



# The Sparkie Sentinel

**Mark D. Hoffmann,**  
**Business Manager/Financial Secretary**

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Well we are coming to the 53<sup>rd</sup> annual SCFL sponsored Bean Feed, here at the Labor Temple. The event will be held on Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6:00 – 7:15 p.m. Free tickets are available in our office to 159 members as long as they last. It is your opportunity to get your fill of beans and dogs and a chance to visit with your local politicians in attendance. Make plans to attend this event.

It is also time to make your application for the SCFL scholarship. There are four - \$1000 scholarships available to members and children of members of locals who are affiliated with the South Central Federation of Labor. Scholarships will be given by a lottery system and the application deadline is July 9, 2012. Winners will be drawn July 23, 2012. Good Luck!

On the State workers front, you have probably heard that Judge Conley in the Federal court, ruled that the State of Wisconsin must deduct working dues once again from State workers by May 31<sup>st</sup>.

This ruling is being appealed by Governor Walker, so we are unsure if this will actually occur at this point. I have spoken with legal counsel who advises me to wait until May 1<sup>st</sup> to see if this will happen. If it does, I will be notifying the State of our new working dues structure, so that the proper amount will be deducted.

As far as the lawsuit over their non-compliance of the new compensation plan, the State has filed for a dismissal of this case. We are waiting on this ruling as well.

At the April 12<sup>th</sup> membership meeting, the members approved to send four women to the IBEW International Women's Conference. The conference will be held August 27-30, 2012 in Washington, D.C. We have a list at our office. One member is currently signed up, with space for three more. If you are interested, call our office at 608-255-2989.

Please take notice of re-sign procedure changes being implemented on June 1, 2012. These changes are a result of Resolution 35 at the 38<sup>th</sup> IBEW International Convention, when we voted to approve the I.O. devise a plan to make re-signs across the nation, more uniform so members can re-sign easily, without falling off the books.

We have also decided to implement the strike system on the Short Call book only, on June 1, 2012 as well.

The work picture in our jurisdiction looks to be bright. Our contractors have picked up several projects along with the on-going EPIC project and Portage Power House project looking to man up soon. These days have been long awaited for.

## Today in Labor History

April 28, 1970 – Congress creates OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The AFL-CIO sets April 28<sup>th</sup> as “Workers Memorial Day” to honor the hundreds of thousands of workers killed and injured on the job every year.

**Famous Quote**

“Recall it as often as you wish, a happy memory never wears out.”

Libbie Fudim

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**Joel Kapusta  
Business Agent/Referral Agent**

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Service Electric is the low bidder on the DOA office remodel.

Staff Electric has been awarded the Promega Project off Fish Hatchery Road.

There will be a \$.50 wage/benefit increase to the Inside Agreement, effective June 1, 2012. Contact the office with any suggestions and attend the May 10<sup>th</sup> membership meeting to vote on the distribution.

Plans are underway for this years golf outing. More information and details will be in Mays’ newsletter.

Unfortunately we will not be able to give a scholarship from the Suchoman fund. Due to low interest rates and insufficient fund, we cannot offer a full scholarship, as dictated by the Suchoman Trust.

**Change in Re-sign and Strike policy**

At the IBEW 38<sup>th</sup> International Convention resolution 35 called for parity among local for re-sign procedure.

In a letter dated April 2 we received a letter from the International office instructing us to make the following changes to our policies.

- 1) Re-sign shall be required monthly Beginning on the 10<sup>th</sup> and ending on the 16<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- 2) Re-sign may be accomplished by mail, fax, e-mail, or in person. **Phone calls will no longer be accepted.**
- 3) Re-signs will require the following information: Name, address, home local #, and IBEW card #, or if not a union member a driver’s license or government approved ID.

In addition to the new International rules Local 159 will make the following additional changes.

- 1) We will implement strikes on the **short call book only**. Registrants on the **short call book** will be allowed two (2) turndowns without penalty and be rolled completely off the book for a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) turndown. You must re-register in person after being rolled off.
- 2) Local 159 will not give any reminder calls about re-resigning.

**These changes will take effect on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2012**

**Business Agent/Organizer**

**Report by Chris Crossen**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the last month we have been continuing to contact non- signatory contractors about the benefits of becoming union contractors. It is still a long road and I know that with the work getting better, we will have some success. We just need to keep our powder dry and be ready to strike when the time comes.

Unfortunately there are more small shops opening up all over. We are continuing to track them down and contact them. We also have been entering them into O.A.R.S. for the I.O.

