



## **INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS** **LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2019**

**May 26, 1919 – May 26, 2019**

### **LOCAL OFFICERS**

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Business Manager &  
Financial Secretary

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President

**BRADY L. WEISS**  
Vice President

**MITCHELL W. BARKA**  
Recording Secretary

**FREDERICK A. HINES**  
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Joseph S. Haley  
Brad W. Honish  
Cory J. Tomac

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Brady Weiss, Asst. Bus. Mgr  
Timothy Hemenway, Asst. Bus. Mgr  
Michael Mountin, Asst. Bus. Mgr  
Nick Webber, Organizer  
Connie Bremer, Office Mgr  
Grace Malone, Accountant

### **OUR ADDRESS**

2206 Highland Avenue  
Eau Claire, WI 54701  
TEL: 715-834-4911

### **INTERNET WEB PAGE**

[www.ibew953.org](http://www.ibew953.org)  
E-mail Staff, see Web Page  
For "Contact Us" link.



Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As many of you are aware, our annual golf outing was scheduled for August 24, 2019. Due to only one team turning in their registration form and a few others calling to say they intended on being there, the tough decision was made to cancel the event. We will have discussions over the next several months to decide if we are going to continue with the event. It is important when we have these organized special solidarity events that everyone makes an effort to send in their registrations and money ahead of time verses signing up the day of an event. Much planning and time go into these events, along with money spent on prizes and trying to give the host a close number of people that will be in attendance. Our next event will be the annual ice fishing contest which will be held on February 8, 2020 at the same location as usual (Pokegema Lakeside) in Chetek. This has been our most successful event over the past several years with over 115 members and family members attending each year. Hopefully this year we can return to having the drawings inside!

**Negotiations:** We have completed negotiations at the following Cooperatives in the past month: Eau Claire (4-year agreement), Barron Co-op (4-year and 4-month agreement), and Pierce Pepin (3-year agreement). These agreements have been ratified by the membership. Other Co-op agreements up before the end of the year, include Chippewa Valley, Riverland, and Price Office. Also, the Xcel Energy agreement is up for negotiations and we have several dates scheduled in September, October, and November with the first meeting date with the Company set for September 18<sup>th</sup>.

In addition to our normal negotiations we will be entering into discussions for another plant closing agreement with Dairyland Power Cooperative. They have not announced an official date for their Genoa Coal plant closure but have stated a timeline of somewhere between 2021 and 2029. Our discussions with management will begin on September 10. Members on our committee will be Aaron Boos, Matt Goeldner, Dave Wucherer, Rob Overby, and Brian Kiesling. Please contact any of them or me with questions, concerns, or for updates. Also, you may contact Mike Mountin (Assistant Business Manager) at 715-577-3899. Mike has been attending several DPC tailgates and meetings with me and he is being assigned the DPC units for strategic reasons and in case I am hard to get ahold of throughout this closing agreement process as I have many negotiation and grievance meetings scheduled for the remainder of the year.



Scholarships: The Scholarship Fund Regulations are enclosed. Per the Bylaws, at the Annual Meeting held in March, the membership again approved five individual \$500 scholarships. The application, rules, and regulations can be found on our website at [www.ibew953.org](http://www.ibew953.org). Essays and applications will be due by November 1, 2019 with the winners being drawn at the November E-Board meeting.

In closing, whether you are dealing with a potential plant closing, the fall rush to get work done before freeze up, or whatever other distractions we have in our daily lives, please always keep your minds on the job you are performing so everyone will return home safely.

In Solidarity,

*Martin Sandberg*

Martin Sandberg  
Business Manager

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Brothers and Sisters,

It was great to see many of you at job sites, meetings and 100-year anniversary events this summer, I wish you all the best as we move into the Fall. Over the past few months the good word of Local 953 has reached many future members of our Union, I am confident our best days are ahead. My confidence in the strength of this local is balanced with concern regarding recent actions at the National Labor Relations Board. The National Labor Relations Board is an independent agency of the Federal Government created by the National Labor Relations Act with responsibilities for enforcing and interpreting U.S. labor law. The NLRB is governed by a five-person board (currently at 3 members) and a General Counsel, all of whom are appointed by the President.

**On August 29, 2019 the National Labor Relations Board held that employers do not violate the National Labor Relations Act by misclassifying employees as independent contractors.** (*Velox Express, Inc., 15-CA-184006, 368 NLRB No.*

61) Following an employee presenting group complaints regarding worker treatment at the company and subsequently discharged, the Board majority held that an employer's communication to workers of its opinion that they are independent

contractors does not violate the NLRA if that is communication from the employer is not accurate.

