

# FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21



Volume 13, No. 4 • December 2008

## COLLECTIVE ACTION... CREATING CHANGE!



### INSIDE

Business Manager . . . .pg 2  
Curran's Report . . . .pg 3  
Gast's Report . . . .pg 4  
Benefit Report . . . .pg 4

Scholarship Information pg 5  
Organizing . . . . .pg 6  
COPE . . . . .pg 7  
Election Results . . . .pg 8

News Across The Local .pg 10  
Comcast/911 Center . .pg 14  
Retirees . . . . .pg 18  
Meetings . . . . .pg 19

## **You are the "U" in Union**

By Ronald Kastner



If you're at all like me, you're ready to move forward and be done with talking about last November's election. But I'd like to take a few more minutes of your time to emphasize the importance of the victory we shared on November 4th.

When you woke up the day after the election, didn't it feel like waking up and breathing new air, an atmosphere charged with the promise

of change? And didn't you feel a sense of pride in that change, an ownership of sorts? Our country has a new leader, Barack Obama, elected by a clear majority, due in part to the efforts of organized labor. Union members worked hard during the months leading up to Election Day, and the realization of the success of those efforts was sweet.

During his campaign, President-Elect Obama promised to sign The Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) into law after it passes through Congress. This legislation provides the key to fixing our special interest by making organizing more members into unions a real possibility. Our current way of organizing gives companies an unfair advantage, allowing them to violate laws and fire employees for wanting a Union. Unfortunately, some dissension has been spread about this pending legislation. Don't buy this rhetoric about EFCA taking away the workers' right to a secret ballot. Get the real facts by visiting [www.americanrightsatwork.org](http://www.americanrightsatwork.org).

In my opinion, this is the answer to the problem of the shrinking middle class in our great country. As EFCA empowers organized labor to increase union density, more and more workers will command a living wage and a better standard of living, securing a true middle class lifestyle for themselves and their families. Currently, only 7.5 % of the work force in this country is organized. With that in mind, it is no wonder that wages and benefits have been on the downward spiral. Simply put, corporate America has had the luxury of dealing with all non-union workers individually. How great that must be, one worker against his boss to decide his or her future, weighed against what is better for the company. Who do you think wins that battle?

I can't guarantee how much higher EFCA will drive union density up. But I feel if it increases to 20 % instead of the 5 % target of the old Bush agenda, we will immensely strengthen organized labor's ability to negotiate for their workers.

Furthermore, unions will once again become a powerful part of the system of checks and balances in the country's economy, balancing the common worker's wages against that of the CEO.

Going forward into 2009, Local 21 has many contracts that expire. President Obama is not going to be able to come in and save the day. Yes, his clear agenda of assistance to the middle class should command the attention of employers, but it is doubtful that legislation will be passed that quickly. Achieving success at Altura, Avaya, AT&T, AT&T/Legacy, City of Chicago/911, Citizens, Comcast West, Verizon and Vermillion County--all of which have negotiations in 2009--depends on you and the bargaining team. I have never felt so strongly on how important it will be for all of us to work together. Every member will be needed to mobilize around their contract. The Union's power at the bargaining table is contingent on what you, the members, want to put into your struggle.

The fact is employers feel you won't put anything into your own struggle. They will just hammer away at your bargaining team until they get what they want. This has been the American way for 8 years, and the only thing that will change it and derail their agenda is you. When you, the members, show you will stick up for the Union bargaining team through mobilization, we will enjoy a good contract. We have shown we can work together when we put so much effort into the election of a new President of the United States. Let's show them that we can work together again!

It is a new era in America. So, don't talk the **old** American way about concessions and give backs; don't say you won't strike if needed to win what you deserve. Prove to your employer that you're up to the battle. All employers are vulnerable and their vulnerabilities must be exposed as we mobilize. The **new**

American way is what you are about so let's all be prepared for the future, put aside some money in case of prolonged negotiations, and get ready for the possible struggle of your lives.

As you ponder these thoughts, I wish you all a happy and joyous holiday season. See you next year.



*Local 21 delegates attending the Illinois AFL-CIO's Convention*

# Were Workers Winners on Election Day? YOU BETCHA!

By Kevin Curran, Vice President/Assistant Business Manager Marketing



**B**rothers and Sisters, thanks to all of you who took time out of your busy schedule to help advance the cause of the labor movement in the November 4th

election. By knocking on doors, making phone calls, and getting people to the polls, you were part of an historic election that will help turn the tide for working people. The general public has caught on to a simple truth you and I have known all along; **allowing Corporate America to run wild is the surest way to destroy the economy and its workers.**

The victories that you and I achieved in this election will have numerous impacts. I'd like to focus on one aspect which should have a significant effect in our struggle for fair contracts next year.

One of the responsibilities of Local 21's Research Department is to review major rulings by the National Labor Relations Board to determine their potential impact on our membership. During the last eight years it's been a very depressing assignment. Under George W. Bush, the National Labor Relations Board was stacked with allies of Corporate America. Some of Bush's appointees on the Board needed only one qualification; **they worked as union-busting attorneys.** With Barack Obama as President, the NLRB will undergo a radical transformation. Before we look to the future, let's briefly review some of their ludicrous decisions, which will give you an idea of what the labor movement has been up against for the last eight years.

A worker at **Johnson Technology** wrote, "Union Meeting Tonight, 7pm" on a piece of scrap paper. He was severely disciplined for "misusing Company assets." The asset in question—**the piece of scrap paper!** The Board upheld the discipline

saying an Employer had a right to protect its assets "no matter how small."

Five employees attempting to form a union at **Sacramento Recycling** were fired once management found out what they were doing. The reason given for their termination was, "they just didn't fit in." The NLRB upheld the discharges because management stated that even though they couldn't say specifically why they fired the five, they were sure it wasn't for their union activity. (We all know management never says anything that isn't true.)

**The most disturbing thing of all under the Bush Board is that during the time it takes you to read Frontline, another worker will be illegally fired for trying to form a union.**

The Board ruled that "charge" nurses working at **Kentucky River Community Care** had no right to join a Union, since they perform some minor supervisory duties. The NLRB believes they aren't actually nurses, they're bosses. This ruling effectively denies approximately 8 million workers the right to join a Union because they use what the Bush Board calls "independent judgment." Apparently, if you use your brain while doing your job you lose all of your rights under the National Labor Relations Act.

My last example of egregious NLRB decisions directly affected our members. In our 2004 contract negotiations, **AT&T committed several unfair labor practices.** IBEW Local 21 filed charges against AT&T with the NLRB. We presented extensive documentation; several eye witnesses bravely stood up to AT&T. Our members testified and exposed AT&T's illegal and unethical actions. In the face of all of this evidence, even the Bush Board could not deny violations were committed. However, instead of taking actions against AT&T for their illegal behavior, the Board told us to just go and file a grievance. Of course, if an agreement isn't reached during contract negotiations because the employer is breaking the law, you don't have a grievance procedure. But, the Board wasn't

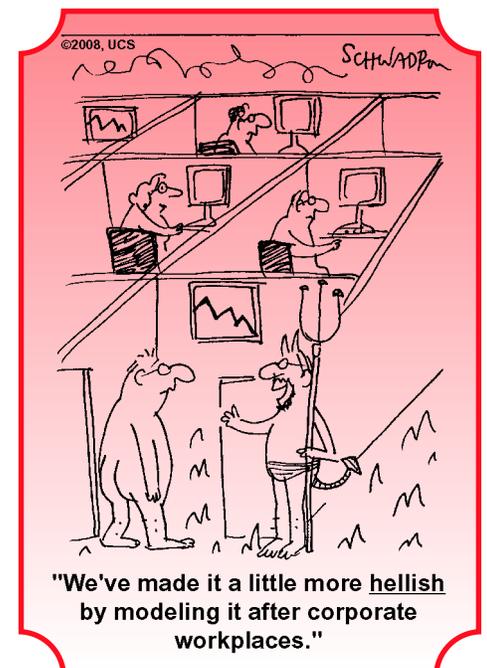
concerned with small details like that.

As we look ahead to next year's bargaining with AT&T, if the company does engage in unfair labor practices or violates the National Labor Relations Act in any way, we will have a Board under President Obama that will do something really radical—**ENFORCE THE LAW.**

Fighting corporate giants worth billions of dollars is hard enough, but, doing it with our hands tied behind our back as we have during the last eight years is nearly impossible. Let's be clear, Brothers and Sisters, **we didn't elect Barack Obama and our other allies in Congress and state governments to fight our battles for us.** We must be prepared, united, and willing to take the fight right to our employers next year. What we will demand from those we elected is to ensure that we have a fair fight. **In a fair fight, when we are united as one, we can beat these sons of bitches at the bargaining table, in the courthouse, and on the shop floor.**

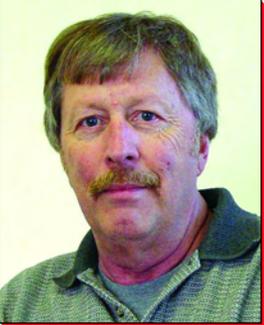
It's my sincere wish you all have a happy and safe holiday season. Enjoy yourselves and the time spent with your families and rest up for the battles to come next year.

