopol Belt. The tournament started with the legendary Jim Cornelison singing the National Anthem. Local 134's team battled tenaciously in the first two games, beating the Pipefitters and the Carpenters. Unfortunately, they fell short in the semifinals with a tough loss to the Sprinkler Fitters' team. Family and friends enjoyed a great night out with food trucks, a bounce house, door prizes, raffles and a shoot-the-puck game for a chance at a \$50,000 grand prize.

Local 134 is proud to partner with the Sopol Foundation, and we hope everyone joins us next year in our quest for the Sopol Belt. If you would like more information about supporting the Sopol Foundation, please visit sopelfoundation.org.

Kevin Clarke, Bus. Rep.



Local 134 members and NHL alumni competed in a charity hockey tournament supporting dyslexia and ADHD awareness during Mental Health Awareness Month.

Thanks to Sunshine Rotary Club, and Welcome, Apprentices

L.U. 150 (es,i,rt&spa), WAUKEGAN, IL — Our local and signatory contractors believe in building strong community relationships. Jeff Harger, Local 150 member and owner of Harger Lightning Protection Systems, and Scott Hezner of the Hezner Corp. are members of the Sunshine Rotary Club in Libertyville, Ill. The Sunshine Rotary Club presented Local 150's first-year apprentices with backpack tool bags, the sixth year of the club's tool bag donations. Local 150 would like to thank the Sunshine Rotary Club for their continued support of our apprentices!

We would like to recognize and congratulate our first-year apprenticeship class of 2026. Our inside apprentices are Samuel Bowles, Jacob Brock, Tyler Cantrell, Geovany Cenobio, Adam DePasquale, Adam Divis, Jake Evans, Megan Faber, Jaxon Gembara, Alexander Gutierrez, Jason Head, Giovanni Hernandez, Aaron Husson, Zayne Lother,



Scott Hezner (left) and Jeff Harger (right) present Local 150's first-year apprentices with tool bags to begin their careers. Thank you, Sunshine Rotary Club!

LOCAL LINES

Nicholas Macella, Brock Maki, Spencer Montanez, Logan Olsen, Bane Pelishek, Jacob Pena, Sebastian Phillips, Nicholas Pichietti, Jean Pierre, Marcus Pletcher, Kayla Reid, Dominic Rivas, Ricardo Rodriguez, Ryan Ruiz, Dylan Sheppard, Mason Steigleiter and Murphy Wilson. Local 150 VDV apprentices are Jacob Clemmons, Nicholas Laas, Keaton Northcott, Yasin Safdary and Nicholas Urban.

Welcome to the IBEW and Local 150! May you have a safe, long and rewarding career.

Sisters and brothers, look out for one another and be safe out there!

Aaron M. Rendon, P.S./R.S.

Local 164 Launches First Annual 3D Bow Shoot

L.U. 164 (c,em,i,o&t), JERSEY CITY, NJ — Our local hosted its first annual 3D bow shoot May 30 at a local county-owned archery range, the start of an expected new tradition for the membership. The inaugural event drew a strong turnout, highlighting member interest in events that bring together sportsmen and sportswomen of Local 164.

The course featured a 28-target 3D archery

range designed to test accuracy and skill in realistic shooting scenarios, along with a stationary practice range for participants to warm up. Archers of all experience levels took part, creating an inclusive and supportive environment throughout the day.

In the spirit of giving back, Local 164 donated three new 3D targets to the range. The facility is maintained largely by volunteers, and contributions like these help ensure that it remains a valuable resource for the community.

While the shoot provided friendly competition, the day was defined by camaraderie and fellowship. Members shared laughs, exchanged tips and enjoyed time together away from the jobsite, strengthening the bonds central to the local's success.

The event was headed by Brother Victor Docherty and made possible by Local 164 volunteers who organized the shoot and prepared lunch for attendees. Their efforts helped ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

On behalf of Local 164, Business Manager Dan Gumble and President Tom Sullivan, thanks to all members who participated and volunteered. Based on the strong first-year showing, the 3D bow shoot is expected to become an annual event.

Warren M. Becker, P.S.

VELCO Goes Union, Joins the IBEW

L.U. 300 (govt,i,u,mo&lctt), MONTPELIER, VT — Members of the Telecommunication Department at Vermont Electric Power Co. have chosen to organize with the IBEW. Their actions are a credit to their agency and desire to be heard at their place of employment.

The members cast their ballots to organize in May and are on their way to negotiate their first agreement with the company. I hope more employees seize the opportunity to be heard and use their voices to help VELCO become the employer these workers strive for it to be. Congratulations to the founding members at VELCO.