**On June 14, 2019 the NLRB held that employers have the right to exclude union organizers from privately owned public spaces** after a hospital's ejection of two union organizers from an 11<sup>th</sup> floor PUBLIC cafeteria while meeting with hospital employees regarding union activity. (*UPMC, 368 NLRB No. 2*)

**On August 2, 2019 the NLRB found that the employer lawfully terminated known union supporter despite finding that the justification for doing so was pretextual.** In this case, a known supporter of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 474 in Memphis, Tennessee was integral in a successful organizing drive at Electrolux Home Products, Inc. In an anti-union captive audience meeting in September 2016 the employee was told by two managers to "shut up" and "she didn't know what she was talking about" when she took on a manager during the meeting. Shortly after, she was terminated for insubordination despite the company not providing the Board with any explanation for her insubordination. (*Electrolux Home Products, Inc., 368 NLRB No. 34*)

As we work hard to enjoy high membership and market share today, we must also realize that the forces that want to take us down are as active as ever. If you have been waiting for a time of urgency to get involved and build Union strength, today is your lucky day. I hope to see as many of you in the coming months as I did in the past. Please feel free to reach out to me with organizing targets. Remember that Labor Day is a "workingmen's holiday", so be sure to enjoy it!

*Nick Webber*

Nick Webber  
Local 953 Organizer



Brothers and Sisters,

The five locals that represent Xcel Energy have set dates to meet with the Company for upcoming negotiations. We have 16 dates set starting in late September. After the first few meetings with the Company, we should have a general idea of what they are looking for. I recommend that all members make an effort, starting in October, to attend your local regional/tailgate meetings and get the information first hand.

Back in January of this year, the Company sent out a "Dependent Verification Packet". That packet included instructions on how to verify your dependents to include them on your medical/dental/vision plans. A few members have had issues with this which resulted in their dependents being dropped from their coverage. Please take the time to verify that your dependents are still covered. Also keep in mind that enrollment will be taking place in late October. Please take the time to review and submit your benefits. Do not assume that doing nothing will result in a carryover from the previous year.

Most of us at Xcel Energy utilize the HSA High Deductible Health Plan. If you haven't already, take the time to check your OPTUM HSA account. One of our members found out that it was changed from family to single. It indicated that they had overpaid into their account and if unnoticed, would have had issues at tax time.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please contact me.

Take care and be safe,

In Solidarity,

*Tim Hemenway*

Tim Hemenway  
Assistant Business Manager Local 953

Hello Fellow Union Members,

Summer has come and gone, and you can feel the fall weather in the air. This is a favorite time of year for many of us and is also a very busy time of year for the Utility industry. We have completed negotiations at several cooperatives up to this point and have more

negotiations that will take place before the end of the year. The remaining contracts that are set to expire are Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative, Riverland Energy Cooperative and Price Electric Cooperative (Office Unit). Also, as most of you are aware, the Xcel Energy contract is up this year and negotiations are set to begin in September.

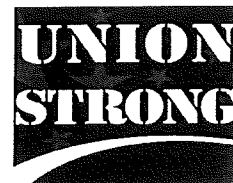
I just wanted to touch on an issue that faces all of us, not just as employees within the electrical industry but as electricity consumers as well. With the shift in generation moving to more renewables and away from traditional baseload generation of coal and nuclear energy, I often wonder if it will get to a point where we can count on reliable electricity around the clock, or will we have to sacrifice the reliable delivery of affordable electricity? While there is no question going carbon free is the path we are on, there is also no doubt that states that have promoted the growth of wind and solar have also seen increases in the cost of their electricity prices even as the cost of natural gas and coal have declined. When and if the subsidies on these renewables expire, it would only make sense that these costs will continue to rise. I guess the threat of global warming is worth it, right.

Also, going forward I will be assisting Marty with the DPC units as he and Tim are set to begin Xcel negotiations. I was involved in the most recent DPC contract negotiations and have been assisting in the current issues that affect DPC, so I'm somewhat familiar with all that's taking place within DPC. In closing I want to thank all of the Union brothers and sisters who continue to stand up and fight by upholding the contract on a daily basis, coming to Union meetings, and taking a part during negotiations to collectively improve all of our wages, benefits and working conditions through support of your Local Union. You are the tip of the spear!

