



IBEW LOCAL 21 FRONTLINE



Volume 7, Number 2 • April 2004

President/Business Manager's Report

Local 21 Members Demand a Fair Contract

By Ron Kastner



2004 is a very important year for all of us—the political campaigns have already started for the presidential election in

November. Right now is the time for all union members to become politically involved and participate in sending a message to the current resident of the White House. It's clearly time for a change. Whether you work for one of the smaller companies that Local 21 represents or one of the larger companies, all of you can contribute to the upcoming presidential campaign in many ways. We must unite and show the collective voice that working families have in our great country. Attend the next Union meeting and see how you can help.

Local 21 members of SBC are gearing up for the **contract negotiations**. This could easily be one of our most significant contracts ever. Our mobilization training for Union Stewards and Activists has just wrapped up and couldn't have been better received. As you know, the goal of this training is to enable our stewards and activists to mobilize all of you, the rank and file members, involving each and every one of you in the negotiating process. In order to maintain our standard of delivering a good contract, this style of bargaining is needed. The fact is that the political climate of our country has created

some biases in our legal system allowing challenges by big corporations. Unions across the country have become somewhat predictable with their responses over the past few years. As you get more involved and mobilized over your issues, you will be very unpredictable. This sense of urgency then brings the needed strength to the bargaining table. We also plan on involving our retirees to join this process.

We have just finished tabulating the bargaining surveys in preparation for the Union proposals. Not surprisingly, as this article goes to press, healthcare is tied with job security as the number one issue.

Our Union has no intention of going backwards on **Healthcare**. Over the years we have sacrificed in many areas of the contract, from wages and pensions to extra time off, in order to stay premium free. This goal is not only for our active members but also for our retirees. I, for one, am tired of watching Unions and non-Union workers compromise our gains to fix a problem that should be fixed by our government. We need to stay strong and maintain our quality of health care without paying premiums. This company is very profitable and needs to suck it up.

Job Security is also a serious concern of our members and will be addressed with proposals that demand that SBC keeps jobs not only in our country but forces them to be in our Union. You, our members and their employees, have made this company what it is today and seeing good jobs go to India is a disgrace. We need to get an agreement that enables this Union to grow when SBC grows. As the wireline business changes, we want to be included. Whether

it is the support for DSL lines, which we are good enough to sell and install, or new ventures like VOIP (Voice over, an Internet protocol), we deserve to be included.

With respect to all items of concern for our members, SBC's "Pot of Gold" is very reachable and quite frankly is overflowing. But, that isn't a guarantee that they will bargain a fair contract. That is where you come in. How hungry are you and how hard are you willing to get involved? With 12,000 members at SBC, all you need to do is get involved when asked by your Union. When you do that, there will be no stopping us.

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FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21

Official Bi-Monthly Publication

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

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Member: Illinois State Labor Press Association, Midwest Labor Press Association, and International Labor Communications Association, AFL-CIO/CLC

Our Time is Now

By Rick Gessler, Vice President / Assistant Business Manager



I am writing this article as SBC has given their first offer to CWA. It's very disappointing for a company that is making OVER

\$7,000,000,000.00 (yes, over **seven billion**) in PROFITS! The revenue per employee has increased every one of the last three years from \$250,677 in 2001 to \$267,621 in 2003—the company insults their employees with such a regressive offer, yet gives their top executives anywhere from 88% to 113% increases since 2002. Net income per employee has increased over 19% since 2001.

Sisters and Brothers, I can only hope that when we get to the bargaining table you show your support for your Union and participate where needed. You will be kept informed of the bargaining process on a daily basis when it “heats up” and you will get the information you’ll need to participate, in phases. We need you behind us when we are at the table. We can’t let over fifty years of bargaining be destroyed

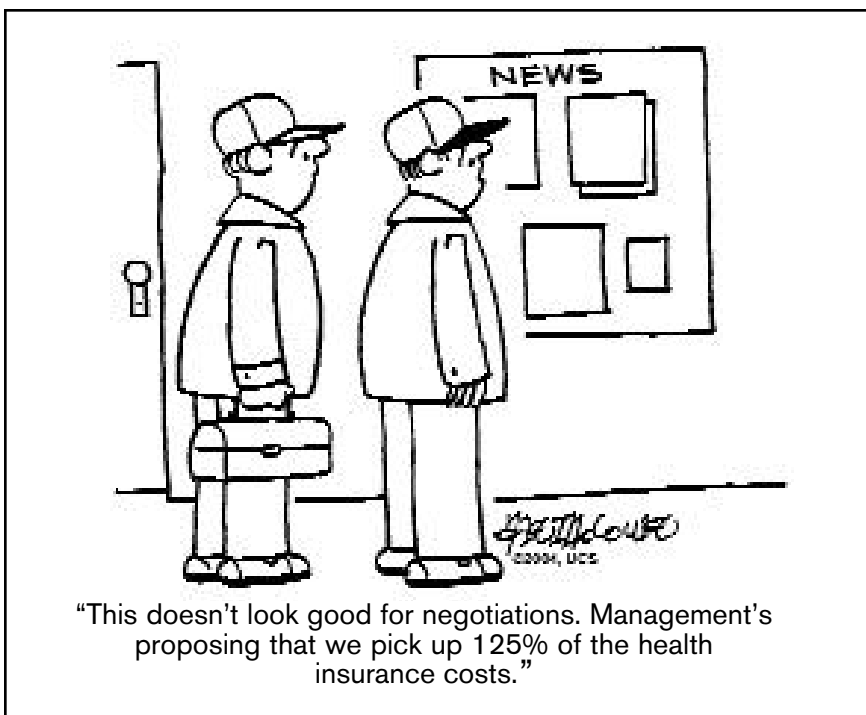
by this group of managers.

The company continues to consolidate functions across the region and many times it means moving work out of IBEW jurisdiction. This, after all of us worked with SBC to bring change in legislative issues to help this company prosper. SBC has made it clear that one of their focuses in 2004 is to bring consistency to the corporation across the thirteen-state region, including their labor agreements between the CWA and the IBEW. This should worry you, since I believe we have the flagship agreement with SBC and we are committed to keeping it.

