



The Sparkie Sentinel

Mark D. Hoffmann,
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

It's been a long time (March, 2008 to be exact) since we have had the number employed we have today. It shows we are turning the corner here at 159. While employment has improved we do have complications with weather issues hampering our work day. Many jobs are shutting down during the extreme and excessive heat of the day. I've been hearing from some members saying "I took this call for 40 hours a week" Let me remind you there are no guarantees in construction. When we have such unusual temperatures, we have to work smart to prevent injury so you can work tomorrow. If the contractor feels the need to shut down early for your safety so you can come back to work tomorrow, so be it. It becomes a safety issue when we have the extremes we've been having. Let's work smart and work safe out there.

I would like to share with you an article I read in a previous IBEW Electrical Journal. Read the words and live by them for this is:

About Brotherhood

"Local Union 494, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, recently conducted an essay contest for its members on the subject. "What My Union Means To Me" The results were both interesting and encouraging. A few lines from the No. 1 essay by Brother John Pinebar appealed especially to us. He said: "We are all Brothers in Local 494. Now don't misunderstand me, and I don't mean that when you say "Brother" a physical change overcomes you. No, the change is not physical, it is in your heart.

"We of 494 are members of a Brotherhood joined together to help on another gain a just share of the happiness in this life. This Brotherhood is one of the equality. All members are treated alike and benefit together, as well as share obligations together. Everything we undertake as a project is for the good for the entire Brotherhood. This equality is our strength."

We think that this is a pretty fine statement of facts as they should be. Our Brotherhood was created to band all Electrical Workers together so they might "help each other in sickness and distress."

Sometimes it seems we have gotten away from the ideals of Brotherhood for which the IBEW was founded. Sometimes it seems that each local union and individual is going in for a "dog eat dog" policy "and the devil take the hindmost." This is a policy of destruction and sooner or later, even strong unions will be destroyed by it.

Our greatest hope and our greatest strength as individual member and individual local unions, will only come through helping one another. As each of our locals lends a helping hand to an organizing effort or to a new local just getting started, that local is in turn strengthened. When we have every segment of this great, spreading, growing electrical industry organized, then will we know what real security means and to what heights our working conditions can rise.

We can never reach our highest potential, pulling against each other on any level. The more quickly we all come to realize this, and the sooner that we adopt more of the philosophy of the Brother from L.U. 494, about "undertaking every project for the good of all," the more we will grow as an organization and the more we will gain as individual members of that organization."

Source: *IBEW Electrical Journal, Editorial by Gordon M. Freeman, July 1958*

Today in Labor History

July 23, 1913

Northern Michigan copper miners strike for union recognition, high wages and eight hour day. By the time they threw in the towel the following April, 1100 had been arrested on various charges and Western Federation of Miners President Charles Moyer had been shot, beaten and forced out of town.

Famous Quote

“Ten Thousand times has the labor movement stumbled and bruised itself. We have been enjoined by the courts, assaulted by thugs, charged by the militia, traduced by the press, frowned upon in public opinion and deceived by politicians. But not withstanding all of this and all these, labor is today the most vital and potential power this planet has ever known, and its historic mission is certain of ultimate realization as is the setting sun.” Eugene V. Debs

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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The work picture has greatly improved. We’ve had good long calls weekly and expect that trend to continue for the foreseeable future.

In addition to the current projects that will need manpower, we still have the scrubber project coming up late fall.

Remember your monthly resign if you are currently on the book. Resigns are accepted by email – resign@ibew159.org, fax 608-255-3014, in person or by US mail and need to be done between the 10th and 16th of each month.

Business Agent/Organizer Report by Chris Crossen

In the last month we had a contractor blitz in Green Bay. This is where all of us organizers get together and visit a lot of contractors in the area in a short time. We had five teams and visited five contractors each on Monday night.

Then we each visited fifteen contractors each on Tuesday. Our message was, are the non-signatory contractors ready for electrical licensing that goes into effect as of April 2013? This was a great ice breaker and led into other questions they had about our training. We then had a debriefing on Wednesday at our State Organizers meeting. Over all, the reception we got from the non-signatory contractors was positive. All locals will be participating in this for all areas of the state.

In the last month we have continued to visit non-signatory contractors in our area. We have visited Searl Electric, Great Lakes Electric, Badger Electric, Bear Electric, No Shorts Electric, Davis Electric, Eagle Electric of Sauk Prairie, Hills Wiring,

The Electrician, Action Heating, Cooling and Electric, Specialized Electric and North Side Electric. We have been asking if they are ready for the electrical licensing law.

Some of them are and some are paying their employees to go to classes for their CEU's.

Most of the employees have to take care of the cost of classes for their CEUs. I have talked to guys out in the field about the way we cover the cost of classes for CEUs for our members.

I would like to thank the Brothers and Sisters who diligently continue to keep their eyes open for things happening in our jurisdiction.

