

# IBEW Local 21

## FRONTLINE



Volume 2, Number 1 ■ January 1999

## Workers Vote: Union Yes!

On October 22, the workers at the Chicago Branch of SecurityLink sent a powerful message to corporate Ameritech. In a union election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), workers voted to join IBEW Local 21 by a 2-to-1 margin.

For over three years, SecurityLink employees had tried to form a union.

the red, 5-foot tall words, **Ameritech Unfair to Working Families.**

Two days later, on October 20, employees conducted a mock funeral at the company's 225 West Randolph Street property in Chicago. Led by the "Grim Reaper" and "Executioner," the highly-visible event focused on the "burial of workers rights" by Ameritech.

representation. As we go to press, five workers at the Chicago Branch have been trained as Union Stewards and are representing their fellow workers.

Two additional work groups at SecurityLink also participated in recent union representation elections, with mixed results. In early November, 14 Service Dispatchers at the Chicago Branch voted, and in early December, 20 workers at the Peoria, Illinois Branch voted in a mail ballot election.

The Service Dispatchers included many new hires who were not present during the three-year unionization effort. Assisted by union-busting lawyers, management isolated the Dispatchers who were persuaded by the company's anti-union attack. The Dispatchers voted against union representation by a final tally of 2-to-11.

At the Peoria Branch, workers displayed great solidarity during the organizing drive and with their votes. Ameritech

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They battled corporate Ameritech and its anti-union hired gun, the law firm of *Durvin, Cahn & Hutton*. This time, in their third election, workers devised an effective plan to win!

Disgusted with working conditions, with rampant favoritism and discrimination, and with the firing of union supporters, SecurityLink employees prepared for the election and conducted a series of public events. Local 21's creative Organizing Department and many volunteer rank-and-file activists carried out the winning strategy.

On Sunday, October 18, during the Chicago Bears vs. Dallas Cowboys football game, union supporters displayed Ameritech's true colors in the sky above Chicago's historic Soldier Field — for all to see. A banner-pulling airplane carried

In a moving show of reality, SecurityLink workers exposed the truth to the public. The lunchtime protest included fired workers and pallbearers carrying a casket back and forth in front of the former Ameritech headquarters. Workers carried gravestone signs and distributed leaflets describing SecurityLink workers' accounts of terror and fear. Friends from **Jobs with Justice** provided background music for the protest, with the eerie sounds of bagpipes. All of this was heard and seen by management's headman and other officials.

Like a winning team's last minute attack on an opponent, a high-powered offense brought workers a solid victory. Two days after the "funeral," SecurityLink employees voted 96 to 52 for Local 21

In the next edition of **Frontline**, look for a focus article on Social Security and for Local 21 Unit updates (all Units are welcome to submit reports).

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# INSIDE





## Message from your President

**Donald L. Moseley**

President-Business Manager/Financial Secretary

## It's Our Lunch Money!

**M**aybe it's because the company employs 12,000 of our 14,000 members. Or, maybe it's because the level of arrogance and ruthlessness the company displays — not only with employees but with the public as well — is why I spend so much time picking on that icon of mismanagement called Ameritech. Not that problems don't exist with the 40 other contracts this local administers, but it's just that Ameritech has elevated its propensity for mistreating people to an art form.

I didn't like it when the bully back in grade school would try to steal our lunch money. I haven't found a way to accept that kind of treatment any better today than back then. But this time I'm **NOT** alone.

Our members, time after time, stand up for one another when Ameritech begins an assault. It makes no difference what size the group under attack is. Our members see an injury to one as an injury to all. That unity, along with bad press coverage, seem to be the only things Ameritech truly fears. The company knows when the employees have finally had enough. By the time when they stand up en masse, **big time** problems exist.

As we start the final year of this century, let's not forget how we got where we are. Many workers before us paved the road we travel with great sacrifice. The solidarity displayed in the past is the reason we enjoy what we have today. The company **gave** nothing to our brothers and sisters in the past. They won their rights and benefits the same way we must attain them today — through long hard fights.

Our responsibility today is to continue supporting one another and to build a future in the industry, so our children and grandchildren will enjoy the fruits of labor's continual fight to raise the standard of living for all working families.

I find myself filled with so much pride when I see you stand up for one another, like many of you recently did. That strength has been displayed before and we will see it again.

Let's all use our energy to educate those members who did not participate to the degree that many of you did in recent solidarity actions. Remember, the non-participating members are like a reflection in the mirror. The image they see could be the next workers Ameritech shoves in the barrel. If and when that time comes, all of us will be there along side them too.

That's what labor does.... We save each other's lunch money by fighting the bullies.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

In solidarity,

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## IBEW Local 21

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International Labor Communications  
Association, AFL-CIO/CLC



# GRIEVANCES & ARBITRATIONS

## ■ Union gets seniority agreement

In 1996, former Local 336 filed a grievance when Ameritech assigned employees from the Gougar garage to Joliet engineering without regard for seniority. The union argued that Article 12, Section 2(a), "Other Assignment" language was eliminated from the contract during 1995 bargaining and that the company no longer had the right to assign employees to engineering or any other assignments listed in the 1992 collective bargaining agreement.