Let’s ALL be ready to send SBC that message in June. As reported in past articles and elsewhere, we have many issues to resolve in bargaining and each one will be addressed, including our laid off members. It was good to see all the retirees who have shown up over the last three months at the retiree meetings. This group is a great resource for all of us and we need to remember them.

“Inform - Organize - Act”

We have a few difficult months ahead. WE WILL get through them. See you at the meetings!



More Money Whether You Want It, Or Not

By Kurt Schmidt, Business Representative



I'd like to say I have only good news to write about. What I have is a good news/ bad news report. First the bad news.

In Oak Brook Business

Communication Services (BCS) the company has implemented **mandatory overtime**. Each Customer Advocate in Oak Brook, Chicago and Springfield is required to work 9 hours of overtime per week starting March 29th and going through April 30th. This is in spite of the fact that the office has worked voluntary overtime since April 2003 in some of its groups. The culprit is Long Distance. I find that interesting because SBC has been trying since 1996, then Ameritech, to get into Long Distance in the Midwest. SBC launched Long Distance in all of its other 8 states prior to the Midwest, yet they learned nothing on how to handle the load of orders, or to improve the ordering process in the Business Sector. On top of this add the fact that a year ago the company surplused almost 100 Customer Advocates. So once again because of company lack of planning, our members are bearing the brunt of the fix. They must give up their lives, their families and their health because of lack of planning by SBC.

Even with all of this bad news I must admit there is the flickering of Solidarity by the Sisters and Brothers in this Oak Brook office. There was a situation where the entire office had to get up for a **health stretch** from being in their seats too long without movement. At first the management thought it was cute, but when they stretched for about 5 minutes it became noticed as a statement. Let's make that candle burn with a high straight flame. Sisters and Brothers, do not forget your health during these long forced hours of overtime. Work accurately; do not make mistakes because you are tired. Continue to put out a quality product, an accurate product, and verify your order examples to

maintain order accuracy. Finally, there was a rumor that a large amount of cheese would be needed at the Call Center.

In the **ISDN Center** in Oak Brook the employees are still waiting for an answer from the company as to what was wrong with the sandwiches served in February 17th by an outside vendor. The company has informed the Union that it has not yet received an answer from the Department of Health. I find that very interesting because one of the employees called the Department of Health and received a hand written copy from the Department's investigator on the results of the visit to the vendor's location. The Union, through the direction of President Ron Kastner, escalated this to the Safety Committee to get an answer. But to date SBC hasn't given a formal response to the Union as to the cause of the tainted food provided at the company meeting. Well Company, I think the answer is obvious why not just **CALL THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT?** The Union will keep you advised of any information received from SBC. Remember, you should not be charged for these absences or loss any wages due to your illness from the sandwiches.

Now for some good news. In

Consumer the company has extended the **incentive plan** for the second quarter of 2004. The plan has been highly lucrative for the past three quarters. Our members have seen an increase from the hundreds of dollars per month to the thousands of dollars per month. Even the company admitted it paid out more than it had anticipated—but don't feel sorry for SBC. What it has earned in revenue far outweighs what was paid out in incentives, both cash and merchandise. You have seen their profit numbers in the billions of dollars. Also, in Consumer the Union is waiting for a decision on the arbitration for mandatory overtime that was forced in that business unit as recently as the end of last year. The answer is to be received by April 15th and may be out before this article is read.

Finally, in the **E911 DIG group** in River Grove, there has been some movement back to the 4 X 10 schedules that were lost for a short period of time. It is true that the number of tours is less but it is a start in the right direction.

Sisters and Brothers, please remember that the contract is up as of June 26th. Keep yourselves informed, support your bargaining team, join in all actions to support a fair contract and stayed unified.



Do you have a News Story?

We need your contributions. We accept them on disk in Word format at the Union office (paper copy backup is a good idea) or simply paper copy. Or you could email an attachment in Word to both addresses as insurance.

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Complete information about all Union Privilege services is available online at www.unionprivilege.org.

Do You Want to Live on 18 Cents an Hour?

By Larry Moeller, Area Steward



These days I find myself nostalgic for the good old days. Just over 3 short years ago we had low unemployment, a booming

stock market and a Federal government that enjoyed a budget surplus. Ah for the good old days, what happened? In my humble opinion our government changed its focus from tending the U.S. economy first to make war, a war on terrorism. To be sure the attack on 9/11 demanded a response and our military has concluded its primary mission in Afghanistan and Iraq. Now its up to the diplomats to make a lasting peace.

More disturbing is the Bush

Administrations Ho- Hum attitude toward the U.S. economy brought to light by public comment by high Bush officials saying the loss of 2 million jobs is essentially the cost of doing business in the new global economy. I'll bet that makes the jobless feel better—they should understand foreign workers are willing to work for a fraction of what Americans earn—as soon as U.S. workers are willing to accept third world wages while the wealthiest 1% of U.S. citizens reap the rewards of our labor, all will be well.

For example, NIKE pays about \$7.00 for a pair of shoes that sells for \$130.00 dollars here. The shoes are made in Indonesia where workers are paid 18 cents per hour, but its not just shoes—all cameras sold in the U.S. are made overseas, almost all bicycles, tape recorders, radios, T.V. sets, VCRs, and computers—not to mention the support services provided by foreign workers.

They Only Lie When Their Lips Move

By Reid Kanies, Steward



I should have known better—especially as a steward—than to believe them.

It was a year ago when the tri-cities of St. Charles, Batavia and

Geneva floated a referendum to support a city owned fiber network, “a to the house broadband program.” As a resident I was against it. As a taxpayer I thought it was too expensive. As an SBC employee I thought it was threatening.

So did SBC. It feared the snowball effect of communities leaving the SBC base and going it alone. Therefore it formed a Company-Employee-Resident task force to sway voters to vote “No.”

An SBC director level person came to the St. Charles garage and told union members that their amount of participation would be their amount of entries into a raffle of sky box tickets to a Cubs or Sox game.

Not needed but a nice company gesture.

