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The Local 159 Line*

IBEW 159

MARCH 2014

Online Version

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Business Manager's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

You would think, with a last name like Doyle, I would be looking forward to St. Patrick's Day. Instead, I am eagerly awaiting the start of spring, which brings longer days, warmer weather, and—I hope—less snow shoveling!

Jeremy Waugh and I attended an organizing class at the School for Workers in late January. Organizing expanded the IBEW to nearly one million members in 1976, and it sustains us today. There are various ways organizing happens. "Self-organizing" happens when we are all on the same page and work together to accomplish a goal. Contractor organizing occurs when we organize non-signatory contractors into our way of doing things through our collective bargaining agreement. By the way; we signed another contractor last week.

Additionally, I attended a pension trust conference in Buena Vista, Florida, through the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans. Among other things, I learned the importance of being an engaged trustee who lobbies for you, the beneficiaries.

The course also outlined the proper documentation one should possess in order to be effective and informed.

Speaking of benefits, people who visit the office often mention ways our health and welfare benefits should be changed, so I was disappointed that only eight members attended the Health & Welfare Seminar on February 19. You still have an opportunity to get your questions answered! Come learn more about our Pension Trust and retirement planning on **Wednesday, March 19, at 5:00 p.m.** from the Prudential Retirement and Manning Napier Advisors team. What questions do you have about your retirement?

Last month, I had the opportunity to jump into a cold lake for a good cause. Some of the other members and I joined many other brave people and participated in the Polar Bear Plunge. I would personally like to thank Kathlean Wolf for taking the time to coordinate this event, and all the other members that participated in person, or through generous donations. Working together, Local 159 raised \$1,050 for Special Olympics.

I am privileged to serve the members of IBEW Local 159. The other business agents and I have accomplished a lot in the last several months but there is still a lot of work to do. Let me end with a quote from Helen Keller: “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

See you at the next union meeting on March 13.

In Solidarity,
Robert P. Doyle



Referral Agent's Report

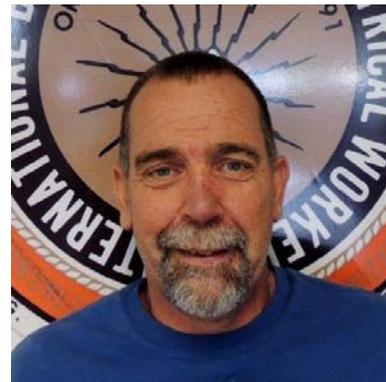
As you all know, when the cold weather breaks, we should see work pick up. Epic looks like it will pick up in late spring or early summer. The Edgewater is coming along well. Memorial Union is slowing down.

I recently visited Eastside Hospital, which just took eight JW's. It's a great example of how a jobsite ought to look—clean and organized. If you see unsafe conditions on any job, or apprentice ratios that don't look right, call the Hall at break or lunch. Let us know.

Brothers and Sisters, our reputation depends on your actions in the field. Taking off fifteen minutes early now and then seems like nothing, but in the end it can cost a contractor a project worth dozens of jobs. When you work eight for eight, union labor gets a reputation for being the very best.

Please let the Hall know if you hear about any city or county meetings that could impact work. We've been attending as many of these meetings as we find out about and letting the city leaders know that union labor matters.

Solidarity,
Jeff Crocker



Organizer's Report

I have had a couple members step up with information regarding their community's development plans and future buildings that are coming up. I plan to meet with them and go to a city meeting with them. Thank you for your efforts.

I recently went to an organizing blitz in Wausau. It was more of a cleanup visit with contractors, making sure we knew which non-union contractors we should visit, and updating the non-union workers information.

There will be an organizing blitz in our Local in April. If you are out of work and would like to assist us in your area (no one knows it better) contact us in the Hall and we will get you on the schedule. We will also have a short orientation meeting to explain what you need to know.

On the safety side of work, you *are* your "brother's" keeper. As work picks up this spring, please keep your family in mind and make it home safe every day.

There is a phenomenal amount of work going on in the country today. If you are far down on the books and willing to travel, stop into the Hall and we will be glad to help you find work.

The Legislative Session ends in March. Lawmakers will be rushing bills through for votes to become law. We have some good help government-savvy partners who keep us in the loop. It is always last minute, but we do what we can to be there and speak up in favor of labor with a good living wage and benefit package. We also push for best-value contractors.

