

# IBEW Local 21 FRONTLINE



Volume 4, Number 2 ■ December 2001

## President/Business Manager's Report Millennium Brings Shifting Ground

by Ron Kastner, President/Business Mgr.



I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our members in the **City of Chicago 911 Center** and at both **O'Hare Field** and **Midway Airport** for all the extra hours and double shifts they worked in support of

our fight against terrorism. It's hard to relate the problems in the local to what has happened in our wonderful country. But unfortunately I need to report on some not so pleasant issues within our Local Union.

The days of just dealing with grievances, arbitrations, and an occasional legal issue are gone. Nowadays, it seems like if you aren't confronted with a company going out of business, a sale of a company, an anti-union attorney, or some sort of surplus, it would be considered a good day.

At this time we are dealing with the closing or sale of **Fujitsu Business Communication Systems**. The Union has met with the company trying to negotiate various issues including Successor language, severance packages, and possible changes in the Pension Plan. We have recently been told that the company has a buyer. As soon as the sale is complete, the Union will make all the information available to our members.

Negotiations with **ATT/Broadband** continue to be a struggle on all fronts. Whether it's organizing or negotiating, they continue to bargain as if they are protecting the corporate policy on keeping Unions and Union won benefits away from our members even though they have made their choice to be represented by Local 21.

I am glad to report that the Union has received a favorable award from the Third Party

Neutral on the issue of ATT/Broadband being unfair in the Kankakee election for Union representation. The award says that the company violated the Neutrality agreement. This agreement states that the employer will allow employees to make their own decision on joining a Union. In this case, the Union received the most favorable decision possible. They awarded the Union automatic recognition meaning that we are recognized as the bargaining agent. We will be bargaining immediately.

The negotiations over the sale of **New Media**, Ameritech's Cable TV Company, continue. At this time, we still have not heard from the buyer. I can't help but surmise that it has to do with an anti-union attitude. I have appointed a committee to work with Ameritech management to place as many New Media members possible in Ameritech core jobs. We will keep all interested members updated on this issue.

The second sale of **Ameritech Security Link** within one year is just another issue we are dealing with. The new owners are ADT, a large alarm company in Illinois. Their contract is up at the end of November. Bargaining has started already.

Things aren't any better in the public sector either. At this time, negotiations continue to move slowly in **Vermillion County** for the judicial and non-judicial contracts. Our members at the courthouse and the neighboring nursing home deserve a better quality of life in those contracts. Hopefully, the well attended rally right before the city council meeting helps their situation. Taking the issue to the street has paid off in the past.

Members at **Peoria Bel-wood Nursing Home** have just voted to extend their agreement for two more years. The extension includes wage increases of 4% in each year. Also additional increases will go into effect during the agreement based on an area wage study.

I'll close with the latest announcement from **Ameritech** involving surpluses or layoffs, depending on how one sees it. The Union has dealt with these issues in Ameritech before. However, one must wonder how a company can claim to rebuild the empire that Notebart tore down while simultaneously laying off Union workers. Just when I was starting to agree with their corporate policy of hiring the needed employees to run the business with the customer in mind, they pull this lame stunt. Even though they claim they will satisfy the problem on the technical side through attrition, they insult the administration side of the business by reducing the total of clerical members by ridiculous numbers. And can you believe another surplus in Coin? Oh by the way, the remaining Coin members will just have to "pick up the slack." **Unbelievable!**

Before I go on rambling from my soap-box, I'll close by saying, "How would you like dealing with all these problems if you weren't organized in a **Union**?" Have a safe and happy holiday.

AT&T Broadband ..... page 3

Industry Standard ..... page 4-5

Unconventional Times .... page 6

Clothes ..... page 7

COPE ..... page 9

New Media ..... page 10

# INSIDE



# A Perspective on the Convention

by Jacquie Fields, Treasurer and Delegate to the 36th Convention

It's been a sincere honor to serve the Local 21 membership as Treasurer and as a Delegate to the International convention in September. It has been a very enlightening experience.

The IBEW convention was held in San Francisco from September 10, 2001 through September 14, 2001. There were a total of 2,600 elected IBEW Delegates. Our local was entitled to 14 delegates, which is approximately 1 delegate for every 1,000 members. I felt very fortunate to attend and anxiously awaited the opportunity to go. Unfortunately, the terrorist attacks changed all of that.

Delegates have various responsibilities. We voted for our International Officers, Executive Council and District Vice-Presidents. We analyzed and vote on resolutions to the International Constitution. We discussed financial and jurisdictional problems. The days were long, but I found the work challenging and very rewarding.

Forty-seven resolutions were submitted at the convention. This year electronic voting was introduced, which made the voting much more efficient. Our resolution, # 36, was written by the Local 21 resolution committee: Dan Gonzalez, Patricia Murphy, Joan Waskowski, and Chairperson Michael Sacco. It addressed the conduct of assigned trustees while maintaining the affairs of a local union, something our local has had experience with, unfortunately. Our president, Ronald Kastner, did an outstanding job of presenting this resolution to the Convention. The International's 2001 Resolution

Committee recommended it for concurrence after adding some comments for the purpose of clarification. The delegates approved the committee's recommendation by acclamation.

This important event was dampened by the tragic events that occurred on September 11, 2001. Although, we tried to carry on "business as usual", it was difficult. We, the IBEW representatives, were in San Francisco and our families were at home. In this time of uncertainty, we wanted to be with our families just as much as our families wanted us home. It was a week I'll never forget.

*"Many people die at twenty five and aren't buried until they are seventy five".*  
**Benjamin Franklin**

Brothers and Sisters, through the struggles of these difficult times that are upon us, life does go on. These times have made many of us stop to ponder our lives, what is important in life, what do we really want to do in life. Many have discovered life's treasures are not found in a shopping mall, a new car, or at the jewelry store. Life's treasures are all around us, whether it is a beautiful rose, new falling snow, or that elderly lady we passed at the supermarket. You know that lady, as we've all seen her. She is the one with a smile on her lips, her eyes sparkling as she is telling a young mother how beautiful her baby is. She discovered Benjamin Franklin's secret long ago.

I would like to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season. And, as we approach the New Year, let us continue to hope and pray that we may one day truly find peace on earth and good will to all.