Managers and craft together, placed yard signs, attended council meetings, wrote editorials and walked door to door. The voters voted “No.” Victory and its rewards were to be forth coming.

You guessed it. No raffle, no local union members at the game.

I realize this breach of their world is small compared to those union brothers and sisters who have been fired, laid off and wrongly disciplined but it does prove the company isn't even a good winner. If they ever do get their way in court about the UNE-P issue they won't share. We must stick together now to bargain for the now.

When I did threaten a grievance they told me since raffles were not a negotiated item in the contract, I'd lose. Okay, let us remember that correcting orders for repair and installation or correcting engineering prints are not in the contract either.

By the way, the tri-cities might place the referendum on the ballot again in November.

I'll be watching SBC to see if their lips move.

One in three workers employed by U.S. multinational companies lives in a foreign country.

As a bigger slap in the face to the American taxpayer, these same multinational corporations get billions in government tax credits. Guess who makes-up the difference? Little wonder where President Bush's 200 million plus campaign fund came from. The philosophy of the Extreme right of the Republican party is clear, if Saudi Oil Princes want to curtail OPEC oil production—jeopardizing the fragile U.S. economic recovery, well thats O.K. with the Bush team. After all, the Bush family is business partners with the Saudi Royal Family and U.S. businesses and consumers will just have to dig deeper.

It's ok to out source IT jobs to India. Everyone has forgotten the Regan administration's promise of high tech jobs for the workers who lost their jobs in the last trickle-down economic plan. In plain language The Bush Administration attitude toward the Environment, Workers, really Fair Trade, Fair Taxes is LET THEM EAT CAKE.

So what does this mean for Telecommunication Workers like us? Support services in India do not use SBC services. Corporations that move off shore do not need the services SBC sells, and we install and maintain. Former employees of US corporations who used to provide Information Technology support services, or worked for corporations that moved away may not be able to afford to keep paying for additional lines, DSL, caller ID, etc. etc. You all know what the results of these are, layoffs and the threat of Health Care Premiums. Oh yeah I almost forgot the CEO gets a BIGGGG raise and Bonus..... PASS THE CAKE!!!



SBC and the White House
—our suspicions are true.



To IBEW Local 21 Members Employed at SBC

By David Webster, Business Representative

It's not hard to share information on the basic advantages of a Union contract with

others. Attached is a "talk point" guide that can be used when you come in contact with Dish Network Workers—especially, if they are working inside your home as you take advantage of your SBC discount on Dish Network services.

It is only meant to give you an idea of what to say to the Dish worker to get them talking, I'm sure that you'll know what to say to keep them interested in the Union difference once you break the ice. Nothing gets the message across better than workers talking with other workers. You can be a part of helping Local 21 maintain the Industry Standard that we all enjoy. By talking to Dish Network Workers and helping them understand "The Union Advantage," you can be a part of helping maintain our industry standards.

Dish Network Talk Points

- Talk about what you do at SBC, how long you've been there, etc.
- If you're installation and repair tell them that you do the same work as them only on the customer side of the D-Mark.
- Tell them that when you do the jack work for a Dish Network customer or for an SBC customer you make \$27.65 per hour because you have a Union Contract.
- With the SBC/Dish partnership, Dish Network is giving away part of your work, the jack work, to SBC workers. That could potentially cost jobs for Dish workers.
- Let them know that the only reason workers are able to make \$27.65 with full benefits and job/ layoff protections are because they are union members—IBEW Local 21.

- Tell them about the Union and how, because you are a member, you have been able to provide for your family.
- Tell them why you wouldn't do this work without a Union and a Union Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Explain that with the changes in the industry and within Dish network due to the partnership with SBC, (all of their phone work being performed by SBC Union members) now is the time they should seriously consider joining us in the brother/sisterhood in IBEW Local 21.
- If they show an interest in joining or getting more information about IBEW Local 21 refer them to Business Representative Dave Webster at 630-222-9121 or Area Steward Bob Przybylinski at 708-404-0417 and they can also visit the Unions Website at www.ibew21.org.

A Corporation That Breaks the Greed Mold

By Jim Hightower

Do big time CEOs -- no matter how compassionate and cuddly they might be personally -- have to be SOBs on the job?

Yes, says the conventional wisdom of the greater Corporate World. The bottom-line dictates that wages and benefits be slashed and that offshoring be pursued with a vengeance. It's not personal, just business. "Look Ye to Wal-Mart," boom the Market Gods, directing CEOs to follow the anti-labor, low-wage, no benefit, move-it-all-to-China ethic of this giant. The gods decree that no one can out-compete Wal-Mart, so best to imitate the beast.

Apparently, Jim Sinegal has been going to the wrong church. He's CEO of Costco, the profitable warehouse club retailer that's fast growing across the country. He takes a shockingly heretical view of his job, boasting of his company's fair treatment of employees: "We pay much better than Wal-Mart," Sinegal says. "That's not altruism. It's good business."

Indeed, Costco's pay is much, much, much better: a full-time Costco clerk or warehouse worker earns more than \$41,000 a year, plus getting terrific

health-care coverage. Wal-Mart workers get barely a third of that pay, plus a lousy health-care plan. Costco even has unions!

Yet, Costco's labor costs are only about half of Wal-Mart's. How's that possible? One reason is that Costco workers feel valued, which adds enormously to their productivity, and they don't leave. Employee turnover is a tiny fraction of Wal-Mart's rapidly revolving door.

Another thing Sinegal rejects is offshoring: "We could move [some operations] to Bangladesh or somewhere. But what kind of message would that send to our employees? Not a good one, I think."

While Wal-Mart makes twice as much profit as Costco, Sinegal believes it's better business to make a nice profit, but not a killing, and to invest more in Costco's 92,000 workers. "I don't see what's wrong with an employee earning enough to be able to buy a house or having a health plan for the family," he says.

—Jim Hightower is a best-selling author from Texas



Springing Into Contract Time

By Michael Sacco, Business Representative



Wow, spring is here!

I love the newness of everything and the promise it brings. At SBC it also means contract time this year, for us

and our sisters and brothers in the CWA. By the time you read this, the CWA will hopefully be done and we'll be ready to start in the IBEW.