In Brotherhood Everybody Wins,
Jeremy Waugh



Membership Development

There are still plenty of seats available for Significant Code Changes for 2014. This class will be held on March 15, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Hall, Room 201. There are 8 CEU's attached to this course. Lunch is provided. Remember to call the Apprenticeship Office to register for this class, or any class you're interested in taking, at (608) 221-3321. We're still looking for a few people that would be interested in signing up for OSHA 30 so that we can get that class up and running.

On our Local 159 homepage in the far right column under "Important Links," there is a link to Wisconsin Electrical Employee Benefits Fund (WEEBF) that will give you access to a wealth of information. You can download forms for things like Flex Reimbursement or Change of Address. You can follow links to view our health and welfare summary plan or our retirement plan, and check out Health Dynamics, which is an opportunity to get a free yearly physical through our plan with a preferred provider.

WEEBF also has a members-only area where you can access your personal eligibility, work history, Flex spending, and claim history. When you became eligible for insurance, WEEBF gave you a username and password on a piece of paper that was in your packet. If you have misplaced it or have forgotten either one, call WEEBF at (608) 276-9111

to request new ones. To protect your personal security, that information can only be sent to you by U.S. Mail.

We are working hard to build unity and solidarity with all the trades. We are also making personal connections with our alders, making our presence known during public meetings where they discuss bills that might have an impact on our trade. Are you willing to get to know your local leaders and get involved in your community in a positive way? Will you help your Local make a positive impact in the community that you live in or work in? Ask yourself, “Do I want to wait around and hope for change? Or do I want to be part of the reason things do change?”



Strength with numbers and solidarity,
Casey Healy

APPRENTICE CORNER: Taking care of your pliers

“I thought the circuit was off!”



The next thing this apprentice heard was a loud SNAP-BANG! Their linemans had two neat holes in them; one from the hot wire and the other from the neutral.

**ACT LIKE IT'S HOT
JUST IN CASE IT'S NOT.**



ALWAYS check to see if a circuit is live. You don't want to find out the hard way when your dikes complete the circuit! Avoid burns to your eyes and hands:



Cut each wire individually →

STIFF STUFF?



Stiff pliers put extra wear-and-tear on your hands. Keep it loose, save the strain. WD-40 is okay for every-day, but once a month, take some good penetrating oil and work it into the joint, opening and closing the jaws for about ten minutes. The grime will float right up out of the joint.



Have tips to share? Call, email the newsletter, or send a postcard. We'll feature tips here.

~ Save the Dates ~

| March | |
|----------------|---|
| Mar 6 | Member Forum , 4:30 p.m. Labor Temple, Room 115 (RSVP by March 5, 4:30 p.m.) |
| Mar 10 | Retirees Luncheon, 12:00 p.m., Monona Gardens. Re-Sign the Book, March 10 – 16 |
| Mar 13 | Union Meeting , 5:30 p.m. |
| Mar 15 | Significant Changes to NEC 2014 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Labor Temple To register, call (608) 221-3321 |
| Mar 16 | Re-Sign the Book, March 10 – 16 |
| Mar 19 | WEEBF Seminar: Pension 5:00 p.m., Labor Temple, room TBA |
| Mar 24 | Newsletter submission deadline |
| April | |
| Apr 1 | VOTE , No Fooling! Spring Election See February newsletter for info |
| Apr 8 | Member Forum , 4:30 p.m. Labor Temple, Room TBA (RSVP by April 7, 4:30 p.m.) |
| Apr 10 | Re-Sign the Book, April 10 – 16 |
| Apr 10 | Union Meeting, 5:30 p.m. |
| Apr 10 | Raffle Drawing for Scholarship Fund Have your tickets yet? You may already have won! |
| Apr 24 | Newsletter submission deadline |
| May | |
| May 10 | Re-Sign the Book, May 10 – 16 |
| May 31 | Deadline for early-bird registration, Bob Palmer Golf Classic, \$65 |
| June and July | |
| Jun 30 | Last day to register for Bob Palmer Golf Classic, \$75 |
| July 19 | Bob Palmer Golf Classic, Bridges Golf Course, Madison. |

↑

Re-Sign

↓

Scholarship Committee Report

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters. The scholarship committee would like to express our gratitude to Kevin Klepper, who won the 50/50 raffle and donated it all back.