## It's over? What a year it has been!

by Rick Gessler, Vice President/Assistant Business Manager

I was told this morning that if I wanted to get anything into the Union newsletter my deadline has long since past, but I have two hours to get something into the editors' hands. It's typical of how things have gone this year. It's been very hectic since the last election; I feel that our Union has come a long way and is making more progress every day. There is a lot to running and managing a 15,000 member Union spread across Illinois and NW Indiana. But I want you to know that you the membership are in good hands starting with your Local Union Steward to the Area or Chief Steward to the Business Representative to your President Business Manager. Decisions are based on what is best for the Membership and we are looking to the future when we make those decisions. Too many times in the past the Companies had based their decisions on five to ten years into the future while the Union had been so busy trying to keep up with day to day problems that we sometimes failed to see the effects of these initiatives down the road. This has changed with your current administration. We do look to the future.

Currently we are in effects bargaining with Ameritech over several surpluses and office closings. Hopefully by the time this is printed we will have come to closure on these surpluses and found jobs for all the surplus members. We also have many other issues with other companies where we represent employees, and they have not sat still through this difficult economic time either.

We have entered into an agreement with Ameritech to try and expedite suspension and dismissal arbitration's by entering into a "Neutral evaluation trial". This essentially puts several cases before an arbitrator for the same day with time limits on the company and the Union for presenting documentation and evidence in a hearing. Then each party has a limited time to give an oral argument in front of the Arbitrator. The Arbitrator then has to make a decision that day. If this is successful we can hear as many as three or four cases in a day.

On September 11, we all witnessed a tragic event, our thoughts and prayers are with all the families that were touched by the attack. I want to wish you a happy holiday season and good health and happiness in 2002.





# IBEW 21 Wins Recognition Decision Against AT&T Broadband

by Jerry Rankins, Business Representative



After nearly one year since starting an organizing campaign at AT&T Broadband in Kankakee the Union finally has recognition. This is a great victory for us and only proves that justice can prevail.

An election was held on November 7, 2000, resulting in the company stealing the election. This campaign was conducted under the Neutrality Consent Election (NCE) agreement that mandates both parties to be neutral. The agreement provides that either party may file with the Third Party Neutral Arbitrator (TPN) if there is any dispute or violation allegation. A complaint was filed by the Union stating illegal activities. After several months of hearings and many testimonies, it was discovered that throughout the organizing campaign AT&T Broadband was anything but neutral. They were found guilty of serious and repeated violations of the NCE agreement. For example they provided wage increases of more than 30% to many of the employees and nearly 40% to one employee. Brothers and Sisters this is an outrage! How far will they go? It's all about power and control of the workers' life.

The company understands that without a good Union contract they can do what they want. The company can give, and the company can take away. It is very important that each worker understand what this fight is all about and what it means to be Union. It is you the worker who comes together collectively to bring about economic and social change. The Union is not a third party—it is you, letting your voice be heard for better working conditions, good livable wages, and affordable medical benefits. Union Brotherhood stands for being treated with dignity, respect, a safe working environment, time with your families with the hope of a retirement plan adequate enough to support you and your family, versus spending countless hours working mandatory overtime. The fact is, without a Union contract you are an “at will” employee, that means you may get disciplined or fired at any time, as the handbook policy states, and changes could be made without notice.

What a shame, AT&T was one of the more

honorable and pro-worker companies, but now it's one of the biggest anti-worker and family companies. It hires the biggest Union busting consultant firms with the shareholders' money in order to hurt workers and cause erosion of the family.

Thanks to you and your hard work, your CEO earns over \$5,000 dollars an hour. You, the worker, are the one who makes the company successful. You do have a voice, make it be heard!

As you know Local 21 currently is still in contract negotiations, a renewal on former Jones Intercable Properties in the western suburbs, and the former U.S. Cable in Merrillville, Indiana. We're also seeking our first contract at Morris Illinois and Chicago South, and have notified the company to start bargaining immediately for Kankakee. All contracts are over 97% complete. But, the company still wants the right to layoff its work force while keeping contractors, moving personnel, and closing offices at will only to leave workers in the cold. Wages and back pay are still big issues, along with double time on Sunday and premium pay.

Brothers and Sisters, as I have stated to you before, you are not alone in this evil assault against you. The AFL/CIO and Rainbow/PUSH coalition have joined together with our International office in a commitment to

make us victors and not victims. On September 22, 2001 Reverend Jesse Jackson wrote a letter addressed to C. Michael Armstrong, CEO/President at AT&T Corporation, addressing the allegations of discrimination and harassment, and offering to mediate the two parties. Rev. Jackson asked Mike to reflect back on his speech, titled “A Revolution in Opportunities” delivered at the 1999 Rainbow/PUSH coalition's Annual Conference in Chicago, quoting, “...there is no social justice without economic justice.” On September 28, 2001 AT&T responded back, denying the facts of discrimination and harassment. The fact is, discrimination and harassment still take place at AT&T Broadband. Some EEOC complaints have been settled, but there are still some pending—several unfair labor practices including bad faith bargaining, intimidation and domination of shop stewards, along with grievances pending arbitration.

Brothers and Sisters at AT&T, it has been a struggle, but we are winning and you deserve the same wages and benefits that Union telecommunication workers have at Ameritech.

This fight is about defending the industry standard that was won for us many years ago by hard workers like you. Hang in there—you are Union!

**WE WILL WIN.... SOLIDARITY!**

## Executive Board Report

by Rosetta Shinn, Executive Board Unit 6

The events of September 11, 2001 have changed our everyday lives forever. The IBEW Local 21 Executive Board, on behalf of all our members, offers prayer and sympathy for all those affected by this cowardly act. We mourn the loss of our many union brothers and sisters who died in the attack. Please offer your support to the families. If you are able to contribute to funds set up to aid the families of the victims, the displaced, and the survivors, Ameritech/SBC has a dollar for dollar match on employee contributions to eligible relief efforts. Information is available on the SBC internet site [www.easymatch.com/sbcdisasteraid](http://www.easymatch.com/sbcdisasteraid) or call 1-877-761-5554 for a matching gift form. This includes the Union Community Fund, September 11th Relief Fund, 815 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20006.

Our prayers are with our country's leaders—help guide them through this terrible tragedy.

The holiday season is upon us. On behalf of the E-Board of Local 21, we wish every member of our local union a safe, and joy filled holiday.



# The Industry Standard and the Standard of Living

## Organizing at AT&T Broadband

By Tom Hopper, Business Representative,  
Organizing

Our strength in collective bargaining flows directly from our ability to represent all workers in a given industry. As an organization, our union's fundamental mission remains today what it has always been — to raise the standard of living and improve the working conditions of our members. While these are goals from which we will never deviate, we must recognize that achieving this goal today presents us with extraordinary challenges.