**Solidarity!**



## Tough Times for Our Terms

By Jerry Gast, Assistant Business Manager Network



Since the last issue of *Frontline* a lot of problems have come up. The economy crashed. Budget problems resulted in

AT&T work completing all of the term technicians performing Project LightSpeed work in Construction. There are rumors everywhere about force readjustments in both Construction and I&M. To save money the company would like to move our members into Chicago for the Project LightSpeed build to avoid details. We are trying to confirm the rumors and meet with management to resolve these issues. Our LightSpeed Memo protects Local 21 members in C&E and I&M from being declared surplus. We will continue to monitor this situation.

Project LightSpeed budget cuts caused twenty-four IBEW represented term employees in the Design Support Organization to be work completed on November 21st. We continue to meet with Joe Dimilis Vice President of C&E on the progress of the high speed build in Chicago and Downstate. AT&T has now let go all of the term technicians. We negotiated a preference to move 25 Terms by seniority to I&M to save their jobs.

Business Rep Mike McCormick and I met with Derrick Hamilton Vice President of the Premise Technicians on several issues: techs being forced to work 70 hours a week, details, the on-going preference, and the heavy work load. He informed us the company plans to hire 79 Prem Techs by the end of December. We met to discuss hiring the term completed employees. AT&T management refused to use a recall list. The terms must call AT&T staffing to apply for these premise technician jobs. An additional 500 prem techs should be hired for the Midwest region by May.



Weekend and off hour schedules in I&M have increased because of U-Verse trouble tickets. AT&T is driving customers to schedule installs on the weekends. We have filed a grievance.

**AT&T is trying to move members across exhibits in C&E and I&M to adjust head count in Chicago.** We've taken the position this would be a violation of the LightSpeed Memo.

A three month trial is being used to resolve **central office scheduling issues.** When it ends we will meet with the company to review all of the weekend and off hour data and adjust the schedules.

We are preparing for bargaining with AT&T. We are expecting a grueling fight. We'll be asking you to get involved with our mobilization efforts and be prepared for whatever we will need to do to achieve a fair contract.

Have safe and happy Holidays.

### Benefit Report

## Every Member Matters

By Lynn Arwood, Mary Jo Hindes, Grace Rivera, Benefits Coordinators

We write this article with the Holiday Season and a New Year quickly approaching. Working as Benefits Coordinators for Local 21 has its challenges and frustrations like any job. Frequently, we are challenged to protect the benefits we all earned at the bargaining table. We are frustrated when simple issues become long drawn out battles that seem to have no end. Still, we consider it an honor to hold the title of Benefits Coordinator. We are in the unique position to offer support and guidance to both members and their families at what may be their most vulnerable time.

It is not unusual for us to get a call from a member diagnosed with cancer whose first concern is to protect their family's financial future. Calls come in from members who are too ill to cope with AT&T's disability bureaucracy. Others just don't understand exactly what they need to get a disability approved. In today's environment, an FMLA approval can



PHOTO: NANCY NORTH

prevent discipline or job termination. Members call with simpler questions too, sometimes they just want our Union to confirm they are covering all their bases and doing the right thing.

Despite our best efforts, sometimes we are not successful. Often there are just not enough hours in the day. When we look back over the last year, we have provided assistance to thousands of our members. We are very proud of that. We look forward to 2009 and the many challenges we will face on your behalf. Thank you for allowing us to assist you and trusting us to help. We wish you a wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

In the **Pizzas for Patriots** article in the October issue of *Frontline* we incorrectly listed Mark Evans website. If you wish to donate to help our troops overseas please visit **[www.pizzas4patriots.com](http://www.pizzas4patriots.com)**.

With your help they were able to send 500 pizzas to VA hospitals for Veterans Day. Keep visiting their website for future events.

We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

### **Scholarship Winner photo correction.**

In the October issue photo captions were reversed in error. It is actually Collette Morgan receiving her check from President Kastner, with E-Board member Jim Sheehan. Kelly Sheehan received her check from Vice-President Kevin Curran.

The editors apologize.

# Meet the Office Staff

By Jacquie Fields, Treasurer



In previous *Frontline* issues, you have met our office staff. Did you know that we have people on staff who can answer

questions for you regarding your benefits? These staff members report daily to the union office to serve you, the member. They are our benefits liaison staff. I would like to introduce you to the first of the two people you reach when you call with benefit questions. When you have FMLA questions, disability questions, or anything to do with your benefits at AT&T, Mary Jo Hindes is available to get the answer you may or may not want to hear. This pertains to the AT&T members only, as this large company has departments that the Union can contact in regards to benefit issues.

Mary Jo has been working diligently for you in this capacity since the amalgamation of the five locals 165, 188,

336, 383, 399 into Local 21 back in 1997. She has been a union member since 1969. Mary Jo was an Area Steward for Local 383 for many years. She also served as treasurer. She has been married for 37 years to Dennis; they have two children, Kim and Kevin. She loves talking to all of you who call for assistance, but I know she looks forward to the day she can retire to spend more time with her lovely grandchildren, Grace, Mason and Hayden.

I admire how Mary Jo interacts with you--taking each case to heart. She will see the case through to the end, sometimes getting too emotionally involved. There are many cases I could mention where she has visited the sick person, and attended funerals of members along with her colleagues.

Mary Jo has a gift of caring for each person and she is beloved by everyone who meets her.



PHOTO: NANCY NORTH

Executive Board of IBEW 21  
wishes you and yours a  
Happy Holiday Season and  
the best in 2009.

Unit 1 Bill Lawrence  
Unit 2 Jim Sheehan  
Unit 3 Jim Noble  
Unit 4 Larry Schuler, Chairman  
Unit 5 Alison Watson  
Unit 6 Rosetta Shinn, Secretary  
Unit 7 Erik Grigg

## Everything you ever wanted to know about MRSA

By Cheryl Crooks, Chief Steward

An important health question came up at a recent union meeting.

**What is MRSA?** MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) is a staph skin infection. Staph is a type of bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. MRSA is a type of staph that is resistant to a type of antibiotic (Methicillin.)

**What are the symptoms of MRSA?** Staph or MRSA infections are usually manifested as skin infections that appear as a bump, pimple, or infected area on the skin that may be red, swollen, painful, warm to touch, full of pus, or other draining accompanied by a fever.

**How do you contract MRSA?** MRSA is usually transmitted by direct skin to skin contact, or contact with shared items or surfaces that have come into contact with someone's infection.

**How do you prevent it?** Good hygiene. Frequent hand washings (friction) with soap and water or sanitizers is the most effective method. Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with bandages. Regularly disinfect and clean items and surfaces.

**What is the treatment for MRSA?** The antibiotic Tigecycline/Tygack is the drug indicated for the treatment of adults with complicated skin infection. Take all of the antibiotics prescribed to prevent re-infection.

If you think you have been infected, see your healthcare provider. You have healthcare benefits and coverage that was negotiated by Local 21.

## 2009 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

The Local 21 Scholarship Committee is excited to announce that applications are now being accepted for the 2009 Local 21 Scholarship Program.

Ten \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to Local 21 members and their immediate family members.

Applicants must submit the application and a 250-500 word essay describing

**"How do unions impact the economy?"**

Detailed information regarding the requirements of the program can be obtained on the

Local 21 website:  
[www.ibew21.org](http://www.ibew21.org)  
or call Jacquie Fields at  
630-960-4466 ext. 374.

All applications need to be received in the Union office by Wednesday March 4, 2009.

# There is Life After Comcast

By Dave Webster, Business Representative



In the October *Frontline* I talked about Local 21 filing objections with the NLRB over Comcast's objectionable conduct prior to the June election.

Good news! The Hearing officer found our objection to the company planting supervisors to observe Union handbilling was "creating an atmosphere of surveillance," which is illegal and she recommended a rerun election.

The company surprised us by offering to do the right thing. Rather than playing the delay game a new election was held on November 8th & 9th. We wondered what they had up their sleeve because they would have less time to run their union busting campaign.

They still pulled off their con-job. We fell short again, even after explaining to the workers that Comcast orchestrates an anti-union campaign full of half-truths and outright lies. Comcast is the poster child of why we need the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) implemented in President-elect Obama's first 100 days.

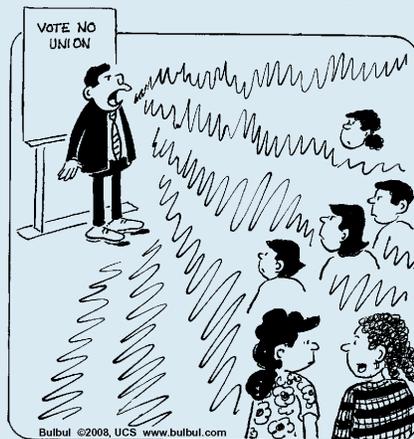
There is life after Comcast. Don't get me wrong, we're not going away, we're regrouping and rebuilding. We will bring the union-busting giant down!

In the meantime, our Local 21

organizers will be talking to workers at other employers who want to unionize. We are working to organize locators in our jurisdiction. SM&P and CLS were the two main locating companies. They were both bought out by **USIC** (United States Infrastructure Company). Now that they're one company we are moving toward getting them organized. It's a slow process because the workers are spread out and rarely come together as one group.

We continue to work with workers at **Dish Network**. We lost our leader there to AT&T. He became a term employee, and Local 21 member. Many signed cards asking for an NLRB election while he was on board as a Dish employee. We are trying to reconnect with that group.

**DirectSat** is a huge contractor for Direct TV. There are over 300 workers in the ChicagoLand area who want to be union, but like most workers they're afraid



"The more the boss talks against the union, the more convinced I become that we need one!"

they could lose their job if they make the attempt to organize. It's not just Comcast proving we need EFCA. It seems ALL employers are getting away with breaking the law by bully workers from exercising their legal rights to form a union.