After a long two-year battle the union and company reached an agreement. The union will withdraw the grievance and not force arbitration. The company will use **seniority as a factor** in the selection of employees to be assigned to instructors, staff persons, demonstrators and engineers, and will include a differential of 10 percent of the employee's basic daily wage rate for each day worked in the said assignment.

The memorandum of agreement covers all Local 21 employees holding titles in Appendix B, Exhibits 1, 2 and 3 of the current collective bargaining agreement with Ameritech and remains in full force until June 28, 2003. Local 21 Business Representative Ronald Kastner said, "This is a good win for the members in Network Operations. It is the first time the union was able to negotiate seniority rights as a factor when management assigns employees to temporary positions, thereby eliminating favoritism."

## ■ Term completion is arbitrated

The arbitrators heard the first of the "term completion" arbitrations on October 19. At issue is the union's contention that Ameritech violated the collective bargaining agreement when it "term completed" employees. A decision is likely to come in early 1999.

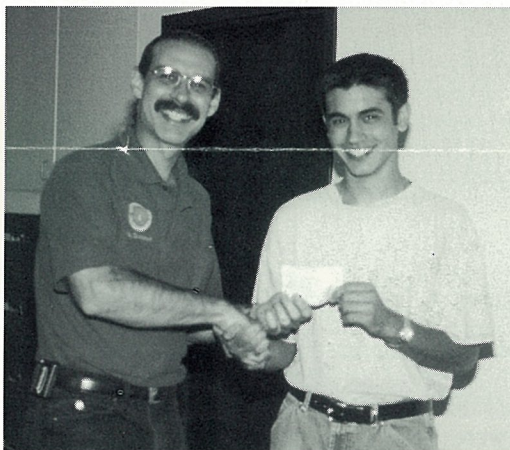
## ■ Two members win grievances

An Ameritech member, upon arrival at work, received a call that her child was very ill. The member left work to take her child to the doctor. Ameritech not only

refused to pay her for the absent time, but also considered her action as a chargeable incidental absence. The union objected to this treatment as a violation of Article 21.10, "Serious Distress," of the collective bargaining agreement. The grievance resulted in the member being paid and the absence being considered non-chargeable.

The company suspended a member in the West LACC office for alleged insubordination. The union found that Ameritech had not even followed its own policies regarding insubordination. Through the grievance procedure, the union succeeded in getting the suspension rescinded and the member paid for lost wages. ■

## Local 21's First New Member



**Chief Steward Michael Sacco (left) presents James Greco with the first working credentials issued by Local 21. An "A" member and new hire at Ameritech Information Systems, Inc., Greco unwittingly became the local union's first new member when he walked into the Downers Grove union office bright and early on September 1.**

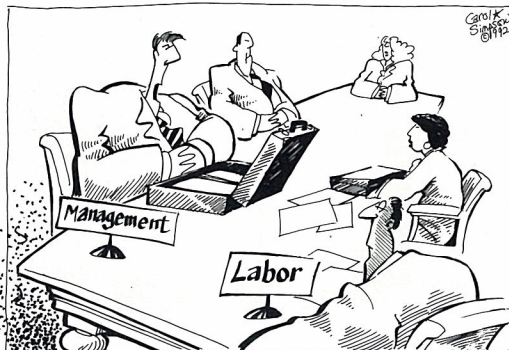
## JULIE Bargaining Goes into Full Swing

**W**ith a December 31 expiration date, 60 IBEW Local 21 members at Joint Utilities Locating in Excavating, Inc., better known as JULIE, are hanging tough for a new multi-year contract with the Illinois one-call center located in Joliet.

Major issues identified by the grassroots bargaining committee include: wages, benefits, scheduling, and innovative language to give members a voice in technological changes and their implementation. One-third of the JULIE members voluntarily participate on the committee.

The JULIE members show tremendous interest and solidarity in the negotiations. They've volunteered hundreds of hours

during the eight-month preparation period. The work group, which is all women,



**"We said we'd be happy to conduct negotiations... We never said anything about an agreement."**

effectively mobilizes and regularly acts in solidarity with the bargaining team. On the opening day of negotiations, for example, the 40 workers on duty boosted the confidence of the union team with a "wear-red day." Their action prompted one union negotiator to say, "The first day of bargaining can be scary. You don't know what to expect. But when I saw that sea of red clothes in the call center, I felt like we could all take on the world *together!*"

**Editor's Note:** As we go to press, the Local 21 bargaining team reached a tentative agreement with JULIE.



# MEMBERS TAKE ACTION

## New Media Members Stand Up for Justice

**D**uring the week of November 9, the Local 21 members in the Ameritech New Media Plainfield and Alsip garages set up informational picketlines to protest the company's introduction of mandatory overtime, its treatment of minority employees and its harassment of some employees.

Ameritech had unilaterally changed the policy on overtime distribution. It hired a contractor to build the newly-signed franchise in Streamwood, Illinois. When the contractor performed substandard work and could not meet production deadlines, management removed the contractor from the project.

Ameritech New Media then demanded that employees again "bail out" an inept contractor, mandating them to work six 10-hour days. Those members who were unable to work the mandatory shifts were to be disciplined. When the needs of their families and other obligations were mentioned, management's response was essentially "I don't care; six days means six days; people should stop whining because I have a business to run!" The company's actions didn't sit well with the members.