The only way to achieve our objectives is through organizing — reaching out and organizing our existing members, as well as organizing those who work in our industries without the protection of a union. If we ever permitted ourselves to believe that we could accomplish our goals at the bargaining table without the strength that can only come from an involved and organized membership, those illusions have been cruelly shattered by the union-busters who every day challenge our very existence. It is simply not possible to successfully confront the immensity of corporate power without an educated, informed and mobilized membership. Without this — the Industry Standard of fair wages, good health care, and continuing improvements in overall working conditions may become a thing of the past. In the global corporate vision of the future, instead of learning about labor history, our children and grandchildren may very well learn that organized labor *is* history.



Most employers have always resisted our drive first for basic recognition and then to create a decent level of wages and benefits. But the last twenty years have witnessed an employer offensive against workers and their unions' unseen since the days of our Union's founding. In today's environment workers and their unions must make dramatic changes in the way we pursue our goals. As a clear example, one of Local 21's organizing targets is the global giant AT&T. At divestiture, in 1984, 64% of AT&T employees were unionized. Today, unions represent only 24% of the AT&T non-management workforce.

Over the last few years, AT&T has spent more than one hundred billion dollars buying up TCI and other cable television companies. AT&T's long-term plan includes using the former TCI's CATV lines to offer local and long distance telephone and other high-speed services across the country, bypassing the regional "Bell Operating Companies." Despite a "Neutrality" agreement in the IBEW/AT&T National Collective Bargaining Agreement, AT&T's shameful business plan is based on performing the work with a

low-wage, high turnover, non-union workforce, while corporate executives rake it in by the millions.

On June 7, 2000, the first representation election was held for one hundred and fifty employees at AT&T Broadband's South Chicago facility, located in the historic Pullman District. A majority of the workers voted IBEW-YES, are now represented by Local 21 and are fighting for their first contract. In the second election, on June 22, 2000, twenty-two AT&T Broadband workers became union after a huge election win at the Morris, Illinois shop, and are also bargaining for a first contract.

On November 7, 2000, at the AT&T Broadband's Kankakee, Illinois, shop, a third election was held. When the votes were tallied, the string of victories took a temporary detour when workers voted by a slim margin to reject unionization. Despite a signed agreement to remain neutral during all organizing efforts, trained AT&T Broadband bosses interfered in the election process, persuading some workers to vote against representation. IBEW Local 21 challenged the conduct of AT&T's management under the dispute resolution procedure in the IBEW-AT&T negotiated Neutrality Memorandum's (NCE), which defines management and union conduct, addresses appropriate remedies for NCE violations, and other issues. The Union challenged AT&T Broadband and their hired puppet-masters, the notorious union-busters at the law





firm Seyfarth Shaw, and the New York firm Kreitzman, Mortensen, Simon & Irgang.

The short story is this - the Third Party Neutral /Arbitrator ruled that the actions of AT&T Broadband Management "... constituted serious and repeated violations of the Neutrality Agreement." Based on wage increases of more than 30% to many of the workers during the organizing drive, with one worker receiving nearly a 40 % increase in wages alone, along with significant increases in other areas, the Arbitrator ruled that a fair election could not be held at this time and the only meaningful remedy is to set aside the results of the election and require AT&T Broadband to recognize IBEW Local 21 as the exclusive bargaining agent for the forty-three workers at the Kankakee, Illinois shop. This means that AT&T Broadband must immediately begin bargaining with the union for a first contract. This is a great victory for the working families at the Kankakee shop, and a real boost to the overall fight for justice at AT&T Broadband. The ruling was decided on October 18, 2001.

Local 21 members at the former Jones and U.S. Cable properties (now AT&T) in Illinois and Indiana, along with workers at other AT&T Broadband locations are elated over the ruling, as news of the decision spread throughout the jurisdiction and also to our friends and alliances throughout the labor and activist communities. Even though the big war is not over ... AT&T Broadband workers won this major battle, by coming forward, by standing up, by sharing the stories of what happened during the organizing drive, by telling the truth, and by gaining a collective voice. They stood up together and they were heard loud and clear. That's what solidarity is all about!

Brothers and sisters - hats off to ALL AT&T Broadband workers throughout Local 21's jurisdiction, most who've not had a raise in years, as they continue to stand up in the fight for a contract, for dignity, respect and an improved standard of living. Come join the fight for justice at AT&T Broadband, this is everyone's battle as we join together to define what's right from what's wrong. This is *the fight* to not only maintain and improve today's Industry Standard, but more importantly - our future Standard of Living. It will affect all of us.

## Shopping for the Holidays?

Look to **BuyUnionNOW.com**. It sells only union-made products. The site is easy to use and all credit card information is collected on a safe and secure server. However people can purchase in many ways such as sending in a check or money order, or by calling toll free at 866-BUY-UNION, by sending a fax or by using their credit card. Each product listing includes the city and state of where the product is made, as well as the name of the union and the local.

The firm is organized by UNITE local #2698. Founder Chris Kuban explained, "Our goal is simple: one stop shopping for union-made products and services for union supporters." He added that for the first time, companies will be able to see—in dollars and cents—just how valuable union families are with their buying power. "They've never really seen our purchasing power. This will get their attention, which can't hurt during negotiations. The more we can demonstrate union workers' buying power, the more job security we provide for union workers everywhere."

Yes, the Radio Flyer wagon is still made in Chicago by UAW 1066.



**"And while I'm gone, no more of this talking nonsense about unionizing..."**

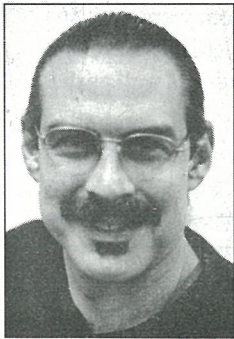
## IDEAS WELCOME!

If you have articles you would like to submit for the next issue, please remit these in word format on a 3-1/2" floppy disk, paper copy optional, to Michael Sacco or Larry Moeller or Nancy North at the Union Office  
1307 W. Butterfield Rd.,  
Suite 422, Downers Grove, IL 60515  
or talk to your Business Representative.