We are following up with what our members are seeing out there. We have been pounding the pavement trying to visit and follow up on all of the leads we are given. Thank you for keeping your eyes open out there and giving us the information we need to do our jobs.

We really need to make a concerted effort on this recall election. It would be nice if everyone gets out to vote on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Every Vote Does Count!!

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**President Report**  
**Fred W. Brown**

Below is a very timely article from a #159 member I wanted to include in this newsletter. So there will be a **brief** reprieve from the code Q&A.

**I Was Not in the Union**

Before I moved to Wisconsin, I was not in the union. I never went to a union meeting. When the steward came around to talk to me, I told her I didn't have enough money to pay my bills *and* my union dues. In Utah, I didn't have to join the union. I had the "Right to Work"—for the second-lowest wages in the country.

I wasn't an electrician: I was a biology teacher. I signed my first teaching contract in 2003 for \$28,000 a year. It was true; I *couldn't* afford dues. I raised my children, paid bills and student loans, and kept up on my mortgage, all on \$1800 a month. By the end of the month, groceries ended up on the credit-card.

Five years into a teaching career, I was making \$32K a year. Teachers at the same pay-grade here in Wisconsin earned \$42K. Why the whopping \$10,000 difference in salary and \$5000 worth of benefits? Union negotiating power. In Wisconsin, I wouldn't have had to choose between union dues and groceries.

It's a vicious circle, Brothers and Sisters. In a Right to Work (for Less) State, the unions lose power and can't negotiate a living wage. Then workers fall behind in their finances. They fall behind on dues just to feed their families, and the union loses even more ground. Imagine that your journeyman's wages took the same cut as my teaching salary. Instead of \$32 an hour, you'd be earning \$24. Could your family get by on that? Mine could not. Now that I belong to IBEW Local 159, we don't have to.

Let's keep Right to Work **For Less** out of Wisconsin by voting for people who will back up Wisconsin's tradition of worker's rights! Do you know where to vote? Make a call to your county clerk, or visit the website <http://vpa.wi.gov> and enter your address to find your polling place.

Primary elections will be held on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and the final Recall election is June 5<sup>th</sup>. See you at the polls!

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**47 DAYS TO A NEW WISCONSIN**  
**WE CAN'T QUIT NOW**

As I write this it is 47 days to the Recall Elections for Governor Walker and Lt Governor Kleefisch. It has been over a year since Walker introduced his Budget Repair Bill that took away the union rights of 85 of our members who work for the State, City and County. At a US Congressional hearing he admitted he didn't do it for any financial savings.

He did it because republicans do not want working families standing up to their corporate agenda – and unions are how we as individuals can make our voice heard. Walker wanted that voice to be quiet.

Our Local and the WI State AFLCIO has endorsed Kathleen Falk for Governor. It is unusual for unions to get involved in a primary but this is an unusual election. With the 900,000 people who signed the recall we have a real chance to not only win the election but to vote in a champion to fight to get our rights back.

All of the Democratic candidates are generally good on our issues and no matter who wins the primary we will support them over Governor Walker, who wants to kill all of the unions in Wisconsin. Among the Democratic candidates though there are some differences that show one is a champion for us. While all of them are far better for us than Walker with this huge effort to get a recall, we should vote for the best in the primary and support whoever wins that primary.

A couple issue differences in the primary:

Prevailing Wage – Kathleen Falk has said she will fully protect prevailing wage. Tom Barrett had the lobbyist for the City of Milwaukee join with WMC and the ABC to fight the changes we sought. Kathleen Vinehout has said the prevailing wage calculation needs to be changed because the rates are too high in rural areas.

Collective Bargaining – all the candidates have said they support restoring collective bargaining, but the question is how hard and long will they fight win.

Kathleen Vinehout said she will introduce a bill to restore collective bargaining but Mark Pocan already did that and the Republican Assembly would not even hold a hearing so this method sounds good but won't work.

Tom Barrett has said he will call a special session of the legislature to restore collective bargaining, but the Assembly Republicans again do not even have to hold a vote, so they won't and this method won't work.

Kathleen Falk is the only candidate who said she will put it in the state budget and veto until it gets through. The State Budget is the only bill that has to be voted on, thus it is the only bill the Assembly Republicans can not keep from coming up for a vote and thus our best chance to get our rights back.

