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# The Sparkie Sentinel

IBEW 159

NOVEMBER 2013

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## Business Manager's Report

**Robert Doyle**

Brothers and Sisters,

The days are getting shorter. It is hunting season and there's a lot going on. Here's what we are working on in the office: involvement (getting members connected), education, contractors.

There are many ways to participate in your union: building bonds with your fellow brothers and sisters, mentoring an apprentice or co-worker, volunteering to serve on committees or perhaps leading a new committee. The possibilities are endless. We can all benefit from our collective efforts. Take action.

***You don't think your way into a new way of living. You live your way into a new way of thinking.*** Just start doing things you want to see changed. Somebody else is not going to change things for the better—you are.

The IBEW is known for high-quality education, yet we can and must improve. Some of the educational issues we face are: limited CEU class availability, more than 200 unlicensed electricians in 159, over 20% of our membership is 53 years old or older, education for Construction Electricians and Construction Wiremen, and a grossly-overworked, diminishing instructor corps.

The office staff is working hard to expand our educational opportunities. Meetings with contractors, instructors, JATC, MATC, and various committees are ongoing and productive. How can you help? Become an instructor, provide input, volunteer to lead a study, or become part of our communication phone-tree; contact Maggie Freespirit at (608) 242-1632. We also need to develop a new technological department. So get out there and come back with ideas. There are no problems too difficult for us to overcome.

Contractors are our vehicle into the job market. Without our contractors, we simply would not exist. Since 1979 we have lost approximately 67% of our contractor base. How do we arrest this alarming trend? Consider becoming a contractor! Take your skills, intelligence, and abilities and go after the dream. An abundance of help and resources are available. I personally promise each member who has this goal the full support of this Union. NECA will also help expand your knowledge, education and horizons. Call the Hall!

Finally, I want to answer questions asked by the members:

Member Question: "I pay working dues. I heard that the Business Manager and Agents don't. Why not?"

## MONEY WATCH

LOCAL 159 RENT  
AT LABOR TEMPLE:

**\$3,405**

(BEFORE MEETING  
ROOM EXPENSES)

MULTIPLIED BY 12  
MONTHS:

**\$40,860**

(Source: Invoice of  
November 1, 2013)

Answer: The Business Manager and all Agents pay working dues. Because we don't come under the collective bargaining agreement (our income and benefits are set in the Bylaws) we pay the same rate as the non-represented State workers, which is \$100 per month.

Q: How many members are active in Local 159?

A: According to our ICS statistics, we have 926 active members.



## **Referral Agent**

### **Jeff Crocker**

Work is still moving a little slow at this time.

**Newtron Heat Trace** from Nederland, Texas is doing the heat trace at Portage Power Plant.

**Davis Electric** from Hartford, Wisconsin may have a job coming up in Beaver Dam.

Help is needed November 11-15, for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary display of Holiday Fantasy in Lights at Olin Park. If you can volunteer, please contact me at the office. Special Projects pay is available for those interested. I would like to thank all the volunteers who are helping get the displays ready. The lighting ceremony will start at 5:00 p.m. on November 15, with lights on at 6:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Union recertification for State workers will still take place November 1-21. However, recertification for the Madison Metropolitan School District, as of this writing, is on hold. On November 11, the State Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the constitutionality of Act 10. Depending on how they rule, the Building Trades Council may set up a time for another vote.

In addition to referral work, a lot of my time in October has been spent visiting job sites, working with the Building Trades Council on recertification issues, and coordinating Fantasy in Lights.

Working in the office has definitely been an eye-opening experience. Coming from a philosophy that is about doing the "next right thing" and treating all members in an honest and respectful manner, I have serious concerns about rumors being spread on some of our job sites regarding this office. Whether you have been one of those spreading the rumors, or a member listening to rumors without questioning them, I invite you to

come into the office any time and feel free to ask any questions, to find out the difference between rumor and reality. Or call me for an appointment to meet one-on-one at another location.

## **Membership Development**

### **Casey Healy**

To all brothers and sisters, thank you for coming to monthly meetings. It's always good to see the regulars and even better to see someone who hasn't been there lately, or someone attending their first meeting. Let's individually challenge ourselves to encourage at least one person to attend the next meeting. Explain to them why you attend meetings, "It's informative, it's a place where my voice is heard, I can vote on issues and actually make a difference." He or she may become a regular.