We have changed the Bob Palmer Classic date and location to July 19, at the Bridges Golf Course in Madison. The early-bird registration is \$65 if paid by May 31, and \$75 if paid by **June 30, the last day to sign up.**

We need your help. Yes you. **Please help sell raffle tickets.** Come to the Hall or to the March union meeting, get 10 or more tickets, and take them to your job or wherever you go. Sell them to everybody, they don't have to be a member. Tickets cost \$10 each, and the drawing is April 10. You don't have to be present to win. Prizes will include a 50" Smart TV, a folding knife, a laptop computer, an embroidered jacket, and a Winchester rifle.

Tim Coger

In Memoriam

Justin Lentz



It is with great sadness that we report the death of Brother Justin Lentz on February 15, in a skiing accident in Twin Lakes, Colorado. Justin had worked for Staff Electric since 2005.

Justin is survived by his parents Bob and Connie Lentz; his fiancée, Erin Watson; dogs, Hurley Wisco and Kix; brother Chad and sister-in-law Tiffany Lentz; sister Keana Lentz; grandparents Harold and Donna Heitke, and Robert and Diane Lentz. Pflanz Funeral Home in Portage is taking care of the arrangements.

Justin was a kind and caring man. He will be deeply missed by the many Local 159 members whose lives he touched. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Lester Gammeter

Brother Lester F. Gammeter, Sr., age 89, passed away on Thursday, February 27, at Agrace Hospice Care. His funeral will be held Thursday, March 13, at Holy Mother of Consolation in Oregon. The funeral is at 11:00 a.m., with visitation from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Gammeter family.

Fred Cox

Condolences also go out to the family of retired Brother Fred Cox, who passed away February 4. Fred was a 30-year member of Local 159.

Member Announcements

Baby News

John and Dawn Brandenstein welcomed daughter, Samantha Mae, born December 31, 2013 weighing 7 lbs., 10 oz.



Travis and Liz Ripp became parents on November 11, 2013 when son, Robert, was born, weighing 6 lbs., 6 oz.

Derek and Stephanie Wipperfurth welcomed their first child, Owen Paul Wipperfurth, on December 23, 2013, weighing 8 lbs., 7 oz., and 21" long.

Congratulations
to all our
New Parents!

Illness and Injury

Brother **William Kracke** is recovering from back surgery and doing fine.

Retired Brother **Jim Virnig** is recovering from some minor heart issues.



Brother **Joe Spataro** is recovering from double knee replacement surgery. He is recovering at the Good Samaritans in Lodi. He sounds great and should be home in the next couple of weeks.

Take good care of yourselves, Brothers!



Anniversary

Andrew and Kim Bangert will celebrate their 20th Wedding Anniversary in April.

Congratulations, and here's to many more!

| LOCAL 159 LINE | |
|---|---|
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| Treasurer | Dan Brein |
| Executive Board | |
| Shane Gibson | Dan McGrath |
| Jeff Kerwin | Keith Miller |

| Union Dues for 2014 | |
|---|----------|
| Monthly | \$ 33.75 |
| Quarterly | \$101.25 |
| Six Months | \$202.50 |
| Yearly | \$405.00 |
| Contact the office for the current death benefit | |
| If you are paying dues for the full year and sending your payment by mail, we will send you a coupon for a free gift. | |
| You do not have to pay in person. Dues payments may be made by check, money order, cashier's check, or cash. Feel free to contact the office at (608) 255-2989. | |

Share your newsletter ideas, stories, feedback
newsletter@ibew159.org Or call, or write.

Newsletter deadlines

March 24, April 28, May 26.

To receive the newsletter by U.S. Mail
contact the office to opt in,
or view online at www.ibew159.org

Apprentices, Our Future

Have you noticed the growing number of apprentices becoming involved in Local 159? They serve on committees, they build and maintain Local 159's web site, they continue to enthusiastically help with Fantasy in Lights, they help write and produce this newsletter.

The Local is stronger because of them. Besides giving their time, apprentices often provide computer and technology skills.

Today we depend more and more on computers and new technology. Many of us pay our bills online and file taxes electronically; many communicate via email and text. It is not uncommon to see tech-savvy younger members consulting smart phone apps to calculate things like pipe fill and box fill. Now more than ever, apprentices are our link to the future. Apprentices are here to learn the trade, but we can all learn from each other.