For the past year many of us have fought and rallied and marched around the Capitol to get the politicians to pay attention to us. Now we finally have the chance to vote out the person who took away our rights. Will you spend even a few

hours helping win that fight? There will be phone banking every night from now until election day at the Labor Temple from 5-8pm. If you would rather do door knocking or labor walks contact me at the office and I will get you time and places.

We all spent hours at the Capitol to get to this day – please spend a few hours helping make sure we win.

Primary Election day is MAY 8 – please vote for Kathleen Falk and Mahlon Mitchell.

General Election day is JUNE 5 – please vote for our Democratic Candidate (whoever wins the Primary) against Scott Walker and Mahlon Mitchell for Lt Governor



## **Retirees Club**

The retirees met at Toby's Supper Club. The following attended:

David Krey, Tom Junck, Rich Gorst, Carmon Howe, Gary Gander, Ron Dommershaussen, Bernie Braun, David Conrad, Mike Stassi, Denny Eley, Michael Sullivan, Bob Quackenboss, Tom Corcoran, Roy Holm, Howard Czoschke, Ted Rowley, Jeff Rowley, Tom Kepler, Scott Gomez, Mark Hoffmann, Bob Call, David Baltes, Marvin Milleville, Ron Disch, Dennis Wiczorek, Bill Kracke, Les Gammeter, Elmer Racek.

Mark Hoffmann updated us on union affairs and the upcoming elections.

Brother Donald Boe is recovering from a stroke at Waunakee Manor. He is not taking visitors at this time.

We had two birthdays this month: Richard Gorst and Bill Kracke.

It was great to see such a great turnout. For those wondering about Lee Lemens' absence, he was at Christmas Mountain.

The next retiree's meeting will be May 14<sup>th</sup> at Rex's Innkeeper in Waunakee. Hope to see you there.

Remember to keep your calendar open for the semi-annual retiree's luncheon at the Labor Temple on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Spouses/guests are welcome.



Brother Clarence Stadler passed away April 15<sup>th</sup>. He was a 32 year member of IBEW 159. He is survived by his wife Sylvia.

Brother Melvyn Burch, lost his wife Sharon on April 10<sup>th</sup>. They were married for 49 years. She was courageously battling cancer.

The thoughts and prayers of the membership are extended to all our families experiencing a loss.



### **Illness and Injury**

Any members who would like information put under illness and injury in the newsletter, please contact us. We don't like to put any news in without the member's permission.

We do have members in need of dollar bank transfers. Please consider making a donation if you have six months or more in your dollar bank.

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### **What's the good word?**

Let us know the good news; anniversaries, births, etc. so we can put it in the newsletter.

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June 24<sup>th</sup> will be IBEW 159 Day at the Mallards. Members are allowed up to four tickets. Contact the office to sign up.

The Mallards face Eau Claire Express at 3:05 p.m. It is Meriter and Physicians Plus Fleece Blanket Giveaway.

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### **IBEW 159 Website**

Local #159's website is up and running. If you haven't checked it out yet there's a lot of good information there.

Take a couple of minutes and sign up. As of this time, we have 57 members who have registered. There are areas of the website that only 159 members can access.

You can only access this portion if your dues are paid up. Retirees are able to register.

If you have any questions or comments, please share them with the office.

**Administrative Notice:**  
**Basic Dues**

**“A” Members –Effective 1/1/2012**

Monthly - \$30.75  
Quarterly- \$92.25  
Semi-Annual -\$184.50  
Yearly-\$369.00

**“BA Members”**

Monthly - \$17.05  
Quarterly -\$51.15  
Semi-Annual - \$102.30  
Yearly. - \$204.60

Basic dues are paid in advance and must be received in the Local Union Office before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month or quarter for which you are paying.

1<sup>st</sup> Qtr. – January 1  
2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. – April 1  
3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr. – July 1  
4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. – October 1

**Electrical Workers Local #159**  
**1602 S. Park Street**  
**Madison, WI. 53715**

“A” members should send death benefit payments along with their dues payment (\$1.00 for each death benefit). We are currently on #181.

The failure of any Local Union #159 member to pay union dues in a timely manner will not only result in membership being dropped, causing the loss of Union benefits, but also discharge from employment. Members who are three months or more in arrears will be charge a \$30.00 reinstatement fee.

**Please check over your dues receipt immediately for accuracy. If you have moved, changed classification or have questions about your dues, please notify the Union office. If you have not been issued a receipt within two weeks from the time you sent your payment, please call the office to make sure it was received.**

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