



## **INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS**

# **LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS - SEPTEMBER 2014**

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[www.ibew953.org](http://www.ibew953.org)

E-mail Staff, see Web Page

For "Contact Us" link.



Hello Brothers and Sisters:

It is with great pleasure that I am privileged to welcome aboard our newest group of Union Members to Local 953! After a year and a half of tough negotiations, Badger Unified Cooperative Service employees were able to ratify their "1st Contract" and are now proud members of IBEW, Local 953. I also wish to commend the two Lead Negotiators, Brady Weiss and Martin Sandberg for their perseverance and true diligence in bringing these negotiations to a proper and fitting ending...a 1st Contract. Congratulations on a job well done!

I must now switch to a topic that can and does generate heated debates, Politics. With the fear of environmental changes such as, EPA's Carbon Rule, Frac Sand Mining, Solar Power, and Wind Generation, this upcoming midterm election is very important. It is going to be very easy to overlook the most important topic - wages, hours, and benefits. Who is going to help us protect them?

As Union Members, we have the distinct advantage of collectively bargaining our contracts. There are several groups out there that would like to see that advantage go away. They push for changes such as; Act 10, Right to Work. It should say "Right to Work for Less." They do this knowing that it will weaken the Unions, eventually leading to their demise and then you are on your own trying to protect your wages, pension, health insurance and working conditions. We don't want to go there!

Take the time to study the candidates on all levels from the governor to the township. Find out who is the most "worker friendly" candidates. Have your debates, if needed, and in November as "Proud Union Members" vote for the candidate that will help us as Union Members, protect what we have worked so hard to achieve over the years.

Stay safe, enjoy the beautiful fall weather and make sure to vote!

"Go Packers!"

In Solidarity,

Dale J. Blank  
Business Manager

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Since the last newsletter we have successfully completed contract negotiations at a couple of the Distribution Cooperatives and will be continuing with other Co-ops as we approach the end of the year. At Dairyland Power Cooperative we have experienced the closure of the cost center at LACBWR in June, Alma Unit 4 was officially retired on September 8, and Alma Unit 5 is scheduled to be retired on or by October 27. With these closures, several members have transferred or will be transferring to different locations. We have also experienced some scheduling issues which have resulted from the short notice given for the Alma Plant to run. We have been working through these on a case by case basis and any changes to the schedules have been done on a non-precedent setting basis and tied strictly to the closure of Alma 4 & 5. We have also completed the discussions over the new environmental equipment being added to JPM and have requested dates to commence bargaining over the effects of the new environmental equipment at Genoa. The efforts of all the members that have been involved with these issues does not go unnoticed and is very much appreciated by us at the Union Hall. Thank you!

With fall and winter approaching fast, so is the upcoming election season. I don't know about you, but I have already seen enough campaign signs, ads, and read enough letters to the editor where people bash the heck out of each other. These elections are very important so make sure you educate yourself with the true facts on all the issues and exercise your Right To Vote.

In Solidarity,

Martin Sandberg  
Asst. Business Manager

Happy Fall Y'all!

In a few short weeks on November 4, you will have the opportunity to exercise your right to vote. Whether it be at the Local, State or Federal level, your vote is very important and hopefully you make every effort to get out and vote for the candidate of your choice.

Related to the above, please keep in mind that Xcel Energy will provide its employees paid time away from work to vote, if it becomes not possible to do so as a result of your job. I recommend that you contact your immediate supervision, gain their approval and make the necessary arrangements.

Related to the Xcel Energy membership please note the following as it pertains to the new 2014-2016 Utility Labor Agreement only, and not the Collectors Agreement.

Article VIII (8) of the 2014-2016 Labor Agreement does not accurately reflect what was agreed to at the bargaining table. Therefore, going forward for the remainder of the 2014-2016 contract term and thereafter until negotiated differently, both the Company and Union will Disregard and not be bound by Article VIII as printed in the 2014-2016 Labor Agreement but rather, will continue to observe the entirety of Paragraph 20 of the terms and conditions which can be found on pages 62, 63 and 64 of the 2014-2016 Agreement, in addition to the following sections of Article VIII of the former 2011-2013 Labor Agreement. (Sections k through p)

On April 25<sup>th</sup> of this year, a committee comprised of 11 Xcel Energy lineman met at the Union Hall to discuss the issue of rubber gloving 23.9kv. That committee, although not unanimous in opinion, but by majority, voted in favor of the Union approaching the Company.