In Schaumburg there's a **Verizon Wireless** call center we are also working to organize. We are investigating a Verizon Business location in our area and have several other irons in the fire to determine their interest in improving their working conditions through organizing.

Lastly, we are in negotiations with **AT&T about card check** and are cautiously optimistic we will be able to use the agreement to bring some of the non-union AT&T workers into the Local 21 fold.

So as usual, I ask if you see workers at our targeted employers, greet them, get their personal contact information and get it to the Local 21 organizing department. Also if you are aware of non-union AT&T workers get that information to us ASAP! You can reach the organizing department by calling 630 960-4466 ext. 449 or from our website [www.ibew21.org](http://www.ibew21.org).

It has been a long, but exciting year fighting the good fight. We would have been happier with different results but we have improved the standards of living for workers just by being out there and letting their employers know the Labor Movement is still alive and well and with EFCA on the horizon the sky will be the limit!

Happy Holidays to All!

## Letter To The Editor



In the last issue of *Frontline*, Mike Sacco made a final comment that our nation was "fighting a phony war on terror." With all due respect to Mr. Sacco, let's observe the facts.

Since the early '90's terrorists have turned their attention to the United States.

Extremist groups were responsible for numerous attacks. In 1992 the Aden Yemen, Hotels were bombed killing members of the U.S. military residing there. The World Trade Center was first attacked in 1993. A large number of U.S. soldiers were killed in 1996 when the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia were targeted. Our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed in 1998 killing soldiers as well as many American diplomats. In 2000 the U.S.S. Cole was attacked killing many sailors and injuring hundreds. Finally Sept. 11, 2001.

In all of the aforementioned incidents, terrorists had made it known years before

each attack that they would attack in one form or another. Each time, they insisted on the U.S. to give-in to their demands until they got what they wanted.

Terrorists have no guilt in using their craft into getting what they want. Why should we suffer history all over again? Why not fight the overwhelming number of terrorists on their soil instead of our own?

I choose not to live in fear but to aggressively fight for what is mine.

Captain Jerome Benton  
1144th TMT ILARNG  
I&R Technician

## You Made it Happen!

By Rosetta Shinn & Dennis McCaffery, Committee on Political Education



Well, what else can be said but “WE DID IT!” It took a massive effort on behalf of Organized Labor from coast to coast but the **Get Out The Vote** (GOTV) initiative that was unleashed by the AFL-CIO and the IBEW in particular, has proven to everyone that **UNIONS ARE BACK** in a BIG way! It further proves that when UNION members and their families

vote, it makes a tremendous difference. In this election, working people took an active role in bringing about the type of change necessary to improve the quality of their lives.

On the national level, the AFL-CIO released important facts about the 2008 vote: 21% of votes were cast by union household members; 250,000 union volunteers worked in the final four days of the campaign; 67% of union voters supported Obama; 51% of nonunion voters supported Obama. In Congress, working families achieved victories and will have 254 Representatives and 58 Senators working on their behalf in January.

Our Local was extremely involved in this election. Local 21 volunteers worked in five different states on Election Day: Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana and Illinois. You would be hard-pressed to find a Local anywhere who took on a more impressive commitment. In Illinois, we worked on many State Representative and Congressional races that enabled the Democrats to pick up 7 new seats in the State House and 2 new seats in Congress. More amazing is that for the first time since 1964, Indiana will cast its 11 electoral votes for the Democratic Presidential Nominee. We also managed to pick up 2 new State House seats which hopefully will keep things looking “blue” until we can make improvements in 2010.

We were honored to have International President Ed Hill, 6th District Vice-President Jeff Lohman, IBEW Illinois State Political Director Lonnie Stephenson, and President Hill's Executive Assistant Liz Schuler in the region on Election Day. They witnessed our GOTV apparatus at work when they visited our volunteers at Local 176, and at a phone bank in Northwest Indiana.

Now that the 2008

Presidential election is over and Democratic presidential-elect Barack Obama is ready to take office, IBEW Local 21 is counting on the incoming Obama administration to back labor's agenda. In the 23 months since Senator Obama announced his candidacy, he's earned our trust by proposing strong policies on working family issues we feel are crucial: health care, job creation, retirement security, and the Employee Free Choice Act. He came out against the anti-worker policies of Bush and McCain on trade and taxes. This election has been about the economy's impact on working families.

The 111th Congress will take up some of labor's issues, such as the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA.) This bill would amend the National Labor Relations Act. In 2007 the Employee Free Choice Act passed the House on a party line vote: 228 Democrats and 13 Republicans voted in favor of it, 2 Democrats and 183 Republicans voted “no.” However, when it reached the Senate, it was defeated by a Republican filibuster. The Democrats brought a vote of cloture, to end debate and vote on the bill. That vote was 51 “yes” and 48 “no” on straight party lines. Since a vote of cloture requires 60 votes, Card Check failed. If the bill had passed Congress, President Bush would have vetoed it. McCain promised he would do the same. Obama says he will sign it.

Under our new President, we can put the American Dream back within the reach of the working middle class. This means the job is not finished. We can give our kids and grandkids a better future. IBEW Local 21's goal is to help rebuild the middle class. We see the need to fix our national health care system, and give workers the right to join a Union without intimidation. It's

very important to hold every politician accountable for the promises they made to the hard-working union members who got them elected.

We would like to wholeheartedly thank everyone for all their hard work and dedication to this year's campaigns; it couldn't have been accomplished without you!

We would also like to wish you a safe and happy Holiday season. Take care



Local 21 members are joined by IBEW President Ed Hill, Ron Kastner, newly Elected Congress Woman Debbie Halvorson, IBEW 6th District VP Jeff Lohman, as they work on Election Day in Joliet.

# Election Results in Illinois

## PRESIDENT

<b>Obama</b>	3,293,340	62%
<b>McCain</b>	1,975,801	37%

## U.S. SENATE

<b>Dick Durbin</b>	2,843,991	63%
<b>Steve Sauerberg</b>	1,476,083	33%

## CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

<b>YES</b>	1,442,196	33%
<b>NO</b>	2,981,836	67%

## U.S. CONGRESS ILLINOIS

1 –	I-Rush (D)	219,709	85%
	Members (R)	37,655	15%
3 –	I-Lipinski (D)	166,024	73%
	Hawkins (R)	48,858	22%
	Pohlen (GR)	12,207	5%
4 –	I-Gutierrez (D)	108,221	81%
	Cunningham (R)	15,375	11%
	Lopez (GR)	10,641	8%
5 –	I-Emanuel (D)	162,779	74%
	Hanson (R)	48,678	22%
	Auguston (GR)	8,824	4%
6 –	I-Roskam (R)	145,755	58%
	Morgenthaler (D)	107,146	42%
7 –	I-Danny Davis (D)	224,786	85%
	Steve Miller (R)	39,869	15%
8 –	I-Bean (D)	145,755	60%
	Greenberg (R)	97,519	40%
9 –	I-Schakowsky (D)	175,923	75%
	Younin (R)	52,132	22%
	Shanfield (GR)	78,00	3%
10 –	I-Kirk (R)	130,073	54%
	Seals (D)	108,796	46%
11 –	Debbie Halvorson (D)	182,451	58%
	Marty Ozinga (R)	107,717	34%
	Jason Wallace (GR)	22,309	7%
12 –	I-Jerry Costello (D)	214,364	72%
	Tim Richardson (R)	74,036	25%
	Rodger Jennings (GR)	10,902	4%
13 –	I-Judy Biggert	178,250	54%
	Scott Harper	145,117	44%
	Steve Alesch	9,261	3%
14 –	I-Bill Foster (D)	180,849	57%
	Jim Oberweis (R)	133,959	43%
15 –	I-Tim Johnson (D)	186,771	64%
	Steve Cox (R)	104,118	36%
16 –	I-Don Manzullo (R)	189,511	61%
	Robert Abboud (D)	112,287	36%
	Scott Summers (GR)	9,500	3%
18 –	Aaron Schock (R)	180,501	59%
	Colleen Callahan (D)	116,429	38%
	Sheldon Schafer (GR)	9,725	3%

## STATE SENATE (CONTESTED)

5 –	I-Rickey Hendon (D)	65,235	86%
	Jason Braswell (R)	10,816	14%
6 –	I-John Cullerton (D)	69,547	77%
	Jay Valko (R)	20,298	23%
7 –	I-Heather Steans (D)	53,124	81%
	Tom Durkin (GR)	12,640	19%
9 –	I-Jeff Schoenberg (D)	69,062	71%
	Brendan Appel (R)	28,457	29%
11 –	I-Lou Viverito (D)	49,663	71%
	Jeffrey Malinowski (R)	20,643	29%
14 –	I-Emil Jones (D)	71,354	79%
	Ray Wardingly (R)	18,571	21%
21 –	I-Dan Cronin (R)	63,834	66%
	A. Ghani (D)	25,606	27%
	John Basco (GR)	6,591	7%
26 –	Dan Duffy (R)	53,575	64%
	Bill Gentes (D)	29,535	36%
27 –	I-Matt Murphy (R)	49,952	59%
	Peter Gutzmer (D)	35,190	41%
30 –	I-Terry Link (D)	28,537	62%
	Keith Gray (R)	17,153	38%
33 –	I-Dan Kotowski (D)	47,380	60%
	Michael Sweeney (R)	31,572	40%
35 –	I-Brad Burzynski (R)	61,690	59%
	Ryan Gailey (D)	42,915	41%
36 –	I-Mike Jacobs (D)	55,403	59%
	Michael Bertelsen (R)	38,849	41%
38 –	I-Gary Dahl (R)	60,653	62%
	Steve Stout (D)	37,251	38%
41 –	I-Christine Radogno (R)	73,151	64%
	Audrey Manley (D)	41,946	36%
42 –	I-Linda Holmes (D)	53,251	54%
	Terri Ann Wintermute (R)	45,800	46%
45 –	I-Tim Bivins (R)	55,509	63%
	Marty Mulcahy (D)	32,835	37%
50 –	I-Larry Bomke (R)	81,900	78%
	John Devine (D)	23,430	22%
54 –	I-John Jones (R)	63,892	70%
	Henry Kijonka (D)	27,322	30%
59 –	I-Gary Forby (D)	49,357	52%
	Ken Burzynski (R)	46,319	48%

