

FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21



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Labor Day Is Our Day



PHOTO: DAVE WEBSTER

IBEW Local 21 is one of the sponsors of the Samuel Gompers statue.

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It's About Respect

By Ronald Kastner



On August 7th over 100 Local 21 members and their families attended the **Presidential Forum at Soldier Field in Chicago.**

This event featured all of the Democratic presidential hopefuls. Total Union members in attendance was estimated at 17,500 and based on crowd reaction, it appeared that most will remember this evening for a long time. Although, in my opinion, no one

won the debate, I think most everyone felt one of these seven people will be our next President. This forum was planned around the AFL/CIO's executive committee meeting that was held the next day in Chicago. A vote was taken at that meeting to determine which candidate would be endorsed by that group. However, no one received the endorsement. It takes a 66 2/3 majority of all International Unions to obtain the AFL/CIO endorsement, and all candidates fell short. At this time the IBEW has not endorsed a candidate.

I attended the **IBEW's Political Conference in August** along with Rosetta Shinn, Executive Director of Local 21's Legislative Department and newly appointed Director of Legislative affairs, Dennis McCafferty. The conference focused on some very bad news. The percentage of American employees represented by organized Labor in this country has dropped below 8 % to 7.5% in the private sector. This low number adversely affects our voice on many different issues. As I have said before, at this pace very few political leaders respect what we think, and fewer yet regard our opinions. All Locals were urged to focus even more on organizing so that organized labor does not lose any more respect and remains an integral part of the decision making process. Union density is the controlling factor on how effective Unions are, not only in bargaining contracts, but also in the everyday policing of our contracts. Corporations too often make business decisions as if we don't even have a contract. We all need to push harder to continue to be heard.

Our Legislative Department continues to work diligently to enlist support of all of the Chicago Aldermen in our **Comcast battle.**

The union-busting attitude at Comcast's bargaining table forced us to create even more methods to assure a victory in this struggle. Most recently, we exposed that Comcast has violated the Franchise Agreement in the City of Chicago and have successfully petitioned the Cable Commission to hold a hearing on our behalf. Primarily, we focused on their discrimination of Union workers' wages compared to non-union workers' wages as well as their violation of anti-discrimination policies. In a recent

meeting with Mayor Daley, Business Representative Jerry Rankins and I were very optimistic with the mayor's commitment to our struggle. Although elected officials don't generally get involved with labor disputes, Mayor Daley did seem concerned over the policing of the Franchise agreement. We also talked about how the city would benefit with AT&T's ability to compete in video. He agreed that a large center in the city would be welcomed. We can only hope it will happen somewhere in our jurisdiction.

The Communications department is planning to feature a different employer every issue. In this issue we thought it appropriate to feature **JULIE Corporation.** These members primarily take locate calls from customers and contractors. Since their contract expires November 15th we felt it appropriate to draw attention to them. Please take the time to read about JULIE, and remember to show your support during their negotiations. We hope to feature our members at the City of Chicago Office of Emergency Management in the next issue.

At the time of this article, the **battle over mandatory overtime** at AT&T has finally dissipated. During the volatile negotiations that accompanied this battle, Local 21 repeatedly stressed a more appropriate and affable method of **asking members to work** rather than forcing overtime on them. As always, the company disagreed. My feelings strongly remain that if you ask a member, and he or she can accommodate that request, that member will work longer hours and do a better job of servicing the customer simply because of a lack of hostility over an extended work week. This crisis has ended, but the difference in philosophy will probably continue for quite some time. I will even predict that this philosophical difference will remain until the time comes when the company realizes that a significant number of our members do in fact listen to their Union. Only then will we be given **the respect we deserve.**

If there is any good to come from this disaster I hope the company realizes that a lot of the service trouble resulted from the total absence of maintenance to the existing outside plant and the not doing the job right the first time. The company has always been quick to accuse you, the rank and files members, and me, the President of the Union, and all levels in between, of not caring about the customer. The fact is we can only do so much, and our ability to do more is constantly impaired by the management team and some of the rules put in the game by them.

In closing, please do not ever underestimate the need to service our customer because losing them means losing them to an anti-union cable companies in most cases. Even though the company throws many roadblocks in your way, make the customer number one as always. **Remember this: Safety First, Quality Second, and Quantity when they start listening to you.**





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

IBEW Local 21

1307 W. Butterfield Road
Suite 422
Downers Grove,
Illinois 60515-5606
Phone 630 960-4466
Fax 630 960-9607

Website

www.ibew21.org

Newsire hotlines

630 415-2711
866 423-9582

OFFICERS

Ronald E. Kastner,
President-Business Manager
/ Financial Secretary

Kevin Curran,
Vice-President
/ Assistant Business Manager Marketing

Jacque Fields,
Treasurer

Linda Cox,
Recording Secretary

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Bill Lawrence	Alison Watson
Jim Sheehan	Rosetta Shinn
Jim Noble	Erik Grigg
Larry Schuler	

MANAGING EDITOR

Tom Hopper email:
thopper@ibew21.org
Phone 630 960-4466 X223
Fax 630 960-9607

EDITORS

Nancy North email:
nancy.north@comcast.net
Bob Przybylinski email:
bobp-ibew21@sbcglobal.net

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

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

“Victory is always possible for those who refuse to stop fighting” - Napoleon Hill

By Kevin Curran, Vice President/Assistant Business Manager Marketing



Our rank and file members in Consumer understand they must fight for justice. They took a stand with the Local 21 against injustice and helped us

win an important court victory. On July 2, 2007, the United States Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals issued its ruling on the lawsuit we filed against AT&T regarding the Consumer Performance Management Plan (a.k.a. “PAR”). We won...and won big!

The lawsuit was filed because of AT&T’s refusal to arbitrate the grievance the Union filed on PAR. The U.S. Court of Appeals ruling rejected AT&T’s attempt to sidestep its requirement under the Collective Bargaining Agreement to arbitrate this grievance. This victory means the case will now proceed to arbitration.

This precedent-setting decision is one of the most significant court decisions in the country on arbitrability in the last 20 years. It will likely be relied upon by many other labor unions for years to come.

I would like to personally thank all members who supported this effort through various means such as the providing of affidavits and other evidence Local 21 utilized in achieving this victory. In its ruling, the Court specifically addressed the affidavits we submitted from rank and file members as persuasive evidence regarding the impact of this unjust system. By getting involved with your Union, you were part of a significant court ruling that benefits all union workers.

Global Markets Arbitration Update-

After 7 days of hearings, dozens of witnesses, and hundreds of pages of documentation, all evidence has been presented in the Global arbitration. It concerns the illegal movement of work out of our jurisdiction and the subsequent layoff/surplus of 137 Local 21 members. The case is in the hands of the Arbitrator. The Union anticipates his decision on the case to come sometime this fall.

Consumer Winback Work- Local 21 recently reached an agreement on a trial which will bring new work into our jurisdiction. Under the trial, Winback work will be assigned to 16 Service Reps in the Rock Island Customer Care Center.

PAR Arbitration Case- The sixth and hopefully final day of hearing for one of the first discharges for PAR was on August 27th. The Arbitrator in the case is being asked specifically to rule if PAR is a legitimate disciplinary system.

Customer Consultant Payout

Projections- As part of the Customer Consultant agreement, the Union reviews the projected payouts Customer Consultants would receive under the compensation plan we negotiated. If the payouts don’t hit certain benchmarks we sit down with the company to resolve the issue. For example, a minimum of 70% of the Consultants must receive the payout. Because of the built-in protections, we were confident the compensation plan would be lucrative. The first month’s payout projections were provided to us, it turns out we were wrong. The payouts weren’t lucrative, they were incredibly lucrative. Here are some statistics on the payouts:

Payout Statistics

- ➡ 97% of all Consultants received a payout
- ➡ 93% received a payout of over \$1,000
- ➡ 65% received a payout of over \$2,000
- ➡ 75% of Consultants total compensation (base pay plus incentive) are making more than a regular Service Rep
- ➡ Top Consultants received total monthly compensation of \$8,432, which projects to over \$101,000 annually
- ➡ Average Consultants total monthly compensation of \$5,540, which projects to over \$66,000 annually

Benefit Report

It's That Time of Year Again

By Linda Cox, Business Representative & Recording Secretary



The 2008 AT&T **Annual Open Enrollment** will be from October 8 through October 19 for active employees. For those who

retired after April 4, 2004, it will be from November 5 through November 16. For retirees who have flexible enrollment and who have changes to their current enrollment, it will be from November 19 through December 31.