The company is doing the hard-nose, "this isn't Bell" drill at CWA bargaining. You better believe it isn't Bell. For us Ma Bell veterans, we can vouch that Illinois Bell **never made the kind of profits SBC does. \$8.5 BILLION dollars or thereabouts last year and on track for a huge jump by the end of the year!**

That's right. \$8.5 billion and quickly rising. How many of us have heard the bosses cry about how the company is "losing money?" They aren't losing anything, they're just not making as much as they want. That's a number they never reach. This company has no limit to how much they want to make and how much productivity increases to make it.

Why do I say the profits will rise quickly? Go to SBC's website and check out their March 16, 2004 presentation to Merrill Lynch investors on the Cingular purchase of AT&T Wireless. They give a thumbnail sketch of the major indicators of the business: DSL sales penetration (50% improvement in the last 9 months—far exceeding Verizon, a larger competitor and closing in on Comcast); increased bundling of services; soaring long distance sales and the slowing (to a trickle) of local access line loss. Things are looking very good. We should expect a quick and successful negotiation, shouldn't we?

To use a dated phrase, **NOT!** The company wants more—as always. They want it from our pockets; a prospect that angers me and it should anger you. It is important that we learn about this greedy corporation and share the knowledge with

our co-workers. We need to be informed and organized to beat back any attempt by the company to try and roll back the gains that we have made as a union during the last 57 years.

How are we sharing information? Word of mouth, bulletin boards, the web (www.ibew21.org), the Hotline (630-415-2711 or 1-866-423-9582 outside of the Chicago area) and this newspaper. Bargaining begins in May. Get involved and make a difference in this critical fight for our families' futures.

DANGER!

In March, we had a serious mishap in the Kildare CO in Chicago. A set of cable trays, holding thousands of pounds of cable, broke loose from the ceiling and came down on top of two of our brothers. Thankfully, no serious injuries occurred. However, we should all take time to look up at the ceiling above our heads. It appears that the anchors placed in the ceiling "blew out." We are not sure what happened, but it is probably due to the use of rat non-union) contractors in our central offices. They either are overloading the cable trays or improperly installing the anchors.

It makes me appreciate the days when Illinois Bell always had engineers design jobs, instead of just schlocking everything together as SBC does. Inspections since this disaster have revealed numerous other problems on the North Side. If you see any anchors pulling or pulled away from the ceiling, report it in writing to your manager and area manager. Forward a copy to the Union and vacate the area! **Pulled anchors are a clear and present danger of a collapse . Don't take a chance .**

In another serious safety issue, certain managers are pushing people to work alone in high crime areas, like the projects. This is a serious safety breach, a violation of company safety practices and the OSHA law. Work safe and follow "Sacco's Rule: If the cops don't go in alone, the phone person doesn't either!"

Around the Area

Scheduling is still a major problem both inside and outside on the North and West sides. Some managers get it, others just want to use it to get their power jollies. We are working through some of the problems, but sometimes the only cure for these problems is the voices of upset members in the boss's face, expressing their displeasure at his/her ignorance. Try it together, you'll surprise your boss, and maybe yourselves at the results it can get!

We had a member accused of misusing a WEX gas card. The company tried to fire the brother, but couldn't prove its case due to the poor security of the cards and passwords. If you are uncomfortable with what your card is possibly being used for off-hours, turn it into your boss for safe-keeping every night. Don't forget to ask for it back in the a.m. though, you don't want to get stuck running out of gas!

Finally, when operating a company vehicle, always follow the law—including parking regulations! The company increasingly is refusing to pay parking tickets or towing fees. Drive around until you can find parking or NA the job. Don't run the risk of the company picking your pocket because you went the extra mile to serve the customer. Have a safe spring!



Return of the Rat!



Ralph the Rat made his first public appearance on 22nd Street & Jorie Boulevard. Before work Customer Advocates from BCS expressed frustration with the new Mandatory Overtime. ISDN Marketing Support Specialists joined them. Solidarity Support also came from Consumer Service Reps down the street, Techs from the Villa Park garage, and Local 21 staff.



Time

By Nancy North, Area Steward

Time. No working mom has enough time. Starting March 29th

Mandatory Overtime means there's less time for parents, for students, for anyone in the Oak Brook BCS office with a life outside of work. Nine hours of Mandatory Overtime per week has everyone stressed out. People are developing nervous habits like pencil

tapping. People feel cramped and stand for stretch breaks. One morning some CA's were so pressed for time, they couldn't change out of their pj's until after they got to the office.

We all felt shocked when management announced Mandatory Overtime—we'd been working voluntary overtime for a year, but it wasn't enough. We're a microcosm of the American economy—the number of orders issued per month tripled after Long Distance was approved, but no increase in headcount.

We all felt shocked at the official HR answers in the Q&A that rolled out a week later. The official policy ended with "failure...discipline up to and including termination."

We hate having to schedule our time a week in advance, although individual managers promise to be flexible with changes—it's "at their discretion."

They anticipate, but can't promise, it will only last a month. We're all tired. The details run round and round in my head, but I've run out of time.

This is Why We Work



IBEW Local 21 COPE and Indiana State AFL-CIO Candidate Endorsements

Governor Joe Kernan

Lt Governor Kathy Davis

State Senate

District 2 Samuel Smith
3 Earline Rogers
5 Nancy Dembowski

State House of Representatives

District 1 Linda Lawson
2 Earl Harris
3 Charlie Brown
4 Ralph Ayres
10 Duane Cheney
11 Dan Stevenson
12 John Aguilera
13 Chester Dobis
14 Vernon Smith
19 Robert Kuzman

The Indiana Primary will be held on May 4 th 2004 In this election year we have 4 major goals

- 1 To retain Democratic control or the State House of representatives
- 2 To see that our friends, Senator Evan Bayh and congressman Pete Visclosky serve another another term in the U.S. Senate and House.
- 3 To elect Governor Joe Kernan and Lt. Governor Kathy davis to a full term in Indianapolis
- 4 lastly and most importantly, we must SHOW BUSH THE DOOR IN " 04. the future of middle Class America and Organized labor is at stake !