## STATE HOUSE (CONTESTED)

2 – I-Edward Acevedo (D) 15,402 83%	51 – I-Ed Sullivan (R) 22,219 62%	83 – I-Linda Chapa LaVia (D) 18,499 75%
Tony Marjan (GR) 3,173 17%	Amanda Howland (D) 13,445 38%	Joan Solms (R) 6,243 25%
12 – I-Sara Feigenholtz (D) 35,478 84%	52 – I-Mark Beaubien (R) 29,089 63%	84 – I-Tom Cross (R) 44,546 60%
Tim Quirk (GR) 6,549 16%	Rich Garling (D) 16,904 37%	Dennis Grosskopf (D) 29,707 40%
14 – I-Harry Osterman (D) 22,378 85%	53 – I-Sid Mathias (R) 21,814 52%	85 – I-Brent Hassert (R) 21,369 41%
John Beacham (GR) 3,798 15%	Carol Javens (D) 18,606 45%	Emily Klunk-McAsey (D) 30,301 59%
17 – I-Beth Coulson (R) 26,508 52%	Rob Sherman (GR) 1,150 3%	89 – I-Jim Sacia (R) 33,743 69%
Dan Biss (D) 24,813 48%	55 – I-Randy Ramey (R) 24,050 53%	Walter Johnson (D) 15,040 31%
20 – I-Michael McAuliffe (R) 22,595 59%	Broc Montgomery (D) 19,094 42%	90 – I-Jerry Mitchell (R) 29,375 63%
Michael Marzullo (D) 15,550 41%	Daniel Kairis (GR) 2,086 5%	Kenneth Novak (D) 16,983 37%
21 – Michael Zalewski (D) 26,422 69%	56 – I-Paul Froehlich (D) 22,838 58%	92 – Jehan Gordon (D) 18,829 53%
Charlie Johnson (R) 8,638 22%	Anita Forte-Scott (R) 16,796 42%	Joan Gore Krupa (R) 16,390 47%
Rita Maniotis (GR) 3,379 9%	57 – I-Elaine Nekritz (D) 21,383 68%	94 – I-Richard Myers (R) 27,900 66%
22 – I-Michael J. Madigan (D) 25,870 80%	James Tatooles (R) 10,108 32%	Earl Godt (D) 14,658 34%
Robert Famiglietti (R) 6,670 20%	58 – I-Karen May (D) 23,101 64%	95 – I-Mike Fortner (R) 32,032 76%
26 – Will Burns (D) 31,825 85%	Timothy Stratton (R) 12,826 36%	Gerard Schmidt (GR) 9,939 24%
Sylvester Hendricks (R) 5,668 15%	59 – I-Kathleen Ryg (D) 18,532 61%	96 – Darlene Senger (R) 24,855 49%
28 – I-David Miller (D) 35,061 86%	Dan Sugrue (R) 11,628 39%	Dianne McGuire (D) 24,209 48%
James Buiter (R) 5,478 14%	60 – I-Eddie Washington (D) 10,700 70%	Jennifer Witt (GR) 1,818 4%
39 – I-Toni Berrios (D) 18,728 79%	Bill Anderson (R) 4,691 30%	98 – I-Gary Hannig (D) 29,021 69%
Jeremy Karpen (R) 4,954 21%	61 – I-JoAnn Osmond (R) 18,999 54%	Jim Curry (R) 13,084 31%
40 – I-Deb Mell (D) 16,455 75%	Jim Parks (D) 16,272 46%	99 – I-Raymond Poe (R) 27,896 63%
Christine Nere-Foss (R) 3,278 15%	64 – I-Michael Tryon (R) 34,311 61%	Kent DeLay (D) 16,397 37%
Heather Benno (GR) 2,228 10%	Robert Kaempfe (D) 21,680 39%	103 – I-Naomi Jakobsson (D) 28,139 72%
41 – I-Bob Biggins (R) 31,615 67%	65 – I-Rosemary Mulligan (R) 21,169 55%	Frank Calabrese (R) 11,079 28%
Kevin O'Connor (GR) 15,782 33%	Aurora Austriaco (D) 17,610 45%	104 – I-Bill Black (R) 27,586 64%
43 – I-Ruth Munson (R) 12,589 48%	66 – Mark Walker (D) 20,357 52%	Lori DeYoung (D) 15,325 36%
Keith Farnham (D) 12,911 49%	Christine Prochno (R) 18,585 48%	106 – I-Keith Sommer (R) 37,075 71%
Dane Wilman (GR) 803 3%	68 – I-Dave Winters (R) 29,685 59%	Tom Shrier (D) 15,283 29%
44 – I-Fred Crespo (D) 20,889 69%	Clint Little (D) 18,748 37%	107 – John Cavaletto (R) 23,915 54%
Peggy Brothman (R) 9,460 31%	Gerry Woods (GR) 1,874 4%	Patti Hahn (D) 20,479 46%
45 – I-Franco Coladipietro (R) 19,535 53%	69 – I-Ron Wait (R) 30,616 55%	108 – I-David Reis (R) 32,658 68%
Jim Hagerty (D) 17,503 47%	Greg Tuite (D) 25,392 45%	Jason Warful (D) 15,087 32%
46 – I-Dennis Reboletti (R) 20,047 51%	70 – I-Robert Pritchard (R) 35,478 77%	112 – I-Jay Hoffman (D) 31,892 57%
Gary Nowak (D) 19,076 49%	James Dusing (D) 10,656 23%	Dwight Kay (R) 23,743 43%
48 – Michael Connelly (R) 29,240 58%	71 – I-Mike Boland (D) 30,926 64%	115 – I-Mike Bost (R) 26,467 58%
Joseph Heneghan (D) 21,121 42%	Lawrence Brukner (R) 17,484 36%	Cheryl Graff (D) 16,493 36%
49 – I-Timothy Schmitz (R) 37,091 57%	75 – I-Careen Gordon (D) 33,601 65%	Charlie Howe (GR) 3,036 7%
Rachel Shattuck (D) 27,852 43%	David McAloon (R) 18,249 35%	117 – I-John Bradley (D) 38,352 76%
50 – Kay Hatcher (R) 44,287 58%	80 – I-George Scully (D) 30,965 76%	Ron Emery (R) 11,801 24%
Mary Schneider (D) 30,004 39%	Miriam Shabo (R) 9,878 24%	118 – I-Brandon Phelps (D) 32,040 72%
Sandra Lezon (GR) 2,656 3%	81 – I-Renee Kosel (R) 41,237 64%	Scott Doody (R) 12,657 28%
	Rich Kelly (D) 23,545 36%	

## Election Results in Indiana

### PRESIDENT / VICE-PRESIDENT:

BARACK OBAMA / JOSEPH BIDEN 1,367,503 51%

### UNITED STATES CONGRESS:

DISTRICT 1- PETER VISCLOSKY 199,145 71%

DISTRICT 2- JOSEPH DONNELLY 187,328 67%

### STATE SENATE:

DISTRICT 2- LONNIE RANDOLPH 29,744 80%

DISTRICT 3- EARLINE ROGERS 38,017 100%

### STATE HOUSE:

DISTRICT 1- LINDA LAWSON 14,495 72%

DISTRICT 2- EARL HARRIS 17,516 100%

DISTRICT 3- CHARLIE BROWN 21,571 100%

DISTRICT 10- CHARLES MOSELEY 17,337 66%

DISTRICT 11- DAN STEVENSON 14,560 68%

DISTRICT 12- M. CANDELARIA-REARDON 13,744 65%

DISTRICT 13- CHESTER DOBIS 18,436 68%

DISTRICT 14- VERNON SMITH 16,923 89%

DISTRICT 19- SHELLI VANDENBURGH 15,505 56%

• • • This is the annual reminder if you are ever called in for a discussion with Asset Protection, no matter how much they want to be your friend, always have a union steward with you. Security is not your friend.

In **Rock Island Consumer** we are still waiting on the arbitrator's decision on the first PAR case. Despite the reduced work hours, management is still forcing mandatory overtime. We continue to hold discussions, and fight it through the grievance procedure.

In the **Springfield Wholesale Center**, there is training going on due to the recent work swap with California. Management extended the work hours to 6:30pm for calls from the west coast. So far there are volunteers, at least through the end of December, so no one has been forced to take a late tour.