Furthermore, in recent months it has grown increasingly obvious that some foremen discriminate against and harass some groups of employees, and unjustifiably discipline some employees. Management was notified of the actions of certain foremen but failed to respond. So, the union employees acted.

### Local 21 OEC Members Honored

**O**n November 5, the Office of Emergency Communications held its first annual retirement and awards banquet at the Lexington House in Hickory Hills. Thirteen retiring Police Communications Operators were honored for their hard work and dedication to the City of Chicago and its residents. The majority of the retirees took advantage of the City's early retirement offer that came earlier in the year, and not one expressed regrets to having done so. Most of the retirees have enjoyed their new-found freedom since July.

Also, 12 Local 21 members received outstanding service commendations. Among the award winners was Local 21 Steward, Ricky Hampton. Ricky received a special commendation for his contributions to public safety.

Local 21 congratulates the members who received commendations and offers best wishes to the 13 retirees:

Carol Begley	Mae Jackson
Vince Buettner	Lacy Johnson
Dolly Griag	Ted Johnson
Beverly Draper	Louisa Mendoza
Mary Pat Foody	Patricia Nielson
Louise Hudson	Louisa Ridley
Doris Templeton	

On November 9, members sent management a message that the company should understand: the needs of employees' families outweigh the needs of the business. At 5 a.m., members established informational picketlines at the Plainfield and Alsip garages, and denounced the racism, harassment and management's lack of respect for all New Media employees and their families. When management ordered the pickets removed, union brothers and sisters refused to back down or cower to management's demand.

Enduring the elements, the employees lengthened their work days by picketing until a compromise was reached. Business Representatives Ron Kastner and Rick Gessler, and Chief Stewards Steve Unterfranz and Bryan Slinkard tried to hammer out an agreement with the company. They offered their support by joining the picketlines. After three days, the company finally came to the table with an offer and on Wednesday a compromise was reached.

The union demanded an investigation of the allegations of racism and harassment at New Media. By Friday, company representatives from the EEOC and human resources departments were meeting with employees to discuss management practices. As this edition goes to press, the investigation continues.

A compromise on mandatory overtime was reached. If the company is able to get 80 percent of New Media employees to volunteer for overtime, the company will back off its mandatory position. The members feel this is fair, because most are willing to volunteer. They simply want the respect of being asked, and not ordered, to work

overtime. They want to be sure they can see to their family obligations. The union also reached an agreement enabling Ameritech Network construction crews to work overtime to alleviate the heavy workload.

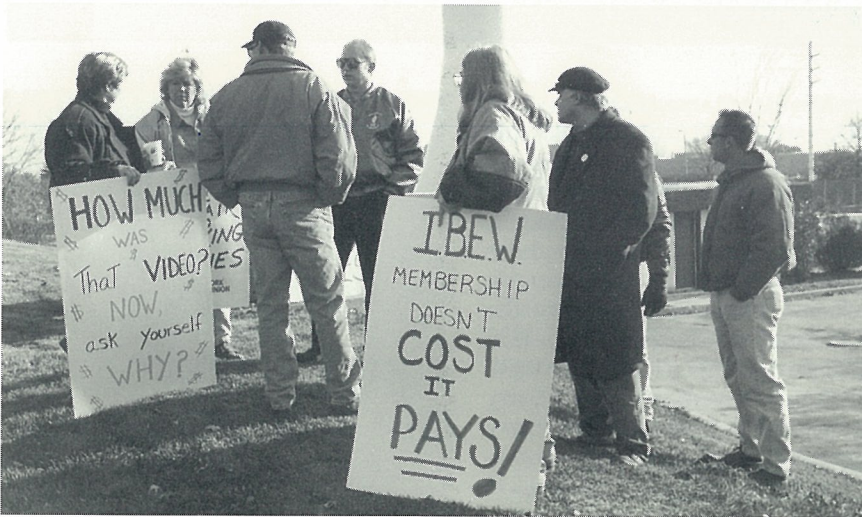
By standing up for one another, New Media members showed what it means to be union. Their tenacity enabled the union to reach an agreement with a company that had previously refused to negotiate the issue. In the future, the company should think twice before it acts against this group of employees. Our New Media brothers and sisters found out *they have a voice and they have made it heard!* ■

**Wherever  
you find  
injustice,  
the  
proper  
form of  
politeness  
is attack.**





# Workers Vote: Union Yes!



(continued from page 1)

tried to delay the Peoria election, violating the intent of labor laws which seek prompt elections, free from employer interference. By challenging two workers' right to join a union, the company forced a legal hearing on the issue. The company claimed one Service Dispatcher and one Installation Coordinator are supervisors, something it did not challenge in the Chicago Branch election.

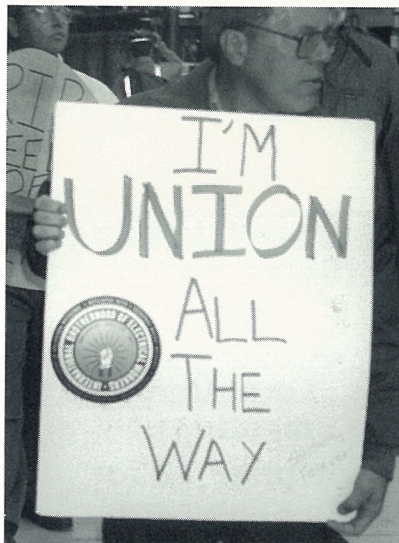
Peoria Branch workers could have had a quick election if they abandoned the two workers Ameritech tried to exclude. Instead the workers fought back and won the NLRB decision. Trying to cause further delay, the company then appealed the NLRB-ordered election but lost the appeal. A mail ballot election was conducted and ballots were counted on December 7.

