



# The Sparkie Sentinel

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

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Special thanks to Labor Day Volunteers.

Labor Day has come and gone and I would like to thank our volunteers who came to the Labor Temple on Monday morning to participate in the set up for the days events on Labor Day. We, at Local 159, have been in charge of set up for a very long time and it seems every year we see the same faces here to do the work. It would be nice to have new faces next year to help with the load. So thank you to

Jeff Kerwin	Joel Kapusta
Jim Virnig	Nick Kapusta
Dan McGrath	Chris Crossen
Dave Baltes	Susi Crossen
Billy Holler	Nick Del Bouno

Tom Lemens – Power  
 Ray Hilgers – Beer Garden  
 Brian Russ – Trash detail  
 Sue Blue – Kitchen  
 Betsy Pape – Ticket sales

These names appear every year and it would be nice to see the list grow, so mark your calendars. We will be needing your help next Labor Day, Monday, September 2, 2013 at 7 a.m.

On Sunday night, Labor Day eve, there was a boat parade on Lake Mendota. Local 159, along with NECA, set up a couple light displays on two barges.

On one barge, we set the Green Bay and Wisconsin Badgers helmets, a couple of long-time favorites. On the other barge, we installed our newest display which is a 23.5' tall Bucky Badger.

The parade began at Maple Bluff and cruised along the shore line over to the Memorial Terrace, which was followed by a fireworks display. It was a beautiful night to sit by the lake with the family and see the parade of decorated boats and top it off with fireworks.

I want to thank the people who were involved with providing our displays. First, you have Ed Smith, a retired ironworker who builds our displays these days. He is responsible for erecting our new Bucky Badger display. It was Elmer Racek and Jim Virnig who installed the lights and Dave Baltes and Jim Virnig who helped install and break down the displays on the barges. Elmer, Jim and Dave are all retirees of Local 159 and I thank these guys for their time and effort to put IBEW on display and to those attending the parade.

I would also like to thank Manke Enterprises for donating the barges for us to show our displays.

## Today in Labor History

September 12, 1946

At the general membership meeting here at Local 159, there was a motion made and seconded that from this day forward, any member who does not march in the Labor Day parade be assessed \$3.00. Motion carried.

## Famous Quote

Every advance in this half century: Social security, civil rights, Medicare, aid to education...one right after another, came with the support and leadership of American labor.

President Jimmy Carter

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**Joel Kapusta**  
**Business Agent/Referral Agent**

**Inside**

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**VDV**

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The most current information we have on the Portage scrubber project is that sub bids will go out late fall.

Staff Electric has confirmed they are the apparent low bidder on the Memorial Union renovation project.

In the last month we have had 81 long calls and 2 short calls.

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

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The last month has been busy visiting non-signatory contractors in our area. We have stopped by Central Contracting Services, Advanced Building Corporation/Electrical Division, Action Heating, Cooling and Electric, Flanders Electric, Electri-Tec, PPK Lighting and Ross Electrical.

We have been asking if they are ready for the state licensing law. Most are ready and some are sending their guys for classes for continuing education. Some of them have to pay for their own classes and travel to wherever the class is. I inform them of the numerous courses we provide for our members, the free NEC books provided and the free or reimbursed cost of taking these classes. This is a great persuasive tool to encourage them to think about joining the union.

We have been working diligently on the two new Fantasy In Lights displays. There is a 22' tall Bucky Badger with over a thousand lights. This display made its debut at the Lights on the Lake boat parade over the Labor Day weekend. It was a big hit.

We are also working on a new tunnel entrance for the top of the hill at Olin Park this November. There are going to be blinking snowflakes added to the display. Elmer Racek, Jim Virnig and Dave Baltes deserve a big round of thanks for helping with these displays. If it wasn't for them, we would never have gotten Bucky ready for the boat parade. If anyone out there has time to volunteer and help us out, please call the hall and let us know.

We had a contractor blitz in the Appleton area. During these blitzes organizers get together and visit numerous non-signatory contractors in a very short period of time. There were five teams and we visited 6 non-signatory contractors on Monday night. Each team went out on Tuesday and visited 18 more non-signatory contractors. We used the same message; "Are you ready for the new licensing law going into effect April 2013?"

On Wednesday we had our state organizer meeting and debriefing. The feedback was that most of the contractors were receptive. Our next blitz is in Janesville in October. The 159 blitz will be sometime in 2013.

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

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**David Boetcher**  
**Governmental Affairs Coordinator**

**VOTE YOUR JOB**

Despite the GOP's [fiercely anti-union party platform](#), some socially conservative members of Building Trades unions may still be tempted to vote against their best interests in November, one many union members will likely regret if Mitt Romney makes good on promises to strip the power of unions and make "Right-to-Work" a federal standard.

George W. Bush looks like a friend to Labor Unions next to Romney. On numerous occasions Mitt has reiterated how he will take on the unions, how he will fervently support Right-to-Work (for less) laws and push to get a national version of those terrible laws on his desk to sign. And sign he will. Recently, the anti-union lobbying group Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) endorsed Mitt Romney for President. But Mr. Romney didn't just receive this endorsement; he actively sought it out. When Romney spoke in front of the ABC several months ago he exclaimed: "One of the first things that I will do – actually on Day One – is I will end the government's favoritism towards unions in contracting on Federal projects." He goes on to say he will fight to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act and end Project Labor Agreements (PLAs). Does any of that sound like a good idea to you? It sure doesn't to me.