In **Vermillion County**, we are working on upgrading some of the jobs outside the contract which expires in November 2009. At that time we are looking to upgrade all job descriptions, and have wage groups in Vermillion County put at higher wage levels. The county combined a couple of departments, one represented and one not represented. The Union is providing guidelines for job functions, some new and some existing. Some employees were slated to a higher pay grade based on new job responsibilities. We just settled 3 grievances prior to going to arbitration, with settlements totaling \$14,000.

At the **Peoria Bel-Wood Nursing Home**, they are now covering attendance on a bi-weekly basis instead of monthly. This is progressing people through the disciplinary steps faster. Although a member has earned paid time off for illness doesn't mean you should be taking it as soon as it is earned. This behavior will move you out the door quickly



*By Vickie Burroughs, Business Representative*

• • • ...The apprentice committee met and reviewed the data. All the districts are within ratio.

The preference for the **Central Office** Technicians is completed.

In **I&M** the stewards should have started the vacation picks. This is the slow time of the season. Safety first.

The Construction Maintenance Centers CMC in Addison and Oak Lawn moved to the Lakewood building in Hoffman Estates in November.

There are 85 new Customer Consultants in **Total Grace**, the Consumer office on Chicago's northside.



*Michael Cohns, Business Representative*

• • • **Central Office** preferencing is completed. COT's should be in their new offices. A preference of this size can be very difficult and there are always some problems, but hopefully they are all resolved. The committee worked hard to make the preference a success. Hopefully many techs moved to offices of their choice.

We hope to tackle some of the off hour scheduling problems in the central offices. The company agreed to trial a system very similar to the one we use in I&M garages. After ninety days it will be reviewed by the Union and management. Modifications will be implemented if necessary. Hopefully this process will help to accurately schedule members based on the work that is really out there.

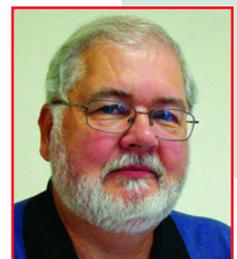
**I&M** is also having scheduling problems. It seems one District manager in particular, feels he can schedule based on what he thinks he needs. When the company broke up the special service group (DOG) they didn't consider the work wouldn't follow the old lines. They broke up crews servicing large geographic areas and moved them into garages covering smaller areas. We warned management the work would no longer prove in but they didn't care. Now that the former special service techs have been absorbed into the I&M lists, the company wants to schedule them separately based on special service work and by qualifications. Makes you wonder why anyone would want more qualifications if getting them could result in you being forced onto an undesirable shift.

**MSOC** is a new performance management tool in the field. Techs are expected to gather around their supervisor out in the garage each morning to talk about results. I don't know if this new system is good or not, but it seems senseless to meet out in the garage when you have a perfectly good assembly room. What are you supposed to do in the dead of winter, stand out in the cold? Does AT&T feel since it worked in the Southwest, it would be OK here? Logic should prevail. By the way, we start at 8:00 AM, not before. If you want to open your IFD do it in the assembly room **after** the meeting.

Over in **Construction** there's a problem with cable mining. AT&T is using contractors to remove the cable. It's our work to pump, ventilate, test, and attach the cable only if the contractor is using a chopper on the job. If the contractor is pulling the cable out and putting it on a reel then the entire job should be done by our line crews. Keep your eyes open and document all cases where this is happening. A grievance was filed and your documentation will be used to support this grievance.

Hopefully construction work will pick up next year. It seems the work is on hold.

Finally, I'd like to wish everyone and their families a safe, happy, and prosperous Christmas and New Year. It's been a challenging year and I expect 2009 will be more of the same. Hopefully our ability to stick together will cause change resulting in our jobs being less stressful in the future.



*By Steve Unterfranz, Business Representative*

# S T H E L O C A L . . .

• • • It's hard to believe that another year is coming to an end, it seems like yesterday I was saying Happy New Year, and it's about to start all over again. The year started off with a bang in February 2008 when the company announced they were closing the office of the Lucent Switching Center in downtown Chicago. This impacted 68 of our highly skilled Telecommunications Specialists, some with over 30 years of service. They were extremely dedicated employees who worked diligently for this company and our customers to provide the finest service possible. Because of the company's greed, none of this mattered, management gave the jobs away to others who were less skilled.

In addition to that surplus, AT&T also let two people go in the mail center at 225 W. Randolph. Now only four people are left to handle the mail in that 30 story building. Management offered a voluntary SIPP to two customer advocates in the Federal Group for no good reason, just because. They are also letting go of all the clerical help at the training center at 350 N Orleans, this SIPP continues to be extended.

This is just a reminder that AT&T is not the same company we all began working for years ago and thought you had a future with. Times have changed and we must change with them and be prepared for anything this company throws at us especially since contract time is coming up. We must stick together now more than ever, we must be united!



By Liz Hodges, Business Representative

• • • AT&T implemented a new performance management tool in the garages. MSOC is intended to replace good jobs in eight. Managers claim it will take the heat off the techs and make for a better working relationship. Currently, techs are being disciplined for good jobs in eight, but the condition of cable facilities impacts the time it takes to finish the work. MSOC is a tool that shows areas with bad cable facilities. The company believes that this information will improve working conditions. We are watching the new process.

The company is cable mining everywhere and management has promised to thoroughly train Construction techs to do the work. Once you are trained it is important to follow all the steps. There have been threats of discipline when the wrong cable is cut. Work carefully, take your time.

In the past, IBEW members disconnected the cable and a contractor would come out with cable chopping equipment and cut it into sections on site. It is a dangerous process using specialized equipment. We would stay and observe the process. In its rush to complete the work, AT&T has changed the process. Now we disconnect the cable, but the contractor does not arrive with chopping equipment. He pulls it out, putting it onto a reel and driving it away. That is IBEW work, not contractor work.



By Dan Gruenich, Business Representative

• • • At **Verizon** soon it will be contract time. We will be sending out bargaining surveys asking you what issues are important. Please get them back in, so we can bring your issues to the bargaining table. **Negotiations should start in mid January.** It is important we show Verizon we are united. The Locals on the East coast were able to secure a good contract because of the strength and mobilization of their members.

At **Century Telephone** we were just notified by management Embarq will be purchased by Century. Embarq is a spin off of the old Sprint landline. How is that for irony? We are unsure at this time if it will impact our members. We will continue to keep a close eye on the acquisition. Until we know the full effect it will have, **Local 21 is NOT supporting the merger.**

We have been working on callout issues. The company was calling technicians for callouts on work they weren't qualified to perform. Our members directed the dispatcher to make calls from the correct list of qualified techs. The company refused to pay the technicians for the work they performed; directing the dispatcher. Grievances were filed, and subsequently settled at the pre-arbitration step. The problem has since been resolved. The supervisors will now be doing the calls instead of the dispatcher.

At **Frontier Communications** management approached us to negotiate a clothing program. **IBEW Locals 21, 702 and 51** tried to negotiate an agreement with the company. No agreement was reached. We were, however, able to come to an agreement on a work boot reimbursement.

At **AT&T** the big issue in construction is cable mining. It seems AT&T is trying to take advantage of rising copper prices. We are in dispute with the company on exactly what work the contractors can perform. The company plans to wreck millions of feet of cable by the end of the year, and there are not enough chopper trucks to do the work. Management's position is the contractor can put the cable on reels and transport it to recycling facilities. Our position is the contractor only can only operate the chopper truck. Local 21 members should be setting up the hole, attaching a wench line to the cable, and bring the cable to the chopping truck. All work involving putting cable on reels belongs to our members. Since we cannot reach agreement, the dispute will be decided by a neutral arbitrator. All splicers who are preparing the cables to be removed make sure you are cutting the correct cable. The company is threatening severe discipline if a live cable is cut by mistake.

I am happy to report; we reached a settlement with AT&T concerning **pole sets**. Power companies have been setting our poles for varied reasons. JAM was used to determine the amount of time it takes to set the poles. Our members will receive a cash payment for the time they should have spent on those jobs.

Going forward, if you come across a pole that belongs to AT&T and it has a different brand on it, let your Steward know. They can verify it with the pole records and file a grievance. I have to believe this is happening everywhere, not just in the few locations we found.



By Michael Roach, Business Representative

• • • MSOC was rolled out in **Chicago I&M**, and AT&T is posting technician's daily productivity numbers. The agreement stated names would be taken off, blackened out or techs would be given an alias if requested. We called the director and he acknowledges the original agreement. However, you must ask for your name to be removed.

The company issued new IFDs. This time they told the techs that instead of locking the IFDs in the new vehicle docking stations, the members should attempt to hide the IFD somewhere in the vehicle. Management feels the docking stations invite break-ins. It's true that in the past, occasionally IFD's were stolen when they were secured in the docking stations as instructed. However, technicians were disciplined if the IFD was stolen while not in the docking station. I have contacted the director and labor relations.

The **Central Office** preference was completed. Instead of fixing the discrepancies, management is trying to find ways to get around them. Members were skipped and we are fighting to make the company honor their preferences. We are hearing rumors of deals being cut to help techs who didn't have the seniority to get their choice. If you see or hear something that doesn't seem right, please contact your Business Rep or Chief Steward so we can keep the company honest.

The C.O.s have been restructured. The Southside of Chicago was split into two areas-- South Suburban and Chicago Metro. There is trouble in the South Suburban area because their single schedule is being broken up into manager orbits. The schedules are not being posted in the offices. Instead, management wants to use email to distribute the schedules. In four of the offices members must sign in and out at the start and end of the day, and during lunches and breaks. We've filed grievances on these issues.

