



# The Sparkie Sentinel

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

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Well another year has come and gone and there has been plenty happening here in the 159 jurisdiction. Probably the most encouraging news here is our work picture. For the first time since 2009 we have reached the one million man hours worked here in 159 in 2012.

This has been a long time awaited and a very welcomed change for the members. It is good to finally see a couple of projects starting that we have been waiting for for a couple of years now such as Edgewater Hotel and Portage Power house. We have also seen man-hours in areas we haven't been working in such as Sauk County. The Sauk Prairie Hospital has brought us 42,000+ man-hours going into 2013, with a completion in February 2014.

This project was won using the Market Recovery Addendum we created, which without that we would not be working there.

EPIC has manned up with over 200 electricians as well. Work continues at Camp Randall for Nickles Electric, Memorial Union and Promega for Staff Electric, just to mention a few of the larger projects and a new U.W. Hospital East, coming to the American Parkway area this spring. Contracts have yet to be let on this project, as far as we know.

Politically, we have been very busy as well. In March we were involved with the Building Trades Candidate Forum at the Concourse Hotel. This forum gave you a chance to here from candidates in the Governor primary for the recall election and the race for 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District.

We didn't get the job done in the Governor's recall but gained seats in the Senate.

In November we came together to keep President Barack Obama in the White House but then lost seats in the State Senate. We elected Tammy Baldwin as our Senator and Mark Pocan to Congress.

Some of this makes no sense to me. It seems we have people voting against their best interests. I understand we can only suggest who the best Union-friendly candidates are for the middle class, but in the voting booth, it's up to you. The consequences of putting the wrong people in political office is the legislation that will follow.

This brings me to Right To Work legislation . Governor Walker says he doesn't feel Right To Work would be good for Wisconsin at this point in time but Governor Rick Schneider of Michigan was singing that same tune before he rammed RTW down the throats of the working middle class in Michigan. We are hoping Governor Walker will honor his word but don't hold your breath.

We will continue to fight for our members and their rights to living wage and benefits in return for their labor.

We have enjoyed outings such as 159 Day at the Mallards at Warner Park in Madison. Attendance was just under 400 this year which has declined from past years. I would like to try something different next year and that would be a Saturday evening game to beat the heat. I would like to hear from the membership about this plan. The Local 159 golf outing is another annual event which seems to be losing steam as well. It would be nice to see more participation from the membership at these types of events. These events give the brotherhood a chance to enjoy each others comaradrie.

While we have enjoyed no increase in our health insurance premiums lately, there have been some issues members have brought to me that I have taken to the Medical Trust meetings.

One issue is the lack of coverage for therapy for Autism. I asked for a change in our Summary Plan Description to cover this but to date I have not had any positive results. I am currently working with an organization in Madison (WEAP) to get study results that show improvements in Autism patients. It is the desire of one of our members, Joe Shropshire, to organize a support group of those members who have a family member diagnosed with Autism. If you would like to be involved, you should email Joe at [joeshropshire78@gmail.com](mailto:joeshropshire78@gmail.com).

There will be a Retirement Planning Seminar here at the Labor Temple on March 11, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. Members and spouses are welcome. Mark your calendar for this seminar. Food and Drink will be provided.

Early November we held a Steward Training Class here at the 159 office. We had the largest number of attendees that I recall, with ten members, and two of them being apprentices. While the apprentices know they won't be appointed until they become Journeymen. I applaud them for their taking the initiative to get involved. The following is a list of stewards and the projects they are on.

Sue Stawicki – EPIC Deep Space AMP Electric  
Tom Rowley – EPIC Farm Campus AMP Electric  
Kevin Klepper – EPIC 2<sup>nd</sup> Shift – AMP Electric  
Ray LeFebvre - MATC Staff Electric  
Troy Thomsen – Promega Staff Electric  
Mark Sveum – WIMR Staff Electric

If you are on these projects and have any issues, contact these individuals for assistance. I will be visiting other jobs for more steward appointments.

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year.

## **Joel Kapusta Business Agent/Referral Agent**

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Findorff is indicating that Nickles Electric has the Edgewater project.

After meeting with the Perry Group, who is under Babcock and Wilcox and Black and Veatch, Perry says that their portion of the electrical work will take 10-20 electricians and that will start around June.

The electrical portion of the scrubber project looks to be going to one of our contractors who is 80% likely to have the project to start manning up around March.

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

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

The month of November was busy visiting non-signatory contractors, workers and job sites in our jurisdiction. In addition to that, the state organizers put on a contractor blitz in the Stevens Point area.

We need to continue to do this to keep up with the man-power needs of our contractors and man the work in our jurisdiction. When I meet with these contractors, valuable information is obtained and exchanged and really assist me in my job as organizer.

They are starting to hire more electricians because they are getting busier also. I can offer them man-power and other avenues to support

their business. Some of the contractors are getting rid of vacation pay, holiday pay, and a pay cut across the board. This is helping us get some qualified guys to help us out.

The Blitz in Stevens Point was very good in that we cleaned up their area of contractors that are no longer in business or moved to a new address. This helps us organizers out time wise. We cannot get everywhere but when we have 8 guys visiting and stopping by every non-signatory shop in our areas, it is easier to make contact with more than we could alone. The next Blitz is in our area on January 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. I will be getting ready for this after the first of the year.