Congratulations are also due to the employees at the town of Morristown for their perseverance. Following a two-year period of negotiations and mediation, the members of the general government and EMS departments have established



Vermont Electric Power Co.'s telecommunications team choose to unionize, becoming new members of Local 300.

their first collective bargaining agreement with the town and became new members of Local 300. Kudos to the negotiating team for their commitment to the process and to the members who supported the negotiating team's tireless efforts.

"Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair." I borrowed this quote from George Washington and used it during a negotiating session with an employer whom I (and my committee) felt was being a little unethical in their practices. The words call on individuals to set a benchmark of virtue and value, and they serve as a humble reminder that we must remain open to unforeseen change and assist with the creation of a more ethical way of life. We need it more now than ever.

Best of wishes during this amazing year of change and sunshine. Cheers.

Jeffrey Wimette, B.M./F.S.



Happy 100th anniversary, Local 306!

Local 306 Celebrates 100 Years

L.U. 306 (i), AKRON, OH — Our local proudly recognizes the successful ratification of a new inside agreement, which officially went into effect June 1. This contract represents a strong commitment to our membership, delivering meaningful wage increases that will directly support the hardworking men and women of our local. These gains will strengthen the financial stability of our members and provide lasting benefits to their families and the communities we serve.

We also extend our sincere congratulations to this year's apprentices, who have completed their training and achieved the status of journeyman wireman. Their dedication, discipline and hard work ensure a bright and skilled future for our trade.

This year marked a historic milestone as Local 306 celebrated its 100th anniversary April 17. We would like to thank all members, retirees, families and guests who joined us June 13 to commemorate this remarkable achievement. A special thank you goes to our sponsors, whose generous support made the evening a tremendous success.

Scott Jackovitch, A.B.M.

Local 340 Inside Wireman Negotiations

L.U. 340 (i,rts&spa), SACRAMENTO, CA — Our local finished its inside wireman negotiations and presented the proposed terms to our members at a special ratification meeting in May. We had record attendance and a great discussion on the topics presented. I would like to commend our negotiating committee (Zackery Collins, Michael Falconer, Michael Franklin, Matt Nootenboom, John Roden and Mark Steelman) for their time and attention assisting with negotiating terms and conditions and helping advance Local 340 membership for the next four years.

At the start of our negotiations, Local 340 sent out approximately 1,200 surveys and received more than 200 back. All surveys were read and taken into consideration when our negotiations team reached the bargaining table. While there was a mix of items requested to negotiate, there was common concern to address healthcare and future pension increases.

Thank you again to our team and members for their participation in these negotiations. Your input was greatly appreciated.

Robert Ward, B.M./F.S.

Red Hot Summer

L.U. 364 (catv,ees,em,es,i,mt,rts&spa), ROCKFORD, IL — Our local's Safetyfest was held June 13 and went over quite well, with members and their families enjoying the day and its various activities.

Participant favorites were the K-9 unit demonstration, as well as viewing the emergency REACT helicopter up close.

The Local 364 summer picnic was held July 18. Every year, this event gets better and better, with several hundred members and their families in attendance this year. From the tug-of-war to the egg toss, a great time was had by all who attended.

Work in Local 364 remains strong as Project Yukon leads the charge with more than 200 wiremen onsite. This project will continue well into 2027 and has kept work steady throughout 2026.

Our Local 364 golf outing will be held Aug. 22, and we look forward to another great event.

Brad Williams, P.S.



From left, Local 164 journeyman wireman Victor Docherty, apprentice Donovan Reiser and journeyman wireman Vincent Colucci celebrate bows and Brotherhood.



Local 570 members at the Seventh District Progress Meeting in El Paso, Texas.

Local 570 Wins Seventh District Progress Meeting Award

L.U. 570 (i,mo,spa&u), TUCSON, AZ — Members from our local attended the Seventh District Progress Meeting in El Paso, Texas. Local 570 was honored to be awarded and recognized by the Electrical Training Alliance for the most journeymen trained. The following members were in attendance and can be seen in the above photo: Lead Organizer Javier Soto, Women’s Committee Chair Jennipher Williams, Business Manager/Financial Secretary Joshua De Spain, Assistant Business Manager Dick Solomon, executive board member John Sheets, President Scott Toot, examining board member and instructor Aaron Gonzalez, and Arizona State Organizing Coordinator Jimmy Ciardulli. (Not pictured: Tucson JATC Training Director Karen King.)