• • • In the **Illinois and Indiana Central** offices we have been meeting with management on scheduling issues. We have agreed to a trial scheduling process. Your stewards and first line managers will discuss the data used to determine how many techs will be scheduled for each shift and how many off hour shifts are necessary. The current schedules will be posted through the end of the year. After the first of the year we will meet again and do a deep dive into the actual data to see if the process is working.

In the **Indiana Central Offices** managers want to split day shifts from night shifts. The day shift will be divided into North and South locations. Each day group will have their own vacation and overtime lists. The off hour shift will remain as one area with separate overtime and vacation schedules. The COT's will preference what shifts they will want to work. Once you pick your shift you will stay on that shift.

**Construction** - AT&T work completed the last of the Term Splicer's. Management claims there is a budget problem till the end of the year!

The company is continuing the **cable mining project**. We filed a grievance, and the case is going to arbitration. We are waiting for an arbitrator to be assigned and a hearing date to be scheduled.

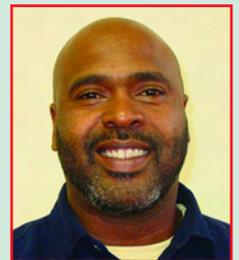
In **Construction** we said goodbye to the vast majority of the term techs. Twenty-five terms were allowed to join the I&M organization to finish out their terms. For those members who have been work completed, good luck, we wish you the best.

There've been problems with cables being cut during the cable mining project. If you're working on that project make sure you follow the procedures to the letter. Before you cut the cable, follow the checklist and call your manager to verify. If you don't understand the procedures or have not been trained on them, notify your steward before a mistake is made.

There's been an increase in robberies and assaults on members around the Local. In Chicago, a member was robbed in front of his work location. We've contacted the police department to get increased patrols. Our Union is working with management to have the police hold seminars on safety. But it's up to you to watch. If you see something that doesn't seem right, or if the hair on the back of your neck stands up, move to a safer location and contact your manager. Make every attempt to be safe out there. We want everyone to go home the same way they came to work. We will do what we can to help you.

As always, be sure to check your driver's license to ensure it's valid by calling 217 782-2720. BE SAFE OUT THERE.

*By CJ-Cleveland Johnson, Business Representative*



The company consolidated the **Construction Maintenance Centers- CMC**. The jobs moved to Hoffman Estates. We met with the company to discuss the consolidation. Move packages were offered. The target date of the move was December 1st.

In **I&R** I received calls after the company began telling people to go home early on 6 Tours! If you **volunteer** to go home, the company is only required to pay you for the hours you worked. If you're **told** to go home early and you refuse, the company must find something for you to do or pay you for the rest of your 8 hour day.

I settled the **TA - TS grievance** in October. The grievance was set to go to arbitration on November 24th. In the award the last two TA's in Indiana were promoted to TS's on November 2nd and each received \$3,000.

All Vacation compositions should be completed and vacation picks should have begun in November.

*By Terry Sheehan, Business Representative*



• • • In **Safety** AT&T sent out a Safety Flash regarding defective hardhats. The defect identified is with the "Ball Cap" style hardhat, Bullard Model C30. Cracks have been identified near the exterior accessory insert located just below the side AT&T logos. All hardhats purchased within the past 2 years are to be identified and inspected immediately.

In **Hoffman Estates** I'd like to take the opportunity to WELCOME our members from the **Construction Maintenance Center** who will be moving from Oak Lawn and Addison to the Lakewood Building. The move will take place on December 15, 2008. I am looking forward to meeting all of you.

At this time I would like to thank everyone for their help this past year, it has been another busy one. I wish you the happiest and safest of holiday seasons.



By *Melanie Probst, Business Representative*

• • • My new responsibility is the Business Rep for the Premise Technicians. President Kastner appointed John Dolsen and Paul Waters as their Chief Stewards. Brian Gee will continue to cover Prem Techs in the exhibit 3 area. All four of us will work together to make sure that we handle issues consistently.

We are confronting the **preferencing issues**, so techs can work closer to their homes. This is being addressed by using seniority as the guideline. Some locations are frozen because there is a lack of interest from other techs to move to your work location or the existing techs have no interest in moving out of theirs. The company is in the process of hiring 79 additional technicians. New technicians will be hired into certain locations enabling more technicians to preference.

The **overtime issue** is impacting almost every area. In November management supplied us with limited information regarding the overtime being worked. They stated a majority of techs work a minimum of 40 to 60 hours of overtime weekly. A small percentage work 60 to 70 hours of overtime. 8% of the techs work 70 plus hours of overtime weekly. We requested the actual hours worked by all technicians, sorted by work location.

John, Paul, and Brian are collecting your personal e-mail addresses, so we can create a list to update everyone ASAP on the latest news. The goal is to inform everyone whether they are Downstate, Upstate, or in the City on issues that may or may not yet be affecting your location.

We are in the process of placing techs into steward positions. We also need techs to step up, and volunteer to become Mobilization and Group Coordinators. If you have attended Unit meetings, you know what role they play in work place mobilization. In short, it is a process that will get communications out quickly to everyone. If you are interested please contact Brian, Paul or John.

Finally, we wish you and your families the happiest of Holidays.

By *Mike McCormick, Business Representative*



• • • The Central Office preference is a mess. Hopefully by the time you read this, all the mistakes will be corrected.

At **Datacomm**, management completed a preference to get everybody placed as the Excelon project winds down. The company is checking everyone's driver's license for validity. No matter what company you work for, you must have a valid license to be employed. Check your license by calling 217 782-2720.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season.



By *Michael Sacco, Business Representative*

• • • In **Consumer**, management continues to discipline Service Representatives under PAR. The performance plan is still in front of an arbitrator, waiting his decision. Our Union has consistently pressed the issues of lost sales, due date changes, long due dates and sales posted a month or two later which all impact PAR, yet the company still proceeds on its course of discipline. AT&T just doesn't care and refuses to face the facts of system problems. The only bright light is the efforts of Chief Steward Karen Battisfore and her entire steward staff. By tediously digging into each grievance, they have been very successful in removing discipline and getting lost incentive payments paid. Keep up the GREAT WORK!!

At the National Credit Verification Center **NCVC** in Oak Park, additional work has come into the office and seniority was used to select a group of 10 Customer Account Specialists from among the volunteers to staff this new group.

In the Street Address Guide **SAG** office our Union recently settled 25 pending arbitration cases. The members received full back pay for their lost time. The case goes back to July of 2007 when the office's central air conditioning failed in 90 degree heat. Management claimed they informed all members that they would not be paid for going home before the end of their shift. However, our members objected stating they weren't advised of lost pay until hot Monday when they saw the manager's list showing the amount of excused unpaid time for each worker. The employees then sent emails up the line protesting, but to no avail. So we filed grievances, prepared for arbitration and the company settled before the hearing date.

In the West Live Credit Collections **WLACC**, Area Steward Winnie Brown and her stewards achieved a big win for the members when 53% of the office did not attain the monthly objective. As a result of the grievance, the objective number was lowered and several members will receive their incentive payout and others became eligible for the Platinum group winners. Great Job!!

Let's not forget family and friends during the holiday season. Try to give up a few extras and pass it on to others in need. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



By *Kurt Schmidt, Business Representative*

## What Happened to MA Bell?

By Kurt Schmidt, Business Representative

**M**A Bell, what do you remember when you hear that name? I remember a company that looked at its employees as members of a big working family. The employees had the greatest loyalty of any company I had worked for previously. They helped one another; they brought each new employee under their wing, to make sure the person was trained on office procedures. Everyone – including management – gave respect and therefore got it back. This respect and caring for MA Bell was seen when generations of families would come to work for MA Bell. It was a company you wanted to work for not just for the pay, benefits and pension, but because you felt the company cared – and it did.

MA Bell reminded me of home and my mother taking care of our family. Even the customers referred to the company as MA Bell because they experienced the caring nature of the employees who handled their day to day needs. This created a customer base with the highest loyalty that I've ever seen, greater than a loyal car owner of Chevy, Dodge or Ford.

What a change since divestiture! It can't ALL be blamed on competition, as management plays it out to be. MA Bell no longer exists. It is now Mother Bell AT&T, a company which LOST the loyalty of its workers. It's not a caring company anymore, not one where generations of family members want to be employed. In fact, today when I see the pleas by AT&T to get our family and friends to fill positions, I tell them to stay away. There is no respect from management for the work we perform every day with fewer co-workers and mandatory overtime. Management is always demanding you do as they say without question. Otherwise you will be hit with insubordination or a Code of Business Conduct suspension.

Management's tool for respect is a hot stick in the eye – not a kind or caring word. Get the numbers or else. Some of this is a result of competition. However, it can be done with some empathy. Today's managers have none.

Even worse, our customers realize how much AT&T has changed and not for the better. When they call looking for



"Gentlemen, if we keep laying people off and keep raising the prices, who's gonna BUY our stuff?"

assistance they receive a steady dose of sales pitches not customer service. Once AT&T sells its product they only want their customers to call back for upgrades or the latest new cellular phone. Service Representatives can't take time to care for customer needs because of AHT, average hold time. They must rush you through to get to the sales pitch. Remember, you'll be disciplined if you don't sell a specific number of products per 100 calls.

Hey AT&T wake up!! It's time to go back to what made you what you were 20 years ago, by caring for the customer first, employee's second, and stock holders last. You need to do more than have a campaign for Customer First. It has to be believed and implemented so it can be successful.