The results showed that solidarity works. The union won a solid victory with a 15-to-5 vote in favor of Local 21 representation.

Local 21 welcomes the newly-organized SecurityLink members and is proud to negotiate on their behalf. Bargaining began on December 9 for IBEW's first collective bargaining agreement with Ameritech SecurityLink in the country. The Chicago Branch is part of the national headquarters of Ameritech SecurityLink, the second largest security company in North America.

About 175 new members now join Local 21 as a result of the SecurityLink organizing drive. These workers and their families have earned much deserved respect from fellow workers and the right to bargain collectively with a corporation that cares more about profits than the people it employs.

Congratulations to the new IBEW Local 21 SecurityLink members! ■



**The workers at the Chicago Branch of SecurityLink sent a powerful message to Ameritech....**

**.... they voted to be represented by IBEW Local 21.**



# LOCAL 21 OFFICERS



## Sally Fohrman

Recording Secretary, Business Representative and Member of the Local 21 Safety Committee

Sally Fohrman served Local 383 members for 17 years as a Steward, Area Steward, Business Representative and Assistant Business Manager. Sally was elected to the Local 383 Executive Board for two terms, as Recording Secretary for two terms, as Delegate to the 1991 and 1996 IBEW International Conventions, and as the Safety Representative.

Sally earned an Associate Degree in Business and also attended several labor education classes. She is married to Gregg, for 36 years. They have two sons Scott and Paul. Sally and Gregg share a hobby of collecting and restoring 1955 Thunderbirds. □

For 30 years, Larry Moeller was an active member of Local 336. He was elected by Local 336 members as Recording Secretary three times and as Treasurer. With 14 years as a Steward, he served two years as Unit 1 Recorder and nine years as Unit 1 Chairman. He was elected Alternate Delegate to the IBEW International Convention in 1986 and Delegate-at-Large to the 35th IBEW International Convention. In 1983 Larry served as Unit 1 Strike Director. Larry also served as a Teller in numerous contract ratification votes and in Local 336 elections.

As the Director of COPE (the union's Committee on Political Education), Larry acts as the liaison to the Illinois, Indiana and National AFL-CIO. □



## Larry Moeller

Treasurer and COPE Director

A union activist for over 27 years, Gloria Sistrunk held appointed and elected positions in Local 188 and was an active member of the past Commercial Telephone Workers Union. Positions in which she served include Area Steward, Steward and Delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor. Gloria was also a member of the 1986 and 1989 Bargaining Committees, and an elected Delegate to the 1986 and 1991 IBEW International Conventions. Gloria is active in the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and a member of the IBEW Women's Conference.

Gloria has completed many academic courses for union leaders. The mother of four and grandmother of five spends a great deal of time helping the needy. Gloria says she wishes "all members of Local 21 a prosperous 1999 and I look forward to hearing from you." □



## Gloria Sistrunk

Vice-President and Area Steward



**IBEW Local 21  
is your union.  
Attend your  
Local Unit  
meetings.  
See page 12 for  
the February  
schedule.**





## LOCAL 21 ABMs



### **Ronald A. Siemienas**

Assistant Business Manager,  
Units 1, 2 and 3 Operations

Ron Siemienas is the former President/Business Manager of Local 165 and is a Delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor. He has served as a Steward, Chief Steward, Business Representative, and on the Organizing and Bargaining Committees. He served as Secretary Treasurer of the System T-4 Council and a member of the 1998 Bargaining Team. Ron graduated from Roosevelt University's Labor Leaders Program, and completed arbitration courses at University of Wisconsin and courses on bargaining strategies at University of Illinois.

Currently, as Assistant Business Manager, Ron is a member of the Apprentice/Certification Committee, New Media Transfer Committee and Safety Committee. He oversees the contract administration with Ameritech, Johnson Controls, City of Chicago, GTE and A-J Communications in Units 1, 2 and 3. □

Dan Klein was the President/Business Manager of Local 383. He was elected Vice-President/Financial Secretary and Executive Board Chairman. Dan was the COPE Director at Local 383, a Solidarity Committee member and an elected Delegate to the IBEW International Convention. He is a Delegate to the Illinois AFL-CIO State Conference. With CWA Local 5714, Dan served as a Steward, was elected Recording Secretary, and served on the Executive Committee, Bylaws Committee and Finance Committee.

Dan is married to wife Vicky, for 19 years, and they have three children. Dan is involved with the Boy Scouts of America as the Committee Chair for Pack 45, Calumet Council. He is a council member at St. Matthias Parish. □



### **Daniel Klein**

Senior Assistant Business Manager



### **Micki D'Angelo**

Assistant Business Manager, Marketing

A union activist for almost 30 years, Micki D'Angelo is former President/Business Manager of Local 188. She served as Steward and Area Representative, and was elected to the Executive Board. She was a Delegate to the System Councils TCC-1, SCT-3 and SCT-4; Illinois State IBEW Conference; 1996 IBEW International Convention; and on the 1998 Ameritech Bargaining Team. Micki has served on the union's Bylaws and Members Action Committees. IBEW International President J.J. Barry appointed Micki to serve on the select Committee for the Future of the Brotherhood, which evaluates and develops recommendations for constitutional amendments to better serve the membership.