In Solidarity,

*Mike Mountin*

Mike Mountin  
Asst. Business Manager



Hello Members,

With Summer coming to a close, I wanted to share some updates on recent settlements and important information that affects you. The workforce of Pierce Pepin Cooperative approved a 3 year contract extension with general wages of 3% each year, also increases were negotiated to the foreman's pay rate and the residency policy was extended. Recently at Winona Lighting, the Company and the Union agreed to begin Labor Management meetings with hopes of solving a host of issues and building a better working environment for our members, these meetings will begin in September and continue on a monthly basis. Members working under the Power Agreement in Wisconsin performing power line work, will soon see a new Safety Liaison, Local 953 and 2150 are in the process of filling this important position. The Safety Liaison program has been a great success story between the Utilities, Contractors, and Unions working together to promote the highest level of safety through awareness and training.

Please remember as we move into the Fall season with many of us enjoying our time hunting, let's make our experiences safe by practicing the same measures we do at work and share those with our youth, too many our members are injured each year falling out of tree stands, let's make 2019 a turning point for the better with Zero accidents this hunting season.

Thank You!

*Brady Weiss*

Brady Weiss  
Asst. Business Manager

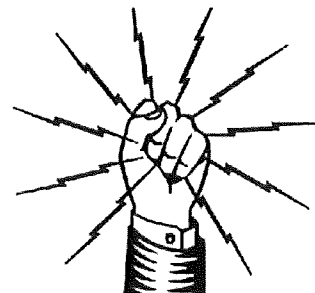
## Stop by our office to check out our Local 953 inventory

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**Sweatshirts \$25 each**  
**T-Shirts \$10 each**  
**Baseball Caps \$10 each**  
**Knives \$20 each**  
**Coffee Mugs \$9 each**  
**Stocking Caps \$5 each**

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CELEBRATING  
**100**  
Y E A R S



## ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 953, IBEW

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### SCHOLARSHIP FUND REGULATIONS

At the September 28, 1990, Local Union 953 Bylaws meeting, a proposal was made and the Unit Chairmen recommended a scholarship fund be established for **children** of all members of Local 953. The language was drafted and presented to all units for vote in accordance with the provisions of the Local Union Bylaws. The Scholarship Fund then became a part of the Local Union Bylaws. The following are the rules and procedures for those interested in the Scholarship awards:

1. To be eligible for the Scholarship drawing, the member must have signed in and attended at least one Local 953 event in the last 12 months. (i.e. any monthly Union meeting, Annual Meeting, Golf Outing, Fishing Derby, etc.) An exception will be made for those that are working in another IBEW Local's jurisdiction.
2. To be eligible all scholarship applicants shall submit, along with their Scholarship Application Form, a 500-word essay on the following subject:

#### “WHY SHOULD I BUY UNION-MADE, AMERICAN PRODUCTS?”

The five (5) scholarships awarded will be randomly drawn by the Executive Board and the essay is the only obligation to apply for the scholarship. Throughout the year the essays will be published in the Local Union Newsletter.

3. In January of each year, the Local Union shall transfer from the Local Union General Fund of the Local Union into an account established as Local 953, IBEW Scholarship Fund, in the amount sufficient to cover scholarships awarded.
4.
  - (a) At the Annual Meeting each year, the members present decide the number of scholarships and the amount of each scholarship to be awarded.
  - (b) The membership shall be advised by mail or newsletter each year as to the number and dollar amount of scholarships to be awarded and the rules governing application for a scholarship.
5. All scholarship awards shall be determined by a drawing at the Executive Board Meeting, in November following the Annual Meeting. The Local Union Executive Board shall decide any disputes.
6. Each eligible applicant requesting a scholarship shall complete an official Local 953 Scholarship form, which must be returned by US mail to the Local Union office (**2206 Highland Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54701**) no later than **NOVEMBER 1**. Applicants **must** list the name and address of the accredited college or university that they are **currently** enrolled at. Applicant **cannot** be in high school.
7. Scholarship winners will be announced at the time of the drawing. Winners' name and amount of scholarship will be published in an area newspaper or newspapers as determined by the Local Union Executive Board. Winners will be notified by the Local Union, prior to the newspaper publication. The checks of the Scholarship Awards will be made out to the accredited school or university only.

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In accordance with Section 4 above, the members present at the Annual Meeting decided there would be five (5), five hundred dollar (\$500.00) scholarships awarded. Children of members interested in the scholarship must complete an official form obtained either from the union office or its web site at: [www.ibew953.org](http://www.ibew953.org). Procedures and requirements will be listed on the form.

IBEW LOCAL 953  
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**LOCAL UNION 953**

**I.B.E.W.**

**100 YEARS  
OF  
EXCELLENCE**

**MAY 26, 1919 - MAY 26, 2019**