We need to check out jobs in our area to see what is being done. It helps us by seeing where non-signatory contractors are bidding better than we are. This is good information for our contractors and our members to know.

I hope everyone has a Happy, Safe and Prosperous New Year!!!

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

‘This is a lie, and we will not be silent about it.’

After such a tumultuous last 2 years and the possible future political fights of Prevailing Wage and Right to Work in Wisconsin, I recalled a prayer I heard at the National Building Trades Conference in 2011. Just to be clear, personally I am agnostic but there is a universal message that Reverend Kiley brought out.

So for the Holidays and the beginning of the New Year, I thought it would be good to hear what he said as we prepare to keep up the fight and remember that the attack on all of us is what he was talking about – ‘This is a lie, and we will not be silent about it.’

The full video is on our website at [www.ibew159.org](http://www.ibew159.org) in the Video link on the left of the page – well worth the couple of minutes to hear him.

*OH GOD, YOUR prophet Isaiah spoke your word, “For Zion’s sake, I will not be silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet.” Like Isaiah, this morning we will not be silent. We will not be quiet. Something has gone awry in this land, and guided by you we must speak, we must act.*

*There was a time in this country when a man worked hard and could count on a fair day’s pay, but not today. There was a time in this country when after a lifetime of hard work a man could look forward to retirement, but not today. There was a time in this country when we respected the women and men who worked in our schools, protected our cities, made our levels of government work — but not today. Somebody has changed the rules, and we will not be silent about it.*

*First came the Wall Street gamblers who crippled our economy, gave themselves obscene bonuses, and began the Great Lie — that those to blame are the labor unions and the middle class. This is a lie, and we will not be silent about it. When they couldn’t fool us on that one, Lord, they blamed the immigrants and pitted working people against each other, trying to wreak havoc on a level playing-field for workers. And when we saw that for what it is, they demonized our public sector unions, and we can only wonder: Aren’t our unions [the building and construction trades] next?*

*Today they balance the budget, Lord, on the backs of the working class. Tax breaks go to the ultra-wealthy. General Electric doesn't even pay a dime. They say our unions have too much of a voice in political life but pretend that we don't see the hand of the Koch brothers and other billionaires underwriting their efforts.*

*Oh yes, Lord, something has gone terribly awry in the American house, but today we will not be silent about it. As You gave the prophets the courage to speak out, so give us that same courage. For the working people of this country, the stakes have never been higher. As You gave the prophets a righteous anger, so let righteous anger pour down upon this house. We have had enough. We are labor. We are the building trades. We are America's working people, and we are one. We will not go quietly, Lord, into that dark night, and we will not be silent.*

Happy Holidays and I look forward to being with all the union members next year who will join with us and not be silent.

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### Retirees Club



The semi-annual retiree's luncheon at the Labor Temple was held on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. We had 86 members and guests in attendance.

It is always a good time to get together for socializing and a great meal that was provided by Angelo's.

Years of service pins were also presented to those in attendance for the following years:

#### **40 Year**

Clarence Dresen  
Scott Gomez

David Krey  
Wing MacLean

#### **45 Year**

Bob Call  
Ron Dommershausen  
David Flom  
Nick Havey  
Sig Leskinen  
Marvin Milleville

#### **50 Year**

David Baltes  
Emery Stluka

#### **55 Year**

Lee Lemens

#### **60 Year Pin**

Don Dushek  
Del McGregor  
William Welsh

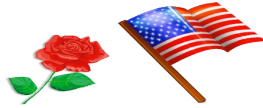
#### **65 Year**

Robert Feller

The next semi-annual dinner at the Labor Temple will be Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. The semi-annual dinners are the second Mondays in June and December.

The next monthly meeting will be Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at the 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter in Verona. Hope to see you there.





We are sad to report the death of retired brother, Jim McWilliams, who passed away November 27, 2012 at the VA Hospital in Madison at the age of 70.

Jim was an electrician for 49 years and a veteran of the US Army. He enjoyed playing the accordion, oil painting and fishing. He is survived by his three children, Mark and Jay McWilliams and Kim Sefkar, nine grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

The sympathies of the membership are extended to the McWilliams family.

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### **Baby News**

**No baby news reported.**

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### **Utility Assistance Program**

Are high energy cost more than your budget can handle? You may be eligible for assistance. The Home Energy Plus Program may be able to help. You can either call 1-866-432-8947 or go online to [www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov](http://www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov) for more information.

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## **Death Benefit Payments**

Some members are significantly behind in paying this benefit. Remember this is also a benefit for your family and needs to be paid with your dues. Thank you for taking the time to get caught up to date.

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## **Dollar Bank Donation**

If you are in need and eligible for a dollar bank transfer, please contact the office. We have a member willing to make a donation to a brother or sister in need.



**Season's Greetings from the office Staff of  
IBEW #159.**

**Betsy and Sue would like to wish all the  
members and their families a Merry  
Christmas, Happy Holidays, and happy  
healthy 2013!**

## 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 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

“A” members should send death benefit payments along with their dues payment (\$1.00 for each death benefit). We are currently on #191.

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.**

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