Micki belongs to the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and the Coalition of Labor Union Women. Micki says she looks forward to meeting as many members as possible in the new year. □



### **William J. Hunter**

Assistant Business Manager, Units 4, 5, 6 and 7 Operations

Bill Hunter is the former President/Business Manager, twice elected, of Local 399. Bill served Local 399 members for over 30 years in appointed and elected positions. He was a Steward during the 1968 strike and remained a Steward until he was appointed Chief Steward in 1974. Bill was elected to the Executive Board in 1976 and served through three more elections until 1985. In 1985 Bill was again appointed as Chief Steward until 1988, when he was promoted to Business Representative and served in that capacity until 1994, when he was elected President/Business Manager. Bill was a member of the 1995 Contract Consolidation Committee and of the 1995 and 1998 Ameritech Bargaining Teams. □



# Apprentice Committee Moves Forward

**A**t the new year, people often enjoy looking back at the closing year while speculating about the year to come. As we think about 1998, the amalgamation of the five local unions comes to mind. Although some members were genuinely concerned about the outcome of the amalgamation, the fact remains that the union leadership is intact and we now have strength in numbers.

As the saying goes, "the more things change, the more they stay the same." Your union has a new local "number" and some new "faces" at the unit meetings, but as always it is committed to serving the membership. The location of union offices will soon change, but you'll still find the same union leaders working for you. Take, for example, the Apprentice/Certification Committee. Former Local 336 Vice-President, **Ronald Kastner**, performs the same functions as before, but with a different title. Kastner, Business Representative/Unit 2, chairs the Apprentice/Certification Committee, is a member of the Non-Management Staffing Committee, and administers contracts with Johnson Controls, Fujitsu, TCI and Ameritech.

Other Apprentice Committee members include:

- **Jerry Gast** (formerly #336), Business Representative/Unit 4, chairs the Training Advisory Board, administers the contract with Ameritech and serves on the SecurityLink Bargaining Committee.
- **Ron Gentry** (formerly #399), Business Representative/Unit 3, administers contracts with Ameritech and Johnson Controls.
- **Larry Niemiec** (formerly #165), Business Representative/Unit 1, administers the contract with Ameritech.
- **Ronald Siemienas** (formerly #165), Assistant Business Manager/Units 1, 2 and 3 Operations, oversees all contracts in the units.

The Apprentice Committee continues to keep the company in check regarding the 10 percent ratio. On a monthly basis, it forces the company to promote the Senior Apprentice in Tier C to Journeyman. In the last monthly meeting with the company, the Committee found six violations in various locations to the 10 percent ratio. The company was forced to remove the Apprentice status and apply a Journeyman status to the most senior qualified employees in the effected work groups.

## Sprint Sells Properties

**S**print Illinois Telephone officially became Gallatin River, Inc. on November 1. The change effects 68 Local 21 members in Pekin, Dixon, Savanna, Galesburg, Staunton, Livingston, Havana and Lacon, Illinois.

The union and Gallatin reached a tentative agreement to honor the current contract, which expires October 1, 1999. A tentative agreement was also reached to extend the current contract to October 1, 2002, with wage additives already negotiated.

Local 21 Chief Steward John Garrett said, "Although a tentative agreement on a three-year extension has been reached, we have some problems with the company at the present time that may hold up ratification." ■

The Committee focuses much of its time on the certification process. With rank-and-file participation, it has succeeded in developing a certification test for the Customer System Technician title. The Committee also reached agreement with the company to replace the current TKT test, and is developing a test for the Telecommunications Specialists, again, with rank-and-file participation, that will be more applicable to the job. The Committee continues to meet with the company monthly.

Committee Chairman Ronald Kastner reminds Apprentices who have not yet passed the Customer System Technician certification test to either schedule to take the test, or keep track of the time frame in which to reschedule and reschedule. This will prevent you from being bypassed if you are next in line for Journeyman. The Apprentice/Certification Committee thanks former Committee members **Dale Carpenter** (formerly #336), Business Representative/Safety Director, and **Mike Palkiewicz** (formerly #165), Business Representative/Safety, for their contributions to the Apprentice Committee. ■

## Zenith Plant Closes

**Z**enith Electronics closed its Melrose Park color picture tube plant and eliminated 2,000 union jobs in late 1998. Black and white tv manufacturing left the U.S. years ago, and little remains of the once-thriving color tv industry.

Jose Caez, Business Manager and Financial Secretary of IBEW Local 1031 which represents most of the Zenith workers, says Zenith offered to negotiate concessions to possibly keep the plant open, but the already low wages of \$7-\$15 per hour offered little room for cuts. The next *Frontline* edition will let you know how you can help these union workers who are likely to be unemployed. ■

### WILLIAM A. LEE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

IBEW members or children of members are eligible to compete in the college scholarship program sponsored by the Chicago Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO. The CFL will award ten cash grants of \$1,000. The grants are for the first year of college enrollment only.

