



## **INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS** **LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS - JUNE 2019**

**May 26, 1919 - May 26, 2019**

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Business Manager &  
Financial Secretary

#### **TIMOTHY J. HEMENWAY**

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#### **BRADY L. WEISS**

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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

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### **INTERNET WEB PAGE**

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

E-mail Staff, see Web Page  
For "Contact Us" link.



### **Congratulations on "100 YEARS"!**

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

In 2016 the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) celebrated 125 years. It all began in 1891 when 10 individuals met in St. Louis, Missouri and formed Local 1 of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (NBEW). The NBEW became known as what we know today as the IBEW in 1899 when the Canadian Locals were admitted in. This year, IBEW Local Union 953 also achieves a great milestone. Our Local received its' Charter from the IBEW on May 26, 1919 and on May 26, 2019 we hit our 100 Year Anniversary. Initially Local 953's membership was made up of inside wireman who were employees of the "Electric Street Railway" and "Wisconsin-Minnesota Light & Power Company", which eventually became known as "Northern States Power Company". It was not until June 1, 1937, after serving several years as the Local's President, that Sherman "Shorty" Preston was elected by the membership to serve as the Local's first full time Business Manager/Financial Secretary and also the first full time employee. Some of the above facts were taken from a publication that was created by the "History Committee" which was made up from the Local Union 953 Retired Members Club. The publication they wrote covers our inception in 1919 to early 1993. If anyone is interested in some history, let us know and we will email you a copy.

At some point over the last couple of years, I had reported in a past newsletter or at an annual meeting that our membership had hit an all time high of a little over 1650 members. Until doing further research on our history, I believed that to be true. I apologize for the error and the fact is that prior to the inside wireman splitting from our Local and forming Local 14 in June of 1993, our membership total had reached 1808. After the split, our membership total dropped to around 1400 and then we took another hit between 2010 and 2012 when Everbrite closed and when we lost the municipalities due to the State forcing Act 10 on us. In 2014 we also went through the DPC plant closures at Alma 4&5 and LACBAR. These events had dropped us down below 1250 members. Today our membership is at approximately 1600 which is the result of some successful organizing over the last few years.

Much appreciation and thanks have to go out to all the past Business Managers, Executive Boards, Officers, Staff, Stewards, and all Members for all the hard work, fight, determination, dedication, and excellence that went into building this great Local into what it is today. Their desire to improve

working conditions, wages, and benefits for our members and all working people has afforded myself and all of the members a better way of life.

Please see the enclosed flyer for our 100 Year Anniversary celebration schedule which will take place at the regional meetings over the next several months. Also, please mark your calendars for our Golf Outing Solidarity Event, which is scheduled for Saturday, August 24, 2019, with signup sheets enclosed. We have ordered new anniversary t-shirts, summer caps, and can koozies. Hopefully by the time you receive this letter those items will have arrived at the Union Hall.

In closing, thanks to all of those that came before us and fought for what we have today. It has been a pleasure to serve the members as your Business Manager/Financial Secretary and I look forward to continuing the good fight along with our dedicated and determined staff into the future. We will continue to work hard for you and help this Union grow, but what really makes us strong is the overwhelming unity and solidarity of our membership. You are the ones that make Local Union 953 great!

In Solidarity,

*Martin Sandberg*

Martin Sandberg  
Business Manager

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Dear Members,

I am very proud to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Local Union with you! History tracks the true measurement of success, and our Local Union clearly has stood the test of time. Unions in America have been the ultimate back stop against pressures to break the American worker of rights that have been established through solidarity and dedication for worker safety, wages, equality in the workplace, and benefits that support a strong family lifestyle.

Over the last one hundred years our Local Union has seen both great prosperity and depression, born just after World War I and survived the second, stood tall during the economic boom of the 1950's and 60's, watched the Korean conflict unfold into the Vietnam War, witnessed high unemployment in the late 1970's continuing into the early 80's hitting 10.8% in

1982. Witnessed the fall of communism, the rise of conflicts in the Middle East as the United States strived to lead and compete in a new world economy. Moving into a new century, saw firsthand attacks on freedom by terrorists on 9-11-2001, and continued the course of freedom laid out by our forefathers.

Our Local Union has survived countless changes in government leadership, some that have supported us and many that have tried to destroy us. We have seen economic highs and lows, great technological advances, civil unrest, supported the long struggle for freedom for all regardless of the color of your skin, seeing women and men as equals, and supported your choice of beliefs in a higher power. The high cost of freedom has been paved in blood by our soldiers and patriots of all walks of life that have believed in a cause greater than themselves. I won't be around for the two hundredth anniversary of this great Union, but I certainly hope the united message of (Worker's Rights are Human Rights) will ring as loud as it does now!