## Change in America

By Jerry Rankins, Business Representative



**S**omething special happened in America. Not only have we elected our first African American President, voters smartened up, and can now see who the real enemy is; the Capitalists, who use race, gender and other tactics to divide working families. But that's not the only change I'm speaking about. Finally, we voted for a candidate who will promote policies for working families, who's committed to bringing about labor reform.

Over the last 8 years under Bush, companies like Comcast have been trying to silence worker's voices though bad-faith bargaining and interfering with organizing drives by hiring evil union busting consultants. Comcast's intent is to drag the telecommunication industry standards of pay and benefits down. For example Comcast workers with a HMO family plan pay nearly \$200 a month for medical insurance, on an hourly salary of less than \$15, yet their CEO earned over \$ 26 million last year. Compare this to AT&T workers who pay no monthly premium for health insurance, and earn over \$31 an hour to perform traditional phone work. Why? Because Comcast is only 2% organized.

The collapse of our economy is a reflection of an eroding middle class, while the attacks on unions have intensified. Now we have a chance to rebuild the middle-class, the only way this can happen is by organizing. We have awakened, change is coming.



The **Comcast West** contract expires on April 30, 2009. We requested to start bargaining over 2 months ago. Comcast has still not offered any bargaining dates. This comes as no surprise. We are prepared to fight like never before. However, we can not win this fight without a commitment from every member. Comcast fired three workers with over 45 years of service. Comcast will sink to the lowest levels to hurt working families. All three cases will be going to arbitration. So, be aware, work smart, and safe.

At **Cortland**, three grievances will be going to arbitration; a technician termination, the attendance policy, and the score-card-work performance policy.

In **City of Chicago 911 OEMC bargaining**, we are disappointed the City is dragging their feet in bargaining wages, and other benefits. We refuse to accept anything less than what the other bargaining units received. We will keep you posted though meetings, and the bargaining committee.

As we close yet another year let us remind ourselves of how blessed we are to have jobs with a voice in the workplace, and pray for our families, for those who have lost loved ones, our troops, the unfortunate, and our government.

Also, I give special thanks to our members and their stewards, and Area Stewards.

As always, our strength is in our unity, God Bless  
**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

# Economic History 101

By Nancy North, Area Steward



Everybody's heard about the Great Depression, through family stories and history books. After the Great Crash in 1929, one in every five banks in America

failed, partly because of market speculation by bankers in the 1920's. Congress passed the Glass-Steagall Act in 1933 to ban commercial banks from underwriting securities, forcing banks to choose between being a simple lender or an underwriter.

But when economic times got better, banks started to lobby Congress to loosen those restrictions. In December 1986, the Federal Reserve Board interpreted section 20 to allow banks to have up to 5% of gross revenues from investment banking,

In the spring of 1987, the Fed Board overrode the opposition of Chairman Paul Volker to allow banks to handle several underwriting businesses, including mortgage-backed securities. Volker expressed concern that lenders would recklessly lower loan standards.

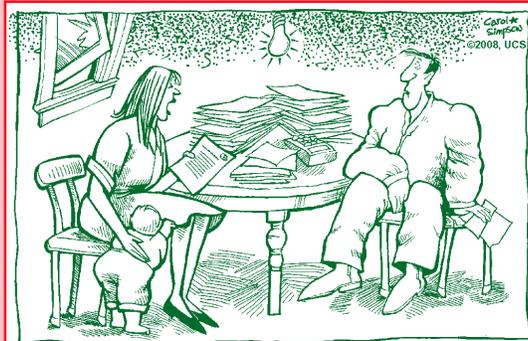
Alan Greenspan became chairman of the Fed in 1987. It quickly raised the limit from 5% to 10%. J.P. Morgan became the first bank to receive permission to

underwrite securities.

In Congress, the House blocked several Senate bills to lift more restrictions during the 1980's. But in 1996 with Greenspan's support for deregulation, the Fed raised the limit to 25% effectively rendering Glass-Steagall obsolete.

In 1998 Sandy Weill of Travelers and John Reed of Citicorp agreed to merge. They would have to work around Glass-Steagall, because it was designed to prohibit a company handling insurance underwriting, securities underwriting, and commercial banking. The Federal Reserve Board gave approval. The companies agreed to conform to the Act, but began a lobbying blitz to change the law.

The Financial Services Modernization Act of 1999 was passed and signed into law November 12th. It enabled all those bankers to make a lot of money until the system froze and crashed this September. Still, there's hope—Barack Obama is reading books on Franklin D. Roosevelt's first 100 days.



"Don't worry, if they cut off the heat we can always burn our credit card bills."

## Holiday Shopping With a Conscience

By Michael Sacco, Business Representative

I'm proud that my serious columns often get people thinking about our larger world. This month's column is a bit lighter, "Mike's Holiday Shopping Suggestions." These suggestions will help you choose thoughtful, sweatshop-free and union made gifts for the holidays. All stuff you can buy with a clear conscience.

Like our day, let's start out with union-made coffee from USA Coffee. This Florida company sells Hawaiian coffee which is union planted, harvested, packaged and shipped. I have bought it on several occasions and it is top flight, [www.usacoffeecompany.com](http://www.usacoffeecompany.com).

You can actually settle down to shop for union-made goods online by visiting [www.shopunionmade.org](http://www.shopunionmade.org). This website is built and maintained by the Union Label Department of the AFL-CIO. The site promotes all kinds of union products from toys to power tools.

People always complain to me that they can't find US-made and union-made clothes. I've purchased from two very good sites. A non-profit company selling all union-made or non-sweatshop

clothing from various countries is [www.nosweatapparel.com](http://www.nosweatapparel.com). For a little more variety visit [www.justiceclothing.com](http://www.justiceclothing.com). They are a for-profit company and out-source to union shops in various countries. They guarantee no sweat labor and all their suppliers employees work under union contracts.

If you want union logo apparel shop at [www.ibew21.org](http://www.ibew21.org), [www.ibew.org](http://www.ibew.org) or [www.afl-cio.org](http://www.afl-cio.org) for all kinds of cool union stuff.

If you want to buy books, CDs and DVDs, go to [www.powells.com](http://www.powells.com). They're the only unionized bookstore in the USA. They stock just about everything Amazon has at competitive prices.

If you're trying to buy for someone who has everything, or you're just tired of meaningless gifts that are quickly forgotten, there is an alternative. Heifer International, [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org), is a global charity that collects donations to buy livestock for impoverished farmers around the world. Buy your sweetie a half goat or a llama. How about some chickens or a cow? Heifer can help you give meaning to

the holidays by assisting someone you don't know rise above poverty or starvation.

Finally, retail shopping with a conscience is tough, but you can make a good start by shopping at **Jewel**, **Dominick's** or **Strack & Van Tils**. They are all union shops represented by the United Food and Commercial Workers.

**Costco** is a well-known employer that pays its employees a living wage and provides low-cost health-care. You have to be a member, but it's an interesting place to shop. Finally, good old **Sears** isn't what it used to be. It's better in some ways but doesn't have the full-time career workers of the past. It always has good people to help you, and it caught my eye when I recently learned that they provide 3 years of military leave and benefits to their workers serving our country. It's better than what Wal-Mart gives to its hungry and hapless employees who survive on government food stamps.

I hope these suggestions help you spend your hard-earned dollar in a wise place.

Have a safe and blessed holiday season!

# A Long and Winding Road to a Frozen Future

By Mike O'Connor, Chief Steward



**W**e work for an employer that claims its business is in Hi-Cap deployment and DSL subscribers, but AT&T doesn't have enough

qualified technicians with the proper test meters to cover the work.

The future of telecom is in broadband content. That is the mantra foisted at every industry conference and every lobbying assault on Congress or the statehouses by the Telco Industry. We've heard it in our own Local, "U-Verse is the future." AT&T's own Cindy Bucks told an auditorium full of Local 21 staff, "We don't want to be a wireline company anymore."

Well, where is this future? What we've seen in Illinois is the U-Verse footprint disappearing like Kool-Aid powder in a tall pitcher of water. We've seen almost all of our Term brothers and sisters in Construction savagely put off the payroll

because of this company's mismanagement of its LightSpeed build-out.

Illinois was the last of the Midwest states to get U-Verse service. The poor Prem Techs were sent to other states for the final leg of their training. Didn't AT&T learn anything in rolling out U-Verse in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin? What best practices other than paying low wages and working the Prem Techs to death did the company bring back to Illinois?

This is a company focused on the bottom line, chasing pennies in profit to make its next quarterly result. Right now it is reduced, like much of America, to digging around the house for valuables to sell off, maybe some old gold jewelry or cufflinks. Except in this case, it is old pulp toll cable; some of it has been sitting in the ground since before the last Depression. And to perform this "cable mining" AT&T isn't relying on the construction forces with nothing to do, in a department with no capital money, or upon techs who historically performed this work. Many of them began their careers doing this work as a "Cable Squeak" for the original AT&T.

No, contractors are doing our work, and SCAB contractors at that: going in our

manholes, hooking up our cable, pulling it out on a reel, and taking it who knows where, probably via rail car and freighter to China.

You may think you received your name at the hospital where you were born, or from a priest or minister when you were baptized. But in reality, your name is Legacy Costs. And your name is a dirty word and a bad corporate habit to AT&T and the institutional investors who lap up its stock.