The CarePlus premium will not be waived for 2008. The cost will be \$1.00 per month for single coverage and \$2.00 for family coverage. The current HMO's will still be available next year; however the monthly costs have increased for the most part. **Please watch for the home delivery enrollment information and look over the information carefully.**

At his point we have not seen what the **co-pay amounts** will be for the HMO's. Blue Cross PPO and United Healthcare Network have no change in co-pays for office visits/urgent care, but will increase the \$50 co-pay to \$75 for hospital emergency room visits. Prescription costs at retail will increase \$1.00 for each category of generic, brand and non-formulary and mail order will increase \$2.00 for each category. These rates apply to active employees and retiree's who retired after April 4, 2004.

Hospital admission costs for **retirees** who left before April 4, 2004 will increase from \$100 to \$200. Office visits, urgent care and hospital emergency room visits have no change in co-pays. Prescription co-pays for both retail and mail order have maximum increases from \$1 to \$8. These are subject to change as the actual co-pays

will be the lesser of the 2005 co-pays trended by actual plan experience or the maximum listed above.

As reported in *Frontline United Health Care* instigated a new policy called Radiology Review Process. This required medical providers to obtain pre-certification before ordering MRI's, CT's, PET scans, nuclear medicine studies, etc. We put AT&T on notice that this was diminishing the benefits we bargained. The company agreed to stop this policy and will review their files for any tests not authorized.

A change occurred with the posting of your AT&T Savings and Security contributions and loan repayments. Rather than posting the Friday following payday, they will now be posted to your accounts by the Wednesday after your payday. This change occurred in mid-June.

There were some errors with the **AT&T Savings and Security Plan** that affected approximately 1,000 company-wide participants over a year ago. The contribution amount shown on Fidelity's system and the amount shown on E-link's (payroll) system were not in sync. Participants received letters in late December or early January asking which amount was correct. Based on the response, the corrections were made. Due to the diligence of our Union, Fidelity has been working to reconcile the accounts. They've placed the missed company match into the accounts but as of yet, the final remediation has not occurred. Each account has to be looked at separately.

The process includes counting the number of pay periods affected, the date the missed contribution would have posted to the participant's account, totaling the amounts missed. Then they determine the company match paid and the amount of missed earnings and the applicable personal rate of return.

The **IRS corrective action** calls for the company to pay your account 50% of any

pre-tax contributions missed, 40% for any after-tax contribution, 100% company match of the missed contribution plus applicable gains or losses via the applicable personal rate of return. If someone had requested a decrease in their contributions, the same method will be used to determine the amount they are not entitled to and will be deducted from the account.

The estimated date for the IRS corrective action was mid-August, but it's the third date promised for corrections. We have asked for a complete breakdown once this is completed and will share the totals once known.

A second **AT&T Savings & Security Plan** error is pending correction. Some participants chose to either increase or decrease their contributions around June 2006 but the change didn't actually take place until October which leaves July, August and September for corrective action. The IRS method described above will be used. The company can not give us a corrective date but must complete the corrections by the end of the year. The participants have not yet been identified.

Despite these errors, I encourage everyone to participate in the Savings Plan. Where else can you get a company dollar match of 80%? For more information or to enroll or increase your current contribution, call the Savings Plan Service Center at 800-416-2363.

Before retiring you can request the AT&T Retirement Checklist through the AT&T Health Benefits Enrollment Center by calling 877-722-0020 or going online to the benefits web site under Your Finances- Leaving the Company. It's a step by step guide on who to contact for your pension payment, Savings and Security, continuation of health and dental benefits, life insurance, flexible spending accounts, long term care and pay for any unused vacation time.

A Labor Day to Remember

This Labor Day will be one that is remembered forever. In these times of Labor strife almost equaling that in the day of Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor, a Statue was unveiled and dedicated to the Labor leaders life long efforts towards improving working conditions that we still enjoy today. He is best known for the following quote that still holds true today, over 200 years later.

We want more school houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures, to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful and childhood more happy and bright. These in brief are the primary demands made by the Trade Unions in the name of labor. These are the demands made by labor upon modern society and in their consideration is involved the fate of civilization.

Labor Day Point To Ponder...

“The superior person understands rightness; the inferior person understands profit”
– Confucius

Mandatory Overtime

By Jerry Gast, Assistant Business Manager Network



Now that the cable franchise bill has passed and was signed by the Governor, some managers at AT&T have forgotten that if it wasn't for the Union, the

bill would not have passed the legislature. There is **lack of co-operation** on construction details, performance management, off-hours shifts in DAVAR, and contractors getting our equipment delivered to their yards.

The Business Representatives and I met with Labor Relations and the GM to try and open up communications in an attempt to resolve our concerns. The meeting went well and a **Union committee was established** consisting of two Business Reps and two Chief Stewards. They will be meeting with Labor and Construction to address the issues. We will be waiting to see if things get resolved.

In I&R the company came to us and **asked our help** in getting more Chicago techs to work overtime on the weekends because of the trouble load due to the recent storms. We responded and the amount of volunteers doubled.

I received a phone call from the GM in the Northern Suburbs asking for help for the same problems they were facing in the City because of the heavy storms. The Business Reps and Chief Stewards were in

the process of calling our members when about 3:30 pm of the next day I was informed the company was going to **force mandatory overtime** in several garages. President Ron Kastner was able to resolve this issue after several phone calls to Labor Relations. However, the following week the company implemented **mandatory 10-hour shifts to all of I&R**. This issue continued from August 22nd until the Union and the company were able to reach consensus, ending mandatory OT on August 31st. The question is, "Where is the communication with the Union that existed when AT&T needed the bill passed in Springfield?"

The Union and the company are in meetings to try to find a way to help our members who are on **long-term details**; so they can get some relief to spend time home with their families. We have more meetings scheduled.

It's that time of the year, the kids have gone back to school. With the problems we face in society today, some school districts are demanding all vendors to perform **background checks** on their employees before allowing them on school property. We are in discussions with the company to work out a volunteer program to protect the kids.

The good news is the Union and the company are moving forward on the **arbitration back-log**. Several cases have been scheduled and some cases have been resolved. The Union has put all 2nd and 3rd step grievances on the Local 21 website by grievance number so our members can track the step of their grievance.

During the recent "Crisis", a Chicago 2nd level manager went out to "badger" his steward on the Mandatory Overtime Saturday. The tech was seated in his truck, after he completed his job.

The manager asked him, "Where are your cones?"

The steward answered, "I picked them up already, because I'm in the truck."

The manager countered, "They should be out if your truck is parked."

The steward explained that this doesn't make sense when he's in the vehicle and in fact, makes it more likely he'll forget the cones when he drives away, since he's already inside the truck.

The manager reacted to that by asking where the tech's next job was.

The steward told the foreman where his next job was and indicated he would be on that job when he finished his break.

When the area manager returned to his vehicle, the steward elected to depart, with the manager racing to follow him in full "gotcha mode."

The tech had to stop at the end of the block to tell the manager, "Hey, you forgot your cones!" And watched as the manager, whose reason for the job visit was for safety, back up the street in his coup to retrieve *his* cones from *his* parking space.