Don't forget what we stand for: brotherhood and fellowship, treating one another like a true brother or sister; and solidarity, a unity of interest, purpose and sympathies among members.

Speaking of solidarity, when working on job sites remember that subcontracting or transferring any work connected with electrical, electronic, or voice-data-video by an employer to any person, firm or corporation not recognizing the IBEW or a local union as the representative of his employees is a breach of our agreement. It's wrong, and it should be reported to the Hall.

During Thanksgiving week, the new phone system will be installed. I am working with the installation company and the phone company to ensure a smooth transition.

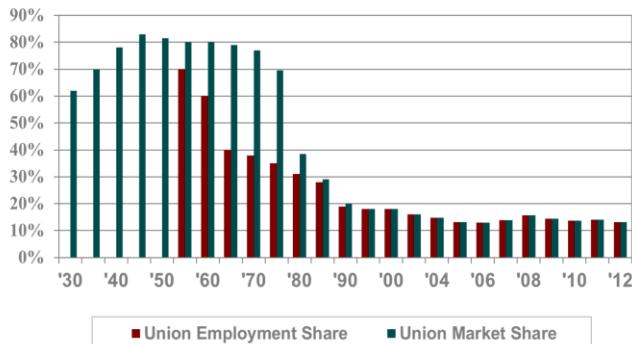
We're updating and reformatting the Local 159 web site. I hope everyone will find it user-friendly. Let us know if you have any difficulties or questions.

*Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery. And today? Today is a gift. That's why we call it the present.*

## Organizer's Update

### Jeremy Waugh

“Union market share” is the percentage of construction done by union contractors under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. “Union employment share” is the percentage of workers actually working in the construction industry who are union members.



In 1965, union contractors were doing 80% of the work, but only 50% of their workers were union members. Non-union workers employed by union contractors were “white ticket” or “permit” hands. Most of those workers wanted to join the union, but were not allowed to, due to the country club attitude that had taken over the majority of our local unions. We had a false sense of security as 80% of all work was done under our collective bargaining agreements; which meant that we controlled 80% of referrals, but only 40% of the employed workforce.

When the recession hit in 1973, we no longer controlled the permit hands and we soon controlled less than 40% of the work; and thus only 40% of job referrals. Non-union contractors picked up more and more of the work, using those workers we had trained but refused to admit as members. In 2009, the percentage of construction workers who were union members was 14.5%.

### **What is “good of the Union”?**

- A. Unions gave us the weekend
- B. Unions gave us Fair Wages
- C. Brotherhood
- D. Just like a state exam, all of the above

I'd like to personally ask you all to reach out to a stranger, help someone you don't know, and keep it to yourself.

### A Reminder from Jeremy

If your contractor sends you to a job site outside of the Local 159 jurisdiction, and you are there for longer than a day or two, you need to check in. Contact that Local (in which you are working) to introduce yourself and let them know you are there. *That Local* (where you are doing the work) should be receiving working dues from you.

### KNOW YOUR AGREEMENT

For all agreements, Inside, VDV, and Residential: RE-SIGN will be required to remain on the out-of-work list. Re-sign shall be required monthly, beginning on the 10<sup>th</sup> and ending on the 16<sup>th</sup> of each month. If signing between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of the month, you will not be required to re-sign until the 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> of the following month. You may re-sign: in person, by mail, fax (608) 255-3014, or email resign@ibew159.org

### Re-signs require the following information:

- a. Name
- b. Original sign date
- c. Home Local number
- d. Book to be re-signed (use one of the following)
  - i. Inside Book I, II, III, or IV
  - ii. Residential Book I, II, III, or IV
  - iii. VDV Book I, II, III, or IV

### **Which of these is not on the tool list?**

- a) Wood chisel
- b) Crescent wrench
- c) Metal file
- d) Aviation snips

[The answer is on page 6]

## **CONFERENCE REPORTS**

**The IBEW 6th District Women's Conference and Progress Meeting,** September 17 - 19, Rochester, MN. I had the privilege of attending and want to share some observations and things learned that I thought were significant. The Women's Conference was held the first day. It began with an invocation, as did the second day. Several speakers asked for a Christian god and Jesus to bless all of us.