Allegra De Spain, P.S.

Local 654’s Apprentice Graduation

L.U. 654 (i), CHESTER, PA — Our local would like to extend its congratulations to the graduating fifth-year class of 2026. After five years of hard work and dedication in the classroom and on the job, the journey is complete.

We celebrated the occasion at the Springhaven Club with a night of dinner, drinks, family and friends. The graduates are shown in the photo below.

Local 654 wishes this class the best of luck and a successful, healthy career in the IBEW!

Christopher J. Schieler, P.S.



Local 654 graduates, from left: (front row) T. Jack Thornton, G. McKelvey, John E. Casey III, James Shanko and Marc S. Masters; (back row) Natalie Gallagher, Timothy Robinson, Sidney Freeman, Brett Wall, Brandon Borcky and Anthony Mirante. (Not pictured: Justin Adams.)

Speaking With One Voice

L.U. 666 (i,mt,o&ptc), RICHMOND, VA — By the time this article prints, we will be close to the Labor Day picnic and other exciting events in the fall. We will also be drawing close to the start of negotiations for the inside agreement. As we all know, construction is booming nationwide, and the contracts are improving across the industry.

Here at Local 666, with our record hours worked last year, our levels of membership and organizing, work coming into our market, and wages of nearby locals, we have as good a case for our value as any workforce in the country. We will come to the table prepared to fight for our members and bring home a great contract.

We need you to be prepared to help and speak to the contractors with one voice to demand a good contract!

Charles Skelly, B.M.

Local 702’s Annual Clay Shoot

L.U. 702 (as,c,catv,cs,em,es,et,govt,i,it,lctt,mo,mt,o,p,pet,ptc,rtb,rt,se,spa,st,t,u,uow&ws), WEST FRANKFORT, IL — Greetings, brothers and sisters. On April 25, our local held its annual sporting clay shoot at the World Shooting and Recreational Complex in Sparta, Ill.

We had a great turnout, with 150 participants. The weather was beautiful, and it was a good day to enjoy the outdoors with our brothers and sisters and their families. We want to say thank you to all our sponsors and all those who came out to shoot.

Jamie Hatfield, A.B.M.



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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

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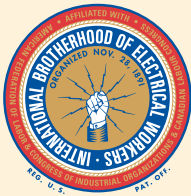
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WHO WE ARE

Florida Member and First-Time Candidate: ‘You Sit on the Sidelines at Your Peril’

Jason Bellamy-Fults stood in a Tallahassee hearing room packed with union members in March and pleaded with Florida senators to block the latest legislative attack on the organizing rights of public workers.

Several hours later, the Gainesville Local 1205 member and husband of a schoolteacher watched with disgust as the Fiscal Committee’s Republican majority voted to send the bill to the Senate floor.

His own senator, Jennifer Bradley, was among them, siding with a trickle of corporate union-busters who spoke instead of the 100-plus workers who testified to the duties and dignity of public employees and how good, union jobs changed their lives.

Bellamy-Fults was livid, especially with Bradley. If she’d stood with workers, the 10-8 vote would have been a tie, derailing the bill for 2026.

“I left there mad as hell,” he said. Fuming on his way home, he made it his mission to find someone to run against her. Not for a moment did he imagine his own name on the ballot.

“I spent a solid month calling everybody I could think of,” he said. “Every elected official, everyone I could think of locally, saying that this was not OK. That she ran unopposed last time and we can’t let her run unopposed again. I told them: ‘If you will do this, I’ll be your number-one volunteer. I’ll help you raise money. I’ll do anything I possibly can.’”

Person after person told Bellamy-Fults that the district was



A member of Gainesville Local 1205, Jason Bellamy-Fults is bringing his pro-worker, pro-union values to his campaign for the Florida Senate. He is pictured with his wife, Shay, a schoolteacher and union activist.

too conservative, that a pro-worker candidate didn’t stand a chance against a corporate-backed opponent with a massive war chest.

Eventually, he said: “I’d bugged enough people that they stopped answering my calls or they turned it back on me, saying, ‘You’re the one running your mouth about it. Why don’t you do it?’”

And so he did, filing to represent Senate District 6 in north-central Florida with the enthusiastic support of his wife, Shay, an activist in her teachers’ union.

His campaign is laser-focused on workers, unions and working families — none of whom, he said, are getting a fair shake in the Legislature.

“These people up there, it’s so obvious where their money is coming from and what their agenda is,” he said. “They are incredibly anti-union, and that hurts workers and working families. Every single session, they’re coming back to the table with more ways to break unions.”