Meet the Office Staff

By Jacquie Fields, Treasurer



The friendly voice you hear when you call the union office belongs to Nancy Kopydlowski. She is the second person in the series on the office staff

who are represented by Local 881, United Food and Commercial Workers International (UFCW). Nancy is Local 21's receptionist and she's responsible for greeting all who come to the union office. She directs calls to the appropriate staff, handles member address changes, sorts and distributes the mail.

She makes sure the retirement packages are sent out, as well as the monthly stewards' mailings. Staying on top of the mail is not an easy task, especially once a year when Nancy, with the rest of the office staff, sends out the almost 11,000 union cards and the pocket calendars to every member. She takes care of the copy and postage machines, calls for their repair, replaces ink and cartridges etc. Nancy is the person the staff will go to when documents need to be copied or faxed, new member packets need to be assembled, and phone lists need updating. Weekly, she makes sure that any correspondence that the staff has not received is mailed to their homes. These are but a few of the many responsibilities that Nancy handles.

She joined our staff in April 2001, after living in Milwaukee for many years. She moved to Darien for family reasons. Nancy worked for temporary agencies to make ends meet. She now has a union job which provides a great salary, benefits, and security— something we share, but many in this country don't. Nancy and her husband Ron are the proud parents of three sons. They have seven grandchildren, with another one on the way in April 2008.



Nancy Kopydlowski



Illinois Legislature Sets Record!

By Rosetta Shinn & Dennis McCaffery, Committee on Political Education



Another record for Illinois Legislature, this is the longest overtime session since the state adopted a new constitution in 1970. This was not a record we should be proud of. Lawmakers set the previous record for overtime futility in 2004 when they didn't approve a budget until July 24, 2004.

Local 21 was proudly represented at several major events during this past summer. First on the list is attending the IBEW Legislative

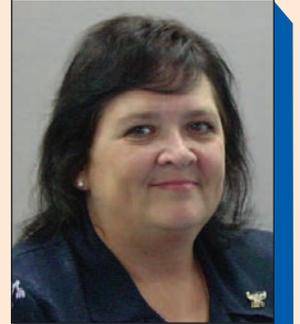
Conference in Washington D.C. at the end of July. Under the leadership of President Ron Kastner, our Local has gained a place of prominence in our International, and it comes as no surprise. A lot of people are talking about our legislative success in Springfield and our aggressive efforts toward achieving worker justice at Comcast. Much was learned and shared at the conference. On the Convention's "Lobby Day" we met with Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Congressman Pete Visclosky (D-IN) to express our views on pending worker legislation and also to lend them a hand back home on their local legislative concerns

A delegation of representatives from Illinois IBEW Locals, including our COPE department, met with Senator Durbin in his office. He asked the IBEW to help by calling our Illinois government officials back home to help get federal money allocated to Illinois. Senator Durbin was able to secure federal money that would put people to work on the locks and dams around the state, but he needed a bill in Illinois to put it into place.

After calling the leaders the first time he wasn't able to get the job done. Senator Durbin asked the IBEW to help make those calls. We did our part. On August 1, SB 766 was passed; it brings federal funds to get those projects started.

Our next event was a lot closer to home. Over 100 **Local 21** members were among the 17,500 UNION members who attended the AFL-CIO Presidential Forum at Soldier Field on August 7th. We would like to thank all the Officers, Staff, Stewards and Members for their hard work in making this a special night for the Local. It could not have been done without you! The sweltering heat may have dampened our shirts but it didn't dampen our spirits as real working people asked the presidential hopefuls tough questions. Leave it to a retired steelworker from Indiana to bring the crowd to its feet by asking, **"How did things get this way in America and what are you going to do to change it?"** That pretty much summed up the whole evening.

The change will come in the next election. We need to reward our friends and punish our enemies. It doesn't matter if a candidate is Republican or Democrat; we need to put people in office who will vote the right way on issues that affect working men and women. This Local supports any candidate who puts working families first. The issues are the Employee Free Choice Act, good union paying jobs, health care costs, and disappearing employer-provided pensions. We need to stop this attack on the American worker.



Labor Day: How it Came About; What it Means

More than 100 years after the first Labor Day observance, there's still some doubt who first proposed the holiday for workers. Recent research indicates that Matthew Maguire, proposed the holiday in 1882 while serving as secretary of the Central Labor Union in New York. It is clear that the Central Labor Union adopted a Labor Day proposal and appointed a committee to plan a demonstration and picnic.

The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City. They held their second Labor Day holiday on September 5, 1883. In 1884 the Central Labor Union selected the first Monday in September as the holiday, and they urged similar organizations in other cities to celebrate a "workingmen's holiday" on that date. The idea spread with the growth of labor organizations, and in 1885 Labor Day was celebrated in many industrial centers of the

country.

Through the years the nation gave increasing emphasis to Labor Day. The first governmental recognition came through municipal ordinances passed during 1885 and 1886. The first state bill to become law was passed by Oregon on February 21, 1887. During the year Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York passed legislation. By 1894, 27 other states had adopted the holiday in honor of workers, and on June 28 of that year, Congress passed an act making it a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories.

The outline for the observance and celebration of Labor Day in the first proposal included a street parade to exhibit to the public "the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations" of the community, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families. This became the

pattern for the celebrations of Labor Day. Speeches by prominent men and women were introduced later, as more emphasis was placed upon the economic and civic significance of the holiday. .

It is appropriate that the nation pay tribute on Labor Day to the creator of so much of the nation's strength, freedom, and leadership - the American worker.

Labor Day Point To Ponder...

"If the workers are organized, all they have to do is to put their hands in their pockets and they have got the capitalist class whipped."

– "Big Bill" Haywood

Democratic Presidential Forum



You Can't Beat Fun At the Old Ball Game Local 21 Solidarity Nights



Peoria Chiefs



**Kane County
Cougars**



Gary Railcats



**Joliet
Jackhammers**



Government Puts Comcast on the Spot

By Jerry Rankins, Business Representative



On July 19, 2007 Chicago 6th Ward Alderman Freddranna Lyle, along with four co-sponsors: Aldermen Leslie Hairston of the 5th, Toni Preckwinkle 9th,

Ray Suarez 31st, and Joseph Moore 49th introduced a resolution that passed in the Chicago city council regarding Comcast.

Local 21 is charging Comcast with workplace discrimination at the Cortland facility in Chicago. The resolution calls for a hearing to take place. Comcast must appear before the appropriate committee and respond to allegations of an inequitable compensation system, violations of the Chicago cable franchise agreement, the 2002 Cable Franchise Resolution, and the EEO/AA plan filed by Comcast on February 17, 2007 with the Chicago Cable Commission. Comcast must present documents and other records showing the job classifications with ranges of pay for all employees at each of its Chicago facilities. Comcast must explain to the City what course of action it shall pursue to correct its unfair pay system.

The Aldermen are not happy! Many appear to be stunned that Comcast has managed to fly under the radar by paying wages that force many of its workers with families to apply for state assistance. The bargaining unit has 106 workers, but over 60% of them make less than \$11 an hour.

Since the expiration of the contract on May 31st Comcast continues to bargain in bad-faith. Comcast is attempting to starve out their workers and their families by only offering a 1-year agreement with 2.25% increase while profits continue to soar!

In an attempt to bust the Union and prevent organizing, Comcast is willing to pay the non-union workers a little more at the price of having **no rights!** Our brothers and sisters and Local 21 have refused to accept anything less than what is being paid to the non-union workers

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a Complaint against Comcast for bad-faith bargaining. Local 21 filed unfair labor board charges against Comcast for its refusal to provide relevant information pertaining to bargaining,

specifically the Comm-tech Program. Unrepresented employees operate under the Comm-tech program. The Union proposed to accept the Comm-tech program under the same terms and conditions as the non-represented. The Union demanded all aspects of the Comm-tech program, including wages. Comcast not only reject the Union's proposal to place the Cortland workers under the Comm-tech program, but also has refused to provide the request for information. The NLRB disagreed with Comcast and ordered management to provide the information. The low-road predatory employer has ignored the Federal Government's demand. Comcast must now go before the NLRB in a hearing scheduled for October 1, 2007.