David Boetcher
Governmental Affairs Coordinator

Affordable Health Care Act or Obama Care?

One thing that is has become a certainty in politics is that often the name of a policy or proposal is more important than what it actually does. In our current society we seem to have little time to actually understand how something works but have no shortage of 'talking heads' willing to tell us and scoff using names and titles while never actually discussing what it really is.

On the Affordable Care Act/Obama Care we hear a lot of contradictory information. It will bust the budget vs. it will save money, it will provide health insurance for many more people vs. it will cause employers to drop insurance, it gives more affordable options on insurance vs. it is a government takeover of our health care system, it will have bureaucrats in government deciding what care you get vs. it will keep insurance companies from denying you care, it will cost less for health insurance vs. it will drive up the cost of health insurance.

The contradictions and counter claims are endless.

We in the IBEW are in a unique situation to truly see the effect of this. By having our own health insurance we are under the same regulations and rules as private insurance companies but we do not have the profit motive driving up the costs of our insurance plan. So does requiring insurance companies to cover dependent kids in college until 26, not allowing them to deny coverage to people with preexisting conditions, not capping the benefits so if you have a serious illness they can drop you if

it is 'too expensive' actually drive the costs of insurance too high? Across the nation we have heard about huge increase in health insurance due to this legislation. Insurance company associations have claimed it has caused increases from 19-30%.

But when you look beyond the pundits on TV and beyond the press releases of insurance companies – how much did these requirements really cost? Our insurance plan has not increased in the past three years. So during this whole fight and seeing private insurance companies do double digit increases every year saying it is Obama Care causing it – why hasn't our premium increased? Because the real truth was these provisions were about making health care affordable and protecting families from bankruptcy over health care – making sure the money already going to insurance companies actually went to health care and not just to larger CEO salaries and bonuses.

That is why so much of politics and government policy takes a lot more to figure out than just hearing the title of the policy or the 30 second political sound bite. The Affordable Care Act didn't drive up rates – the profit motive of private insurance and hospitals did.

Whenever you hear a slick line or name for a policy always look under the hood. The 'tools' Walker gave to local governments was a euphemism for cutting pay and benefits. This type of misdirection is to keep us all confused. So as election time comes around make sure to look under that hood or you could be buying a great looking car that has no engine.

Retirees Club



The Retiree's Club met Monday, July 9th at the Village Green in Middleton. Twenty-three members were present. They were Ray Becker, Scott Gomez, Michael Sullivan, Richard Gorst, Elmer Racek, Ron Disch, Marvin Milleville, Lester Gammeter, Bill Kracke, Jim Virnig, Roy Holm, Carmon Howe, Ken Goss, Bob Call, Dave Krey, Mike Stassi, Tom Corcoran, Donald Boe, Lee Lemens, David Baltes, Dennis Wiczorek, Tom Junck and James Stewart.

Winners of the drawings were, Scott Gomez, Elmer Racek, Ron Disch, Marvin Milleville, Lester Gammeter, Ken Goss, Bob Call, Dave Krey, David Baltas, Dennis Wieczorek and Tom Junck.

We have a primary on August 14th for state and national offices. These are very important and we should all make sure to vote.

The next meeting will be at noon on Monday, August 14th at Fitz's On The Lake, W11602 Cty. Hwy. V, Lodi. Hope to see you there!

Lee Lemens



We are happy to report no deaths this month!



Illness and Injury

Great news for Sister Heather Wipperfurth! She has a new kidney! Heather received an unexpected call that a kidney was available for her and had the surgery on July 8th in Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee. Everything went exceptionally well and she is home now recovering. She and her family want to thank all the members for their thoughts and prayers.

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

Congratulations to Brother Josh Meyer and wife,

Andrea on the birth of their first child Landon Alan Meyer, born June 24, 2012. Landon surprised his parents by arriving a bit earlier than expected but he is doing well having to spend some extra time in the hospital.

Brother Bryan DeLoirmier and wife, Melissa welcomed their second daughter, Madelene Jean DeLorimier on June 3, 2012 weighing 8 lbs. 12 oz. She joins big sister, Jilliana, 16.5 months. They will have their hands full, but enjoying every minute.

Congratulations to all our families.

Building Trades Endorsements for 2012 Primary Elections

2nd Congressional District – Mark Pocan
(member of the Painter's Union)

Assembly District 47 (McFarland) – Rob Kahl
(works for Operating Engineers)

SCFL Endorsements for 2012 Primary Elections

51st State Assembly District- No Endorsement
78th State Assembly District- Brett Hulsey
79th State Assembly District- Dianne Hesselbein
The following candidates were formerly endorsed by SCFL and not interviewed. They are recommended to the State AFL-CIO.

State Senate:

16th District- Mark Miller

26th District- Fred Risser

State Assembly:

43rd District- Andy Jorgensen

46th District- Gary Hebl

76th District- Chris Taylor

77th District- Terese Berceau

81st District- Fred Clark

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 #184.

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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