



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS – MARCH 2021

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 For "Contact Us" link.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This last year has definitely been something I never imagined us experiencing with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, we had several negotiations and temporary agreements created over work rules in an effort to work with employers in attempting to keep our members safe. It also led to several months of our meetings being cancelled along with the ice fishing contest. We are planning on starting the regional meetings back up beginning in April. The schedule is included in this newsletter. Hopefully, with the vaccines being distributed we can finally get our lives back towards normal. At this time, we are not hearing from any of the employers requesting to make the vaccine mandatory. Our hope is that enough members choose to volunteer for the vaccine, so we do not have an employer attempt to go down that road.

Labor Agreements due to expire over the next few months are at Winona Lighting, Fort McCoy, and the Tree Agreement. The pandemic has created safety concerns over meeting in person for negotiations. Over the last year, depending on each group, some we have been able to meet in person and socially distance and others we have or are doing virtually. In a couple of instances, we have secured extensions with the understanding that we will be getting together face to face within the next few months.

As many of you are aware, quite some time ago Dairyland Power Cooperative announced the closing of the Genoa Coal Plant with that final date being around June 1, 2021. That is approaching very fast and many of our members are facing very challenging decisions on possible retirements, layoffs, and/or bumping. These are very difficult decisions, life changing events, emotions and tensions will be at an all time high. There are still many unknowns and we will have to deal with them as they arise. Please make sure if you have questions throughout this to talk to your stewards, Assistant Business Manager Mike Mountin, or myself.

For our construction, tree trimming, or any members that have NEAP or NEBF, please check out our Facebook or Web page for the Liaison Alerts for both of these plans with regard to "MEMEBERS GET MORE THROUGH THE ONLINE BENEFITS PORTAL".

In closing, please continue do your part in remaining healthy and safe. We look forward to the meetings starting back up and the return to some type of normalcy.

Yours in Solidarity,
Martin Sandberg

Martin Sandberg, Business Manager

Dear Members,

Spring is in the air....

That means that construction projects will be in full swing, so I wanted to send out a proactive reminder on an important safety topic that too often does not get the attention it deserves. This should be a part of every job long before anyone grabs a tool and starts working. Any guess yet? what I'm referring to? That's right it is the practice of preparing a proper roadside job site. In the old days to many of us were comfortable when working in road right-of-way just turning on the amber strobe light and believed every driver knew we were there and would slow down, and maybe just maybe, we would throw out a couple old traffic cones if there was a lot of heavy traffic. Well, I'm telling you now, if you still think that is adequate, it is only a matter of time before you will be involved in an accident. There are far too many distractions drivers deal with inside their cars that we must prepare for.

As an industry we need to make sure that we are following all the best practice related to work zone protection, ask yourself did my employer include a traffic control plan in the design and pre-construction of this project? If not, that should immediately be brought to their attention and the project should not begin until this is addressed. All crew members should review the plan to ensure the work site is protected. In many cases extra signs may be required to alert drivers of changing conditions, allow enough space to transition traffic through the work zone, cones and barrels should be used to direct traffic follow, flaggers must be used during stop and go traffic set-ups, barricades and blocker vehicles must be used to protect workers. High Visibility reflective clothing must be worn by all workers, this includes your rain gear when working in inclement weather. Strobe lights and flashers should always be activated on the vehicles. Because many roadways are under continuous construction drivers have become (sign blind) to traffic control devices, for this reason we must use all the protective measures available to us when working in the road right-of-way. Don't forget about sidewalks, driveways, paths, and trails during this process.

During unplanned emergency work, traffic control must immediately be considered when arriving on site. At this point it may become necessary to completely CLOSE THE ROAD! to protect the work site until the correct control devices and personnel are in place to

perform the work safely. Police and Fire Departments in many cases, may need to stay on scene or be dispatched to assist. Do not be afraid to ask for help or close a road to protect workers and the public from hazardous conditions. Let's make sure that our company vehicles are equipped to handle the traffic conditions that we routinely work in, and teach our new co-workers about the importance of setting up a safe work site every time!

Safe Regards,

Brady Weiss

Brady Weiss

Asst. Business Manager

Brothers and Sisters,

Earlier this year, the Maintenance Technicians employed by the Pablo Group of Eau Claire exercised their right of concerted activity to form a Union to collectively bargain with the employer regarding their conditions of employment. Throughout this process, we could not be more proud of their commitment to collective strength all while playing an integral part of the downtown community each day.