The Chicago city council is demanding to see the same information. Comcast is no longer going unnoticed in the community. Comcast treats its workers badly and the consumers are sick and tired of Comcast pimping their pockets!

In the **Comcast West Area:** The Union won the Vacation/sick time arbitration award. Comcast has to pay out over \$16,000 to nine workers

In **Merrillville:** The Union received the arbitrator's decision regarding the vacation accrual transition arbitration. The Union won big, very big! Comcast tried to renege on the vacation transition agreement shortly after signing the current contract. The arbitrator saw through their lies and awarded Local 21 everything they wanted. Yes \$60,000 to be paid to our affected members in the

Merrillville bargaining unit.
Justice shall prevail at Comcast!

The City of Chicago Appears to be Ready to Bargain

The City of Chicago reached tentative agreements for a ten-year contract with all of their building-trades unions. They reached agreement less than two months after the contracts expired, marking an historic moment in labor relations. Prior to these tentative agreements, the earliest any unit reached agreement was 16 months.

It took Local 21 over 22 months to negotiate the last contract for our members at the OEMC which includes workers at the Chicago 911 Center and the Department of Aviation. I'm wondering what this is all about. It could be about the possible events surrounding 2016 that prompted the City to reach a 10-year agreement with the trades. Regardless of the reason, Local 21 expects that our members will also get a fair contract.

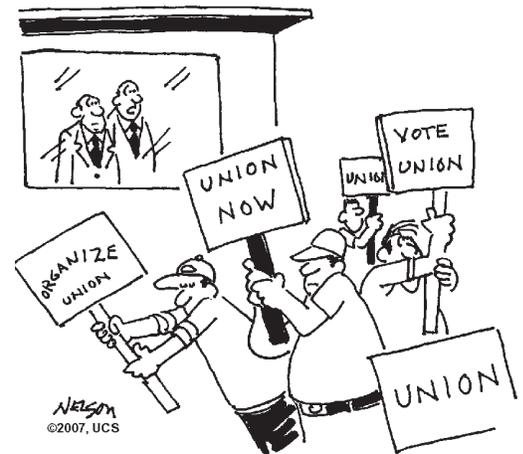
In City of Chicago Grievances: The backlog grievances have been discussed at the 3rd step. The Union has advanced several grievances to binding arbitration. The lack of staffing at all three locations still presents itself as a major cause of problems affecting the OEMC at the expense of the membership. This issue alone presents itself as a major issue in contract negotiations.

Solidarity!

Labor Day Point To Ponder...

"Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."

— Abraham Lincoln



'I offered to make them all VP's if they didn't organize but they didn't take the bait.'

Retire With Caution

By Denis A. Cardone, President of Scarborough Alliance Corporation

Throughout the country, especially at utility companies, many in the workforce are reaching retirement age. It is no different with members of Local 21. Some of you are considering retirement in the near future. Much has been written and advertised from financial firms that promote "Give us your money and we will take care of you and your retirement. Trust us."

Be careful. Nationally, we see a wave of brokers and advisors that are trying to take advantage of the aging workforce. We continually see products being sold that pay the highest commissions to the broker rather than having the members invest in funds that have the best performance and lowest expenses for the member.

We see almost no disclosure about expenses. For example, when we ask at a workshop, "What are your expenses?" Those with a broker reply, "\$35 a year", which is the annual administrative fee or the broker has told them, "You don't have to pay me anything, the mutual fund pays me."

The truth is most broker-sold IRA's have annual expenses of 2% to 3% a year, with insurance company variable annuities being the most expensive. Also, surrender or withdrawal charges sometimes start at 7% declining through 7 years. So, if you are not pleased with the plan's performance, or service, you can't move your money without an expensive penalty.

We believe in complete transparency. We disclose all of our expenses including our fees

as we feel our clients/participants should know them. If you have an account with a broker or you are considering one, you should feel free to ask him/her for a full disclosure of expenses. This would include the annual expenses of the funds they are recommending, any upfront or deferred sales charges, the amount of commissions payable to their firm and to the broker. You are entitled to this information.

However, the question missing in many cases is the most fundamental one – **Have you thought out your retirement plan?**

- Do you know how much money you will need each year in retirement?
 - Do you know what income your current assets will generate?
 - Do you know the impact of inflation on your retirement assets?
 - Do you know what to do with your company 401k plan?
- And many other questions...

We believe very strongly that members should be educated first and be made aware of all of the issues that will impact their retirement.

In some cases, after we help a member do all of the calculations, we tell them – and they see for themselves – that they can't afford to retire right now, or if they do, they will have to get a part time job. We don't like to deliver this news but it is better than the alternative of waking up one day and realizing you retired too early.

Get a realistic picture before you pull the

trigger on retirement. Find somebody you can trust to help you with a retirement plan and don't pay unnecessary expenses or sales charges!

Denis A. Cardone is President of Scarborough Alliance Corporation which he founded in 1970. Scarborough has been working with IBEW locals around the country since 1975 and with Local 21 and its predecessor locals since 1977. Scarborough provides retirement planning assistance to members through workshops and follow-up individual meetings with members.

Scarborough Alliance Corporation is pleased to introduce John Laughlin, their new regional manager for the Midwest. John is based in Chicago and has been helping Local 21 members over the last year.

John has been working in the investment services industry for over 15 years. During that time he's met with hundreds of clients and helped them with a vast array of financial situations including: investment and retirement planning, estate planning, college funding, insurance needs analysis and others.

You may want to attend one of the workshops that John has been conducting throughout Illinois and Indiana. He will also be available for one-on-one counseling sessions for those who attend the workshops to follow up on individual needs. If you are interested, please contact your chief steward and ask them where a workshop may be scheduled.



"That concludes my prepared remarks. I will now answer questions on everything except my salary and perks."

Union Sportsmen's Alliance Launched

A collaboration between the AFL-CIO and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) is providing a club for union members who love to hunt and fish, and helping preserve quality places for the pursuit of those activities.

The Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) formally opened its doors to members in early July. Bolstered by an interactive website, the club offers a place for members to share photos and stories, plan trips and save money through discounts on hunting and fishing gear.

The annual membership fee of \$25, or a charter membership of \$40, also supports the TRCP's efforts to protect and maintain access to quality places to hunt and fish in the U.S.

"Millions of union members love to hunt and fish, and they are some of the most active conservationists found anywhere in the country,"



said TRCP President and CEO George Cooper. "But most of them are not affiliated with hunting, fishing or conservation organizations. USA gives them a unique affiliation opportunity and will bring them into our fight to insure policymakers are better addressing the priorities of our nation's sportsmen-conservationists." Visit www.UnionSportsmen.org for more.

Funny How Things Change With Different Management in Place

By Mike McCormick, Business Representative

Remember when you were hired by this company and you were sent to training classes, then you were teamed up with a journeyman technician to perfect your new trade? Your first line manager also taught you to do the job right the first time. If the job didn't meet their approval you had to redo it. We all went through this trial period and learned from our mistakes. We all were better off for those experiences.

Well I'm here to tell you when different management is put into place funny things happen. **Forget doing the job right the first time. The time has come--what once was right is now wrong and what was once wrong is now right.**

You're probably asking yourself, "What could he possibly be talking about?"

Well here it goes. Disgruntled construction technicians, from many garage locations, talked to me about the FTTN project and the inability to fix bad plant, the lack of time given to job steps, the lack of job steps on their prints, and the problem with C codes versus M codes. The techs were also wondering about **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT and the discipline invoked.**

I decided to get the answers to these concerns and this is what I found out. Current management figures when video is offered to our customers

only 35% of them will buy it. So why should AT&T spend so much money to fix the existing plant? All management wants you to do is make sure that bonds and grounds are on the cables, the terminal strip in place, only splice the pairs that are assigned, and make sure that the **RED** caps are in place. The contracted-out safety inspectors are hired to check only what is listed above, nothing else.

