



## INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS **LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS – JULY 2013**

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Business Manager &  
Financial Secretary

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#### BRADY L. WEISS

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Robert Lahti, Asst. Bus. Mgr  
Brady Weiss, Asst. Bus. Mgr  
Martin Sandberg, Asst. Bus Mgr  
Connie Bremer, Office Mgr  
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E-mail Staff, see Web Page  
For "Contact Us" link.



Hello Brothers and Sisters:

The Local Unions Election Process has been completed. I would like to say "Thank You" for your support in my re-election as the Business Manager/Financial Secretary of Local 953. I look forward to working with all of you as we continue the good fight!

I would also like to say congratulations to all Officers and Executive Board Members of the Local Union that won their elections. I am sure that we will have much work to do during the course of the next 3 years.

During the campaign of this election, one of my opponents wrote a letter stating that they would hire an attorney full time, replacing an Assistant Business Manager, ending the retainer fee paid for an attorney and saving the Local lots of money. First, let me set this straight, Local 953 **does not** have an attorney on retainer. We only pay for their services when we need them. In my first term as Business Manager, I learned in a hurry, if you want a top notch attorney, you must pay them a top notch hourly rate as well. But as they say, you get what you pay for! I have spoken with a couple of Local's that hired an attorney full time. It did not work out well, they now hire an attorney when they need one. As I have stated in my first term and in my recent campaign letter, I believe in continuing education for myself and all of the Assistant Business Managers that work with me. We will continue to attend training courses that help us do our jobs for the benefit of the Local Union and its membership. All three of the Assistant Business Managers, Bob Lahti, Brady Weiss and Martin Sandberg are very good at administering the labor contracts and everything else that comes with it. If and when the need arises, you can rest assured that we will do our very best to represent our membership and only when it is needed, hire an attorney to help us with a case.

Enjoy the rest of the summer, work safe, and have a designated driver when over-relaxing!

Yours in Solidarity,

Dale Blank, Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Summer Greetings!

I would like to briefly address the subject of workplace violence. Having been around the electric and gas industry for a lot longer than I care to acknowledge, I have been exposed to multitude of different interactions between employees. Some of those good and some not so.

Today, as most of you are aware, violent behavior of any type is no longer tolerated by employers. In fact, as an employee you are expected to know and refrain from any violence or threats of violence in the workplace. Given the unsympathetic nature of arbitrators with respect to violence in the workplace, it is highly unlikely that an employee would be reinstated once he or she has been terminated for violating a workplace violence policy.

Therefore, going forward, I urge the membership of this Local Union to communicate and interact with each other in a manner that is consistent with the expectations of the policies of which you work under.

It is contract time once again and the Xcel Unit Joint Negotiations are set to begin on August 7. At this time, 8 additional dates in August and September have been scheduled on which to meet. The following is a list of those meetings that have been or will need to be rescheduled or canceled as a result.

Northern Regional (Ashland) - rescheduled for Wednesday, July 31, at 4:00 p.m. at the Airport Bar (was originally August 7)

Southern Regional (La Crosse) -Thursday, August 8 - membership present at July 11th Regional Meeting requested be canceled and not rescheduled unless necessary.

New Western Regional Meeting Location  
Beginning with July 18, 2013 Western Regional, Meetings will be held at; 504 Valley View Drive, Hudson, WI.

August Meetings to Reschedule or Cancel  
Hayward - Xcel Tailgate - August 12  
Durand - Xcel Tailgate - August 13

September Meetings to Reschedule or Cancel  
Northern Regional (Ashland) - September 4  
Ironwood Xcel Tailgate - September 5  
Sparta Xcel Tailgate - September 16

On a related matter, on July 29, 2013, the Union will be meeting with the Company to begin discussing Wisconsin issues. Therefore, if you have concerns that are related to Wisconsin/953 please forward those to my attention, no later than July 25, 2013. My apologies for the short notice.

Please have a safe and enjoyable remainder of the summer and I hope to see you at the Local 953 Annual Golf Outing.

In Solidarity,

Robert J. Lahti  
Asst. Business Manager

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“We must learn to live together as Brothers or we are going to perish together .... as Fools.”

Martin Luther King

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There has recently been a number of safety incidents that either management or members have communicated to the Union Hall. The issues have been with individuals taking short cuts, a lack of communication on crews and some crew members not listening or caring when their peers bring up potential safety concerns on the job.

For your safety and everyone else's, please correct these safety issues. In particular, if someone on the crew brings a safety concern up to you, don't blow them off. They are only trying to help make sure everyone goes home safe!

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On another note, Dairyland Power Negotiations are scheduled to begin on August 20, 2013.

PLEASE FORWARD YOUR AMENDMENTS TO YOUR UNION STEWARD SO THEY CAN BE SUBMITTED TO THE UNION HALL BY AUGUST 2, 2013.

In Solidarity,

Martin D. Sandberg  
Asst. Business Manager

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**"IN OUR GLORIOUS FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, WE MUST GUARD AGAINST BEING FOOLED BY FALSE SLOGANS, AS 'RIGHT-TO-WORK.' IT PROVIDES NO 'RIGHTS' AND NO 'WORKS.' ITS PURPOSE IS TO DESTROY LABOR UNIONS AND THE FREEDOM OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, WE DEMAND THIS FRAUD BE STOPPED."**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
1929-1968**

Hello~

Many of you may already know, Local Union 953 did reach a settlement in Washington, DC, on the Power Agreement, which covers most of the power line work that is performed in Wisconsin under a union contract. During contract negotiations the parties (IBEW Local's 953 & 2150 and National Electrical Contractors Association, NECA) were unable to reach a settlement. For this reason, the case was presented to the Council of Industrial Relations, C.I.R. in Washington, DC. This body acts as an arbitrary board which gives a binding decision on the award of the contract. The outcome of this settlement was a general wage increase of approximately 3% percent each year of a 3 year contract.

Henkels and McCoy, which does not belong to NECA, reached a table settlement with the Union that was slightly different, allowing for an additional 1% percent increase to the retirement annuity pension plan and allowing for a change to where money is forwarded into health insurance reimbursement accounts from the existing VEBA account to the newly created LINECO HRA account.

I would like to thank all of the committee members from both Locals that helped throughout the process. Also a special thanks to Mike Bellcock, Outside Business Rep. from Local 2150 for presenting the case in Washington, DC. His leadership and efforts allowed for the best possible outcome.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Brady L. Weiss  
Asst. Business Manager