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A ballot was subsequently forwarded to the line membership of which 95 responded and voted by a wide majority in favor of the Union pursuing the matter. As a result the Union contacted the Company and requested dates on which the Company could be available to meet and discuss. On September 16<sup>th</sup> the Company stated to the Union that it would respond back once it had an opportunity to meet and discuss the issue internally. At such time the Union does receive word from the Company, I will make the effort to share that information with those concerned.

With Fall fast approaching and the hunting season beginning, remember to exercise good judgment, know what you are shooting at, and be sure to employ safe practices while climbing up into, out of, or while in your tree stand.

Last but not least, please keep those serving in our Armed Forces in your thoughts and prayers.

In Unity,

Robert J. Lahti  
Asst. Business Manager

Dear Members,

With Fall upon us, our attention turns to preparing ourselves for Winter, maybe completing some last minute projects around the house. This is a good time to remember the safety training we receive at work, many believe these safety meetings and training are all from the good will of your employer, but let me assure if you look in your Union Contract you will find in most cases safety meetings are required. Please don't take them for granted and share your knowledge with your family. Many times basic First Aid can be the difference between life and death. Many people that work outside of a Union never have the opportunity to participate in safety events.

This Fall brings another round of Labor Agreements that will expire. The Staff at Local 953 will be up the challenge of negotiating the best possible settlements. Please take the time and get involved in this process, even if something does not affect you now, changes in your life may make it very important in the future. One example of this would be Health Insurance, it's so important we understand not just what the costs are, but what are the benefits. Understanding the true value of a benefit is sometime the most difficult part of negotiating an agreement.

Stay Safe at Work and in the field!

Happy Hunting!

Brady Weiss  
Asst. Business Manager



## **IMPORTANT ELECTION NEWS!**

Starting with the November 4<sup>th</sup> Election, Wisconsin voters will be required to present a valid ID at the polls in order to vote. If you, your family members, and/or friends do not have a current ID, please make sure to obtain one before the election. Here are the acceptable forms of IDs as listed by the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board:

The following photo IDs are acceptable for voting purposes, and can be unexpired or expired after the date of the most recent general election (currently, the November 6, 2012 election):

- A Wisconsin DOT-issued driver license, even if driving privileges are revoked or suspended
- A Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card (available for free)
- Military ID card issued by a U.S. uniformed service
- A U.S. passport book or card

The following photo IDs are also acceptable for voting purposes, but must be unexpired:

- A certificate of naturalization that was issued not earlier than two years before the date of an election at which it is presented
  - A driver license receipt issued by Wisconsin DOT (valid for 45 days)
  - An identification card receipt issued by Wisconsin DOT (valid for 45 days)
  - An identification card issued by a federally recognized Indian tribe in Wisconsin
  - A photo identification card issued by a Wisconsin accredited university or college that contains the following:
    - Date of Issuance
    - Signature of Student
    - Expiration date no later than two years after date of issuance
    - The university or college ID must be accompanied by a separate document that proves
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## **IBEW PER CAPITA NOTICE - "A" MEMBERS ONLY**

We wish to inform you that at the 38<sup>th</sup> International Convention of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers held September 16-23, 2011, the delegates representing the entire membership of the IBEW voted to increase the "A" members Per Capita effective **January 1, 2015**. (The IBEW Per Capita for "BA" members remains at \$17.00 per month.)

The Per Capita to the IBEW for "A" members ONLY will increase one dollar (\$1). Therefore, **effective January 2015**, "A" Per Capita will be \$33.00. If you pay union dues by check/cash, please add \$1 starting in January 2015. If you are on dues payroll deduction or automatic dues deduction, the one dollar increase will begin January 2015. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact Don at 715-834-4911 ex 112, or Grace at 715-834-4911 ex 122. Thanks!!