When questioned about splices that look like a rat's nest (spaghetti) and what should be done? They answer, "You just work on your pairs."

When questioned about splices that have black plastic wrapped around them because the splice was so deteriorated that the ends of the cables had to be opened to get to good wire? "Just work on the pairs that you need and advise your boss to check if the I&R department will give the OK to cross-charge the time." Of course, this won't be done while the construction tech is working at that location because that is also a budgetary issue.

When questioned about lines that are working on split pairs? The answer was, "Cut the line in the same way (split)."

First and second level management is aware of these issues but are directed from above that

this is the process. Upper management has informed the Union that in the other states that are in the process of "the build", costs run approximately \$240 per line; our costs run about \$67 per line.

The process calls for the DAVAR crews to go out and test the X-box. They download the defective pairs and have a record of them. The splicers then go out and perform their work as explained above. After that the copper pro testing takes place. This three-step process determines if the pairs will allow video to pass. If not, techs will see if removing the drop clears the trouble.

My question is "If the pair still fails, are the technicians able to still shoot the trouble or is this why it only costs only \$67 per line?"

I now understand why construction technicians are so frustrated. I know that the training once supplied to them now means nothing. Forget about doing the job right the first time.

To all the I&R technicians out there, do you remember when you dealt with the issue of double dispatches and that was the worst thing that could happen? I'm curious who was in charge of I&R then? In fact, I wonder "Who is in charge of the construction department now?"

FUNNY HOW THINGS CHANGE WITH DIFFERENT MANAGEMENT IN CONTROL.

Pride vs. Production

By Bob Przybylinski, Area Steward



It's a numbers game at every employer. Do we complete the highest quality job we can or do we swallow our pride, and cut corners so we can make our number and our bosses can make their numbers?

Foremen have often said, "Just get it working," or "Do only what's on the print; we need the production"; instead of fixing all the problems we see. I'll be the first to admit I've done it at times and was wrong for doing it.

We face it everyday—do more or else. When we achieve the new "good jobs in eight" quota; it's do more again and the cycle continues. When does it stop?

It needs to stop now. We need to show our union pride. Union members have a reputation of doing it better. Statistics prove union workers are more productive and produce higher quality products. Why would we let our bosses ruin our reputation?

For those brothers and sisters in the communication industry there is fierce competition. As AT&T, Verizon, Citizens Utility, Century Telephone, and Comcast compete against each other we all face pressure to keep the customer. How many customers will stay when quality is sacrificed?

Our integrity is on the line. We need to fight back. Management is forcing higher productivity over quality. Proper quality standards are more important than an arbitrary production quota.

If you have a problem on a job where you can't do it the right way and your boss won't give you the time to get it done properly,

document everything on your work orders. Write down all the facts, problems, road blocks, and what your bosses told you not to do. Just because management doesn't take pride in what they do, doesn't mean you shouldn't. They're puppets for the company; you're proud advocates for the customers.

Some members may argue that there is job security if someone else has to come back and fix it. But poor quality will lead to lost customers and lost customers lead to lower profits which will lead to lost jobs. If we do it by the book there will be more work and more jobs for everyone.

Let's be true to the union tradition of quality craftsmanship. Safety is number one. However, quality is job one. Be proud to be union and take pride in the work you do.

This is how I feel. What's your take on it?

Chicago South Comcast Workers Are Back in the Fight

By Dave Webster, Business Representative



In June of 2000, Local 21 organized three "Cable TV" units at AT&T Broadband using the Neutrality Consent Election language found in the national

agreement with AT&T. Since that time Comcast bought most of its competitors including AT&T Broadband-the cable division that AT&T spun off in 1999.

Comcast, upon its entry to the Chicago Market, agreed to honor all labor agreements and to bring to conclusion all outstanding contracts in a fast, fair and equitable manner. I know you may find this hard to believe, but **THEY LIED!** Instead they brought in union busters to bargain contracts that divided union from non-union workers, leaving union workers with the short end of the stick so Comcast could tell the unorganized workers that they would be paid less if they joined Local 21.

Of course all of us who have enjoyed the benefits of a union contract like; a pension and a 401K savings plan, grievance procedure, and health care paid by the company to mention a few, cannot be fooled by such a tactic. However, non-

union workers who have never enjoyed the benefits offered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) can easily fall into the union buster's trap. Comcast not only lied to our leadership; they lied to their employees and to our Local 21 members.

Instead of quickly negotiating fair and equitable contracts Comcast hired union-busting attorneys to surface bargain with no intention of reaching a fair agreement. A fair agreement would have interrupted their plans to keep the union out and to try and remove union representation where workers are represented by Local 21.

In 2003 the Chicago South group fell victim to the company's lies about how much better life would be if the union was decertified. Since that time we have been in constant contact with those workers and continued to educate them about union-busters and the truth about why workers form and join unions.

Recently, the Chicago South workers asked us to represent them again and began signing authorization cards, the first step towards an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Statistics prove that workers who have been through an organizing drive before are more likely to follow through and organize because they have witnessed the lies and deception that corporations deliver to combat the workers having a voice in the workplace.

We can claim progress in protecting the industry standard because Comcast has

bribed its non-union workforce by throwing money at them every time they realized workers were talking to Local 21 organizers. The fact remains that these workers still have no real voice at work without a union contract.

So, from an organizer's point of view, the job is not complete until the workers win an election and Local 21 has bargained a first contract not only for these workers but for all Comcast workers in Chicagoland.

The card signing at Chicago South shows real progress. Management's actions have demonstrated that we are making progress. Comcast has already violated the National Labor Relations Act numerous times. I'm sure they will continue until forced to stop when we file charges against them with the NLRB.

Brothers and Sisters, Comcast must be stopped from bribing and scaring these workers.

We are on the right path and will continue as long as workers stand together to fight for what is rightfully theirs--the legal right to join our Union without interference from Comcast.

At Chicago South our organizers are confident that the workers will once again have union representation. Local 21 will get them a first contract by using Community Allies, Labor Allies, Labor Law, and Elected Officials to pressure the company as discussed in Brother Rankins' article.



"There's no reason... it's company policy."

Congratulations go to our winners of the last **Something New Something Old Photo Contest**. We had two winners Debra Benefield, an MA working in Hoffman Estates and Johnny Cash, an I&R tech out of Franklin Park. The photo was a picture of the Cicero central office before they added the third floor.

Are We doing Well?

By Nancy North, Area Steward



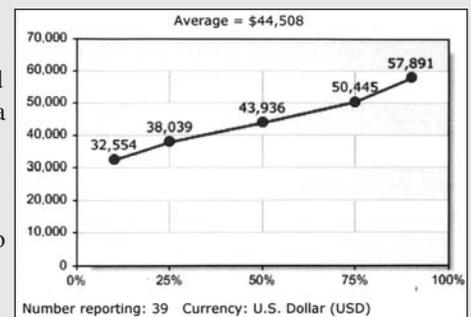
It always seemed there would be a great deal of work researching where our wages ranked in relation to service reps or technicians in the wider economy.

I was tempted by the snapshot offered by www.payscale.com. It's all voluntary, so it's less thorough than the Department of Labor, but it only took a few minutes to answer the survey

questions. Only 39 respondents admitted to be a customer service representative, even among large corporations.

The lowest salary of \$32,554 is only \$15 an hour. My job title of customer advocate earns \$56,368, and a consumer service rep earns \$54,496. Both are well above the average of \$44,508, or \$856 a week. The formula includes overtime if you add it in, so a little overtime puts Local 21 members at the very top of the range.

It's good to take a look at the bigger picture and discover we have very good wages indeed thanks to our union-bargained contract.