Together they dream of an idealized world of triple play services delivered over an IP network of high speed fiber optics. In this future there are no wasted \$200 truck rolls just to place a cross connect or run connections in the Central office. In this future – some hybrid of Dante's Inferno and the Jetsons – cross connects are virtual, two clicks on a laptop; facility and subscriber records, changes of service are all done instantly and automatically. It's a "greedy profiteer's" Utopia and they are dreaming about it right now. If you want a good scare, you can read about it in the October issue of *Outside Plant* magazine.



PHOTO: TOM HOPPER

Orland Park Construction Members voicing their dissatisfaction with AT&T management.



PHOTO: PAUL WRIGHT

AT&T Members in Des Plaines standing in solidarity

# There is So Much More to Achieve

By Bob Przybylinski Chief Steward



As I took my place in history among the crowd witnessing a new chapter in American history unfold, I was struck with admiration for the man, our assignments, and how we as union members are best positioned to further the dream.

As I listened to President-elect Barack Obama's speech I realized it relates to our lives as union members. Direct quotes

from his speech are italicized.

Our role in shaping our futures as union members did not end on election night. It was only the beginning in our journey to reclaim our position as a force with the power to strengthen the middle class. When our grandchildren enter the next century they will look at our generation and appreciate the courage it took to achieve the progress we have made.

*This victory alone is not the change we seek - it is only the chance for us to make that change. It cannot happen without you. I will ask you join in the work of remaking this nation the only way it's been done in America for two-hundred and twenty-one years - block by block, brick by brick, calloused hand by calloused hand.*

By electing Barack Obama we only started making the changes we need. In the political arena, we need to fight for the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act. It will make it easier for non-union workers to join our ranks and partake in the benefits we enjoy as union members. We all must do our part to organize those in our industry. Take the time to talk to non-union workers and direct them to our organizing department so they may obtain the information they will need to understand the value of union membership.

*Our union can be perfected. And what we have already achieved gives us hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.*



Internal Organizing is one way Local 21 will achieve this goal in our union. Many members have already stepped up by volunteering to help as Mobilization and Group Coordinators. We have an obligation to support them when they ask for our help.

At work we must all stand together against the injustices we face. We obtained our gains by doing this in the past. We can achieve more by recommitting ourselves to fight harder to obtain our piece of the American dream, by doing so we will leave our children with more than we have. *So let us summon a new spirit of patriotism; of service and responsibility where each of us resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other.*

Obama reiterated what we as union members have long known *out of many, we are one*. We are the ones who must take the lead to rebuild the middle class. We stood together by voting for change. It's now time to enact that change. We will fulfill the goals of our union, the IBEW, by elevating the moral, intellectual and social conditions of our members, their families and dependants, in the interest of a higher standard of citizenship. *The road ahead will be long. Our climb will be steep.* There will be setbacks but I have never been more hopeful. With our solidarity we will get there. With that I say Yes we can!



Members taking it to the streets in Oak Lawn



PHOTO: TOM HOPPER

PHOTO: BOB PRZYBYLINSKI

# CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

## January 2008

Dennis Starns  
Maria E. Dean

## May 2008

Robert Benuska  
Felice Wortham  
Bernice Thomas  
Karen Heard

## July 2008

Gwendolyn McCary

## August 2008

Anna M. Vasquez  
Diane C. Brown

## September 2008

Gregory Holloway  
Terry Mattia  
Theresa Ware  
Lora A. Clay  
Lenette Owens

## October 2008

Janice Funderburk  
Lance Belter  
Shirley Newtoff  
Linda Davis-Greer  
Ruth Serran  
Frank McGuire  
Paula Bullock  
Phillip W. Miller  
Sandra Boulos

## November 2008

Tamara Berry  
Fred Koch  
Terry Salter  
Paul Hobe

In order to appear on this page you must inform your steward you are retiring and a retiree gift application must be submitted. Without receipt of this application the *Frontline* editors are unaware of your retirement.

### Information Alert

Members must be in good standing for 10 consecutive years with IBEW Local 21 immediately preceding their retirement in order to receive a retirement gift. These members must be severing their employment with the employer. Stewards can request applications by calling Nancy Kopydlowski at the union office 630 960-4466 X234.

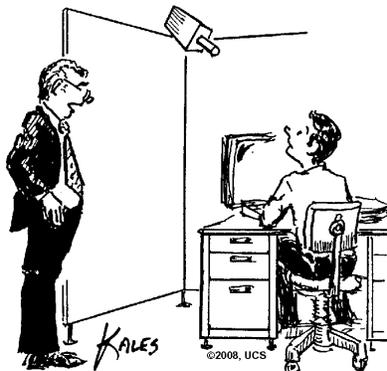
## Remembering our Members in the Military This Holiday Season



David Coleman  
Jason Seeman  
Burton Breazeale  
Abasi Baruti  
Brian Kollias  
David Murcio  
Keith Murphy  
Jason Koenigshof  
Timothy O'Brien  
Benjamin Schultz  
Eric Reay  
Joseph Nicholas  
Jovani Torres  
David Rogers



The generosity of Local 21 members enables the Union to remember our brothers and sisters serving overseas. We are again selling military patches. The large patch is \$25, the small one is \$15. Please call Nancy Kopydlowski in the Union office at 630 960-4466 x234 if you are interested. The proceeds will be used to send care packages to our members serving overseas or donated to a local veteran's hospital. Purchasing a patch will double your support because the Local 21 Executive Board has pledged to match your donation dollar for dollar.



"Frankly, we've been spying on you because we're bored."

# FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21 Official Publication



International Brotherhood  
Of Electrical Workers  
Local 21, AFL-CIO/CLC

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Comments and articles are welcome and should be sent to the editors. Local 21 reserves the right to edit letters and articles, and to use items as space allows.

**Member: Illinois State Labor Press  
Association, Midwest Labor Press  
Association, and International Labor  
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# UNIT MEETINGS 2009

## JANUARY

### **Unit 1**

Thursday, January 8, 6 PM  
IBEW Local #134  
600 W. Washington Blvd.  
Chicago IL  
312 474-4186

### **Unit 2**

Tuesday, January 13, 7 PM  
Slovak Club  
6920 Broadway  
Merrillville IN  
219 756-5101

### **Unit 3**

Thursday, January 15, 7 PM  
Gurnee American Legion  
749 Milwaukee Ave.  
Gurnee IL  
847 244-9282

### **Unit 4**

Wednesday, January 14, 7 PM  
IBEW Local #145  
1700 52nd Ave, Suite A  
Moline IL  
309 736-4239

### **Unit 5**

Wednesday, January 21, 7 PM  
American Legion Post #979  
4501 S. Airport Rd.  
Bartonville IL  
309 697-2432

### **Unit 6**

Tuesday, January 20, 5:30 PM  
IBEW Local # 193  
3150 Wide Track Dr.  
Springfield IL  
217 544-3479

### **Unit 7**

Monday, January 19, 7 PM  
American Legion Post #141  
916 Main St.  
Mt Vernon IL  
618 242-4561

## FEBRUARY

### **Unit 1**

Thursday, February 12, 7 PM  
Irish-American Heritage Center  
4626 N. Knox Ave.  
Chicago IL  
773 282-7035

### **Unit 2**

Tuesday February 10, 7 PM  
Gaelic Park  
6119 W. 147TH  
Oak Forest IL  
708 687-9323

### **Unit 3**

Thursday, February 19, 7 PM  
Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites  
495 Airport Rd.  
Elgin IL  
847 488-9000

### **Unit 4**

Wednesday, February 11, 7 PM  
American Legion Harwood #5  
705 S. Larkin  
Joliet IL  
815 725-4333

### **Unit 5**

Wednesday, February 18, 7 PM  
IBEW Local #146  
3390 N Woodford St.  
Decatur IL  
217 877-4604

### **Unit 6**

Tuesday, February 17, 5:30 PM  
IBEW Local # 193  
3150 Wide Track Dr.  
Springfield IL  
217 544-3479

### **Unit 7**

Monday, February 16, 7 PM  
IBEW Local # 309  
2000A Mall St. (Rte 157)  
Collinsville IL  
618 345-5112

## MARCH

### **Unit 1**

Thursday, March 12, 7 PM  
IBEW Local #21  
1307 W. Butterfield Rd. Suite 424  
Downers Grove IL  
630 960-4466

### **Unit 2**

Tuesday, March 10, 7 PM  
Lansing American Legion #697  
18255 Grant St.  
Lansing IL  
708 474-5906

### **Unit 3**

Thursday, March 19, 7 PM  
Holiday Inn of Rockford  
7550 E State St.  
Rockford IL  
815 398-2200

### **Unit 4**

Wednesday, March 11, 7 PM  
Lemont VFW  
15780 New Ave.  
Lemont IL  
630 257-9859

### **Unit 5**

Wednesday, March 18, 7 PM  
IBEW Local #538  
1290 N Michigan Ave.  
Danville IL  
217 442-0996

### **Unit 6**

Tuesday, March 17, 5:30 PM  
IBEW Local # 193  
3150 Wide Track Dr.  
Springfield IL  
217 544-3479

### **Unit 7**

Monday, March 16, 7 PM  
IBEW Local #649  
501 Humbert Rd.  
Alton IL  
618 462-16217

Information on attending your closest Local 21 Union meeting can be obtained by contacting the Union office at 630-960-4466 or ask your Steward.

**IBEW LOCAL 21**  
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*Happy  
Holidays*

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