



The Sparkie Sentinel

Mark D. Hoffmann,
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

The Edgewater Hotel lives again. Yes it's true the Edgewater Hotel project is set to begin this fall. On October 26th, there will be a ground-breaking on the site.

Hammes Company will be honoring the PLA we had drawn up while the city TIF money was in play. However, with the help of private investors, such as the Frautschi Group and the Pleasant Family, this project will go on without the use of TIF money from the city of Madison.

I had hoped that my suggestion of using the AFL-CIO Building Investment Trust and the contacts I had provided them from the NEBF National Real Estate Advisors would have provided financing long ago. I am not sure why a deal wasn't worked out with those groups. This will be another boost for our work picture, as we continue in the right direction with our unemployed members. It does not appear that Fred Mohs can stop the project anymore.

Medical Trust Meeting

On July 31, I attended our Medical Trust meeting. While our claims payout was about 2.5 million more than the same time a year ago, our reserves are doing well. We are currently sitting at 10.6 months net assets, which is a good number for us compared to what we were a couple years ago.

We have a cautious eye looking a couple years out but here's hoping the Affordable Health Care Act will do what it's suppose to in reducing the cost of health care, therefore lowering our claims payout.

Today in Labor History

August 1929

Capital City Local Union 159 is still on both feet and going strong. We had a little difficulty with our contractors over wage agreements in April, and were out six and a half days, but that has all been forgotten, and everything is as quiet and peaceful as a spring morning .

At the present, all of our boys are working but, although there is quite a bit of work, we are not broadcasting any S.O.S. calls for men, as the most of this will be cleaned up long before the snowballs start rolling.

On August 1, Local 159 will start the five day week, thus giving our fish hounds a better chance to get "up and at em." Others, like myself, will pursue their favorite indoor sport of remaining in the blankets.

(As reported in the Journal of Electrical Workers and Operators by A.W. Bahr, Local 159 Recording Secretary. August 1929 issue)

Famous Quote

"Of course I believe in free enterprise, but in my system of free enterprise, the democratic principle is that there never was, never has been, never will be, room for the ruthless exploitation of the many for the benefit of the few."

Harry S. Truman

Volunteers for Labor Day are needed for set up Monday, September 3rd at 7:00 a.m. Please call the hall so we can add you to the list.

**Joel Kapusta
Business Agent/Referral Agent**

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I have a meeting with Babcock and Wilcox on August 29th to get more information on Portage.

Edgewater is a go. CWA is still in place. As far as we know, groundbreaking is October 26th – Homecoming weekend.

Forward has the generator replacement project at Monona City Hall.

**Business Agent/Organizer
Report by Chris Crossen**

In the month of July, we had a contractor blitz in Racine and Kenosha. These are both smaller locals, so we had the blitz in one day. This is where all of us organizers get together and visit many non-signatory contractors in our area. We had five teams and each team visited nine contractors.

We kept the same message from the Green Bay blitz. It was, are the non-signatory contractors in this area ready for the licensing law?

Again, it was a good ice-breaker and led to many other questions, which we answered. The next day we had a debriefing at our state organizing meeting.

We continue visiting non-signatory contractors in our area as well. In the last month we have visited J&M Electric, Service Electric of Reedsburg, Hills Wiring, 20/20 Electric, Action Electric, Reis Electric, Direct Electric, Design Electric, Davis

Electric, Jerry’s Electric, Motl Electric, Faith Technologies, Sunstation Electric, PKK Electric, Maier Electric, Atomic Electric, Central Contracting Electric, Mr. Electric, Don Parent Electric and Bretsch Electric. We have been asking if they and their employees are ready for the electrical licensing law.

I would like to let everyone know that we are doing Fantasy In Lights again this year under special projects. If anyone would like to volunteer, please call me at 608-334-0434.

I would like to thank the members who are continually keeping their eyes open and letting me know about jobs and other things in our jurisdiction.

**David Boetcher
Governmental Affairs Coordinator**

Paul Ryan – Vice President?

Just this weekend as I write this, Mitt Romney, announced that Paul Ryan would be his running mate for Vice President. It would be great to see a Wisconsinite as Vice President, but would Ryan be there to represent us or would he hurt us?

The biggest thing Ryan is known for is writing the Republican Party Budget. Like Mitt Romney, Congressman Ryan claims that his radical budget proposals are needed to reduce the national debt.