Ours is the only district in the IBEW that has a women's conference (men are welcome to attend). I was impressed that this was the 30th annual conference. We learned that there are not -and have never been- any female International Vice Presidents. Several women stood up and told their IBEW stories. The most interesting was a woman who said she was "just a janitor." Just a janitor, just a single mother; but because she was a union member she could afford to raise her kids and is now able to afford to retire. She was so thankful for the opportunities and benefits that many of us take for granted. The IBEW can organize in anyone, not just electricians or lineman, but janitors or restaurant workers; anyone who wants to join the union.

The next two days were the Progress Conference. President Ed Hill and numerous speakers mostly focused on goals of organizing in more members, getting back market share, and the progress different locals have made. For those who would like to run for local government offices, the IBEW can assist you with that. The IBEW is attempting to become more diverse: more women, more ethnic diversity, and more young people (their definition is "age 35 or under"). They want young people to become more involved in the union. Surprisingly few people attending were under 35. [Of an estimated 150-200+ people at the Women's Conference, only nine were age 35 or younger.]

In the evenings, meeting members from other locals was enlightening and entertaining. The I.O. tells us what to do, but a lot of locals are figuring out HOW to meet those goals in ways that work for them. Some have unique ways of holding onto market share; others are planning how to gain market share. We have three contracts in our

local, but some locals have 20 or more contracts to negotiate. Every local seems to have the same problem – how to get more members to attend meetings and become involved in union projects. No one seemed to have the answer.

It was at a union meeting that I learned about the opportunity to attend this conference. I thank the membership and officers for giving me this experience. It has given me a lot to think about and has helped inspire me to become more involved in our Local 159.

-Maggie Freespirit

~ ~ ~

**RENEW Conference,** September 27 - 29, 2013, Washington, D.C. This conference was designed to inspire young workers (younger than age 35) to be strong advocates for the union by becoming active in their locals. As more than 25% of our local is within 10 years of retirement age, we need to focus on recruiting young people —and the best recruitment tool is a happy young electrician telling their friends what they like about their job and the union!

In the workshop, "Combating Bigotry on the Job Site," we learned ways to be allies to minority brothers and sisters. If someone tells a sexist or racist joke, let them know that it doesn't belong on the job site. People being harassed may be reluctant to speak up for fear of retaliation. We can do the "next right thing" by being good mentors and brothers, watching out for each other, and making the job site a positive place to work.

Another workshop discussed forming a Young Workers group. Several of our third-year apprentices have discussed starting a group like this. If you want to help create a Young Workers group, please contact me through the Local 159 Facebook page; send a friend request to KT Wolf or email kt.wolf.96@facebook.com.

The final workshop was about communicating across the generations. It was great to listen to perspectives from the "Millennials" and the "Baby Boomers," and everyone in between.

What amazed me most at this conference was how strong, passionate, and intelligent the Millennials are—they may not come from that

military “take orders” background of many seasoned Journeyworkers, but their Internet-influenced ability to work with others to solve problems creatively is equally valuable. The best of both worlds is a relationship that includes innovation and experience, working side-by-side.

**Next came the IBEW Political / Legislative Affairs Conference**, Sept. 30 - Oct 2, 2013, in Washington. IO President Ed Hill laid out some of the biggest issues facing our union members today. Most notable was the Affordable Care Act. Approximately 74% of NECA contractors have fewer than 50 full-time employees; under ACA, these employers are not required to provide coverage for their employees. The one solution we can rely on in the immediate future? Do not allow health care to become a negotiating point with our contractors. If we let go of our health care plans, we'll never get them back.

IBEW attorney Robert Kurnick discussed the 2010 Supreme Court ruling, “Citizens United v. FEC.” This ruling opened loopholes for the richest individuals and corporations to make unlimited, anonymous donations to political campaigns. In 2012, three billionaires contributed \$91,780,000; \$25,665,000; and \$23,450,000 respectively, to Tea Party candidates; and 47% of campaign donations were not traceable to any corporation or individual donor. If, as the Supreme Court ruled, “money is speech,” I’d say these three men have a megaphone and we’re whispering through a pillow.

I also attended three informative workshops; “How to Lobby Congress,” “Changing the Landscape,” and “PAC Essentials.” I’ll share more about these on the Local 159 website.

-Kathlean Wolf

<b>Local 159 By the Numbers</b>	
Active members	926
Retired members	216
Total members	1142
Member email addresses on file	615
Members logged into 159 web site	257
Members of Local 159 Facebook group	205

## **COMMITTEE CORNER**

President Tom Lemens reports that committees have been named. A list of members is on the 159 web site. For hard copy, contact the office.