# Unconventional Times, Conventional Bosses

by Michael Sacco, Business Representative  
and Delegate to the 36<sup>th</sup> Convention



I was honored to be chosen by the membership of our Union (you!) to be one of the delegates representing our Local at the 36<sup>th</sup> Convention in San Francisco. Our Union, made up of more than 900 locals from across the

U.S. and Canada comes together in this exercise in self-governance only once every five years.

Our Local is the fourth largest in the Brotherhood and the largest single Telecom unit. Our group of fourteen was proud to take our place near the front of the large room in the Moscone Center seating the thousands of delegates and guests on September 10<sup>th</sup> at the elaborate and inspiring opening of the Convention.

That's right, September 10<sup>th</sup>. The day before one of the darkest days in our history. This great, proud moment for our union, coming together again with 110 years of history. The next day was shrouded in black and the business of our union seemed small and trivial, dwarfed by the enormity of what happened back east.

Millions of dollars had been spent, the air travel system was down and everyone really wanted to be with their loved ones. What could we do? With heavy hearts we proceeded with the business of our Union. It wasn't easy, it certainly wasn't fun, but there really was no alternative. The rest of the week was spent wading through the big book of work that is the purpose of a convention. The Resolutions and Amendments; the committee reports and the guest speakers. It's all kind of a blur. But I have the Big Book and its record of the business of the 36<sup>th</sup> Convention. I'm proud of my service to our Union, but the memory of it will always pull at my heart, the unconventional convention.

Soon after our return to Chicago, it became clear that in spite of everything that happened, many bosses continue to be the conventional, power-hungry knuckleheads that they always have been. Some things never change...

At AG Communications the work situation remains strong for the moment, with nearly

400 members working across the country. However, the big downsizing happening at Verizon threatens our Hi-Cap work. Additionally, in violation of our contract the company has brought in a number of contractors from Canada to do our switch work. This is in the grievance process, which, by the way, is completely stalled at the Company's hand.

At Lucent, our small group of 57 members at the Network Software Center is suffering under the mismanagement of a frightened and desperate group of top managers in New Jersey. This group eats their young, or at least it seems that way. They have no view of a future beyond the next quarter. They are lost and wandering through a desert, eating their own limbs for nourishment. Now they are like a carcass with no arms and legs and they can't imagine what to do now. The company has told us they are trying to outsource our work. We're in the process and we'll have more news when it becomes available.

SBC Datacomm has been slow but steady. The company is still using contractors where they don't think we can see them. We're watching though and will act as its appropriate. The conversion from a weekly payroll to a bi-weekly payroll was the disaster we suspected it would be. We're in the process of fixing the problems. The Company owes matching savings plan money from the first week of the new pay-

roll. Watch the mails for a letter from the company telling you how to get the money they shorted you. Don't let them off the hook! Talk to your steward or chief steward if you don't get this letter.

Avaya and the IBEW renewed the deal on the Variable Workforce memo starting November 4, 2001. Core IBEW folks will receive an upgrade of 2 steps in wages and pension. Details on a new Union Training and Certification program are coming soon. Until the contract expires in 20 months or so, there is a guarantee of no layoffs.

By the time you read this, our sisters and brother at JULIE, Inc should have a new three year contract. It was a tough negotiation, with the usual crocodile tears about how "there is no money." Boo-hoo, the same old song and dance. More details next time.

Finally, interconnect contracts are up for renewal and are in negotiations. New pensions are on the table for this group of smaller contractors. The new agreement will go into effect on January 1, 2002.

It has been a year I'm glad to see coming to a close. Please work safely, we have too many accidents; please be kind and supportive to each other, we have too much division. Be kind to a stranger today. Holiday greetings from my home to yours...Peace on Earth.



**"Ms. Watkins...we're a little short handed. Would you mind typing up your layoff notice?"**



## **IBEW Local Union 21 Items for Purchase**



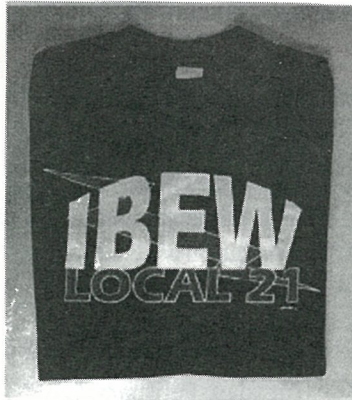
Item # 1  
IBEW Local 21 Baseball Hat  
Black or Navy with White  
Price: \$10.00



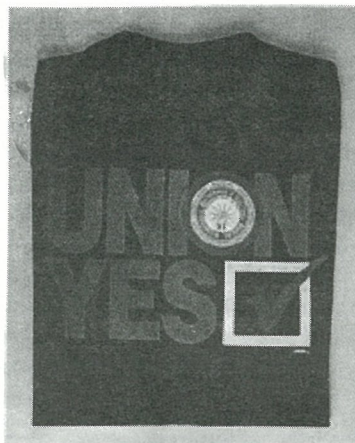
Item # 2  
IBEW Local 21 RULES - Med. Blue  
Front of Shirt  
Price: \$15.00



Item # 3  
IBEW Local 21 - Ash & Red Letters  
Front of Shirt  
Price: \$11.00



Item # 4  
IBEW Local 21- Navy Blue  
Front of Shirt



Item # 4  
Union Yes with IBEW Logo  
Back of Shirt  
Price: \$15.00

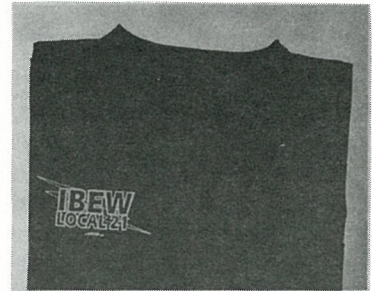
**ALL PRICES ARE BELOW  
EACH INDIVIDUAL ITEM**

**\*\* Limited Quantities \*\***

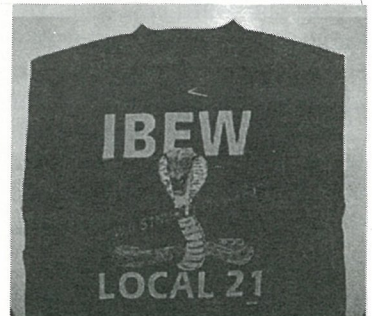
If you have any questions -  
Call: 630.960.4466  
Ext. 229 for Rita Petersen, or  
Ext. 234 for Nancy Kopydlowski



Item # 5  
IBEW Local 21 Visor - Navy & White  
Price: \$12.75



Item # 6  
IBEW Local 21 - Dark Green  
Front of Shirt



Item # 6  
Will Strike if Provoked  
Back of Shirt  
Price: \$15.00

**ALL ITEMS  
ARE  
UNION MADE  
AND  
UNION SCREENED  
IN THE U.S.A.**

### **TO PLACE YOUR ORDER, YOU HAVE 3 OPTIONS:**

1. Stop in at IBEW Local 21, pay for your item and take it with when you leave.
2. Call IBEW Local 21 to place your order over the phone.  
Make your payment and delivery arrangements at that time.
3. Place your order by mail with your payment included; item(s) will be shipped direct to your home. Add \$2.95 for postage and shipping (up to 5 items; \$5.90 for 10 items, etc.)