Under the guise of the discredited trickle down approach to the economy, Ryan’s budget actually slashes federal revenue by \$4.6 trillion in order to give massive new tax breaks to the wealthy. Under Ryan’s budget the average millionaire, who already pays \$129,000 less in taxes due to the Bush tax cuts, will get an additional tax break of \$265,000. (See chart below for how much the tax burden would shift under Ryan/Romney).

To pay for these massive new tax breaks to the wealthy few who already claim much more than their share national growth, and pay much less than their fair share in taxes.

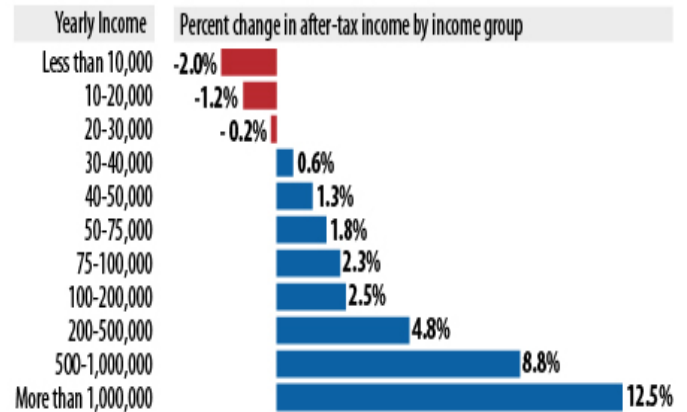
Ryan proposes unprecedented cuts which would undermine the foundations of opportunity such as student loans, school lunches, research and development, investments in infrastructure, and other commitments to giving everyone a fair shot at the American dream.

Ryan’s budget would result in 4.1 million lost jobs in 2 years. Ryan’s budget calls for massive reductions in government spending. He has proposed cutting discretionary programs by about \$120 billion over the next two years and mandatory programs by \$284 billion, which, the Economic Policy Institute [estimates](#), would suck demand out of the economy and “reduce employment by 1.3 million jobs in fiscal 2013 and 2.8 million jobs in fiscal 2014, relative to current budget policies.”

A lot of the jobs lost would be in construction since Ryan’s budget takes out a lot of infrastructure work along with gutting energy policy investments. His plan would take \$3 billion out of renewable energy programs. Those programs have led to a lot of work for our members in solar, wind and other projects. Along with that the work on EPA requirements that lead to the scrubber job in Portage would also be killed. Not having that project would seriously hurt our local.

The chart below shows the tax shift that would come. While some of us might get a 1% tax cut under Romney/Ryan realize they also propose cutting the payroll tax cut Obama gave the middle class so overall we would see a tax increase. But no matter a tax increase or cut, under Ryan’s budget, the killing of infrastructure and energy projects makes it all moot. If you don’t have a job you don’t worry much about your tax rate – and we have seen, more tax cuts for millionaires as Bush did, has not lead to many jobs for the rest of us.

Ryan Plan Would Cut Taxes Deeply at the Top, Raise Them at the Bottom



Note: Compared to current policy; does not include plan’s reductions in unspecified tax expenditures.
Source: Urban Brookings Tax Policy Center, Table T12-0126

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities | cbpp.org

Retirees Club



The Retiree’s Club met Monday, August 14th at Fitz’s on the Lake in Lodi. The following were in attendance: Jim Virnig, Bill Kracke, Marvin Milleville, Jerry Miller, Tom Kepler, Tom Corcoran, Bernie Braun, David Krey, Thomas Riechman, David Ruhnke, Rich Gorst, Del McGregor, David Baltes, Gerald Huggett, Don Small, Eldon Dodge, Clarence Dresen, Donald Boe, Roy Holm, Elmer Racek and Les Gammeter.

We had a moment of silence for brother Craig Hill.

We elected to go back to Fitz’s on the Lake for the September 10th meeting.

It was nice to see such a good turn out for our luncheon. Remember, all retirees are welcome to attend these monthly luncheons and we encourage you to join us.

Any retirees interested in helping with the Fantasy in Lights should contact the union office. We can really use the help as we get the displays ready for November. It’s a lot of fun working on these and socializing with our members. You can also make a little extra cash, working on the displays and counting money after the lighting ceremony.



Brother Craig Hill, age 59, passed away peacefully in his sleep on August 1, 2012 after a brief and courageous battle with lung cancer. He was a 159 member since 1979.