Only COMPLETED entries received by MARCH 1, 1999, will be considered. To enter the 1999 awards competition, you must first request an application by writing to:

William A. Lee Memorial Scholarship Committee  
Chicago Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO  
Prudential Plaza  
130 East Randolph, Suite 2600  
Chicago, IL 60601

No applications will be sent, unless requested in writing. Please do not telephone.

Award presentations will be made at the May 1999 CFL delegates meeting, and the winners must be present.



# Ameritech-SBC Merger Raises Concern

On May 11, 1998, consumer groups, regulatory agencies and business organizations took notice when Ameritech Corporation and SBC Communications boldly announced their plans to merge. Employees at both companies also noticed, since the word *merger* usually ends up having one meaning — mass layoffs.

Soon after the merger announcement, 12,000 IBEW members in Illinois and Northwest Indiana ratified a new five-year collective bargaining agreement with Ameritech. Throughout the summer and early fall of 1998, the System Council T-4 [President/Business Managers of IBEW Locals 165, 188, 336, 383 and 399] monitored the situation closely. On September 1, the IBEW International in Washington, DC, amalgamated the five System Council T-4 locals and created Local 21, now one of the largest IBEW local unions in the country.

Local 21 continues to monitor the pending merger and its impact on the 12,000 IBEW members at Ameritech. When

Notebaert in writing [and later distributed to all Ameritech employees] that, "...as a result of the merger, employment levels in your five state region will not be reduced due to this transaction and, in fact, as we discussed this transaction is based on growth and we fully expect employment levels to increase as a result of the merger." On the surface, this sounds great — more jobs, more opportunities, long-term employment security....

Regardless, it has become clear that the former "Bell System" companies formed over the last decade are driven by three elements: reducing costs; increasing profits; and creating shareowner value, thereby attracting more investors. As the Ameritech/SBC merger works its way through numerous regulatory and judicial authorities, including the state utility commissions in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Missouri, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission and U.S. Department of Justice, Local 21 has taken a more active role.

to preserve union jobs and to provide real opportunities for women and minorities in higher levels of management. Following Rev. Jackson, President Moseley told Notebaert that Local 21 was not attending the meeting to challenge the planned merger. Moseley continued and said Local 21 could not publicly support the merger, at that time, without resolving key issues which would benefit IBEW members, their families and the people of Illinois.

Specifically, President Moseley stated that the pressure for more profits and lower costs in the *merged* company will most certainly cause SBC to: implement higher prices for Illinois consumers; disinvest in Illinois' telephone infrastructure, thereby degrading service quality; and transfer jobs to lower cost states — all to turn a profit for shareholders. Moseley

**IBEW Local 21**  
**Member Newswire**  
**630/415-2711**  
**217/529-0087**



*Shovel to dig out from under windfall profits.*

combined, SBC and Ameritech plans to enter the 30 U.S. local telephone markets outside their established regions and to *bundle* local, long-distance cellular, Internet and high-speed data services. The growth in our industry *should* provide employment security and open new opportunities for IBEW members.

When the merger was announced in May, Edward E. Whitacre, Jr., Chairman and CEO of SBC Communications, committed to Ameritech CEO Richard

On December 11, Local 21 President-Business Manager/Financial Secretary Donald L. Moseley, Local 21 staff, IBEW members, CWA union representatives and members, and other concerned groups attended the Ameritech shareholders' meeting in Chicago. Prior to the meeting, President Moseley met with the Rev. Jesse Jackson and discussed many common concerns.

At the shareholders' meeting, Rev. Jackson urged Ameritech CEO Notebaert

extended an invitation to meet with CEOs Notebaert and Whitacre to recommend ways to address the concerns of Local 21 members and Illinois consumers. If common ground can be reached, Moseley committed that Local 21 would aggressively support the planned merger. Notebaert, in response, promised, "...that there will be no *net* loss of jobs as a result of the merger." He also told Moseley he heard him loud and clear, and would arrange that meeting.

Words can mean or imply many things — "...no net loss of jobs as a result of the merger." This statement is a major concern, even if guaranteed in writing. A loss of jobs in Illinois and added jobs in other states of the merged company could *possibly* mean "...no net loss of jobs as a result of the merger." President Moseley continues to communicate with the Ameritech and SBC CEOs in the best interest of Local 21 members. If successful in addressing the material job security issues, then IBEW members, their families and the people of Illinois will have to trust CEO Notebaert, and that the values of truth, honesty and integrity will back his words. ■



# In Illinois and Indiana — What You Can Expect from Workers Comp

**W**orkers Compensation is a system of benefits regulated by state governments and provided to most workers who acquire job-related injuries or occupational diseases. Coverage begins with the first day of employment. In this no-fault system of benefits, the employer is responsible for paying the medical bills and the lost wages that result from an on-the-job injury or disease. The cost of Workers Comp cannot be charged to the worker.

“No fault” means it does not matter what or who caused the injury. It also means the company hires you “as is” and must pay compensation regardless of previous physical condition, as long as something at work, even a relatively minor incident, precipitates, aggravates, hastens or contributes to the injury or disease.

The injury or disease must be proven to be in relationship to the work you perform for the company and must put you at a greater risk than the general public.

Medical bills associated with the injury are compensable at 100 percent, as long as the treatment is reasonable and necessary. These include first aid, emergency room service, ambulance service, hospital service, tests, doctors fees and prescriptions.

