



The Sparkie Sentinel

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

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

You missed it. On March 10th, the Reclaim Wisconsin Tour ended here in Madison with a rally around the capital square. They say 35,000 were in attendance and while I did not know or see every face in the crowd, I would like to thank those fourteen or fifteen members I did see, who I always see at these functions. Thank you for taking time from your busy lives to come and participate, to be heard in mass, to unite in solidarity.

A couple of those members are even retirees, former business manager, Joe Strenger and Jim Virnig, a long time volunteer and activist for union issues. Thank you both for continuing to fight the fight for worker rights.

To Dan Brein, Kevin Klepper, Shane Gibson, Jeff Kerwin, Dan McGrath, Tim Hasey, Mike Lake, Joel Kapusta, Chris Crossen, Eric Bade, Dave Boetcher and Mark Heiss, thank you for coming and walking with us. I invited IBEW President Hill, who flew in from a function in Florida, on his way to a function in Houston, TX later Saturday evening.

I also saw IBEW members from across the state. But I have to ask, where were the members of Local #159?

Now, if you were there and I did not see you or maybe I did see you and don't remember, I thank you as well. But brothers and sisters, we need to mobilize. We need to be there.

This stuff is happening in our house and when people can come from across the state and nation to support our cause, we need to rise to the occasion and join in.

On June 5th we will have a job to do. We will have the chance to oust Governor Walker and put a candidate in that office who will fight and work for the working class of Wisconsin. If we sit idly by on the sidelines and watch, we won't be at the dinner table; we will be on the menu. We need to get to the polls and help take back our rights as the working class.

We need to vote like we've never voted before. We need that 39% of union voters who voted for Scott Walker to revisit the events of the last year here in Wisconsin and realize that the Walker Administration is working very hard to tear down our working conditions, to make this a state where the haves will own the have nots.

We cannot go back in time after achieving the victories we have this past year. Brothers and sisters, we are a better union than that and I'm just asking you to look in the mirror and ask yourself; am I doing all I can do for the cause?

I know we can all do more.



President Hill at the candidate forum

As I said President Hill came to Madison for the March 10th rally and spoke at the candidate forum earlier in the morning at the Concourse Hotel which was sponsored by the Building Trades. President Hill opened the event with some comments about our movement here in Wisconsin.

“Scott Walker gambled that you all, the construction workers, wouldn’t care enough to come out and support the teachers, librarians, firefighters and garbage workers.”

On the issue of the results of signature gathering, President Hill says, “A million Wisconsinites have said enough is enough is enough. Good jobs and economic opportunity for all depends on you all standing together.”

We are hoping to make history here in Wisconsin and eyes are on us across the nation. President Hill went on to say “2010 Brothers and Sisters is history, 2012 is our chance, your chance to reclaim Wisconsin but also to reclaim our Country.

Today in Labor History

March 20, 1908 - The American Federation Labor issues a charter to a new Building Trades Dept. Trades unions had formed a Structural Building Trades Alliance several years earlier to work out jurisdictional conflicts, but lacked the power to enforce Alliance rulings.

March 20, 1956 - Members of the International Union of Electrical Workers reach agreement with Westinghouse Electric Corp., end a 156 day strike.

Mark Your Calendar

Journeyman Inside Wireman, make plans to attend the May 10th membership meeting to allocate the .50 increase, which will take effect this June.

Quote of the Month

“Action is the foundational key to success.”
Pablo Picasso

Joel Kapusta Business Agent/Referral Agent

Inside

Book I – 177 Book II – 214

Residential

Book I – 19 Book II- 0

VDV

Book I- 8 Book II- 6

CW/CE - 3

Unfortunately I don’t have great news about the Portage scrubber project. There was a pre-job meeting with the Building trades on Wednesday February 22nd. We learned that the job did start on Monday the 20th. However, starting is a little deceiving. They started moving what was described as “a big pile of dirt that’s in the way.” This should take a couple of months and then a couple more months to dig for foundations. So the project is under way but not much for us for a while.