Labor Day – No Thanks – I’ll Remember in May

By Tom Hopper, Business Representative

Since the late 1800’s, the first Monday of every September has been the observed National Holiday recognizing the working men and women of organized labor. According to the United States Department of Labor, “Labor day... is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.” Don’t buy it!

Most workers don’t know that only the United States and Canada celebrate Labor Day in September. Throughout the rest of the world, over sixty nations honor workers on May 1st each year, on May Day—otherwise known as International Workers’ Day. That historical fluke has not at all been by accident.

With its roots born right here in our own jurisdiction, in Chicago, May Day grew out of the great struggle and sacrifice of life that resulted from the general strike of 1886 along with the historic worker movement for the eight-hour work day. The working class, fed up with terrible working conditions and ten to sixteen hour workdays, organized and mobilized, gearing up for the first national action calling for an eight-hour work day. They joined together, talking about how an eight-hour day would leave working people more time for their families, for bettering themselves, and for taking an active part in their communities and the politics of the country.

The 1886 strike had international significance. The entire world was watching on May 1st, when the walkout brought much of the nation’s work to a halt. It watched as police, acting for and paid by the employers—killed strikers on May 3 and again during events on May 4. Then the police rounded up a number of the city’s leftist labor leaders and put them on trial, executing four. (A fifth killed himself before execution.) These actions were part of what are known as the Haymarket events. At the request of the American Federation of Labor, in 1889, the world labor movement adopted May Day as its international holiday.

Globally, on May 1st of each year, workers in massive celebrations all around



PHOTO: CONNIE HIGGINS

IBEW Local 21 members march in the Peoria Labor Day Parade.

the world pay tribute to their labors and honor the struggle for better conditions. All that has been written out of most American history books. But we are denied an important part of our heritage by not celebrating May Day. We can be grateful that another generation of immigrant workers, demanding their rights, should have reminded us of that fact. Now we can all move to reclaim what is collectively ours.

It’s also a time to reflect on the sacrifices of those U.S. workers who came before us, especially those who lost their lives in the fight for justice at the workplace.

The symbolism of May Day—working people challenging corporate power—still causes fear among employers and our government. Well over one hundred years have passed since that first May Day. Many parallels can be drawn between the events of 1886 and today. We continue to fight over an eight-hour workday. Workers continue to fight in America for the freedom to associate and the freedom to speak freely, without fear, threats, firings, and harassment. Employers freely wage war on employees who attempt to form or join a union today – this is written as a legal right in our own country’s laws. Around the globe, at least 100 trade unionists are killed every year for trying to promote better pay and working conditions for workers.

Beyond a doubt, history has a lot to

teach us about the roots of our revolutionary beginnings. We must remember people were shot so we could have the 8-hour workday. We must remember that homes with families in them were burned to the ground so we could have Saturday as part of the weekend. We must remember the 8-year old victims of industrial accidents who marched in the streets protesting working conditions and child labor— only to be beat down by the police and paid company thugs. **We must understand that our current conditions cannot be taken for granted. People fought for the rights and dignities we enjoy today, and there is still a lot more to fight for.** The sacrifices of so many people can not be forgotten or we’ll end up fighting for all of those same gains all over again. This is why they want us to forget, by celebrating workers in September. I say with an attitude, “No Thanks, I will celebrate mine in May.” Please, tell your children.

Labor Day Point To Ponder...

“Only a fool would try to deprive working men and working women of their right to join the union of their choice.”

– Dwight D. Eisenhower

● ● ● Last year the **Peoria Credit & Collections Center** for business customers had an incentive plan based on achieving an hourly goal. This year the company implemented an unrealistic monthly achievement. There are no exclusions for vacation days or special projects. We objected to this unfair incentive plan and the company moved forward and decided to implement it over our objections.

...In **Rock Island Consumer** we are seeing members disciplined for PAR who were not previously disciplined and this is due the company's increased focus on "going beyond the call" GBTC objectives in relationship to their sales quotas. Please remember to follow GBTC and ROI (resolve the need, offer, and integrity) criteria on every call instead of putting all of your emphases on PAR.

...Effective September 9th, the **Springfield PLR (Plant Location Records) Group** PLR no longer has a second shift.

...In **AFRC** the AOTL arbitration concerning technology change was lost. The arbitrator ruled that the company had the right to do what they did.

...The **Springfield ASC (Access Service Center)** is getting new billing work with no addition to head count and training has begun.

...We continue to butt heads with management at **Century Telephone**, who bought Gallatin River. They constantly interpret the contract the way they want, without going back to the bargaining history to find the original intent. Members have filed more grievances in 2007 than the last two years combined.

...At the **Bel-Wood Nursing Home, Peoria County** we finally appear to be at the point where we are able to talk things through and resolve issues instead of being in a constant state of confrontation between our members and the management staff.



By Vickie Burroughs, Business Representative

● ● ● In the **Construction Department**, members on details have been driving past each other. The Union pointed this out to the company. We'll be meeting with AT&T to resolve this and other issues that have come up.

...The **Apprentice Committee** met and all areas are within ratio. We are still discovering some people who were missed. If you feel you are one of them, please contact your Chief Steward.

...The Union is concerned that in the **Transportation Department**, the company is trying to contract out some of the work with VRADS, terminals, and crossboxes.



...We met with the company on weekend scheduling. We are getting closer on integrating the **scheduling** of DSL techs with regular repair.

By Steve Unterfranz, Business Representative

● ● ● **Chicago North** management duties have changed at Total Grace Consumer. Brian Klamer is handling the escalations team and Arlene Johnson now covers Chicago North and Bilingual.

...In Network five **Datacomm** techs have reported to the Lightspeed Validation Testing Group (LVT). Ric Calderon is their manager. The other Datacomm Techs went to the Buffalo Grove garage on September 4, 2007.

...In the next few months I will be very busy working on arbitration cases. I had three arbitrations scheduled in September, two cases are from Chicago North and the other involves a C.O tech. I also have two cases scheduled for October and one in November.



...I'm on the **Apprentice Committee**. We met in July and there was no change in the ratio of apprentices to journeymen in any of the exhibits.

Michael Cohns, Business Representative

● ● ● We received a disappointing decision on the **AOTL arbitration**. It dealt with technological change and work in the engineering offices. The Union is weighing its options on arbitrating another grievance that is different but related to the original case.

...**Datacomm** work is picking up. Our members were laid off last year and now the company is shorthanded! To alleviate the shortfall we reached an agreement to allow Local 134 members to work in our jurisdiction on straight time. The alternative would have been to use sub-contractors.

...The preference to **Central Offices** from some downtown Chicago test centers is complete. AT&T is over head-count in the centers. With any luck our members will have a smooth transition into their new positions.

...There have been suspensions for violations of the **Six Lifesaving Behaviors**. This is ridiculous! We get paid to follow all procedures. We are giving the company the right to discipline us because we aren't wearing our seatbelts, hardhats, or using our ladder mates. We need to work safely and follow the Lifesaving Behaviors all the time. **No job is so important that it cannot be done safely.**



...Many new members have been hired into construction positions. I hope our experienced Brothers and Sisters will teach these new members the value of a union contract. **Solidarity!**

By Michael Sacco, Business Representative

● ● ● AT&T has launched a new computer system in Illinois called RUBY. It's being utilized in the Lucent center at 311 W. Washington. RUBY can close maintenance tickets, a task which was done by Telecommunication Specialists. In the June-July timeframe RUBY closed out over 6,000 maintenance tickets which were normally done manually by a T.S. in that center.

...The Union and the company are in disagreement about some of the Project Coordinator responsibilities. It appears that once we became AT&T, whenever a Project Coordinator leaves, the company hires a Project Manager or a CSM, both management titles. There is a big gap between the roles of these titles. The company is assigning more and more of the Project Coordinator work to managers.



By Liz Hodges, Business Representative

● ● ● In **Chicago**, the Director of I&R wants a midnight to 8am shift city-wide to do cable work in two-man teams. Discussions have just begun.