**In Illinois, you,** the employee, have the right to choose two doctors for treatment, in addition to any doctors the company may refer to you. The emergency treatment does not count as one of your choices. Immediate treatment does not require approval, but further treatment may need to be pre-approved by your company.

**In Indiana,** the company’s Workers Comp insurance carrier has the right to direct medical care, unless it fails to provide “reasonable and necessary” medical treatment; then the employee may go to any physician. Medical bills should be sent directly to your employer or to the insurance carrier designated as the claims administrator, but not to your health insurance carrier.

When the injury or disease prevents you from working, you are entitled to **Temporary Total Disability (TTD)** benefits (wages). TTD benefits are not taxable and are paid at two-thirds of your average weekly rate, which is based on your gross (before tax) earnings on the job during the 52 weeks preceding your injury. **In Illinois,** the gross earnings exclude overtime and bonus pay, unless the overtime was mandatory, in which case it is included but at the straight time rate. **In Indiana,** the average weekly wage is calculated by taking the total wages, including sales commissions, overtime and tips. State laws set a minimum and a maximum that you can receive.

**In Illinois,** TTD benefits are payable after three days lost from work. The first three days are not payable unless you are out of work for 14 calendar days or more. **In Indiana,** TTD benefits are paid starting on the eighth day lost from work. However, on the 22nd day of disability, the employee will receive compensation for the first seven days. Generally, in both Illinois and Indiana, payments should begin 14 days after the disability begins.

In addition to **TTD** benefits, Workers Comp laws also provide: payment for medical expenses when there is no lost work time; compensation for **Permanent Disability** benefits for disfigurement and for **Permanent Partial Disability**, including loss of earnings or earning capacity and loss or damage to specified body parts or the body as a whole; compensation for **Permanent Total Disability**; vocational rehabilitation; and a variety of survivor’s death benefits.

If your claim is denied in whole or part by your employer or Workers Comp insurance carrier, seek legal counsel. While your claim is denied, you may file any unpaid medical bills with your health insurance carrier; however, you should note on the bills “this is a denied worker’s comp claim.” You may also file for wages under your short-term disability plan or by using any available sick days, again including a note, “this is a denied worker’s comp claim.” This protects your claim that the injury occurred on the job and will assist you in your legal claim.

**If you are injured on the job or suffer a work-related disability, you should:**

**1. Notify your employer immediately.** If written notification is required, retain a copy of what is filed. Make sure it clearly relates your injury or illness to something that happened at work. Relate your condition to a specific time, place and cause, and note the part of the body affected.

**IBEW Local 21**  
**Website**  
**[www.ibew21.org](http://www.ibew21.org)**

**2. Get prompt medical attention.** Make sure the treating provider is aware the injury occurred at work, how you were hurt and how the injury relates to your work. Describe your job requirements, so that he or she can properly evaluate when you will be able to return to work and whether you should restrict any of your work activities.

**3. Keep detailed records about the injury.** Note the time, date, place, and any machinery or equipment which may have been involved. Keep a written record of the names and addresses of any witnesses. If a toxic substance was involved, try to obtain a sample of the substance, if this can be done safely. Minimally, get the name of the substance, any warnings and the Material Safety Data Sheet.

**4. Seek legal advice.** An attorney is the only authorized agent who can represent you at the Industrial Commission. The Commission is responsible for administering the law, providing information and assistance, and resolving disputes regarding an employee’s entitlements to benefits and amounts of benefits.

Most attorneys will consult with an employee at no cost or obligation, but you should ask about the fees and charges at the start of your case.

**In Illinois,** the law sets the amount an attorney can charge for representation at 20 percent of your compensation award. The fee is deducted from your award. If your case is lost, you will not be charged for the attorney’s time, but may be required to reimburse the attorney for the costs of preparing your case.

**In Indiana,** attorneys are entitled to a minimum fee of \$100 for handling the case, even if no compensation or benefits are awarded. If an amount is recovered, the attorney is paid a percentage of the amount recovered. ■



# Union Members Make the Difference!

**O**n November 3, 1998, union members across the country sent a message to elected public officials. That message was clear: union members and their families have a big impact on elections.

Contrary to what many "experts" say, unions do make a difference in election results and pro-union voters can elect labor-friendly candidates. According to the national exit polls, union members and their families made up 23 percent of the voters on November 3, representing millions of voters. In Illinois, 29 percent of all voters who cast ballots on November 3 were union members. Nationally, 49 percent of union members came out to vote.

If these figures rose by a mere 10 percent, labor-friendly candidates would sweep elections. Anti-labor legislation, prevalent in recent years, would be repealed. Newly-proposed bills aimed at weakening labor laws would never get to the floor for a vote.

Anti-labor ballot initiatives in California and Oregon, aimed at prohibiting union participation in the political process, were soundly defeated in 1998 because unions educated and mobilized their members.

The 1998 turnout signals the success of tens of thousands of union members who volunteered to educate and mobilize other

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**"I believe that the 1998 elections usher in a new era of people-powered politics," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, "with union members turning out at record levels and making the difference in race after race, and with African-American and Latino participation way up."**

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members through one-to-one contacts. Leading up to the November election, the unions of the AFL-CIO put together a coordinated effort that:

- Registered one half million new union voters and members of their families,
- Mailed more than 9.5 million pieces of literature to union households,
- Made 5.5 million personal phone calls, and
- Created 511 different fliers and distributed them at thousands of worksites to educate union members about candidates' positions on working family issues.