COPE Report

Political Action in Indiana & Beyond

By Dennis McCafferty, Committee on Political Education

The most frequent questions from the members are: One, "What's the Union doing about it?" And Two, "I'm only one person, what can I do?" Well, we've got answers for you. Your Union's Committee On Political Education is going to be ALL ABOUT these 4 things from now on.

1. Registration: Your Union is going to get you registered and then BUG THE HELL OUT OF YOU TO VOTE! Indiana residents have until April 5th to register to vote in the primary of May 4th. In Illinois, the registration for the General Election in November opened up on March 22. If you don't already have one, we will provide you with a list of endorsed candidates. The time has come to reward our friends and punish our enemies.

2. Education: Your Union is going to see to it that you get the information you need to make a more informed decision in the voting booth as well as provide you with the necessary tools, so you can get involved in the fight to protect our futures.

3. Mobilization: Your Union is putting a tremendous amount of effort and resources into transforming all this information into meaningful action. Local 21 is exploring all types of new and innovative ways of mobilizing the membership to spring into action on short notice. Your Union has also enlisted a growing number of retirees to join in the fight. Unfortunately, after all their years of dedicated service, SBC appears willing to make these folks their prime target in negotiations and we ain't havin that!

4. Participation: By now you have returned the membership surveys. The information you provided will help the officers and staff determine what issues are most important to you—whether it's wages, benefits, health care, job security,

etc. Visit our website at www.ibew21.org and register for your State's e-activist network. You can also send us your email addresses or continue to sue your Local's hotline (630-415-2711) for the latest information.

Make no mistake about it Brothers & Sisters...we are on the brink of war with this Company. And to win this war we have to have 2 things:

1) A plan of attack—your Bargaining Committee will have that when they march up to the table to begin negotiations on a new Collective Bargaining Agreement. But no matter how good their strategy is;

2) You **MUST** have motivated foot soldiers to carry out that plan. **AND THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN!!!** Whether it's walking an informational picket line, or lobbying local politicians, family, friends and neighbors. Taking a younger member "under your wing" by teaching them how to stick up for themselves or just "talking up" the Union in your garage or office—when you conduct yourself as a **stand-up Union Member** it rubs off on others and the best way to lead is by example. Our strength as a Union lies in our Solidarity, so **BE PROUD—LET IT SHOW AND HELP IT TO GROW.**

Here's the challenge to you, the Membership. If we pledge, right here right now, to work our damndest to achieve these goals, there will be **no limits** to what we can accomplish. And know this, the future existence of our livelihoods and our Union is at stake. The time to roll up our sleeves and get to work is **NOW!** Together we can and will do it. So thank you for all that you do, take care, **GOD BLESS AMERICA AND GOD BLESS OUR UNION.**



The Grievance Process @SBC – May it

By Jim McLauchlan, Chief Steward



Over the past few years we have listened to reports from President

Kastner and Vice-President Gessler on the backlog of grievances waiting for arbitration. We all wonder how it can get fixed and why it's gotten this bad. I think it finally hit me upside my head as I worked several different issues recently.

In my travels I find people amazed on why we can't seem to settle even the littlest of issues. The answer is UNION BUSTERS!! That's right you have read it here in this paper before, but I truly believe that SBC has chosen to become UNION BUSTERS. Look around and you see it everywhere. They attempt to discredit your Union leadership. They attempt to make you, the member, feel like you have no power to fight back. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT THIS!!

A recent issue. I had a technician with almost 20 years with SBC get into a car accident. The company deemed the accident avoidable. He was taken into another meeting after the accident investigation and suspended for 1 day. That is where this gets interesting. I asked the manager why he would get a suspension after 20 years of perfect driving and his answer was, "HR said so." I explained that in the olden days we would make him go into the garage with all his peers and explain how the accident happened. This was always a good learning experience and a good safety review for everyone. Again, the answer was, "Sorry, HR said so." We grieved the discipline. Do you think we can settle it before it goes to arbitration? The answer is no, because "HR said so."

Another great example is the attendance policy, or should I say "the attendance guidelines" they have started to enforce. They now use a computer to track all our attendance. The managers are sent exactly what to do after each absence. They no longer can make a decision themselves. The managers are all told to contact HR for any and all decisions that they make. People with 10 years perfect attendance now get disciplined, because "HR said so."

I could go on with examples forever, but this is the problem. We no longer have a grievance process. The company will no

longer allow managers, to manage their business. In the past when a grievance was presented at the first step, the local manager had the ability to listen to the issue and decide what to do. Today the decision has already been made because "HR said so." The manager won't try to think on his or her own and make the "correct decision" because "HR said so."

The President and Vice-President of each business unit are directing HR.

What manager below them will change a decision already made at that level? The grievance process is ruined.

When we get the grievance at the second step we hear the same thing that the Steward heard at the first step, "HR said so." The grievance is denied and moved to the third step for Labor Relations and the Business Reps to attempt to straighten out. They then finally get to discuss the issue, which is usually denied, because "HR said so."

The Union and the company negotiated a grievance process in our contract. As article 13.10 states, "it shall be the objective of both the Company and the Union to settle any grievance promptly and at the lowest step of the grievance procedure." We no longer have a 3-step grievance process. Since someone in each Business Unit has dictated to have HR step in and make decisions for local managers, the entire process is a TOTAL FAILURE. There aren't many managers below the rank of the Labor Relations department who have enough guts to actually think for themselves. Who would go against the heads of the Business Units, who have already made the grievance decisions? **So the grievance procedure at SBC is dead, may it Rest in Peace.**

SBC has chosen to become UNION BUSTERS!!! We won't let that happen, show your support. THE TIME IS NOW!!! Here's a quick 3-question survey. Circle the correct answers below.

1. Who will you support and put your trust in?
Your Union trying to negotiate your next pay increase or
A company trying to take your pay away
2. Who will you support and put your trust in?
Your Union fighting to maintain or improve your benefits or
A company that is trying to take them away

3. Who will you support and put your trust in?
Your Union fighting to improve your pension or
A company trying to take it away

I'm sure I know your answers.