...Stewards have been trained on the new off-hours scheduling procedure for the **DOG Group**. So far there have only been a couple of issues, and all have been resolved.

...Always do your job; do the best you can. Be where you are supposed to be. Take the time to call the Illinois Secretary of State at 217 768-2720 and verify the status of your **driver's license**.



By CJ-Cleveland Johnson, Business Representative

● ● ● Detailing is a huge issue **Downstate**. Techs are passing each other on the highway. The Union is meeting with the company on a regular basis to come up with a plan to reduce the pain of long-term details.

...Area Steward Doris Halls' husband Fred passed on August 10th after a long battle with cancer. We extend our condolences.

... Justin Owen Penrod son-in-law of IBEW Local 21 member Rick Whittington of the Champaign C.O. lost his life on August 11, 2007. He was serving his second tour in Iraq in the U.S. Army. He leaves behind an eight month-old son Colin Penrod. Friends and family have established the Colin Penrod Fund. The contact person is Amy Kasper, the Senior Customer Service Rep at 1st Bank in Rantoul. Her number is (217) 893-8100.



By Michael Roach, Business Representative

● ● ● **Lakewood NCSC (Repair)** - On August 20th the department rolled out a new management tool **Management Systems and Operating Controls** "MSOC". Cutting to the chase this new system is supposed to teach 1st & 2nd level managers to be more consistent in regards to performance, quality, service, and process effectiveness. It brings back the old "team concept." Expect to have a lot more one-on-one contact with your 1st level managers. The new system also calls for daily posting of team and individual results. The Union is currently arguing about these postings with the company and we will keep you advised.

...On July 30th **Customer Rules** was rolled out. This program is a feedback tool that uses voice response technology to contact customers to rate the service they received. There will be 8-10 surveys per employee per month. AT&T advised us that these results will not trigger discipline except in cases of Code of Conduct violations. Yeah Right!

...**Lakewood NDC (Dispatch)** - Light duty techs were given a "Post Call Job Aid/Quality Form" to use as a check list when calling customers after a technician visit. Unfortunately the check list asked questions directly regarding the tech on the visit instead of asking about the service they currently have or ordered. The Union was successful in having the process pulled. Our light duty techs are now back doing pre-calls.

FYI-some items on the check list....Did the tech pre-call? Was the tech pleasant and courteous? Was the customer advised of the NID location? Did the tech wear boot covers? Was the case closed with contact person and with a shake a hand...etc?

...**Chicago Heights Credit & Collection** - Members are running out of FMLA time, then management is disciplining them for taking time off sick. For those members on progressive discipline the penalties are becoming severe. Make sure your time is covered and CYA.

...**Outstate and Night Reporting Center** - MA's are currently training for a trial to dispatch for HICAP. In Illinois, the trial will cover the Rockford I&R territory. Hopefully if all goes well, we will be seeing this additional work permanently stay in Hoffman.

...**JULIE** - Bargaining is fast approaching. The first bargaining date will be 10-2-07. We held a membership meeting to review the bargaining surveys and collected any additional info. If you are interested in being on the bargaining team, please call me at 630-960-4466 ext. 444.

...**SAFETY** - AT&T was put on notice to send out a statewide safety bulletin advising tech's to beware before entering any CEV. We were advised by a member from the DARRT crew that the re-certification testing of CEV alarms has been delayed because DARRT techs are being loaned to I&R. **Remember to test and treat all CEV's as a manhole!**



By Melanie Probst, Business Representative

• • • At **AT&T I&R** side, the FTTN work goes on. In areas where bad plant exists, more techs are being scheduled on the weekends. First, please be sure to close out using the proper trouble location. Second, stewards check to see if cable cases are being used on the dispatches. Finally, check to see if the area has enough trouble reports to push for a rehab job to be requested.

...Cabinets and other items are being delivered to contractors and they deliver the equipment to garages. This is work that belongs to our Transportation Department. Also, we are involved with the delivering and placing of cables on routine work.

...Several contracting-out cases in Morris and Montgomery that were scheduled for arbitration have been settled.

... The Union is involved in the work moved into the Central Offices that was previously done by the FWG technicians. The two concerns are: can technicians follow their work and also the testing that is being performed by the U-Verse center.

...We are also involved with the TS's on the Special Service side of the business. One issue involves the ordering of tools. Another concern is a trial with Special Service and the I&R department in Rock Island / Moline. At this time, the Labor Relations department has stopped the trial because of dispatching issues.

...At **ALTURA**, we have been dealing with some ongoing grievances, in California. Several have been settled and we are close to resolves on the others.

...At **Century Telephone**, we have the issue of work groups going on. Bill Henne and I have been dealing with the company's HR director. President Ron Kastner is in the process of setting up a meeting with the company. We dealt with the clothing issue, and you should have seen the response from the company.

...At **Citizen's/Frontier**, we have the same issue of work groups going on. Unfortunately, we are not optimistic because this company is digging in. Local 21 has one of our law firms involved with this. The Union withdrew the Labor Board charge due to some unforeseen issues.

...At **Verizon**, we are dealing with the mandatory overtime issue and the issue of contracting-out bargained-for work. The loss of lines and the retirement of technicians, without rehiring more technicians, has driven us to this point. We are awaiting word from the Department of Labor with regards to the Northern Illinois University issue.

...On a personal note, Carla Tomter, is not doing well. After being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001 she was terminated in January of 2005. She is in a fight for her life. I recently visited Carla. Because of the termination she lost her benefits, losing the treatment drugs that were prescribed to fight the cancer. **May we, as union members, keep Carla in our thoughts and prayers because as far as I know, we still have a heart.**



By Mike McCormick, Business Representative

• • • **Central Office preferencing** is complete. Over 100 members moved—it was a big success. As of September 10th, a majority reported to their new locations. TS's from downtown moved into North Suburban, South Suburban and Chicago Central Offices. Our goal was to get as many members as we could closer to home.

...In **I&R** things were going smoothly until the storms hit and the company enforced mandatory overtime. We have already fielded numerous grievances per Article 18 of our contract.

...In **new member orientation** I am VERY impressed with our new brothers and sisters and their excitement on joining Local 21. The orientations are a huge success and I'd like to once again welcome them to our family.



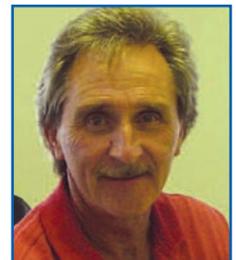
By Mike Kunas, Business Representative

• • • The Rockford area trial to bring back the DOG techs to I&R expired on August 1st and has been put on hold.

...Local 21 and **AT&T** continue to meet on the Central Office scheduling issues. The last meeting was August 31st. Although we have been meeting over the last two months, there has been little progress; there is a sense the company is moving backwards.

...Mandatory overtime issues in the Gurnee, Lake Villa, McHenry and Rockford garages started in August. I was notified at 4:30 pm and by 5pm of the same day President Kastner was able to resolve the issue. A few days later on August 21st the company announced mandatory overtime for all of I&R.

...We extend our condolences to Joris Harrison, an I&R technician in the McHenry garage, on passing of his wife Lynn.



By Dan Gruenich, Business Representative

• • • The **Customer Consultant** agreement is the right thing for the future of our Union. Since being in place, hundreds of new members have joined the Local 21 ranks. They sell the products made possible by Project Lightspeed. Their first incentive payout has shown the \$100,000 top-end of income is both attainable and realistic.

...Again a **safety reminder** to join product recall alerts on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website. For anyone who has children and buys toys, the recent China toy meltdown makes it imperative to sign up for alerts. Go to <http://cpsc.gov>.

... In **JOBS** members need to review the desired skills of the job requisition. Then update their skills and qualifications prior to job nomination to gain the additional points. Please refer to Frontline April 2007 pages 12 & 13. View it online by visiting www.ibew21.org.