Historically, apprentices have been told, "Be seen, but not heard." Or, "Do as you're told. Don't make waves until you top out." At the same time, leaders moan that not enough people are involved in the union. But is it surprising that apprentices don't get involved in the union after they top out? It may not have been intentional, but apprentices

have heard for five years that they did not matter, that their voices were not welcome. We have not “trained” apprentices to be involved.

We can’t have it both ways. Let’s encourage everyone to get involved, apprentices, JW’s and retirees alike; to become leaders who will carry our union forward. Everyone has unique strengths –young and old, journey worker and apprentice. Each learns in their own way. We all deserve respect and encouragement. **Unless we train apprentices to be involved, we will not have experienced leaders to step up in the future.**

To better support apprentices, we are launching an apprentice section in the newsletter; a place to share information and ideas, to ask and answer questions. If you are interested in contributing, please write newsletter@ibew159.org, or telephone the office.

Maybe apprentices would enjoy the chance to meet monthly for an informal Apprentice Night Out. Let us know if you can help coordinate an Apprentice Night Out.

RENEW has become an important program for the IBEW (Reach out and Engage Next-generation of Electrical Workers). Some Locals have developed active RENEW groups. Sounds like a good initiative for Local 159, too. Let us know if you would like to be part a Local 159 RENEW group.

When younger members attend meetings and offer suggestions from their unique point of view, let’s welcome them. And let’s commit to learning from each other. Let’s create the best future possible for Local 159.

Lisa Goodman

WELCOME HOME!

Apprentice Cameron Knuteson (second from left) spent six months in Afghanistan, training electricians in the Afghan National Army. His role as a non-commissioned officer in the U.S. Army is just one example of the outstanding dedication and competence of today’s IBEW apprentices.



Hunters and Fishers

The Union Sportsmen's Alliance is North America's largest community of union sportsmen and sportswomen committed to preserving our outdoor heritage for generations to come. Through conservation projects and strategic partnerships, USA members will work to improve hunting and fishing access, wildlife habitat, and outdoor recreational opportunities for all to enjoy, now and in the future.

Visit <http://unionsportsmen.org>
for more information

Fun and Games

Interested in playing **bar league volleyball** with your fellow Brothers and Sisters? Leagues around Madison will be starting in April, and we need players to join the coed teams. For more information, please contact:

Fernando "Nano"
(608) 658-6695.

The Labor and Working Class Studies Project welcomes to Madison,

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II

"The most thoughtful civil rights leader since Rev. Martin Luther King Jr."

Moral Monday
Movement Co-Founder

President of the
North Carolina NAACP

*"There must never be a separation between labor and civil rights."
- Rev. Barber*



Speaking in Madison
7pm - March 13, 2014
Bethel Lutheran Church, 312 Wisconsin Avenue

On The People's Moral Agenda
Anti-racism, anti-poverty, pro-labor!

32°F

President Tom Lemens **Water** commends that the members of Local 159 consider attending this event. At the start of the March 13th Union meeting, there will be a brief discussion of whether or not to end the meeting early so that interested members may attend.

8°F Air
Temp

Plunge Team

left to right:
Kathlean Wolf
Dave Boetcher
Audrey Kaczor
Lisa Goodman
Robert Doyle
and
Gerry Smith
Tom Lemens
Casey Healy
Jeff Crocker



Thank you, Local 159!
We raised



\$1,050 for
**Wisconsin Special
Olympics!**

REMINDERS FROM THE OFFICE

Member Forums

The next Forums will be March 4, and April 8, at 4:30 p.m., Local 159 office. Tell your officers what's most important to you. Learn why we've been losing market share and help us plan for the LONG-TERM success of our union. We'll feed you; please RSVP to sblue@ibew159.org so we can order food.

Job Line

If you're wondering about work in Local 159, **check out the Job Line**. Phone after 5:00 p.m. to hear about calls to be dispatched on the next work day (608) 255-0169. Updates are made daily.

Instructors Needed

If you know someone you think would be a great teacher, please give their name to Casey Healy and we'll persuade them from there. Email chealy@ibew159.org, or call the Hall (608) 255-2989.

Resign Instructions

ALL classifications must resign between **MARCH 10 and 16.**

Sign in person, by fax, U.S. Mail, or email resign@ibew159.org.