# 2002 UNIT MEETINGS

## JANUARY

### UNIT 1

Thursday, January 10

7:00 p.m.

Comfort Inn

2175 E. Touhy, Des Plaines, IL

847-635-1300

### UNIT 2

Tuesday, January 8

7:00 p.m.

Slovak Club

6920 Broadway, Merrillville, IN

219-756-5101

### UNIT 3

Thursday, January 17

7:00 p.m.

IBEW Local #364

6820 Mill Road, Rockford, IL

815-398-6282

### UNIT 4

Wednesday, January 9

7:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn Airport

6902 27th Street, Moline, IL

309-762-8811

### UNIT 5

Wednesday, January 16

7:00 p.m.

Days Inn

77 N. Gilbert, Danville, IL

217-443-6600

### UNIT 6

Tuesday, January 15

5:30 p.m.

IBEW Local #193

3150 Wide Track Dr., Springfield, IL

217-544-3479

### UNIT 7

Monday, January 21

7:00 p.m.

Alton Sports Tap

3812 College Ave., Alton, IL

618-465-2539

## FEBRUARY

### UNIT 1

Thursday, February 14

7:00 p.m.

U.N.I.T.E. (Eugene Debs Room)

333 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago, IL

312-738-6100

### UNIT 2

Tuesday, February 12

7:00 p.m.

Gaelic Park Banquet Hall

(Celtic Room)

6119 W. 147th, Oak Forest, IL

708-687-9323

### UNIT 3

Thursday, February 21

7:00 p.m.

American Legion

820 Liberty St., Elgin, IL

847-741-1684

### UNIT 4

Wednesday, February 13

7:00 p.m.

American Legion Harwood, Post #5

705 Larkin, Joliet, IL

815-729-2254

### UNIT 5

Wednesday, February 20

7:00 p.m.

VFW Post #630

1303 E. Main St., Urbana, IL

217-367-4197

### UNIT 6

Tuesday, February 19

5:30 p.m.

IBEW Local #193

3150 Wide Track Dr., Springfield, IL

217-544-3479

### UNIT 7

Monday, February 18

7:00 p.m.

IBEW Local #309

2000A Mall St. (Rt. 157), Collinsville, IL

618-345-5112

## MARCH

### UNIT 1

Thursday, March 14

7:00 p.m.

Habetler Bowl

5250 Northwest Hwy., Chicago, IL

773-774-0500

### UNIT 2

Tuesday, March 12

7:00 p.m.

American Legion

18255 Grant St., Lansing, IL

708-474-6413

### UNIT 3

Thursday, March 21

7:00 p.m.

Gurnee American Legion

749 Milwaukee, Gurnee, IL

847-244-9282

### UNIT 4

Wednesday, March 13

7:00 p.m.

Lemont VFW

15780 New Ave., Lemont, IL

630-257-9859

### UNIT 5

Wednesday, March 20

7:00 p.m.

American Legion Post 979

4501 S. Airport Rd., Bartonville, IL

309-697-2432

### UNIT 6

Tuesday, March 19

5:30 p.m.

IBEW Local #193

3150 Wide Track Dr., Springfield, IL

217-544-3479

### UNIT 7

Monday, February 18

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American Legion Post 141

916 Main ST., Mt. Vernon, IL

618-242-4561



# Three Things We Learned From September 11th

by Jeff Faux

There was no silver lining to the cloud of horror that descended on America September 11, 2001. And the avalanche of pain, terror, and death we have witnessed may just be the beginning.

But life, as always, slowly picks up and moves on. Despite the nagging sense that it is unseemly to begin thinking about the economic consequences, the country is again back in the market. Investors are selling the stocks of insurance companies and airlines, buying those of military contractors and companies that will benefit from the new security-conscious society. Economists are calculating the gains and losses and guessing about the odds of a recession.

Many are engaged in burying the dead and tending to the survivors, or facing the awesome responsibility of satisfying the national demand for action that serves justice rather than multiplying evil. Those of us who are going back to business have an obligation, as we do, to reflect on what we have seen.

The attacks of September 11, 2001 reveal some truths about the American political economy that have been obscured in recent years.

One is just how much of our economy is made up of what used to be called the "working class"—the non-supervisory, non-college-educated people who make up 70 percent of our labor force. For the last half-dozen years the media saw economic trends through the eyes of the glamorous, globe-trotting, business executive—to the point where it seemed to many that they must represent the vast majority of American workers. And one could hardly find a more fitting symbol of the new global economy than the World Trade Center—surrounded in the evening with a herd of sleek limousines waiting to serve the masters of the universe at the end of the day.

And yet, it turns out, that the building was run by thousands of data clerks and secretaries, waiters and dishwashers, janitors and telecommunications repair people. The role of trade unions mourning their dead is long: firefighters, hotel and restaurant employees, police, communications workers, service employees, professional engineers, operating engineers, the electrical workers, federal employees, building trades, and state, county, and municipal employees.

And many were in no union, meaning job insecurity, no benefits, and certainly no limousines.

A second insight revealed by the awful,

gaping hole in the Manhattan skyline was how ill-served we have been by a politics that perpetuates the illusion that we are all on our own and, in particular, holds the institutions of public service in contempt. For two decades, politicians of both parties have celebrated the pursuit of private gain over public service. Shrinking government has become a preoccupation of political leaders through deregulation, privatization, and cuts in public services.