More volunteers are needed for the committees named below. As part of committee work, members will help draft policies and procedures. Contact the committee chair directly; or Tom, at [president@ibew159.org](mailto:president@ibew159.org), or contact the office. **Retirees and Apprentices are encouraged to volunteer.**

**Audit Committee:** Help ensure that 159's finances are in order. There's lots of work for three more members, including one apprentice.

**Friends and Family Committee:** This new committee will raise money to help members who are ill, injured, or otherwise in need. Especially needed are members willing to help fundraise.

**Community Outreach:** This new committee will engage members in projects that connect Local 159 members with projects to benefit the community. Contact Kathleen Wolf [kt.wolf.96@facebook.com](mailto:kt.wolf.96@facebook.com), or Tom Lemens.

**LU 159 & Suchoman Scholarship Committee:** Tim Coger wants your T-shirt designs; no particular theme, just something eye-catching that people will buy. Anyone can submit a design, whether a 159 member, family or friend. The winning artist gets bragging rights and a free T-shirt. Tim also wants input on the Bob Palmer Classic. Is anyone interested in golfing as an individual rather than as part of a team in? With interest there may be an “individual” category next year. Contact Tim at (608) 513-1725, or [regocmit@yahoo.com](mailto:regocmit@yahoo.com).

**Legislative Committee:** Hello Brothers and Sisters. My name is Andrew Traverse, and I have been selected as Legislative Chair, part of our President's obligations per Local Charter. We are currently re-organizing and re-prioritizing our political activities to reflect members' various backgrounds and beliefs. If you feel you're more qualified for this assignment please contact our President. We are seeking members willing to attend their local town and school board meetings

**(Legislative Committee, continued)** on rotation, to keep membership abreast of local issues throughout our jurisdiction. All are welcome - active and retired members from all classifications, including apprentices. Any and all input would be greatly appreciated and should be directed to [legislation@ibew159.org](mailto:legislation@ibew159.org).

**Safety Committee:** Jeremy Waugh is looking for one or two interested apprentices. Contact him at [jwaugh@ibew159.org](mailto:jwaugh@ibew159.org), or phone him at the office.

## **Giving Back**

To give back to the community, we're starting a new initiative. Each month we'll support a worthwhile cause. For November it will be the Goodman Community Center's long-standing Thanksgiving Basket Drive. Together, we can help provide groceries to 2,500 families across Dane County, so they can enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving meal with their families.

**Please bring non-perishable food to the Union meeting on November 14  
Or bring to the Hall  
by November 20**

### What to Bring:

Cans of vegetables, fruit, cranberry sauce  
pumpkin pie mix, evaporated milk.

Boxes of Jiffy pie crust mix, stuffing, Jell-O.

Disposable roaster pans, and aluminum pie  
tins. Jars of gravy and  
Frozen turkeys **OR**



**Donate money to help buy  
groceries, at [goodmancenter.org](http://goodmancenter.org)  
(608) 241-1574 (x249)  
Tell them you're from Local 159.**

**Do you know who represents you?**

**Find out at [legis.wisconsin.gov](http://legis.wisconsin.gov)**

**Click on *Who Are My Legislators?*  
at bottom of page**

## **Are You Current?**

When was the last time you updated your information at the Hall? If you're not sure - Just Do It! Today.

If something unexpected happens, your family will have one less heartache.

## **Keep these documents up to date:**

Your current address, phone and email,  
Beneficiary form, Authorization for  
Representation Form (9A Form).

Download electronic copies at  
[www.ibew159.org](http://www.ibew159.org)

For hard copies, call or  
visit the Hall.



## **Sentinel Update**

**Remind your friends** - only those who contact the office to opt in will receive the newsletter by U.S. Mail. The Sentinel is always available online at [www.ibew159.org](http://www.ibew159.org).

**And, if all the news doesn't fit** - we may put more content online. Due to limited space in the printed newsletter, watch the web site for additional information and features.