The election took place via mail ballot conducted by the National Labor Relations Board Region 18 based in Minneapolis, Minnesota with the ballots sent to the Employees on February 12, 2021. To provide sufficient time to mail completed ballots back, there will be an official ballot count on March 8, 2021 at Region 18.

We are thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with these folks so far and look forward to creating a fair and just workplace in the future. Eau Claire has been a Union town in the past and will continue to be for years to come. The only way we can guarantee that future is through organizing.

I hope you will join in welcoming the Pablo Group Maintenance Technicians into this great brotherhood!

In Solidarity,

Nick Webber

Nick Webber

Local 953 Organizer

Brothers and Sisters,

Hope all is well with you and your family.

Several months ago, the Local Unions that represent Xcel Energy, worked with management to get our critical 1 employees bumped up the list for the COVID-19 vaccine. Fortunately, we were able accomplish this task. The vaccine rollout is being handled by state and by county. As of this time, vaccines are not mandatory. In February, our members at the Ironwood Michigan Service Center received their first vaccine. As of the writing of this letter, Eau Claire County has contacted Xcel management and asked them to pole our members and see who wants the vaccine. Once that information has been retrieved and turned over to the county health system, the county health system will be reaching out to the employee's that want the vaccine and schedule an appointment. I would assume that the other counties in our service territory will be doing the same. Please be ready to take the call and get your shot scheduled. This is a process that has been moving fast so be ready.

In regards to the pandemic, fortunately things seem to be turning around in our areas. That is great news. As Marty indicated in his letter, and assuming things continue to improve, we hope to start Regional Meetings in April. As far as tailgate meetings, I have not been given a timeframe when I will be allowed on Company property. A majority of the tailgates have been held at our service centers or shops. So for now, starting hopefully in April, if your group would like to have a tailgate please have your steward give me a call and we can see if we can find a place to meet and have a meeting.

Please be safe and take care of each other and hopefully we will see you soon!

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

In Solidarity,

Tim Hemenway

Tim Hemenway
Assistant Business Manager

Hello Fellow Union Members,

The long cold winter is finally coming to an end and warmer weather will soon be upon us. I guess it wasn't quite that bad, but in the years to come, I am sure mother nature will find a way to make up for it! Hope all of you are doing well and staying clear of the Covid-19. With vaccinations available now for those who want them, hopefully we are one step closer to getting back to normal life. Regardless, we still all have a job to do and it has been challenging but for the most part we have all adapted. I know utilizing zoom and the other apps for meetings, negotiations and even an Arbitration case has been a new experience for me.

We recently negotiated a contract at Riverland Energy and acquired a two-year agreement with a wage increase along with some changes to the meal provision in the contract. During the negotiating process we had a combination of in person meetings as well as communication by phone and email, due to members of the bargaining committee coming down with Covid-19 as well as having it myself. This year we have agreements set to expire at Price Electric Line, Jump River Electric Line and Office and Taylor Electric Cooperative so we will be looking to amend those contracts.

I know in my last newsletter I mentioned an Arbitration case at Price Electric Cooperative regarding a rest time issue. We received a decision back from the arbitrator and he agreed 100% with the Unions position that the evidence showed the parties had clearly applied the rest time language in the same way over time and that Managements position was something new and had never been the process for rest time. The Employer was ordered to cease and desist from refusing to pay employees for all hours of rest time that overlap the regular work hours, from refusing to allow employees to take an unpaid lunch break after returning from paid rest time and also from refusing to pay employees at the appropriate overtime wage rate in cases where employees return from rest time and then work through their lunch break.

Until next time stay healthy and work safe!

In Solidarity,

Mike Mountin

Mike Mountin
Assistant Business Manager

NOTICE TO ALL
LOCAL UNION 953 MEMBERS

ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2021

9:00 AM

EAU CLAIRE LABOR TEMPLE
2233 BIRCH STREET
EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN

THE MEETING IS FOR ALL MEMBERS.
HAVE A VOICE IN *YOUR* UNION!