One result is that the U.S. is the only major nation that leaves airline and airport security in the hands of private corporations, which by their very nature are motivated to spend as little as possible. So the system was tossed in the lap of lowest-bid contractors who hired people for minimum wages. Training has been inadequate and supervision extremely lax. Turnover was 126 percent a year and the average employee stayed in airline security for only six months. Getting a job at Burger King or McDonald's represented upward mobility for the average security worker. In an anti-government political climate the airline corporations were able to shrug off the government inspections that consistently revealed how easy it was to bring weapons on board. The competition for customers sacrificed safety to avoid any inconvenience. How else to explain the insane notion that a 3" inch knife blade is not a weapon?

Private provision of public services has been the dominant philosophy of government in our time. Only natural, the economists told us. People were motivated by money. It's human nature. "Greed is good," said the movie character in the send-up of Wall Street—a sentiment echoed by politicians of both parties. "Collective solutions are a thing of the past.... The era of big government is over.... You are on your own." Public service was "old" economy, just for losers. A teacher in New York City schools starts at \$30,000. A brand new securities lawyer starts at \$120,000. Does anyone believe this represents sensible priorities?

And does anyone believe that firefighters who marched into that inferno did it for money? Does anyone think that people working for a private company hiring people for as little as possible would have the same motivation—would have been as efficient? At the moment when efficiency really counts?

When the chips are down, where do we turn? To the government's firefighters, police officers, rescue teams. To the nonprofit sectors' blood banks and shelters. And Big Government's army, navy, and air force. During his campaign, the president of the United

States constantly complained that the people knew how to spend their money better than the government did. Overnight we just appropriated \$40 billion for the government to spend however it sees fit. Who else would we trust?

The stock market itself made one point. Despite calls for investors to exercise political restraint, the market opened with an avalanche of sell orders, driving the Dow to its largest point loss in history. As one broker said, "This is how capitalism is supposed to work." Just so. The market is about prices, not values.

Finally, perhaps we learned something about our national identity.

It is common—almost a cliché—among political philosophers and pundits to define America as an "exception." For many, America's exceptionalism means that it is the best place to get rich. For others, it is our unique set of laws—our Bill of Rights. Still others see America not in national terms at all, but as a patchwork of ethnic groups and regional interests.

There is some truth in all of these views. But those who risked and gave their lives—both the public servants and the brave civilian passengers who rushed the terrorists and forced the airliner down in Pennsylvania before it could get to Washington—are unlikely to have acted out of reverence for the deregulated market or for our court system or for some ethnic or religious loyalty.

Everything we know tells us that they acted as human beings responding to the agony of other human beings, or tying in one last desperate effort to spare their country more damage, not because it is the world's superpower but simply because it is their country. No country has a monopoly on simple patriotism.

If America is, as the politicians often remind us, the "last best hope" for humankind, then it is not because we as individuals are exceptional and different from the rest of the world, but because we are much the same—full of the normal set of human traits, which at times of stress often bring out the best in us.

It is obvious that we can no longer rely on our exceptionalism to keep us safe. In the coming months and years we are likely to be reminded of that. To get through this, we need to be disabused quickly of the illusion that we are all on our own. America's strength, like the strength of any other society, is in our ability to be there for each other.

*Jeff Faux is a Fellow at the Economic Policy Institute*



## COPE Report

by Larry Moeller & Rosetta Shinn, Committee on Political Education

Defending working families demands constant vigilance. Phone calls from Local 21 members to the AFL-CIO legislative hot line helped delay "Fast Track" from reaching the House floor for a vote. Unfortunately, that piece of bad trade legislation passed the House on Thursday, December 6, 2001 by ONE VOTE. The vote was 215-214. On the final count, 21 Democrats joined 194 Republicans to pass the bill. The Republican leadership pulled out all the stops using intimidation and industry-specific promises to woo members to switch their votes. If it passes the Senate, "Fast Track" gives President Bush the authority to rush trade agreement through Congress with only the ability to accept or reject an entire agreement with no changes and minimal review. The "Fast Track" bill now goes to the Senate which traditionally has been more receptive to trade agreements than the House. As we go to press, it has not reached the Senate floor, but may be considered as early as this week. Be ready to call your Senator at 1-800-718-1008 ask them not to support any version "Fast Track."

In other news. The U.S. House passed a bill, HR 3090, that grants huge tax breaks to wealthy Americans and of course corporations. In 2001 they get a 90 billion dollar tax break, in 2002 99.5 billion. And it gets worse, over the next 10 years 159.4 billion—all for corporations and the wealthiest 1 % of U S taxpayers. This Bill was passed by a Party line vote of 216 -214. We all agree we need tax relief but the question is what about us? What about providing additional monies for unemployment benefits? The AFL- CIO has tracked 638,000 layoffs since Sept. 11, that's in addition to the 1.1 million who lost jobs prior to that date.

But this battle is not over because the fight now shifts to the U S Senate, where a vote is likely to happen in the next week or so. Please call your Senator at 1 800 718 1008 ask them not to support any version of HR 3090. Any economic relief package should include all of us, especially laid off workers.

Thanks to all of you who called to make our voices heard on Fast Track. Politics is fast moving, keep the Senate number 1-800-718-1008 and the House number 1-800-393-1082 handy. Check our hotline 630-415-2711 regularly for updates on legislation that impacts working men and women.



## Bel-Wood Nursing Home

by Jerry Gast, Business Representative



Peoria County and IBEW Local 21 agreed on an incentive program to help fill the fifty-seven job openings at the Bel-wood Nursing Home. 120 of the 128 employees at the 300 bed nursing home are union members. Bel-

wood needs caring and loyal people to fill open positions in nursing (CAN, LPN, RN), kitchen, and housekeeping.

The county is offering a total \$250 recruitment bonus. \$100 paid to the referring employee, when the new employee receives their second payroll check. \$150 paid to the new employee when they have successfully completed the six month probation period, which must include a minimum of at least 936 working hours of service. Employees can refer up to three new employees for the bonus.

Until all the jobs are filled there is a great need for overtime. The Union and the county agreed on an additional overtime incentive. Employees who work extra shifts at the facility will be paid double time for the extra shift worked, provided the employee does not have unpaid leave or sick leave during the work week for which he/she is normally scheduled, and the employee works all his/her normally scheduled hours. If an employee has unpaid leave or sick leave during the week the overtime is worked, they shall be paid according to the contract at time and a half.

On October 17, 2001 the members ratified a two year extension of their contract. Provisions include extending the contract to May 31, 2004; a 4% wage increase on June 1, 2002, and 4% salary increase on June 1, 2003. Also CNA's and LPN's would receive an additional thirty-two cents per hour effective September 1, 2001 and January 1, 2002.

