



# INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS **LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS - OCTOBER 2012**

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For "Contact Us" link.



Brothers and Sisters:

Fall is in the air, the elections will soon be finished and the contract negotiation process is in full swing. I recently had the opportunity to attend the Membership Development (Organizing) Conference, where the importance of the number of members belonging to Unions was discussed in great detail. Over the last number of decades the overall number of people in Unions has been on a steady decline. It is a trend that must be reversed. At its peak, all the Unions accounted for over 30% of the entire workforce in the United States. Great political influence at that time of our history. Some of the good work rules and benefits that were implemented at that time still exist today. But as the Union numbers continue to decline, the attack on those work rules and benefits increases ten-fold. A prime example that you hear a lot of discussion about is the defined benefit retirement programs. They paint the picture that the program is a dead horse, too expensive and it just needs to go away. At the same time that you are being told about your retirement program, they are also telling you that Social Security is no longer the answer to your retirement and needs to go away also. This is just a current example, brothers and sisters, of why we must constantly strive to organize new members into the Union. The more members we have, the greater the political influence we have. Consider what just transpired with NFL Referees and their contract. It got so bad that enough people finally said enough is enough. Phone calls were made, pressure was put on the owners to settle and in 2 days the contract was suddenly done. Now **that** is political influence!

Brothers and Sisters, that is why organizing is so important! Just as important, is who we vote for this November! We need to continue to elect **worker friendly** candidates to stop this pressure to take away benefits that we have fought so hard for. Even though Union membership has declined from over 30% to its current 7%, the Union still must have a political influence or some very rich people wouldn't spend so much money to try to get rid of us.

When you go to the voting booth on November 6th, get past the hot bottom issues that either party never change anyway. Vote for the candidate that you believe is worker friendly, that will stand up and fight to protect your benefits when the time comes! Stay Safe! Remember to vote!

Yours in Solidarity,  
Dale Blank,  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Summer is gone and fall is upon us. To finish out summer, we had a great showing of solidarity and one of our better turn outs in years for the golf outing. It is always great to see IBEW, Local Union 953 members get together and enjoy the day away from work.

We are currently in the middle of negotiations at several of the Cooperatives and will be starting other Cooperative contracts in the near future. Once again, the big issues appear to be wages, pensions, and health care. We also have negotiations during the next few months at a few of the Municipals, one of the Manufacturing units, and the newly organized Badger Unified Cooperative Services.

On the political front, there are several key races this fall that will play an important role in the direction of where things are headed not only for Unions, but for the middle class, seniors, and the future of our children. Take the time to educate yourselves so that you can make the best choices for you, your family, and for all the working people in this State and Country.

In Solidarity,  
Martin Sandberg  
Asst. Business Manager

Where did summer go? As we move along into the fall of the year and the temperatures begin to cool and the leaves begin to change color, we are faced with the imminent threat of that first snow. That thought already has me thinking about that first warm day of Spring, that at this time, seems way too many months away! Although we are powerless to change whatever it is that Mother Nature holds for us, the same does not hold true regarding our future. In a little less than one month from now, we will again be afforded the opportunity to exercise our right to vote. Your vote can and does make a difference! Therefore, please

take the time to become familiar with the individual candidates, their respective positions and the impact those positions may have on your future. But, most importantly, remember to vote for the candidate of your choice on November 6th!

In closing, please accept my best wishes that you and yours have a safe and wonderful Fall Season.

In Solidarity,  
Robert Lahti  
Asst. Business Manager

Fellow Members,

With summer behind us and fall season in full swing, many of us turn our attention to the great outdoors. Hunting has always been a favorite pass time in this neck of the woods. Passing on traditions and sharing in camaraderie with family and friends is truly one of the best times of the year. We as a Union Member can also pass on our Union heritage and history, just like a good hunting story!

Things at Local 953 are moving forward with many organizing drives in high gear! Badger Unified Cooperative Services (BUCS) has began the process of negotiating a first contract. Please support these new members as part of our great brotherhood. We also have a campaign going with a large cable locating company called USIC (formerly SMP). This is a statewide effort. Please help by talking a pro-union message if you meet these workers in the field. Furthermore, we are still actively pursuing the Xcel Energy Designers and trying to gain support among this group. Any of your help in organizing new members is greatly appreciated.

"The strength of the Buffalo is the herd and the strength of the herd, is the Buffalo."

Brady Weiss, Asst. Business Manager

Dear Union Member and Family,

I don't know about you, but I'm tired of feeling like the system is rigged against families like ours. For too long, Wall Street CEOs have called all the shots, forcing the middle class to make concessions while the wealthy enjoy record profits and special breaks.

That's what the presidential race is all about this year. **Mitt Romney is an example of all that has gone wrong with our economy.** The former CEO of venture capital fund Bain Capital, Romney personally made hundreds of millions of dollars by **outsourcing jobs to China, bankrupting companies, and breaking contracts with employees**—costing workers their promised pensions, benefits and, in many times, their jobs. He fixed the game so that he made huge profits even when he ran companies into the ground.

But Mitt Romney didn't just make a fortune killing American jobs and businesses. **He's still getting millions of dollars a year by exploiting tax loopholes and by hiding his money overseas.** Even though Romney has refused to release any of his tax returns before 2010, we do know that he's been stashing his money in offshore bank accounts and trusts in several known foreign tax shelters—Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Ireland, Luxembourg, Germany, Australia and a Swiss bank account that held \$3 million.

We have to rebuild the middle class and restore balance to our economy, but to do that we need to elect leaders who will put working families first. **Mitt Romney has proven that he's more interested in making personal profits than in helping America's workers. That's not the type of leader the middle class needs.**

**We need to get out to the poles and vote. Motivate our family members and friends to get out and vote, our voices need to be heard.** If needed, check with your local Election board for early or absentee voting but get your vote counted!

In Solidarity,  
Mark Yohnk  
Political Registrar  
IBEW Local 953

**VOTE NOV. 6** ★

**SUPPORT  
CANDIDATES  
WHO SUPPORT  
WORKING  
FAMILIES**

**LABOR  
2012**



**FIRST EVER IBEW LOCAL 953  
WHITETAIL BIG BUCK CONTEST**

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**TWO CATAGORIES**

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**ARCHERY AND GUN**

**SCORING SYSTEM**

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**POINTS TIMES SPREAD**

**Legal point 1 inch or more times greatest inside spread**

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**RULES**

1. You must be the IBEW Local Union member that legally harvested the deer.
2. Must send photo of you and the deer to the Union Hall within 3 days of the last day of the particular hunting season, by US Mail or e-mail to: [info@ibew953.org](mailto:info@ibew953.org).
3. Must provide a general location of where you harvested the deer.
4. In the event of a tie, the submitted photos will be used to decide the winner.
5. Winning names and photos will be posted on the Local 953 web site and in the upcoming Local Union Newsletter.

**WIN PRIZES!!**



**GOOD LUCK!!**