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**Know Your Agreement answer:** c) Metal file.  
See inside agreement, Article III, Sec 3.17.  
Submitted by Tom Lemens

**Retirees Club**  
**Elmer's Corner**



We met on October 14, at the Village Green in Middleton. Present were: David Baltes, Ray Becker, Dale Bickle, Donald Boe, Mike Bullock, Bob Call, Tom Corcoran, Ron Disch Clarence Dresen, Rich Gorst, Casey Healy, Roy Holm, Carmon Howe, Tom Kepler, Dave Krey, Bill Kracke, Dennis McGinley, Bob Quackenboss, Elmer Racek, Jeff Rowley Don Small, Mike Stassi, Jim Stewart, Jim Virnig, Dennis Wieczorek.

Another great turnout. Thanks to everyone who showed up. Thank you to Dave Baltes for doing the MC'ing. It is always nice to get more people involved. We had a moment of silence for brothers Fred Shepard and Lee Virnig. Casey Healy reported on the job situation and Union affairs. Next month we will lunch at the Coliseum Bar on Olin Avenue, as the Fantasy In Lights display begins set-up across the street. Those working over there will only have to travel a short distance to join us. Hope to see you there at noon on November 11.

## Milestones



Happy 30<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary to **Tom and Jeanne Verbsky**. They celebrated three decades together on September 30. Congratulations!

We sadly report the passing of two active members:

**Brother Dennis Stein** passed away unexpectedly on October 13. He was a 25-year member of Local 159. He always had a great story to tell. He enjoyed boating, shooting pool, football and hockey. He is survived by son Samuel and daughter Jennica. He will be greatly missed.

### **Brother Lee Virnig** passed away October 5.

A member of Local 159 for 32 years, Lee was a kind and considerate man, a skilled electrician and loving father. Lee served in the US Army and Army National Guard for more than 22 years. He loved the beach and was an avid sports fan with an encyclopedic command of stats and sports history. He loved nature, and no wildlife went unfed around him. He was a faithful blood donor for 30-plus years. He is survived by his daughter Emily. He will be greatly missed.

The thoughts and prayers of the members are extended to their families.



### *~ Save the Date ~* *Saturday, December 7th*

Who: Local 159 members and their families.

What: Holiday get-together for members, significant others, children, and grandchildren. Snacks will be provided. Santa will be there.

Where: Labor Temple, room 201 A, B, C

When: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (tentative times)

Why: Meet other 159 families and spend some time together.

This will be very informal. Show up anytime between 11 and 3. If any members would like a table to sell items such as crafts, re-sale, baked goods, or do a cookie exchange, just let us know. Planning is still under way.

If you have other suggestions, or want a table, please contact the Union office (608) 255-2989.

We'll post updates on website and Facebook page.



## NEWS FLASH: The 2011 NEC will be adopted December 1<sup>st</sup>

### November 14<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting Agenda:

- Wage allocation for raise effective December 1.
- Compensation for members of committees and boards.
- Motion on referral language.

At press time, this is a partial list of agenda items. To submit an item, see Tom Lemens before the meeting, email him at [president@ibew159.org](mailto:president@ibew159.org), or leave him a note at the Local 159 office.

### Congratulations to these members who recently completed their apprenticeship

#### Mandy Held, Apprentice Of the Year \*

##### Topped Out:

Justin Deminter  
Andrew Johnson  
Ryan Schmelzer  
Antonio Small  
Kyle Syverson  
Justin Wahl  
Brian Wineke  
Kevin Wirth  
Reed Miller, VDV

##### Topped Out and 5-Year Pin:

Troy Cibulka \*  
David Hannemann \*  
Lue Lor \*  
Cody O'Connell \*  
Timothy Reddy \*  
Joshua Richardson \*  
Nathan Tuggle \*

### Congratulations to these members on receiving their years-of-service pins

Matthew Alexander  
Benjamin Clark  
Matthew Derenne  
Radmila Felten  
Matthew Hill

**5 YEARS**  
Daniel Hittesdorf  
Timothy Johnson  
Justin Minick  
Nicholas Niemann

Glenn Olsen  
Brett Seiberlich  
Jonathan Seymour  
Travis Thering  
Russell Wolff

Patrick Beinborn  
Bradley Cirves  
David Cummings  
Dennis Fry  
Shane Gibson  
Derek Goetz  
Kevin Graniero  
Patrick Jones  
Reed Jones

**10 YEARS**  
Bobbi Kahl  
Kyle Kittleson  
Fatos Kuqo  
Donald Ledwidge  
Michael Marti  
Chad Meckley  
Amber Moonlight-Klein