From IBEW brothers and sisters and supporters throughout the seven counties he would represent, Bellamy-Fults is building a campaign from the ground up. Toward that end, he was delighted by the success of his first house party in May, an ice cream social hosted by a friend.

“You hear ‘house party’ and think, ‘I’ve got to invite big rollers,’” he said. “I said: ‘Let’s not think about that way. Let’s think about people that we know, that are invested in this community and that are doers — people who will get out and knock on doors, make phone calls. I asked my friend to come up with a list of 30, 40, 50 doers, and that’s what she did.’”

He’s been inspired and coached by Local 1205 President James Ingle, who was elected to the Gainesville City Commission on a working-class platform in 2024, his third try. The two have been friends since Bellamy-Fults began his apprenticeship in 2010.

Ingle describes him as “very bright,” a hard worker, devoted volunteer and genuine to his core.

“Jason understands the struggles people are facing,” he said. “I think that’s one of the biggest problems we have in Florida. You don’t find workers

in the Legislature. You find MBAs and lawyers and business owners. You don’t find waitresses or bus drivers or construction workers.

“Without their voice, the Legislature makes all these horrible decisions that are so far removed from the consequences,” he added. “They don’t even know what they are. But Jason does. He’s struggled, he’s been hungry, he’s worked with his hands.”

Another inspiration is state Sen. Brian Nathan, a Tampa Local 915 organizer who won a special election in March in a deep-red district and is on Florida’s ballot again in November. (See story on page 5).

“We had a real heart-to-heart about how to survive the campaign trail,” Bellamy-Fults said. “He told me to keep it real, be yourself, say what you think. Go out there and fight for working people because — win or lose — that’s the win.”

Nathan’s words affirmed his own beliefs. “It’s been my mantra. People think 51% of the vote is the win, and I’ll take 51%, don’t get me wrong,” he said. “But the win is working people standing up and fighting back.”

Bellamy-Fults and his younger sister were raised by a single mother, a waitress who eventually was able to open her own restaurant. It was a family affair.

“We were always working from an early age,” he said, describing lean years growing up and juggling multiple jobs as a young man. “I know how much hustle it takes for most working families to keep a roof over their head.”

Getting into Berea College in Kentucky’s Appalachians was his lucky break. The private liberal arts school is tuition-free, accepting motivated students in financial need. Among other benefits, he had healthcare coverage for the first time.

He majored in biology but focused on sustainability, a field that balances environmental concerns, fairness and economic growth. After graduating, he won research grants that sent him to Asia for two years to study Eastern approaches to sustainability.

Returning to Gainesville, he threw himself into volunteer work with the Community Weatherization Coalition, a program that helps people reduce their utility bills.

“I was in the very first class of energy coaches,” Bellamy-Fults said. “You go to somebody’s house with a crew, sit down with them, look at their utility bill

and explain it to them. Then we do a thorough investigation of the house, three to four hours seeing how they’re using electricity, how they’re using water. We also install some things, like energy-efficient lightbulbs, water-saving aerators, we bring pipe installation — a bunch of different things.”

He’s recruited IBEW members as volunteers, one of many reasons he’s proud to be part of Local 1205. “We’ve got a really cool local, and we’re really known in this town because we’re so active in the community,” he said.

It was a co-worker’s comment 16 years ago that put him on the path to becoming a journeyman wireman.

“They are incredibly anti-union, and that hurts workers and working families. Every single session, they’re coming back to the table with more ways to break unions.”

— Jason Bellamy-Fults on the Florida Legislature

“I was working at a grocery store, and a buddy of mine there who knew I was interested in energy issues said: ‘Hey man, you should look at the IBEW. They’ve got an apprenticeship school here.’”

Currently, Bellamy-Fults is working in academic technology at the University of Florida, a job he was offered while studying for a master’s degree. But he remains an active Local 1205 member and serves as recording secretary.

He urges fellow IBEW members to consider running for local and state offices or, if that’s outside their comfort zone, to volunteer for labor and other pro-worker candidates.

“If you don’t get involved in politics, politics will get involved in you,” he said. “We’ve got legislators who vote against us every single time. When they’re coming to destroy your union, when they’re coming to get rid of the already crappy unemployment system that we have and to take away your right to vote, you sit on the sidelines at your peril.” ■

A community activist and energy conservation expert, Jason Bellamy-Fults is pictured fighting for local control of Gainesville Regional Utilities, a battle that began when the Florida Legislature handed jurisdiction to outside political appointees.