If you're on a short call, you must still re-sign

Traveling

Work prospects around the country look good. For information about work on the road, please contact Jeff Crocker. You'll need to fill out the ERTS form, get a travel letter from the Local, and make sure your dues are paid. (The IBEW Electronic Reciprocal Transfer System helps ensure proper crediting of travelers' pension and health and welfare benefits.) Some Locals require a state license, First-Aid, CPR, OSHA 10, and so on. Always call first.

Residential Reclass

Contact Casey Healy with your name, address, phone number, and email about classes to finish your program.

Photo of the Week

We want to highlight Local 159 members' photographic skills. Send in your best photos showing "a day in your life." The cold weather provides many interesting photographic opportunities. Capture the spirit of Local 159. Be creative!

Stay safe and follow all rules at your job site that prohibit use of phones or cameras while working. Every week, we'll post the "Photo of the Week."

Send your best JPEG images and your name to newsletter@ibew159.org, and view member photos on www.ibew159.org.



This month's Photo of the Week was taken by Brother Cameron Knuteson. For six months, Brother Knuteson's "Day in the Life" was spent at Forward Operating Base Linsey, in Afghanistan, training Afghan soldiers.

Labor History: The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire



By Cindy Johnson, Union Spouse

On March 25, 1911, the deadliest garment factory fire in U.S. history took the lives of 146 young workers, 125 of them female immigrants, the youngest of them 14 year-old sisters.

The garment-workers, who made \$0.14 an hour, were locked in by management during shifts, partly to keep out union organizers. Some workers jumped to their deaths from the 8th, 9th, and 10th floors, not to save their lives, but so that their families would have their bodies to bury. The two men who owned the factory were never punished, and continued these practices elsewhere.

Industrial workers were deeply moved by the tragic fire and deaths. They stepped up their organizing. The Women's Trade Union League stated, *"It is up to the working people to save themselves. The only way we can save ourselves is by a strong working-class movement."*

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and the movement that followed hugely influenced Frances Perkins, head of Public Safety in New York. She worked together with the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and other government officials. By 1913, they had created 60 new safety laws along with commissions and societies to develop the basis of the safety laws we have today.

Three months shy of the 100-year anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, a similar fire broke out in a sweatshop in Bangladesh. The exits were locked and 29 workers were killed, 100 were injured. **These workers were being paid \$0.28/hour, the equivalent of one tenth of what Triangle workers were paid 100 years ago.**

"Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it..." ~Santayana

Retirees' Club

We had a moment of silence for Brother Fred Cox. Robert Doyle gave us an update on the work situation. He also told us of the difficult problems the union faces with maintaining work and trying to gain more market share back. Had several Brothers involved in the discussion; a lot of work needs to be done in the future.

Brother Lester Gammeter was in a Stoughton nursing home at the time of the luncheon; sadly, has just he passed away. Bill Kracke is home after a back operation at the end of January. We made up cards to send to them. Brother Jim Virnig had a heart attack the first week of February. Something was wrong with his heart valves. More doctoring ahead for him.

Had a good turn-out for having such cold weather. We also were joined by new member Russ Thomas.

We'll go to Monona Gardens next to WPS in Monona on March 10th. Come and join us and enjoy the camaraderie.

In Attendance

James Virnig
Robert Doyle
Donald Boe
Roy T. Holm
Tom Junck
Rich Gorst
Bob Call

Dennis McGinley
Tom Kepler
Russ Thomas
Bob Quackenboss
Ron Dommershausen
Stephen Greenheck
Dennis Wiczorek

Ron Disch
Dave Krey
Elmer Racek
Don Dushek
Marvin Milleville
Carmon Howe
Kenneth Goss

Labor-Pedia

People in Labor History

Frances Perkins (April 10, 1880 - May 14, 1965) First female U.S. Secretary of Labor. She served under Franklin D. Roosevelt. Perkins made enormous contributions to labor rights, and safety for working people and labor unions. During the Great Depression, she established Social Security and Unemployment Insurance, pensions, women and child labor laws, minimum wage laws, overtime and 40-hour-week laws, and fire and building safety laws. She also organized committees to help labor unions negotiate with employers. She courageously refused to deport Harry Bridges, leader of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), who was accused of being a Communist.

By Cindy Johnson, Local 159 Spouse

Contributors and editors of this month's newsletter include:
Robert Doyle, Casey Healy, Jeff Crocker, Jeremy Waugh, Sue Blue,
Lisa Goodman, Tim Coger, Cindy Johnson, and Kathlean Wolf