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL. DO NOT FORGET UNITED WE STAND!!!!

United in Solidarity

Union Structure Explained

Part 5: The Treasurer

By Jacquie Fields



In this issue of *Frontline*, I will continue with duties of the Union staff by sharing the duties of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall

receive from the Financial Secretary all monies collected, or the bank record of the money deposited in the local union's bank account, and give a receipt for it. The Treasurer also:

- Deposits in the name of the local union all local union monies received from Financial Secretary. In Local 21 that is a combined title with the President.
- Shall make no disbursements without an order or warrant signed by the President and Recording Secretary and approved by the local union.
- Provide an itemized financial statement to the local union.
- Must submit books and records for inspection or audit when called upon by the proper authority.

Financial statements are available to members upon request at each unit meeting every month. The office of Treasurer is an elected position, which I am proud to hold for a second term.

The Work Shuffle

By Dennis McCafferty, Steward



Well here we are once again; with contract time steadily approaching the s*** is getting so thick you can stir it with a stick. I'd

like to extend sincerest congratulations to all the recent retirees in Lake County.

You've earned your day in the sun; enjoy it in the best of health! Advise your steward to call for your union retirement gift. A special thanks to Wally Pearson for all his help in trying to make me a real Steward.

So now down to business...The Infrastructure Maintenance Organization (IMO) world turned upside down in late December with an upper level management reorganization that would divide many work functions into different yet totally unrelated departments. For example, certain DARRT Techs would now be under Construction and Engineering (C&E) while others would return to Installation and Repair (I&R). Locate work would return to I&R and the Cable Splicers (many of them forced into IMO because of their job title) are not allowed to preference back to C&E although they hold the title because they're from another "unrelated department."

In I&R, scheduling has once again become a problem. Not once has any SBC manager come up with a holiday or N/S scheduling plan that makes any kind of sense, nor can they back one up with any sort of logic. Just in case y'all in San Antonio were wondering, we experience all 4 seasons up here in the Midwest (sometimes all in the same week). So I hope you're not depending on the weather to cooperate when you determine how you go about this.

In Construction (C&E) the big broadband initiative disappeared as quickly as it re-appeared. Apparently, all those "hot jobs" that had to get done had time limits attached to them. They're still hot and still important, just not important enough to allocate any overtime or six tours to. But hurry up and get them done. This company never ceases to amaze me.

SUGGESTION BOX:

Far be it for me to tell you how to run your business SBC, but here is one suggestion I hope you'll consider: The next time you want to run one of your **dog and pony shows** like "Factors for Success" past us, bring donuts, then it won't be a total waste of time. The fact that you trotted out the same managers who we deal with on a daily basis, the same ones who'll be the first to admit that they cannot effect any sort of meaningful change, just proves how little you care about not only your employees, but your customers. But hey, what do you care, you've got everything you want now. Don't you? (Long Distance, Regulator Agencies re-evaluating UNE-P) etc. Why should you care? Well, I'll tell you why. Because all of your new found fortunes are dependent on one thing: Service Level Commitment Numbers!!!

CHOICE MEMORIES:

They say you can't live in the past, but it's a fool who does not remember it. So here are a few things I hope you remember in the future as contract time grows nearer.

- **REMEMBER:** That this Company **CHOSE** non-union, out-of-state, SCAB contractors over 600 of their own people who they so cold heartedly, put out on the street 2 days after Christmas in 2002.
- **REMEMBER:** What your manager said when you and your steward met with him about a contract violation? "Go ahead and grieve it" That's why there are over 900 grievances at 3rd step or higher at the time of this writing.
- **REMEMBER:** Being called into the office for a GPS meeting and having to explain your every movement for the last month to your manager?
- **REMEMBER:** What you were told the last time you asked for a capital tool or a training class?
- **REMEMBER:** That the company had planned to lay off 500 more of our Brothers and Sisters this past June, but because of your Union's extensive Legislative Lobbying efforts in Springfield, they pledged no further lay-offs until May of 2004.

- **REMEMBER:** The closing of Call and Tech Support Centers throughout our regions, in which this company **CHOSE** to move the work out of our local, or in some cases outsource it to another country!

Remember all of it, when the company comes to the Bargaining Table crying about how tough things are and how they're not making enough of a profit to keep the shareholders happy. And also remember that this is not an industry in trouble, despite themselves they still mismanage to make a gazillion dollars every quarter. Remember all the bull**** they put us through but most of all, remember they didn't have to treat us the way they did, they **CHOSE** to.

For all Local 21 members that drive an SBC vehicle 10,001 pounds or more, the vehicles need to be inspected daily and also, don't forget the requirement to fill out the form to show that the inspection was done. If the SBC supervisor does not have the form or gives an incorrect form (the correct one is double sided) get your shop steward involved right away. These requirements are not optional—**THIS IS THE LA W.** In addition, if you drive an SBC vehicle like this (the truck should have a U.S. DOT number on the door). You should have a valid medical card, so care for that immediately. This also includes the smaller vehicles pulling HESCO's.

With all the detailing and loaning out, and exhibit and job title crossing over going on, we need to start paying a little more attention to what's going on around us. Management's latest scam is if they can't get their own people to perform a task (due to safety or health concerns) they just give the job away to a different department until they find someone who will. The fact that they are showing such total disregard for the safety of others, not to mention screwing their own crews out of **THEIR** work is NFG I'm sure you'll figure it out.

So in closing, let's remember to work safe, be stand up Union Members always, and look out for one another. We truly can make this a better place to live and work if we stick together in **SOLIDARITY.** Until next time, good luck and God Bless.

Letters to the Editor



Dear IBEW Local 21,

To begin with, the February edition of *Frontline* was both informative and inspirational. With upcoming contract negotiations there is no shortage of issues to discuss. One of the issues that concerns me is the willingness of SBC to shortchange their retirees of healthcare. It is not only degrading, it is sinful. These members invested years of hard work in a promise that was made to secure their well-being in the future. Families deserve the reassurance that their health care needs will be met in the future and not be reduced or possibly eliminated. Retirees and active members need healthcare on an increasingly higher level. How can a company that grossed 905 million dollars last quarter justify their actions? It is truly unimaginable!