The dangers facing union members in the event of a Republican presidential win should be sufficiently terrifying to make even the most conservative union brother think twice about casting such a ballot. Yet in June — before the party platform was penned — a Gallup poll found that [35 percent of union members planned on voting for Mitt Romney](#). Exit polls from the Wisconsin recall showed 38 percent of union members supported Gov. Scott Walker despite his anti-union agenda [this number is frequently disputed because of confusion about the difference between a "union household" and a "union member"].

Of course, it is the right of any citizen, Building Trades member or not, to vote for the candidate of their choice. But it is also the right — nay, the duty — of all union members to expose the truth about the direction our government will head if Romney can pull out a victory. Republican insistence on ending Project Labor Agreements and creating a federal "Right-to-Work" law would have a chilling effect on members of the construction trades.

This newly minted GOP platform is also putting construction unions in its crosshairs. The platform calls for an end to PLAs and the repeal of Davis-Bacon.

It goes even further calling for an increase in worker visas – i.e. more lower paid construction workers imported from other countries, stories we have seen even here in WI and even in the electrical trade.

On Labor Day, Vice President Joe Biden spoke to Michigan AFL-CIO workers in Detroit, [praising them for their role in the revitalization of the American auto industry](#). "You're the reason the auto plants are back," Biden remarked. Commenting on the Republican Party platform, Biden promised that the Obama Administration would continue to fight against "Right-to-Work" laws if elected for a second term.

The choice couldn't be clearer for union members: one candidate vows to protect the dwindling rights workers still have, while the other vows to steal them from you.

We in the building trades have really hit a rough patch. But things can get much worse if we either don't vote at all or vote for people that will work against our economic interests. And saying you've always voted Republican is not an excuse because you simply don't want to face the fact that your party has turned on you. When I was young and first in the military I believed the story that the Republican Party was best for those of us in the military. Over the years I have seen and learned, that is just a story and reality is much different. You have to ask yourself: What has this party said or done to deserve my vote? Republicans seem to say and do more and more against us and our families. A good quote to remember is "Always vote your job, because the other guy sure as hell is." Unfortunately if the other guy is nonunion he is voting to end your better pay and benefits – you have to decide if you are going to vote to protect them. We have seen in Wisconsin what happened to the teachers and state employees because of the last election, now we will vote on whether it happens to all employees.

(Thank you to the National Building Trades for the material for this article)

**Retirees Club by Lee Lemens**



The Retiree's Club met Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at Fitz's on the Lake. Twenty-one members were present. The following were in attendance:

Lee Lemens, Bill Kracke, Mike Stassi, Don Small, Tom Kepler, Tom Corcoran, Bob Quackenboss, Dave Krey, David Conrad, Elmer Racek, Donald Boe, Eldon McDaniel, Roy Holm, Carmon Howe, Rich Gorst, Clarence Dresen, Jeff Rowley, Bob Fritz, Jerry Miller, Dave Ruhnke and Dave Baltes.

Business Manager, Mark Hoffmann talked about the work situation and for once it was very encouraging. We have most of our members working and a lot of jobs coming up.

We again are facing an important election, which will affect everyone. The changes being proposed by Paul Ryan and Mitt Romney will definitely not help the working people and the rest of the middle class. One issue items aside, think about your work, your future and your retirement years when you will need social security and health insurance.

Winners of the drawing were, Bill Kracke, Don Small, Bob Quackenboss, Elmer Racek, Eldon McDaniel, Rich Gorst and Dave Ruhnke.

The next meeting will be noon on October 8<sup>th</sup> at My Buddies near the Target store at East Towne.

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.



Retired #159 brother, Jerome Hillenbrand passed away August 15<sup>th</sup> at the age of 94. Jerome is the father of #159 member, Ken Hillenbrand.

Many will remember him as "the bird man of Sherwood Forest" for his knowledge of birds, both exotic and common. He will also be remembered for his knowledge of the history of Cross Plains.

Jerome was initiated 12/16/53. He credited living to this ripe old age by stating " I didn't get this old by sitting in front of a tv." Wise words to live by.



**Congratulations to brother Seth Nelson on his marriage to Madeline on 8/25 and to brother Aaron Weiland on his marriage to Daisy on 8/15. Best wishes for a long, happy and healthy life together.**

**Let us know your good news, births, marriages and anniversaries to put in the newsletter.**



**Baby News**

Eric and Beckie Haugen added new daughter, Madilyn Joyce Haugen, born July 18, 2012, weighing 9lbs 7 ounces and 21"

Little brother, Oliver is happy to have a new baby sister. Congratulations and enjoy your journey through parenthood.

**2013 Dues Increase**

Make note that dues will increase \$1.00 per month in 2013.

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Monthly	\$30.75	\$31.75
Quarterly	\$92.25	\$95.25
Semi-annual	\$194.50	\$190.50
Annual	\$369.00	\$381.00

Administrative Notice:  
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 #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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