



The Sparkie Sentinel

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

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

The Official Notice of Nominations and Elections for IBEW Local 159 is scheduled for mailing to this membership. Please watch your mail for this very important notice.

Reminder

Vacation Deduction Option for Inside, VDV and Residential Agreements

If you wish to change your vacation deduction option from 7% to 0% or from 0% to 7%, you must make this request with your employer by May 15, 2013. This timely request will allow the employer to implement your request by June 1st.

Contract Negotiations

Residential Negotiations:

We have reached a tentative agreement, subject to ratification with our residential negotiations. While the contractors were offering another wage freeze and rolling the contract over, we were looking for a much different result.

Most of the negotiations were off the record with discussion about what we can do to get back marketshare. On the record negotiations resulted in this tentative agreement:

- One year agreement
- \$.40 increase in total wage/fringe package

- Remove wiggins tester and replace with a non contact AC voltage sensor, CAT IV rated to detect 50-1000V AC
- Delete voluntary 10 hours education
- Employee recall extended to while drawing unemployment

We will be ratifying this tentative agreement at Mays' membership meeting, so I urge all residential wiremen to attend.

Inside Negotiations:

We are in the last year of a three year agreement, which was subject to a wage opener only. While we opened for wages only, the contractors opened for Market Recovery Addendum, which they could do, but both sides would have to agree to have that be a part of negotiations. We did not agree with that request, so it could not be negotiated this year.

Since we held our ground on this issue, the contractors offered very little in way of wage negotiations. Their last offer to us was \$.35 increase, which was a long way from where we were. Therefore, an agreement could not be reached, so we must take our negotiations to C.I.R. in Washington, DC.

At C.I.R., both parties present their case and the Council decides what the settlement will be. We always want to settle at home but with such a huge gap between the two sides, negotiations had stalled and movement was not going to happen. C.I.R. will meet on May 13 - 15 and we would get the results within a week or two. Remember a decision at C.I.R. will not be voted on. It will be what we get.

Famous Quote - “ The labor movement means just this: It is the last noble protest of the American people against the power of incorporated wealth.”

Wendell Phillips



IBEW 159 Day at the Mallards will be Sunday, June 23rd. The game is at 3:05 p.m. and there is a limit of six tickets per member.

Please contact the hall at 608-255-2989 to reserve your tickets. Please let us know the breakdown of tickets in the following age categories:

Under 5 - Free

**Adults with beer
Adults without beer**

**Joel Kapusta
Business Agent/Referral Agent**

Inside
Book I – 19 Book II –301

Residential
Book I – 1 Book II- 0

VDV
Book I - 1 Book II – 2

Staff has been awarded the University of Wisconsin Campus co-gen chiller upgrade project.

As of this writing, there is no official word on the low bidder for the UW Hospital – East project.

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

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

In the Month of March we have been doing follow up visits with the non-signatory contractors that looked promising during the blitz in January. We had 5 pretty decent leads that came out of the Blitz. They are my priority on OARS right now. I have been going out and visiting with them and I am starting to get a rapport with some of them.

We have also been keeping an eye on jobs in our jurisdiction. We have been visiting these jobsites to talk with the non- represented electricians about the benefits of becoming a Union Member. It is awesome to talk with these individuals and tell them how good it can be.

We had a Top down Blitz in Eau Claire on March 18th. Local 14 actually had some out of work members that rode around with some of the teams to help with the “ lay of the land.”

This was very helpful to the teams of organizers because the local members knew the area and most of the contacts we were visiting. There were 5 teams; each team visited 8 contractors on Monday evening and 26 contractors on Tuesday.

We then had our debriefing on Wednesday after our state organizer meeting. Our team actually ran into a couple of non-signatory contractors that were upset about the delay in the licensing law. There has not been a blitz in Local 14 for the last 6 years and the local was happy to have us there to help them clean up the northern part of their jurisdiction.

In the future there might be another blitz in the Lacrosse area to clean up the southern area also.

I would like to thank our members who continue to call me and tell me what they are seeing in our area. Please keep it up. I really appreciate it for I cannot be everywhere and see everything that's happening.

Don't forget Mother's Day on May 12th!!!
Happy Mother's Day to my Union Sisters who are Moms.

David Boetcher
Governmental Affairs Coordinator

Time to keep an eye on the Capitol

There will not be another election in Wisconsin until the spring of 2014. For many of us that is almost a cause to rejoice. The constant run of elections and the campaigns around them can be daunting and exhausting.

But now the effects of those elections come into focus. While the state voted for Obama and Tammy Baldwin it also kept the republicans in power in the state legislature and governor's office. That means it is time to watch and be ready for what the legislature and governor will do.

For those of us in construction there are two quick approaching issues. In the state budget it is school vouchers and in the legislative bills it is unemployment.