Craig is survived by his wife Peggy, sons, Jeremy (Becca Hayward), Hunter (Amanda Fath), brother Jay (Chris) Hill, along with numerous other family members.

He was thankful to have had the opportunity at the end of his life to spend the last few months traveling with his family and proud to complete his lifelong goal of visiting all 50 states.

Craig was a veteran of the Viet Nam Conflict and lifetime member of VFW Post No. 1318. For those who knew Craig personally, he had a wonderful sense of humor and a deep compassion and commitment for his loved ones



Illness and Injury

Please keep those members going through illnesses or injuries in your thoughts and prayers. We have members going through some very difficult health challenges and even though they may wish to remain anonymous, our positive thoughts for their health and well-being are greatly appreciated.



Baby News

First time parents, Brother Ryan Maier and wife Carie welcomed their daughter, Bree, born July 28th, weighing 8 lbs-7 oz. and 20”.

Brother Andrew Traverse and Raquel Aleman, along with big brother, Dominic (2), welcomed new family member, Elicia Ruby, born July 13th, weighing 8 lbs, 3 Oz. and 21”

Brother Nick Manion and wife, Kristin added to their family on January 18, 2012 with the birth of their first born, Maddox Garrett Manion, weighing 7 lbs. 8 oz. and 19”

Congratulations to all our families on their journeys through parenthood.

BY-Law Update

The by-law proposed last month did not receive a 2nd reading and therefore no vote will be taken.

New proposed by-law change – Election Judge Nominations – Article III

Sec. 4 (a) At the meeting of the Local Union, in the month preceding the month in which nominations are made, the Local Union, by a majority of members present, shall elect an Election Judge and as many Tellers as are required, who shall serve as an Election Board to conduct the election. No candidate for any office shall be eligible to serve on this Board.

Referral System

We are considering changes to our current referral system and looking at possibly implementing one of the below options:

Option 1 – Standard Bid System

Calls would be placed on a recorded message system and onto a page of the website between 4:30 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Persons interested in the call would leave a message on the Local 159 phone system or send an email between those times. After 7:00 a.m., messages would be retrieved and calls placed according to book position.

For example, if we had four calls for XYZ Electric, and fifteen people bid on the job, the people with the lowest book numbers would receive a phone call that the calls were theirs.

Our current phone system would need to be upgraded to handle this system. We have received a bid of \$7500 from a union provider to accomplish this.

Option 2 – Call In System

Calls would be placed on a recorded message system and onto a page of the website between 4:30 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. People wishing to bid on the call would then have the option of sending an email or calling the hall between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. to say they wanted the call. Calls would be placed according to lowest book position.

Our current phone system should be adequate to handle this type of procedure.

Option 3 – Current Call Out System

Continue to use our current system of placing calls by starting at number one on the book and calling until calls are filled between 7:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Option 4 – Day Book

Calls would be placed on a recorded message system and onto a page of the website between 4:30

p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Those interested in accepting one of the calls may appear at the hall the following morning for a job call. Jobs will be awarded based on position on appropriate book.

Join Us For Laborfest at the Labor Temple

Monday, September 3rd – Noon – 5:30 p.m.
Bring the kids and enjoy face painting, bounce house, balloons, pinata; lots of good food – Italian sausage, corn on the cob, hot dogs, Louisiana style rice and beans, soda and ice cold beer.

Music will be provided by Paul Cebar, Tomorrow Sound plus Westside Andy/Mel Ford Band
The solidarity roll call will be at 2:15 p.m.

Special Labor Day Collection!

Participate in the Labor Day collection of personal care items and other household supplies to ensure that the most basic needs of other in our community are met.

The Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, which serves all area food pantries and does outreach to the homeless, indicates that the following items are needed and can be dropped off at the SCFL office in room 228 in the Labor Temple. or with the AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison at the Anderson United Way Center – 2059 Atwood Ave. from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Diapers
- Dishwashing soap
- Paper towels
- Toothpaste
- Toilet paper
- Baby wipes
- Laundry detergent
- Bar soap

All these items are in great need and not covered by food stamps (FoodShare/Quest cards)

- Non-perishable food items - Anything you can do, will be greatly appreciated.

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 1st day of the month or quarter for which you are paying.

- 1st Qtr. – January 1
- 2nd Qtr. – April 1
- 3rd Qtr. – July 1
- 4th 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 #185.

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 one week from the time you sent your payment, please call the office to make sure it was received.

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