Westphal does have the site work and temporary, but that is as much of the electrical that is let at this time.

We would expect to start putting guys out there this fall. The good news is that the project is under a NMA so no matter what, it will be a Union project.

Electric Construction is Low bidder on Phase 2 of the Lakeshore Dorm Project.

We will hopefully start seeing calls for EPIC by the end of April.

Business Agent/Organizer Report by Chris Crossen

Hello Brothers and Sisters,
In the last month we have been continuing to talk to non-signatory contractors. I have been asked why we can't seem to organize these shops.

When I travel around our jurisdiction to speak to the owners of these shops, I am usually dealing with someone in their office first. I will give them one of my business cards and ask for the owner by name. Most of the time I am told they are not there or unavailable, which is what they have been told to say if the union comes by. So it takes a while to even get my foot in the door.

Once I get the opportunity to sit down and talk to the owner(s), they tell me about concerns they have from previous experiences with the union.

For example, one owner told me when he was a child, his father crossed a picket line and the union members actually beat on his truck with bats and fists.

Another was when they were turned and burned. That was done by salting the shop, filing charges with the DOL that costs them money by having to pay fines and then stripping guys from their shops.

So after I explain that we don't do that anymore and we are now trying to help make them profitable, then we can start the conversation on what the union can do for them.

They don't want to lose control of the business. They want to be able to go anywhere, like they are doing now, without any restrictions on how many of their workers they can bring to a particular jobsite. They want to pay their workers what they want to pay. There are other hurdles for an organizer to cross but these seem to be the main ones. I just thought that our members would like to know what we organizers are up against.

We continue to get calls from Faith employees with questions about the union wages and dues. I reiterate the facts that even with paying dues

(which are tax deductible) they will still make more than they are at their current wages.

I would like to thank the members who continue to be our eyes and ears out there. We really appreciate the input.

In Solidarity
Chris Crossen

President Report Fred W. Brown

I am attending our Journeyman Electrician Exam Prep class with about thirty other of our members. It is always a joy to learn with our members about the electrical code.

I found an installation that I wanted to run a little Codeology exercise on. The condition is a fluorescent luminaire that is chain hung from a drywall ceiling and supplied by a fixture whip. The branch circuit for the luminaire is 20 ampere, 120 volt, and the fixture whip is a six foot length of Trade Size 3/8 Flexible Metal Conduit with 14 AWG copper THHN conductors inside. A 14 AWG copper conductor supplied by a 20 ampere branch circuit does not comply with the basic rules in Article 240 because it is being used as a Tap Conductor. The definition of Tap Conductor (a conductor that has overcurrent protection ahead of its point of supply that exceeds the value permitted) appears in Article 240 because this is the base rule for conductor overcurrent protection.

Art 240.4(E)(1) (Tap Conductors) helps by sending us to 210.19(A)(4) Exception No. 1 (Branch Circuit Tap Conductors). Then 210.19(A)(4) Exp No. 1 (b) states "A luminaire having tap conductors as provided in 410.117." The code also gives us another path here by Art 240.21(A) Branch-Circuit Tap Conductors. This rule allows a 14 AWG copper conductor to be taped from a 20 ampere branch circuit.

Now we are in Article 410 Luminaires, Lampholders, and Lamps and we need to check Art 410.1 Scope to determine if this is the appropriate article.

Part I General applies to the other parts of the article and the additional parts of an article have more detailed information. Art 410.117 is located in Part XI Special Provisions for Flush and Recessed Luminaires and Art 410.110 General states “Luminaires installed in recessed cavities in walls or ceilings shall comply with 410.115 through 410.122.”

This fixture tap conductor whip is only allowed by Part XI of Article 410 and not recognized for this chain hung luminaire.

The way that the code looks at this installation surprised me. I have seen fixture tap conductor whips used to supply exposed luminaries for years. I will need to call Dave Baltes about this. He knows everything code.

It just goes to show: “What you see does not make it legal”

May the Code be with you and keep you sane.