Over 50% of the members cast ballots, and 75% voted "Yes" to the contract extension.

Thanks to Area Steward Jim Murphy and Stewards Joyce Artega, Bonnie Bolander, Sandra Roberts, and Cynthia Theinert for all their hard work.

## Local 21 Member Comes to Rescue

Noah Arroyo, David Hastings and Bill Panek were working at the Trinity group home in Manhattan Illinois, when an explosion ripped through the building. Brother Hastings was slightly injured and is OK. Brother Arroyo, upon hearing the explosion, rushed into the building to help evacuate residents. Brother Arroyo noticed a trapped resident and carried the victim on his back to safety. President/Business Manager Ron Kastner and the Local 21 Executive Board are expected to nominate Brother Arroyo for the IBEW Lifesaving Award, our union's highest honor.



# The Inside Story on DSL

by Claudia Szuberla, Steward

DSL—Digital Subscriber Line—has been touted as the “Wave of the Future.” Yet with computer systems that aren’t up to par, sub standard networks that need to be revamped, and outside contractors taking traditionally union work, the DSL is far from being a wave of our future. It is more like the possible death knell of the future.

Ameritech has had a rough start with DSL in Consumer. Despite all the advertising, DSL is not available everywhere, and the computer systems which verify availability are cumbersome and inaccurate. Customers are irate when they have been promised DSL in their area and months later it still isn’t available. They aren’t alone. Service Reps are frustrated that the DSL systems they are expected to sell aren’t available to a vast majority of their client base. Despite these limitations, Consumer reps are told that they need to push the DSL services, and contests are created around this product. The question arises, “Why are we pushing a system that isn’t operational?”

Problems aren’t limited to our brothers and sisters in the call centers. In the field there are average delays of four weeks. The outside work is done by IBEW technicians, but past the netpop the installation is done by the non-union employees of a separate subsidiary currently known as Ameritech Advanced Data Services of Illinois Incorporated (the name changes regularly.) It seems that Ameritech is willing to place a fifty plus years relationship with the IBEW on the line by this practice.

Local 21 believes it is our work and the issue has reached arbitration. We are also working to organize these technicians through card check.

Non-union workers are not the solution to the DSL bottleneck. We already have qualified, trained IBEW technicians in the field who could do the work. We are not afraid of new technology. If DSL is indeed one wave in the future, Ameritech should partner with the IBEW to create a win-win situation for both sides.

## Ameritech New Media Sale

by Kurt Schmidt, Business Representative



The fact that good union jobs are under attack is demonstrated by the sale of Ameritech New Media (ANM) to Wide Open West (WOW) out of Denver Colorado in April of this year. The sale was an asset sale, which means it did not include jobs for the employees. WOW was only interested in the infrastructure and the customer account base of 310,000 subscribers. Since the announced sale WOW has been working throughout the Ameritech five state region to secure the transfer of the franchises from ANM. This process was scheduled to be completed by October 2001 but was extended to November 30<sup>th</sup>.

Local 21 has been negotiating with Ameritech Labor Relations and ANM to find jobs for the members in the Ameritech Business Units since the announced sale. The team is composed of Assistant Business Manager Rick Gessler, and Business Representatives Kurt Schmidt and Steve Unterfranz. The call center located in Itasca Illinois employs about 240 Personal Assistants and about 25 Administrative Assistants. There are an additional 100 members in outside positions holding the titles of Operation Technician and Communications Technician.

As of November 1st approximately 115 members at the Itasca call center have been released to various jobs at other Ameritech Business Units. These positions are all promotions for the call center members. They have upgraded to positions of Service Representatives, Customer Advocates, Marketing Support Specialists, Customer Account Specialists and Technical Associates. The balance of the call center members are scheduled to be released on November 12<sup>th</sup>, November 19<sup>th</sup> and December 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year. This timetable is based on the sale of ANM being completed by the end of November 2001.

The Union continues to talk with the Company regarding the outside technicians at ANM. The preference process began on October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The Union is still negotiating with Ameritech to arrange for additional outside jobs for these members. The release date of the technicians has not been determined at this time.



## Rankins Honored by Calumet Project

Business Representative Jerry Rankins, who represents Local 21 members at AT&T Broadband and the City of Chicago 911 Center, was honored as a Community Hero by Northwest Indiana’s Calumet Project for Industrial Jobs on November 16, 2001.

The Calumet Project is a non-profit coalition of unions, community groups and religious organizations that works to preserve good jobs and works for social justice in the region. Their annual dinner is an important event recognizing outstanding contributions to the community in the fight for justice.

Brother Rankins was recognized for his work with AT&T Broadband workers in Northwest Indiana, who have been working without a contract since the Spring of 2000. He was lauded for his inspiration and dedicated work for and to Local 21 members, our officers and staff, the Cal Project and the general community. Congratulations Brother!



# What Happens When You Dump The Union

*From SMWIA Local 483's "Local News"*

Dear Former Brother and Sister Union Members:

I am writing to warn you to avoid what has happened to me and other union members. We were once members of an international union with the usual gripes about union dues, slow grievance procedures, seniority disputes, incentives, overtime arguments, etc.

We thought of our stewards and union officers as free-loaders and that the company would treat us just as good with or without them, and were in agreement when someone said, "The union is selling us out, never the company."

Well this was in 1978 and now we no longer have these old problems, for in October 1978, we voted to decertify and break away from the international union. We are now non-union and no more dues!

We no longer have seniority disputes because we are placed by ability which means whoever is the bosses' pet. And the same with overtime. Our grievance procedure is no longer slow, it is non-existent.

We don't have any absentee problems; if you miss one day, you must have a doctor's slip, so most absentee problems were fired long ago with nobody to represent them.

All this for less money, smaller hospitalization benefits, fewer holidays and seven days without overtime, if it's an emergency—which is almost every week.

Out ex-stewards and union officers are no longer a problem; most of them were set up in a discharge situation.

How did this happen? Well one night at a local tavern a supervisor I know got drunk and was laughing and bragging to a friend of his about how they got rid of the union. This is what I overheard at the booth in the tavern....

The supervisor said that they hired a union-busting firm out of Chicago at several hundred dollars an hour to come and train the supervisors and foremen in the skill of union-busting, with the threat that any foreman disclosing this would be fired.

He explained that there are a lot of companies in the business (union busting) now because they think the time is right with plant closings, conservative Republican and Democrats being elected and a general fear of a job loss in a lot of plants.