THE AGENDA WILL INCLUDE
THE ELECTRICAL WORKERS CLUB &
LOCAL UNION BY-LAWS MEETINGS

Masks will be available at the door and will be mandatory

LOCAL UNION 953 REGIONAL UNION MEETINGS**2021****WESTERN REGIONAL MEETINGS - THIRD WEDNESDAY**

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Wednesday	January 20, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	February 17, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	March 17, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	April 21, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	May 19, 2021	All meetings held at:	4:00 PM
Wednesday	June 16, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	July 21, 2021	Meister's Bar & Grill	4:00 PM
Wednesday	August 18, 2021	1402 Cty Road A	4:00 PM
Wednesday	September 15, 2021	Boardman, WI	4:00 PM
Wednesday	October 20, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	November 17, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	December 15, 2021		4:00 PM

FLOATING REGIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Tuesday	January 7, 2021	Alma Cancelled COVID	5:15 PM
Thursday	February 4, 2021	Barron Cancelled COVID	5:00 PM
Thursday	March 18, 2021	Lancaster Cancelled COVID	5:30 PM
Tuesday	April 13, 2021	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	May 6, 2021	VFW, Barron, WI	5:00 PM
Thursday	June 17, 2021	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM
Tuesday	July 13, 2021	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	August 5, 2021	VFW, Barron, WI	5:00 PM
Thursday	September 16, 2021	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM
Thursday	October 7, 2021	American Legion, Alma, WI	5:15 PM
Thursday	November 4, 2021	VFW, Barron, WI	5:00 PM
Thursday	December 16, 2021	Wolf's Grantland Graphics, Lancaster, WI	5:30 PM

NORTHERN REGIONAL MEETINGS - FIRST WEDNESDAY

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Wednesday	January 6, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	February 3, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	March 3, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	April 7, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	May 5, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	June 2, 2021	All meetings held at:	4:00 PM
Wednesday	July 7, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	August 4, 2021	Airport Inn	4:00 PM
Wednesday	September 1, 2021	50964 Hwy 13	4:00 PM
Wednesday	October 6, 2021	Ashland, WI	4:00 PM
Wednesday	November 3, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	December 1, 2021		4:00 PM

SEE THE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE MEETINGS AND LOCATIONS.

LOCAL UNION 953 REGIONAL UNION MEETINGS**2021****CENTRAL REGIONAL MEETINGS - SECOND WEDNESDAY**

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME
Wednesday	January 13, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	February 10, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	March 10, 2021	Cancelled COVID	4:00 PM
Wednesday	April 14, 2021	All remaining meetings at: Union Hall, 2206 Highland Avenue Eau Claire, WI 54701	4:00 PM
Wednesday	May 12, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	June 9, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	July 14, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	August 11, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	September 8, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	October 13, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	November 10, 2021		4:00 PM
Wednesday	December 8, 2021		4:00 PM

SOUTHERN REGIONAL MEETINGS - SECOND THURSDAY

DAY	DATE	PLACE	TIME	
Thursday	January 7, 2021	Cancelled COVID	5:00 PM	
Thursday	February 11, 2021	Cancelled COVID	5:00 PM	
Thursday	March 11, 2021	Cancelled COVID	5:00 PM	
Thursday	April 8, 2021	All meetings at: American Legion Post 336 731 Sand Lake Road Onalaska, WI	5:00 PM	
Thursday	May 13, 2021		5:00 PM	
Thursday	June 10, 2021		5:00 PM	
Thursday	July 8, 2021		5:00 PM	
Thursday	August 12, 2021		5:00 PM	
Thursday	September 9, 2021		5:00 PM	
Thursday	October 14, 2021		5:00 PM	
Thursday	November 11, 2021		Stew Feed & Retiree's Night	5:00 PM
Thursday	December 9, 2021			5:00 PM

2021

SEE THE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE MEETINGS AND LOCATIONS.

IBEW LOCAL 953
2206 Highland Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701

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PERMIT NO. 1557



IBEW

...the right choice



**Integrity
is doing the
right thing, even when
no one is watching.**

C.S. Lewis



Weingarten Rights

I believe this discussion could lead to my being disciplined. I therefore request that my union representative or officer be present to assist me at the meeting. I further request reasonable time to consult with my union representative regarding the subject and purpose of the meeting. Please consider this a continuing request; without representation I shall not participate in the discussion. I shall not consent to any searches or tests affecting my person, property, or effects without first consulting with my union representatives. ©