Stand Tall my fellow Brothers and Sisters,

With Great Pride,

*Brady Weiss*

Brady L Weiss  
Asst. Business Manager

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CELEBRATING  
**100**  
YEARS



Hello Fellow Union Members,

With winter over and warmer weather on the way, the busy time of year for Utilities with construction on new projects, repair and maintenance is ramping up. I just want to remind you all to have safety at the forefront of all you do.

I was able to attend the IBEW Spring Safety Caucus this year and there were several speakers that spoke about various incidents that have taken place throughout our industry. It's no mystery that the daily duties we perform pose potential threats if we don't take the time and use the proper tools and equipment needed to safeguard ourselves. Everyone knows safety but it takes a conscious effort to apply it on a daily basis. We are all affected by the day to day personal issues in our lives that sometimes make it difficult to keep us focused on the task at hand. We are all human, at least most of us!

I just wanted to mention also an incident described by a Lineman from WE Energies where they had an accident and they were not able to get the lower controls on the bucket truck to work so they could get the employee down. They had to get another truck over and setup to assist in the rescue effort. Be sure to take the time to test the lower controls each day prior to use to determine they are in a safe working condition.

In closing, I want to stress to believe in safety, buy into safety, take the necessary time to do things safely and be responsible and look out for those around you. Have a great summer!

In Solidarity,

*Mike Mountin*

Mike Mountin  
Asst. Business Manager



Brothers and Sisters,

The five locals that represent Xcel Energy have met to prepare for the upcoming general negotiations. We have tentative dates set for July to meet and exchange amendments. These dates are tentative and could change. As of the writing of this newsletter, the Company has not communicated with the Local Unions in regards to what their intentions are. I recommend that all members make an effort in the next several months to attend your local regional/tailgate meetings and get the information first hand.

It has been brought to the Unions attention that there is a large group of members at Xcel Energy that are not aware of the Company's corporate policy in regards to alcohol in Company vehicles. Long story short, you cannot use ANY Xcel Energy vehicle to transport alcohol. I understand that a lot of our members travel overnight for Company business and think they can drive to the store on their own time with a Company vehicle to pick up alcohol. This is a violation of corporate policy. If you need further information, please refer to section 9.3 of the corporate policy handbook.

Xcel Energy has been hiring some apprentices as of late. Not adding bodies but replacing ones that have left. Please take the time to embrace these new employees and explain to them the benefits of belonging to a Union. Some of the management at Xcel will allow the Steward to take some time to explain what it means to belong to a Union, and if it's an Apprenticeship, explain how that process works. As always, if anyone needs help doing this please give me a call and we can work together welcoming our new brothers and sisters.

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

Brothers and Sisters,

As we celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the founding of this Local, it is appropriate to revisit a principle that got us this far, organizing. In 1919, ten employees of the Electric-Street-Railway and Wisconsin-Minnesota Light & Power Co. joined forces and organized to improve the lives of their fellow brothers and their families. They may not have known it at the time, but their actions on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1919 would endure the test of time to impact our lives today. In that time, organizing for labor unions and the IBEW alike was extremely difficult. Most employers throughout the nation strenuously opposed organized labor, with tactics that often resulted in refusal of employment, or violence towards those carrying a union card. Looking back, it is clear that the benefits we enjoy today did not always exist for those who believed in our cause.

In fact, this Local was created 16 years prior to the passing of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 which was a foundational law that guarantees the right of private sector employees to organize into trade unions, engage in collective bargaining and take collective action while being protected under the law. Prior to 1935, our nation's union members and Local 953 members alike were subject to laws and Supreme Court interpretations that actively worked against organized labor from laws viewing labor as a commodity to decisions that held unions and individual members liable for performing peaceful concerted activities.

Reflecting on the benefits and livelihood we enjoy today, we cannot ignore what has brought us here. Throughout the times of hardship including a depression, warfare and unfavorable laws, the brothers and sisters before us continued to organize. Effectively organizing our jurisdiction has afforded us to belong in a strong union in the past and that will surely be the case in the future. I look

forward to seeing you on job sites and 100-year celebrations in the next few months. If you have organizing leads, please feel free to contact me and as always, work safe.

To Another 100 Years,

*Nick Webber*

Nick Webber  
Local 953 Organizer

