



# The Sparkie Sentinel

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

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

On June 5, 2012, we finished our battle at the voting booths but again came up a little short. I would say, it wasn't for lack of trying. Boots on the ground coming and going from the Labor Temple was like nothing I have ever witnessed here before in the weeks before the election.

Here at Local 159, many of our unemployed members came in to help. They were passionate about the battle for the working class of this state. People like me and you; people like our friends and relatives and those who have fought the fight before us.

As I said we came up short again at least in the Governor's race but for the meantime (if we survive a recount) we scored a victory in the Senate recalls with John Lehman defeating Van Wangard, giving Democrats control of the Senate. By achieving this, we can be almost assured that Right to Work will not pass here in Wisconsin. I understand legislation is written and waiting to be introduced, with very little chance of passing.

To the efforts in the election, I want to thank a number of members who took the time to come down and engage themselves in this battle. I saw these people come in and put their heart and soul into this campaign because they feel the effects of cuts in budgets, they know first hand that Wisconsin is dead last in job creation. They have suffered long and hard. They are from our unemployed ranks.

These members went to battle for you and I, to fight the fight for the working middle class. And on Tuesday night, June 5<sup>th</sup>, I'm sure they were just as stunned as I was when at 8:48 p.m., MSNBC and CNN and all the other various reporting agencies projected Scott Walker the victor in the Governor recall.

Well, I want to say to those members, while we had a setback on June 5<sup>th</sup>, we will not give up, we will continue our fight on into the Presidential race this November. We must do what we can to stop this corporate take over of our Country in honor of working class people of our Nation.

It's obvious to me, what the agenda of the Republican party is and if I were a republican, I would be ashamed of my party and the tactics they have resorted to. I find it hard to believe anyone on that side of the isle can be proud of what they have done and how they still today, carry themselves in the upcoming Presidential election.

Our politicians are hired by the people to work for the people of this nation and anyone who is not doing their job to work for the people, should be "terminated for cause" with a, "will not rehire" on their record.

It's up to us to tell them that and we can do that by telling your neighbors, friends and family how the republicans are not serving their constituents at all.

So again, I want to say Thank You to the following members for their commitment and energy in the weeks before the election. They are:

Tim Bates

Jerry Brown  
 Gene Fleming  
 Maggie Freespirit  
 Damon Glenn  
 Lisa Goodman  
 Wayne Haefer  
 Ray Hilgers  
 Jenna Hilgers (Ray's niece)  
 Dan Hittesdorf  
 Jeff Hughey  
 Scott Juris  
 Amber Moonlight-Klein  
 Joe Rott  
 Eileen Stuntebeck  
 Tom Tomlinson  
 Jim Virnig  
 Kathleen Wolf

I would also like to thank our office staff, Sue Blue, Betsy Pape, Joel Kapusta, Chris Crossen and Dave Boetcher for sharing some of their nights and weekends for the cause. I do need to say a little extra thanks to some spouses who have been involved in their communities such as, Ingrid Fleming, Cindy and Doug Johnson. I am sure there are more I am not aware of. Thank you all and remember, November is just around the corner.

**Today in Labor History**

June 20, 1947 – The Taft-Hartley Labor Management Relations Act, curbing strikes, is vetoed by President Harry S. Truman. The veto was overridden three days later by a Republican controlled Congress.

**Famous Quote**

**“In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, as “right to work.” It provides “no rights” and no “work.” It’s purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining... We demand this fraud to stopped.”**

**Martin Luther King Jr. - 1961**



The South Central Building Trades Council held an information picket in front of the new Ale Asylum Brew Pub being constructed on Packers and International Lane. Dave Boetcher and Joel Kapusta were there for IBEW 159. The Ale Asylum and the general contractor on the job, CSI, have used predominantly nonunion labor to construct the project. The electrical contractor is Hills Wiring of Baraboo, which is nonunion. One of the employees of Hills Wiring actually came out to take a picture of the protesters. We took his picture because it is illegal to use intimidation, such as taking pictures of picketers, to try to stop such job actions. We expect to be increasing such actions around the Madison area to raise more awareness of businesses that receive taxpayer help (Ale Asylum is on county land with a lease program) should hire contractors that pay decent wages.

**Joel Kapusta  
Business Agent/Referral Agent**

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The Portage scrubber project is 3-4 weeks ahead of schedule due to the good weather conditions. There is still no update on the electrical bids but we do know it will be union.

As you can see by the above numbers on our out of work books, things are improving. We have had some good long calls finally rolling in. The outlook remains very promising for our members.

Remember the new re-sign policy is in effect now. You must re-sign between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of EVERY month. This can be done by fax – 608-255-3014, email – [resign@ibew159.org](mailto:resign@ibew159.org), US mail or in person. No phone in re-signs and NO GRACE PERIOD. Email re-signs will receive a confirmation sent to you. So mark your calendar to re-sign during the 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>.



### **Robert Palmer Classic Golf Outing**

There is still time to sign up for the golf outing on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Call the union office by July 20<sup>th</sup>, if you are interested or want more details.

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

The importance and high priority of putting all our efforts in the recall election had me in a slightly different roll for the past month. From May into early June, I have been coordinating our members to assist in the recall elections. This was done through neighborhood walks, phone calls and data entry.

I enjoyed the opportunity to get out in our jurisdiction and do canvassing of our union members to encourage them to get out and vote to recall Governor Walker and the other Republicans being recalled.

There were so many members willing to help out and do everything possible to be successful in those efforts. As you know, we fell short. But

even with the results of the election, we were successful in many ways.