On top of this, Ed Whitacre and confidants have the audacity to swindle outrageous bonuses while our health care is supposedly in jeopardy. It seems to me that they rationalize their pay by taking from us. Maybe it is time that they sacrifice their luxuries for our basic essentials!

The staff of IBEW 21 sincerely deserves a hand for reacting so quickly by organizing a retiree club. This club will give all members an opportunity to see how they will be treated long after their work is done. Health care is a necessity, never to be compromised for the sake of corporate GREED.

In Solidarity,
Tim Stacy

Editors' note: *Tim Stacy is a working member of IBEW Local 21 at SBC. His opinions are solely his own and do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper or IBEW Local 21.*

Dear Editors,

Since the February *Frontline* loudly mentioned that half of Local 21's membership has less than five years service I will dare suggest that for the next contract, banging the seniority drum will only give many folks a headache and do little to stir up support. Grab a clue everyone...seniority is not very meaningful in a company where, by Local 21's own admission, so few employees have any.

There should be language giving consideration for people with college degrees, military service, or other relevant work experience. Ideally, this would be in the form of a better pay scale, even if it's only \$5 or \$10 a week, and/or a "weighted" NCS date. Not only would such a system reward people who have worked hard to acquire valuable skills, it would be an incentive for others to do the same. The bar would be raised for everyone.

Yeah, you got me right: I'm proposing that all job titles should have separate pay scales. The teachers' unions have been doing this forever: A teacher with a Master's degree may get more money than another teacher with higher seniority but only has a Bachelor's degree. There is nothing unjust about rewarding hard work and self-initiative.

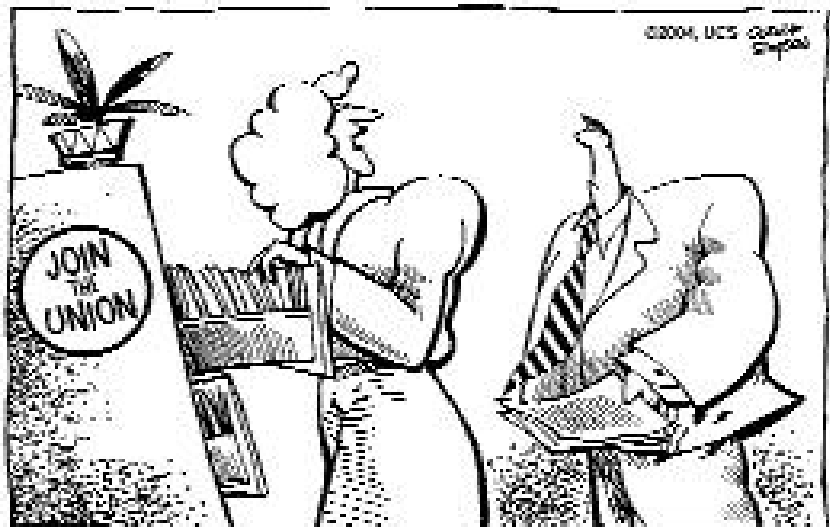
There are many SBC employees with little seniority, but do have college degrees or honorable military service. They work very hard and are incredibly smart. But when it comes to pay, job transfers, or layoffs, none of that matters. The

hypothetical lazy slug with decades of service gets preferential treatment only because their sole "marketable skill" is their ability to fly under the radar long enough to become untouchable. Why does the contract favor them and push aside low seniority employees who have actually gotten off their rear ends and **done something** with themselves?

I don't support one group benefiting at the expense of the other. I'm only asking that everyone get fair credit their accomplishments...be it years of service or otherwise. For the record, I have 13 years at SBC, am a second-generation employee and former union steward...so I'm not some ignorant, whining punk who just walked through the door. I can see it both ways because I've also spent enormous amounts of my personal time and money learning new things and would like to get credit for it. I respect the union, and the sacrifice made by my father and those like him is not lost on me. But along with telling me to educate new people, the union leadership should itself be doing some introspection and really look at what is important to the "new" membership.

Thank you very much.
Charlie Warfield, Jr.
Telecommunications Specialist
Lombard, IL. central office.

Editors' note: *Charlie Warfield Jr. is a working member of IBEW Local 21 at SBC. His opinions are solely his own and do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper or IBEW Local 21.*



"But Mr. Hinkley, I thought you *liked* well organized employees."



IBEW Local 21 Solidarity Day Golf Outing & Dinner

WHEN: Sunday Aug. 8th, 1st Shotgun Start at 1:30

WHERE: Golf Club of Illinois
1575 Edgewood Drive, Algonquin, IL
847-658-4400

COST FOR GOLF: \$80.00 per person Includes 18 Holes of Golf & Cart along with a Homestyle Buffet Dinner. If you chose not to golf you can join us for dinner. Dinner only will be \$22.00 per person.

Monies must be paid to reserve your Tee Time. There are only tee times available for 120 Golfers, and will be on a first come basis.

RSVP by July 16th, 2004

Cut here and return with money to:

IBEW Local 21, 1307 Butterfield Rd., Suite 422, Attn. Rita Peterson, Downers Grove, IL.
60515-5606

Foursome Golf Club of Illinois Outing **RSVP by July 16th, 2004**

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Cut here and return

Dinner Only \$22.00 per person

Please fill out the form below and return it to: IBEW Local 21, 1307 Butterfield Rd., Suite 422, Attn. Rita Petersen, Downers Grove, IL. 60515-5606 Dinner will be served approximately at 6:30pm.

I _____ will be attending the Dinner only and will need _____ meals. I've included \$ _____

Hope to see you there!!!!!!!!!!!!

CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

DECEMBER 2003

Mike Janeczko
Francine Allen
John Hibbs
Curt Fennema
Garrylee Curls
Les Bales
Bob Curtis
Mike Dolan
Alfred Lowry
Tom Herod
Sue Dubinski
Bonnie Schaefer
Marilyn Ward
Maureen Geho
Chris Pagan
Paul Chehak

JANUARY 2004

Joyce Peterson
Raymond Herigodt
Marvin Brunoehler

FEBRUARY 2004

Kathy Howard
Roger Kennedy
Angelo Williams

MARCH 2004

Mary Alexander
Michael Kathrein
Robert Ragain
Shirley Skinner
Michael Shapkauski

APRIL 2004

Larry Kelly
Virginia Sue Backstein
Gray Lantis
Margret Griffin
Carmen Thompson

Information Alert Local 21 members, who retire are eligible to receive a gift certificate. Providing the retiring member is in good standing and a Local 21 Representative requests the retirement certificate. Stewards, Area Stewards, Chief Stewards, and Business Reps can request applications by calling Nancy Kopydlowski on ext. 234 at the Local 21 office

IBEW Local 21 Retiree's Club Update

There has been a great show of interest in the development of the IBEW Local 21 Retirees Club. Over the last three months we have held informational meetings prior to the Unit meetings throughout the State. It was a pleasure to see all the retired members and talk about current issues and reminisce about the past. Through your suggestions President Kastner, and the committee have come up with two ideas that we think will help the retired members stay informed on issues within the Local. First, we will add any retiree interested in receiving the Local's bi-monthly *Frontline* to our mailing list. Second, any retiree wanting to attend the Unit meeting in your area is invited to attend.

We need your help to better serve all your requests and develop such a large number of Charters in a timely manner. We are looking for people to assist with each of the Charters in creating that group. Please locate a Charter near you and contact the person now in charge of establishing that club. We will be having elections of each Charter's Board of Directors after we have attempted to contact as many retirees as possible.

The number of Charters is unlimited. If you would like to join one of the Charters being established, or if you and a few of

your friends would like to create your own Charter in your community, please notify the appropriate contact for your area.

These are meant to be your clubs that deal with **your issues and interests**. We have set up a tentative list of Charters throughout the state. The list of these Charters, along with a contact for each Charter is attached.

We have also had a hard time contacting all of our retirees. If you know of anyone who is not receiving our mailings, please have them contact the Union Office at 630-960-4466 or 877-584-2121. Ask the office to update your information and add you to our mailing list.

Thank you,
IBEW Local 21 Retiree Club Committee
Jim McLauchlan
Cheryl Crooks
Michael Roach

Charter #1
HILLSIDE, IL.
Contact: Cheryl Crooks
630-960-4466 Ext. 332
cherylrn2@yahoo.com

Charter #2
CHICAGO, IL
Contact: Cheryl Crooks
630-960-4466 Ext. 332
cherylrn2@yahoo.com

Charter #3
MERRILLVILLE, IN
Contact: Cheryl Crooks
630-960-4466 Ext. 332
cherylrn2@yahoo.com

Charter #4
LANSING, IL.
Contact: Cheryl Crooks
630-960-4466 Ext. 332
cherylrn2@yahoo.com

Charter #5
GURNEE, IL.
Contact: Sue Davern
847-731-1212
Davern@ameritech.net

Charter #6
ELGIN, IL.
Contact: Jim McLauchlan
630-960-4466 Ext. 354

Charter #7
JOLIET, IL.
Contact: Jim McLauchlan
630-960-4466 Ext. 354

Charter #8
MOLINE IL.
Contact: Jim McLauchlan
630-960-4466 Ext. 354
mac21@ibew21.org

Charter #9
LEMONT, IL
Contact: Jim McLauchlan
630-960-4466 Ext. 354
mac21@ibew21.org

Charter#10
DANVILLE, IL.
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #11
URBANA, IL
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #12
SPRINGFIELD, IL.
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #13
COLLINSVILLE, IL.
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #14
ALTON, IL.
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #15
OAK FOREST, IL
Contact: Cheryl Crooks
630-960-4466 Ext. 332
cherylrn2@yahoo.com

Charter #16
ROCKFORD, IL.
Contact: Jim McLauchlan
630-960-4466 Ext. 354
mac21@ibew21.org

Charter #17
BARTONVILLE, IL
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #18
MT. VERNON, IL
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

Charter #19
QUINCY, IL
Contact: Mike Roach
217-433-0070 or 877-584-2121 Ext. 348
mproachibew21@ameritech.net

2004 UNIT MEETINGS

May

Unit 1

Thursday, May 13, 7 PM
Holiday Inn Hillside
4400 Frontage Rd
Hillside IL
708 544-9300

Unit 2

Tuesday, May 11, 7 PM
Slovak Club
6920 Broadway
Merrillville IN
219 756-5101

Unit 3

Thursday, May 20, 7 PM
Gurnee American Legion
749 Milwaukee Ave
Gurnee IL
847 695-5000

Unit 4

Wednesday, May 12, 7 PM
American Legion Harwood Post #5
705 S. Larkin
Joliet IL
815 725-4333

Unit 5

Wednesday, May 19, 7 PM
Danville Inn
388 Eastgate Dr.
Danville IL
217 446-2400

Unit 6

Tuesday, May 18, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, May 17, 7 PM
IBEW Local # 309
2000A Mall St (Rte 157)
Collinsville IL
618 345-5112

June

Unit 1

Thursday, June 10, 7 PM
Habetler Bowl
5250 N. Northwest Highway
Chicago IL
773 774-0500

Unit 2

Tuesday June 8, 7 PM
Lansing American Legion
18255 Grant St
Lansing IL
708 474-5906

Unit 3

Thursday, June 17, 7 PM
Best Western Elgin Plaza
345 West River Rd
Elgin IL
847 695-5000

Unit 4

Wednesday, June 9, 7 PM
Lemont VFW
15780 New Ave.
Lemont IL
630 257-9859

Unit 5

Wednesday, June 16, 7 PM
VFW Post #630
1303 E. Main St.
Ubana IL
217 367-4197

Unit 6

Tuesday, June 15, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, June 21, 7 PM
Alton Sports Tap
3812 College Ave
Alton IL
618 465-2539

IBEW LOCAL 21

1307 W. Butterfield Rd.
Suite 422
Downers Grove, IL 60515-5601

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Members marched in
South Side St. Pat's
parade