Walker's budget proposes expanding vouchers in several communities (including Madison) and increasing the amount of money for each voucher. Is it better to give free choice to parents or have a more standardized approach for everyone? No matter where you come down in the voucher debate there is one given – it will cut down prevailing wage jobs.

Private schools and private charter schools are exempt from Prevailing Wage as they are not solely a public entity – even if they take public money from the voucher system. Thus more private schools and more students in them mean less prevailing wage work in our area. So for the Building Trades increased vouchers will hurt our prevailing wage projects.

There are also some major proposed changes in Unemployment Insurance being proposed that will seriously harm our membership. The current group of changes is being pushed by some republicans in the Assembly and Senate. A list of the most damaging is:

1. Cut down the number of reasons an employee can quit and receive UI.
2. Increase the number of reasons an employer can fire and still deny UI.
3. Cut down the number of weeks you can receive UI based on a lower state unemployment number. Currently you can get 26 weeks from the state and the proposed change can make it as little as 12 weeks.
4. Deny unemployment if you lose your electrical license.

The one good thing in this budget cycle is republicans are wavering more under public input and pressure. We have already seen several republican senators (including Luther Olson who represents many of our members) say they don't agree with the voucher proposal as it stands.

Both the Vouchers and Unemployment changes are the consequence of the last elections and now we must keep pushing to make sure the changes don't hurt us. In the weeks and months ahead please watch for notices asking you to contact legislators and the governor's office about these issues. We voted now we must hold them accountable.



Retiree’s Club

The retirees met at Alt N Bach’s on Monday, April 8th. The following were in attendance:

Ron Dommershausen, Bob Call, Les Gammeter, David Baltes, Bernie Braun, Scott Gomez, Mike Stassi, Tom Corcoran, Jim Stewart, Dennis Wiczorek, Jerry Miller, Tom Kepler, Rich Gorst, Tom Junck, Ken Goss, Carmon Howe, Roy Holm, Bill Kracke, Jim Virnig and Elmer Racek.

Winners of the raffle: Les Gammeter, Scott Gomez, Mike Stassi, Dennis Wiczorek, Ken Goss, Jim Virnig and Elmer Racek.

A big thanks to Elmer for taking the reigns for the meeting. A great job, as usual Elmer.

Next months’ meeting will be at Toby’s Supper Club on Monday, May 13th at noon. Hope to see you there.

Remember the semi-annual retiree luncheon at the Labor Temple will be June 10th at noon. Mark your calendar and make your reservation.



It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Diane Strassman on February 23, 2013. Diane is the daughter of retired Brother Donald Schultz, sister to Brother Gerald Schultz and wife of Brother Donald Strassman.

Diane and Don made their life long careers together running Capital City Electric. This allowed Diane to have a dual career as a stay-at-home and work-at-home Mom. She provided a warm and loving home for her family and welcomed her home to extended family referring to her as a “second mom”

She was famous for her singing skills and was often the life of the party. She was a wonderful cook and enjoyed creating dishes with her husband to share with the family.

Family was always first and she will be missed for many reasons, especially for her unconditional love.

The sympathy and prayers of the membership are extended to the Schultz/Strassman families

Sister Jennifer Riddle and Brother Brian Riddle lost their Mother, Connie very unexpectedly on April 4th. Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this very difficult time.



Illness and Injury

None reported



It is with great sadness that we also report the passing of retired brother, Donald Schultz, age 87, who passed away April 13, 2013 at the VA Hospital in Madison.

Don is survived by his wife of 67 years, Eleanor, son and daughter in law, Jerry and Joan Schultz, Gloria (Tom) Swayzee and Karen (Dave) McGaw, son in law, Don Strassman, 11 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Don enlisted in the US Marine Corp, serving during WWII in South East Asia receiving numerous commendations, including the Purple Heart. After his time in the service he came home and was co-owner of Schultz Electric.

He was a 65 year member of IBEW #159. Don enjoyed fishing, hunting, bowling, snowmobiling and traveling. He especially enjoyed spending time with his family and wonderful grandchildren.

For any of our other members and families who have experienced a loss this month, we extend our sympathies.



Baby News

Brother Ed Kroth and wife Pat announced the birth of their first grandchild, Eden Gottfried Kroth, born to their son Brian and daughter-in-law Naomi on March 23rd, weighing 9lbs. 7 oz.

Congratulations!

Reminder

We are asking all members to update their personal information with the office and to make sure they have a current beneficiary form on file with us.

If you need new beneficiary forms, please contact us and we will get them out to you.

We also need updated cell/home phone information and email addresses.

Thank you for helping us with the above.



ADMINISTRATIVE NOTICE

Basic Dues

“A” Members –Effective 1/1/2013

Monthly - \$31.75

Quarterly- \$95.25

Semi-Annual -\$190.50

Yearly-\$381.00

“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 #194.

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 an automatic \$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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