There is a new energy in the labor movement and we will keep up this momentum to help ensure victories in November in the national elections. The fight continues and union members have to realize, you vote for your job first. We need to elect and support those candidates willing to work for living wages for the middle class.

Please do all you can in the upcoming months to help fight for your job and your family's future.

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

Congratulations to all our completing inside apprentices who have taken and passed the State Journeyman Electrician's exam. This is now a requirement for our inside apprentices to complete their apprenticeship. Keep up the good work and stay informed and educated as you enter your new life as JIWs.

We are preparing for Fantasy in Lights with new displays in the works. Even though it is the end of June, November will be here before we know it. As this gets closer, we will need the help of available members to make sure everything is up and ready to go.

Enjoy your summer and keep your Code book handy!

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

### **RECALL OVER – NOW WHAT**

A huge piece of history in Wisconsin has now been written. The first time a Governor in Wisconsin has been recalled and the first Governor to be recalled who survived the election. But that isn't the whole story.

For the first time in Wisconsin history the State Senate changed hands in the middle of the Legislative Session. 3 Republican Senators who won their elections in 2008 or 2010 lost their seats in the recall elections giving the Democrats control of the State Senate. Over 900,000 people in WI signed the recall, a number higher as a percentage of the State than any other recall or petition drive in history.

None of these are small accomplishments or easily done. You just have to look at other recall efforts to see how hard it is. The republicans last year started a recall drive on Senator Mark Miller – it failed due to lack of enough signatures. They started a recall drive on Senator Julie Lassa – it failed due to lack of enough signatures. 4 years ago they started a recall drive on Governor Doyle – it failed due to a lack of enough signatures. Just 3 months ago they started a recall drive on Senator Bob Jauch – it failed due to a lack of enough signatures. Recalls aren't easy, just getting the signatures is a huge show of activism and effort.

February of 2011 started a real wakeup call for working families and union members in Wisconsin. It was incredible to see the huge rallies and protests not just in Madison but across the state. Name another event or issue that had 100,000 people marching in Wisconsin? The Capitol Occupation and Walkerville, kicked off a national idea in how to protest. They were peaceful, long lasting and gained great attention to the needs and issues facing union members and the middle class in Wisconsin.

Many are trying to say that the loss of the recall and failure to get rid of Walker is the death of unions in Wisconsin. They will only be right if we give up. If we aren't willing to fight as hard as our great grandparents did to create unions.

In the late 1800's we saw the beginning of the union movement in Wisconsin. The union's big issue at the time was the eight-hour work day. On May 4, a group of 1,000 Polish strikers marched on the Milwaukee Iron Company to shut it down. Governor Jeremiah Rusk called out the local militia to protect the mill. The mill closed, but the following day an even larger group

descended on the mill. The strikers were fired on. There were from five to nine people killed including two bystanders. Another incident occurred the same day in the north part of the city involving German strikers and the Milwaukee police. Shots were fired but nobody was killed.

In the days and months following these violent confrontations, workers slowly went back to work at their old wages and hours. The working people of Milwaukee had to wait a few more years for an eight-hour working day and to earn a good wage under decent working conditions. Yes, they lost in the strike they led but they did not give up, they kept fighting and while it took a couple of years, in the end, the workers prevailed.

Today we don't face the threat of being killed for protesting; rather we face the threat of what has happened over the past 40 years – apathy. In the late 50's unions were large and the earnings were great for the middle class and trades workers. We took that growth and good jobs for granted. Now we see that the push to lower wages, get rid of overtime, reduce child labor laws, get rid of equal pay protection for women and more has all come back again.

Now we must show the same perseverance, the same strength that those workers did in the early 1900's and regain our union power. We have a great advantage they didn't – a union in existence to help marshal us together and organize the effort.

So the question isn't whether unions are dead due to the recall – the question is will union members fight as hard and as well as their predecessors did? It's our turn to fight for what our union forefathers gave us. They did it – so can we.

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## Retirees Club



The retirees met on June 11<sup>th</sup> for their semi-annual luncheon at the Labor Temple. There were approximately 100 members and guest in attendance.

Lunch was catered by Angelo's in Monona. There was plenty of good food and conversation. A great time was had by all.

The following members were there to receive their years of service pins:

Dave Baltes – 50 year  
Emery Stluka – 50 year  
Lee Lemens – 55 year  
Donald Crawford – 60 year  
Donald Dushek – 60 year  
Robert Feller – 65 year

Business Manager, Mark Hoffmann gave us an update on the re-call election results and work situation.

The next meeting will be July 9<sup>th</sup> at the Village Green in Middleton at noon

You can also mark your calendars early for the next luncheon at the Labor Temple on December 10<sup>th</sup> at noon.



William "Mushroom" Laursen Sr. passed away May 21, 2012. He was a 41 year member of IBEW Local #159. William served his Country in the US Army Air Corp from 1/11/43 until being honorably discharged on 10/16/45. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, Air Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross, American Theater Medal, WWII Victory Medal, Asiatic Pacific Theater Medal, Philippine Independence Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Ribbon and three Bronze Stars.

Mushroom was a dedicated union member and a true brother. He enjoyed traveling, dancing, fishing and spending time with family and friends. He touched the lives of many and will be greatly missed.



## 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 is greatly appreciated.



## Baby News

**No reports this month**

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## Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary



Joy and David Krey celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Dave said he has been blessed with a happy life and wonderful wife to share the last five decades with. Joy said it's been "ok" and Dave is still on probation! May you have many more years of health and happiness!

**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**

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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.**

“A” members should send death benefit payments along with their dues payment (\$1.00