Here is what union members accomplished at the polls this year in Illinois. The pro-worker majority in the Illinois House rose from a razor-thin one-vote majority to a more solid cushion of 62 to 56, and unions kept their friend, Speaker Michael Madigan, at the helm in the House.

In the U.S. Congress, working families scored a major victory by picking up five Democratic House seats nationally to chip away at the anti-worker Republican majority advantage to 223-211. This election was the first in more than 100 years when the political party of a sitting president gained seats in a non-presidential election year.

Clearly, union members did make a difference in the 1998 elections and we can make a difference in future elections by participating in political and legislative activities on all levels.

Illinois AFL-CIO President Donald Johnson said it best: "Working Families made an impact on this election. The politicians saw our strength and our power and it's in each volunteer and each union family member that went to the polls. I don't think the next set of candidates will be eager to take on this state's union members." ■

## Notes from Labor's History



**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and A. Philip Randolph, leader of the Sleeping Car Porters union, walked with freedom marchers in Chicago in 1963.**

### **January 15 — 1929**

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born. In addition to his key role in the civil rights movement, Dr. King was an earnest crusader for labor, especially for municipal and hospital workers. At the time of his

assassination in 1968, King was in Birmingham, Alabama to support striking sanitation workers.

### **January 26 — 1897**

The Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America received a charter from the AFL to organize "every wage earned from the man who takes the bullock at the house until it goes into the hands of the consumer." In 1979, the Meat Cutters union merged with the Retail Clerks union to form the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW).

### **January 27 — 1850**

Samuel Gompers, first president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), was born in England. He emigrated to the U.S. as a youth. A cigarmaker by trade, Gompers shaped his approach to unionism on the shop floor.

### **February 1 — 1865**

President Abraham Lincoln approved the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery.

### **February 5 — 1830**

The first daily labor paper, the *New York Daily Sentinel*, began publication.

### **February 12 — 1880**

United Mine Workers President and founder of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), John L. Lewis, was born. Lewis played a leading role in the organizing drives of the 1930s which established unions among unskilled mass production workers.

### **February 25 — 1913**

In one of the most heroic struggles for justice in U.S. history, 25,000 immigrant textile workers in Paterson, New Jersey's silk factories went on strike against sweatshop conditions and working 10 hours a day for as little as \$6 a week. Despite the strikers' steadfast courage, the lack of financial support, mass arrests, police harassment and divisions between skilled and unskilled workers contributed to the strike's defeat. ■



**Tuesday, February 9**

6:30 pm

**Unit 2 Meeting**

American Legion Hall  
18255 Grant Street, Lansing

**Wednesday, February 10**

6:30 pm

**Unit 4 Meeting**

Willowbrook Holiday Inn  
7800 Kingery Highway, Willowbrook

**Thursday, February 11**

6:30 pm

**Unit 1 Meeting**

Hillside Holiday Inn  
4400 Frontage Road, Hillside

**Monday, February 15**

6:30 pm

**Unit 7 Meeting**

American Legion Hall  
816 Main Street, Mount Vernon

**Tuesday, February 16**

6:30 pm

**Unit 6 Meeting**

IBEW Local Union 21  
Springfield Office  
2720 South 13th Street, Springfield

**Wednesday, February 17**

6:30 pm

**Unit 5 Meeting**

Wholligan's Restaurant  
200 West 5th Street, Tilton

**Thursday, February 18**

6:30 pm

**Unit 3 Meeting**

Holiday Inn - Express-Palatine  
1550 East Dundee Road, Palatine

# CALENDAR



## BUY UNION

Here are the brand names of some union-made foods.

**BAKERY ITEMS** — Oreo, Chips Ahoy, Snack Wells and Stella D'Oro cookies; Entenmann's, Oroweat, Freihofer, Arnold and Thomas's sweet goods, variety and specialty breads, and English muffins; Keebler, Zesta, Town House, Club, Export, Wheatables, Munch 'ems, Pecan Sandies, Magic Middles, Chips Deluxe, E.L. Fudge and Elfin Delights cookies and crackers; Grecian and Kronos pita bread; Tops cheesecake; Colonial, Rainbo, EarthGrains, Grant's Farm, Family Recipe, Iron Kids, Break Cake, Wonder, Sara Lee and Hostess breads, rolls, cakes, cupcakes, donuts, pies, honey buns and refrigerated biscuits; Rich's frozen breads, rolls, sweet goods and dough.

**FRESH FRUITS** — Butterfly, Mann's CA, Penguin, Pickup and Sunflavor CA applies; Airdrome\*, Big Jim\*, Dole\*, Sunkist\* and Sunworld\* (grapefruit, lemons, oranges, tangerines); Sun Power\* table grapes; Swanton Berry strawberries.

\* Those displaying the United Farm Workers' Black Eagle label.

**CANDIES/SWEETS** — Hershey Chocolate; See's; Bit 'O Honey bars and penny-piece bags; Katydids; Nestle; Jolly Roger candies; Russell Stover; NECCO candies; York Peppermint Patties; Fanny May candies; Brach candies.■

## IBEW Local 21

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