David Boetcher
Government Affairs Coordinator

Walker’s actions take away more rights – but we now have a date

When Governor Walker introduced the Budget Repair bill he said that the loss of collective bargaining rights would not be a major impact because employees would have civil service protections. Now that many local governments and the State have started to write those policies, we see what a lie that was.

The patchwork of policies that has sprung up across the state includes fees of up to \$400 to appeal discipline, a requirement that an employee hire an attorney, and rules under which only a select few facts of a case are considered in the final decision made by the local elected body. The state has maintained a civil service standard requiring “just cause” for serious discipline or termination. But state employees may no longer appeal to a neutral arbitrator in disputes about matters such as vacation scheduling, work rules, overtime or lower-level discipline such as reprimands as they could under union contracts.

So yes there are protections but only if you can afford the price tag to see if you can prevail, and if you are a state employee, it is your manager who decides if you or the manager is wrong. I think I can guess how that ruling will go without charging \$400. Sometimes people wonder why they need unions. Rules like these didn’t exist in union workplaces, it seems pretty clear that having a union makes a difference in what rules you work under.

Now that we have seen what the pay cuts were and we are now seeing what the work rules are under Governor Walker, the time has come to cast a vote on it. This past week the Government Accountability Board set up the time table for the upcoming recall elections. The Primary (which looks likely) will be on May 8th. The General Election will be on June 5th.

It’s clear and easy to see if you want there to be unions, you will vote against Walker on June 5th. The primary is a little more difficult. Local 159 has endorsed Kathleen Falk for Governor. With the only other current candidate being Kathleen Vinehout, the decision came down to the difference between the two. One major area is Falk said she will fight with everything including putting it in the state budget to restore collective bargaining. Vinehout was not willing to do that (nor were other potential candidates such as Barca and Barrett). For the unions restoring that basic right was paramount.

There are other issues and I encourage you to look into the candidates, you can find our endorsement on our web page <http://www.ibew159.org>. Go to the link for Endorsements on the left side.

We are under 2 months to finally stop Walker and take our state back. Please contact me if you can help, the only way we win is by beating Walker’s money with our grassroots.



Retirees Club

The retirees met on March 12th at the 5th Quarter in Verona. The following members were present:

Ken Goss, Terry Stamm, Roy Holm, Bernie Braun, Bob Call, Tom Kepler, Dennis Wiczorek, Tom Junck, Mike Stassi, Scott Gomez, Rich Gorst, Les Gammeter, Mark Hoffmann, Ron Disch, Marvin Milleville, Ron Dommershausen, Bill Kracke, Jim Virnig, Elmer Racek and Tom Corcoran.

We had a moment of silence for Keith Urbach and Allen Worth.

Mark gave us a run down on the work situation, the solidarity rally and Governor Walker's recall.

Birthday of the month-Marv Milleville.

We heard that Florian Stamm is having some health issues. We send our prayers to him.

Plan to join us at Toby's Supper Club on Monday, April 9th at noon, for the next retiree's luncheon.

Hope to see you there!

Elmer Racek
Local #159 Photographer/biographer and all around great guy!

Free to a needed home

Fairly new, top-loading Maytag washing machine – heavy duty – large capacity.

For more information, contact Ken Nunes at 608-358-3021



It is with great sadness that we report the death of Brother Allen Worth, who passed away March 7th.

Allen was a 65 year member of the IBEW and very proud to be a union member. He enlisted in the Marine Corp in 1941 and served in the Pacific Theatre.

He was last employed by the UW as an electrician where he worked for 30 years. He was a generous man, liked by everyone who knew him.

The thoughts and prayers of #159 go out to the Worth family.

Baby News

Proud Grandparents, Sister Carol Grundahl and Brother Dan Grundahl, welcomed granddaughter, Brooklyn Marie Grundahl, born on leap day, February 29th to parents, Nate and Katie Grundahl.



Illness and Injury

Brother Kevin Olson is recovering from Achilles reconstruction surgery and will be off work for about four months.

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 #180.

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.

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MADISON, WI
PERMIT NO. 199