Christopher Nichols  
Andrew Petzke  
Jeff Rickert  
Shaun Schaalma  
Regina Schmidt  
Jeffery Waisbrot  
Shawn Weible  
Heather Wipperfurth

William Allbaugh  
Vincent Bos  
Timothy Brickson  
Jeffrey Brown  
Johnny Buckbee  
Richard Coder  
Kevin Curtis  
Shaun Daniels

**15 YEARS**  
Beryl Gray  
Dan Grundahl  
Daniel Head  
David Keller  
Ronald Kempfer  
Roman Krueger  
Steve Lange

Sheryl Rickerman  
Rickey Royem  
John Schmidt  
Daniel Schultz  
David Seddon  
Joel Shoemaker  
Norman Stamm  
Luke Tanner

Casey Freeman	<b><u>15 YEARS</u></b>	Kevin Tomczak
Jack Geier	Jeffrey McAllister	Joshua Trager
Jeremy Gempeler	John Meinholtz	Brian Trujillo
Brian Genz	Adam Melka	William Vogel
Kenneth Gieschen	Ernest Newel	Randy Wagner
Curtis Goodyk	Brian Oettinger	David Zadnichek
Kevin Anderson	<b><u>20 YEARS</u></b>	Richard Nelson
Richard Ballweg	Joel Kapusta	Terry Putman
Mark Breitnauer	Kris Konkol	Dale Roth
Thomas Busch	Eugene Krinkey	Fredric Shepard
Kelly Feiner	Travis Kujawa	Randy Smith
Francis Hyatt		David Walhovd
William Bahr	<b><u>25 YEARS</u></b>	Thomas Quinn
James Binger	Jeffrey Kerwin	Randall Reuter
Kurt Boyd	Leslie Ladd	Marvin Smith
Gerald Brown	Donald Maahs	Robert Spencer
Donald Cassels	James Mack	Roger Sprecher
Bruce Crull	Timmy Mani	Corey Statz
Jon Cummings	Brian Marvin	Gary Tearney
Terrance Doyle	Jeffrey Michaelis	Charles Veling
Michael Foti	Jon Moore	Keith Watts
Daren Gunderson		James Woerpel
Dana Barnhart	<b><u>30 YEARS</u></b>	Daniel Russell
Thomas Bengsch	Mark Heiss	Bruce Trager
Dan Breiby	Jack Helbig, Jr.	Dan Wolff
John Dahl	Frank Johnson	Donald Zimmerman
Robin Benton	<b><u>35 YEARS</u></b>	James Kolb
William Feeney	Dennis Havey	Raymond LeFebvre
Robert Germann	Todd Kiley	Casper Pullara
Stephen Greenheck		Christopher Weber
Millard Christianson	<b><u>40 YEARS</u></b>	Wayne Pedder
Ronald Disch	John Holler	Charles Serra
Dennis Eley	John Kujawa	John Smail
James Emden	Dennis McGinley	Daniel Smith
Howard Frey	Richard Meyer	William Timm
Timothy Henneman		John Yurs
<b><u>45 YEARS</u></b>	<b><u>50 YEARS</u></b>	<b><u>55 YEARS</u></b>
Raymond Becker	Richard Anthes	David Auby
Fredrick Kempfer	Ted Cannon	Robert Bartels
Kenneth Phillips	Richard Gorst	William Bates
Richard Schlagenhaft	Eldon McDaniel	Robert Breiby
Karl Schuetz	Armond Moll	Kenneth Goss
	Warren Trager	
	Richard Woerpel	
<b><u>Congratulations to our Amazing Members of 60 Years!</u></b>		
<b><u>We appreciate your experience and dedicated service to the Union</u></b>		
Dale Bickle, Howard Endres, James Fish, Carmon Howe, Florian Stamm		

## **IBEW LOCAL 159**

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**Madison, WI 53715**

### **What do you think?**

The Sparkie Sentinel is only as good as you make it. Your contributions, news items and ideas are welcome. The deadline for the December issue is November 25.

### **To Tree or Not to Tree**

The Sparkie Sentinel does grow on trees, but it doesn't have to. Thanks to everyone who has chosen the electronic version.



**See you at the Union Meeting on November 14th!  
Remember to bring food for the Thanksgiving Basket Drive.**