He said they held a lot of management classes and were taught the following 10 rules (he held a piece of paper that he read them from and I tried to jot them down.)

- 1) Try and confuse the seniority system for lay-offs, move-ups, and overtime to get employees jealous of one another. Then, when employees complain, send them to the union—thereby shifting the blame, even if you have to use racial or sexual disputes. Most important; create fear and distrust.
- 2) Draw out grievances as long as possible.
- 3) Threaten employees if they file grievances or safety complaints.
- 4) Increase disciplines for even minor offenses, to cause an overload for the union, slowing down the effectiveness on timeliness.
- 5) Make sure employees get all benefit books or letters on insurance benefits, pensions, etc. saying that the company gives these, not the truth that they are negotiated by the union and the company.
- 6) Increase management trainees or substitute foremen.
- 7) Get your stool pigeon—big mouth employees (every area has them) to criticize union officials and union dues. (You know who these are.)

- 8) Hold department meetings with employees to convince them that you agree with their problems, but that the union has to do something.
- 9) Convince them that you are on their side about a job-class increase or incentives on the job, but that your hands are tied and it's up to the union.
- 10) Last but not least, the company must become the Big Brother, the good guy and the union becomes the enemy by distorting the truth about the agreement. By the time the truth is known, they won't trust the union anyway.

When I hear this, I realize they followed the game plan perfectly. All of these things happened to us and they were laughing at us the whole time. So, I felt I had to write this letter to warn you how easily we were led down the road to disaster.

I only hope in some little way this will help you avoid what happened to us. Don't go back 40 years in time like we have. Are any of these things going to happen to your company? They may be training your management now. Beware!

I cannot sign this letter in fear of my job and family. Hopefully some day I will be back with you without fear. It's a terrible lesson to learn.

Respectfully an Ex-union Brother

## In this Season of Giving, SBC Cuts Back on Matching Gifts

*by Nancy North, Area Steward*

The 2 for 1 charitable match option in Ameritech's Matching Gift Program ends December 31, 2001 when the plan transitions to SBC guidelines. In a cost cutting effort SBC only matches 1 for 1. Could your children's school use some extra corporate cash? SBC is also eliminating matching gifts to schools K-12, so any contributions you wish to make to these educational institutions must be done by December 31, 2001. The recipient organization must get their paperwork in to Ameritech by March 31, 2002 when the plan ends. Call 1 877-761-5554 and ask for Ameritech forms.

Both plans require a minimum gift of \$25, but Ameritech matched the first \$500 in a calendar year at 2 for 1. On the plus side, for big donors the SBC plan has a higher overall limit of \$15,000—compared to Ameritech's limits of \$5,000 for education and \$5,000 for cultural institutions. SBC continues to match gifts to higher education—colleges and universities.



# Make\$ Cent\$: How to get Rich – \$lowly & \$urely

by Bob Borucke

**Q:** What's the easiest way to make small amounts of cash grow large?

**A:** Use the 'magic' of compounding interest in a tax deferred vehicle.

**Q:** What is compounding interest?

**A:** Interest earned on investments, compounded daily.

**Q:** What is a tax deferred vehicle?

**A:** IRA's, 401k's, 403b's, Sepp's, Keough's are examples of tax deferred vehicles.

**Q:** I can get RICH, slowly & surely?

**A:** YES!

**Q:** How?

**A:** That 1 word question gets a long answer. But it can easily be done, & millions of Americans are doing it! You just need to follow a few simple rules.

**Q:** What are those rules?

**A:** The first rule: get started early.

**Q:** Why?

**A:** Again the simple questions...let's demonstrate: Alice is 20, her sister Betty is 30. Both put \$2k/yr into an IRA. Alice contributes till 30 and stops. Betty contributes till 65 yrs. Who will have the most savings at 65? Assuming a 12% return (common w/mutual funds), Alice will have the larger IRA!

Hard to believe? Here's another example: a woman, aged 68, passes on & leaves an estate of \$2.5million to charity. She never inherited money, worked 1 job from 18yrs to 65, never married, had a strict budget & never earned \$20,000 a year. How? The 2 keys are: she kept a budget & invested (her only job was for a successful stockbroker).

Now, here are questions for you: Do you want to get rich? Can you invest monthly? Are you saddled with debt? If you have large credit card bills you are making big business RICHER! Sage advice: those who don't make compounding interest's magic work for them are doomed to pay it to those who do! If you're in debt, develop a budget, stick to it, pay off your smallest debts first, use the extra cash to pay the larger debts, burn your credit cards & avoid "stuffitis". Still want to get rich? Read on...

**Q:** What's a mutual fund?

**A:** It's a group of stocks, bonds, CD's, money markets bought by a mutual fund manager with money sent to a mutual fund company by its investors.

**Q:** How does it become a tax deferred vehicle?

**A:** An investor chooses mutual funds offered by a mutual fund company, fills out the proper paperwork & sends money to that company- it can take the form of an IRA, 401k, 403b, etc. as the investors situation applies.

There you have it, take the initiative & get started.

*Brother Boucke is a Local 21 member who studies finance. This advice is purely his own, and does not represent the views of the union officers, staff or employees.*

## REMINDER:

If you move call the Union Office at 630.960.4466.  
The company does not notify us if you move.

## The Union Plus Scholarship Program

For ten years the Union Plus Scholarship Program has helped students who represent working families reach their educational goals.

This year, 115 students, representing 31 AFL-CIO unions received a total of \$151,000 in scholarship awards. Twelve students received the top award of \$4,000. awards from \$500 to \$2,000 went to 79 students attending four-year institutions. And awards from \$500 to \$1,000 went to 24 students attending community and trade schools.

In addition to overall grade point average and SAT scores, students were selected according to their involvement in extracurricular activities, and an essay demonstrating their understanding of the issues affecting working families and the meaning of union membership.

### 2002 Applications

Applications for the 2002 awards are now available. Members can send a postcard with their name, return address, telephone number and international union affiliation to: The Union Plus Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 34800, Washington, DC 20043-4800, or download the application from the Union Privilege website at [www.unionprivilege.org](http://www.unionprivilege.org). The deadline to return the completed application is January 31, 2002. Recipients' names will be announced on May 31, 2002. However due to the high volume of applications, only winners will receive notification.

There are a variety of IBEW Scholarships available. For a complete list call the Union Office 630.960.4466 and 'O' escape.

## Surfing on the Web ?



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



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