By Kurt Schmidt, Business Representative

All In The Family... Did you call JULIE?

When asked that question most respond, "Who's Julie?" JULIE is not one person but all of our IBEW Local 21 members who work for JULIE Inc. the Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators. Currently we have 86 members working for the non-profit corporation mostly in the positions of call center operators, data personnel and office support staff. Our members take over 1.2 million calls annually.

JULIE Inc. was founded in 1974 by the owners and operators of underground facilities in Illinois, mainly utilities, as a means of preventing injuries and reducing damage. Before anyone puts a shovel in the ground JULIE should be called. Earlier this year the national 811 "Call Before You Dig" number was launched as mandated by the FCC. The public can now call either 811 or 800-892-0123 to reach our members.

Calls come in from contractors, excavators, even homeowners placing a fence or mailbox, planting a tree or a bush. When the caller keys in numbers on their phone, a ticket is created on the call center operator's computer screen. Then our member fills in the information where they are digging. The operators have a new task. From the address, they "map out" the excavation area in the NEWTIN system within a maximum of two minutes. When it's completed, the ticket is sent electronically to the affected member utilities, so they can schedule a locator to mark the lines and prevent accidental disruption.

Then another call pops into the operator's headset. Despite the rapid pace, about 180 calls on the busier days, there is a strong sense of family. JULIE operates 24/7 so there are several shifts. About 21 operators work from home. Seven or eight people work part-time by choice. Since the busy season is April to October JULIE hires "peak" workers for the summer,

usually college students. Every year there is a voluntary lay-off from December to March.

Exciting changes at JULIE will affect our members. The good news is business is booming, necessitating the expansion of their call center in Joliet. Work started in April on a 3,000 square-foot addition for a new training center, more office space for data personnel as well as the remodeling of the call center. Our members were asked for input on how their new work stations



should be designed. The most interesting part of the project is the new "safe room" for emergencies, built much like a bank vault with steel supported concrete walls and doors. It's the brainchild of Mark Frost, JULIE's executive director, so our members have a safe haven in case of a natural disaster or intruder. Mark said, "The company has redundant systems to reduce the possibility of a system failure; but there is no backup if an employee is harmed."

The JULIE contract expires on November 15th. Our members are preparing for negotiations. They have already completed bargaining surveys and attended a solidarity bargaining meeting on September 18th. Their concerns are affordable health care, job security, and increased wages. They would also like to be compensated for the new mapping work they are performing.

In the past there was some acrimony

between labor and management, but the union-company relationship has improved through the years. The current contract that expires in November was signed on time with decent wage increases. Mark Frost credits JULIE's success, "On our members' commitment to the non-profit mission. They understand that the fruits of their labor are the unseen things. When things are done right something doesn't happen, there are fewer hits and on-the-job injuries affecting our utility company members working in the field."

Fara Lynn Bingham was a Customer Advocate in AT&T Global Markets before she was surplus, then hired by JULIE. "There is a lot less stress here than at AT&T, but it would be nice to make more money." She started at \$13.06; max pay is \$15.32. Fara Lynn was surprised when she found out she would be paying a monthly premium for her health insurance. There is a 401K plan, but no pension. In addition to vacation, everyone gets 80 hours of PTO, paid time off, per year. PTO time

can be used to manage tardies, or a home emergency.

Although discipline plans exist, the focus during the monthly reviews is positive. All calls are recorded, and management listens to several calls each month. Fara Lynn explained the big difference, "I'm not used to the attitude that management wants you to succeed, and is not watching over you, waiting for you to mess up and put you on a step."

We wish our members well in bargaining and hope the strong union relationship continues. They can rest assured that they have the solidarity of the entire Local backing them. Let's all remember to call JULIE at 800-892-0123 if we are doing any digging work around the house or on the job. Our JULIE members take the calls; the locates are then dispatched to utility company members. **It's a free service that keeps all of our members working.**

CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

March 2007

Everett Korn

April 2007

Robert J. Shanley

Rich Butkus

May 2007

Donald Black
Lawrence A. Folladori
Philip Krueger
Richard Dianovsky
Kathleen Koval
Cynthia Troy-Pilch

June 2007

Jeanne Cramsey
Douglas Shuster
Albert Tarenski
Joseph Polcyn
David C. Moore
Pam Kemp
Ken Meyer
Terry Boyd
Gary Broy
Shirley Bradley
Robert P. Grimm Sr.
Patrick J. Lynch
Dennis Schwichow
Craig Sumeracki
Gary Ostrander
Doug Lahrop

July 2007

Narithier Gearlds
Joanne Rotherham
Ronald Pecka
Linda Kriesel
Donald Kriesel
Mike Renda
Richard A. Eisenhut
Elizabeth A. Barreto
Andrea Williams- Pickett
Lawrence W. Kincanon
Gary Greene

August 2007

Edward Nieves
Mary Troesch
Rebecca L. Gonzales
Cathy Ritacco
Francis S. Dawson

Information Alert

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

Did You Know?

The screenshot shows the IBEW Local 21 website with a navigation bar (Home, Union News, Organizing, Political/Legislative, Resources) and several news sections:

- SIGN UP TO RECEIVE IBEW LOCAL 21 NEWS AND ACTION ALERTS**: Includes a "Tell-A-Friend" link and a note to let friends know to sign up too.
- CHECK RECENT NEWS MESSAGES FROM IBEW LOCAL UNION 21**: Lists current news for all Local 21 members, available via the IBEW Local 21 Newsline (630-415-2713 or from certain area codes, at 866-429-9382).
- LabourStart**: A logo for LabourStart.
- afficioNOW**: A logo for afficioNOW.
- NEW! AT&T Grievance Log Status Page!**: A new page for members employed at AT&T to check the status of any outstanding AT&T grievance.
- September Unit Meetings**: A reminder to attend unit meetings and bring co-workers.
- Watch this Story Closely**: A story about FairPoint, a small highly leveraged acquisition firm.
- Related Item - Vermont IBEW Radio Spot**: A 60-second radio spot currently running in Vermont.
- Current News and Bargaining Updates**: A link to the August 10, 2007 update.
- FRONTLINE**: A link to view the July 2007 newsletter.
- Scarborough Alliance Corporation**: A link for more information.

IBEW Local 21 has its own website www.ibew21.org. Members can view recent news, print grievance forms and check the status of grievances, view officer and field staff telephone numbers, history, photos, information about legal rights, and much more.

Don't Forget...

Members can SIGN UP to automatically receive **IBEW Local 21 News and Action Updates**. Simply provide your name and personal e-mail address (not employer provided) and local union news will be sent to your e-mail inbox.

SIGN UP today at www.ibew21.org

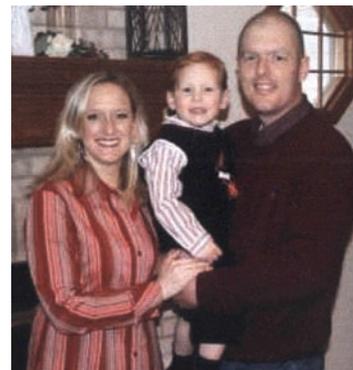
In Memoriam

Thomas Peloquin

4/22/73 – 7/27/07

Our Brother T.J. Peloquin worked in the Romeoville I&R garage. T.J. was a very likeable person. If you needed help, he was there for you. He had a strong personality and fought for what he believed. He tried to see the best in everyone. TJ was diagnosed with a rare children's cancer called Ewing's Sarcoma.

He is survived by his wife Jen, and their four year old son Brant who loved and supported TJ. If you were to read the updates on their website, you would have been as proud as I was to see the four year battle that they raged against this aggressive cancer. TJ once told me, he didn't know if he could beat this cancer but he was going to fight as long as possible. He wanted to spend more time with his wife, and to have as much time as he could with his son Brant. TJ loved his family VERY much.



Please keep Jen and Brant in your thoughts and prayers.

Submitted by Karry Eggert- Steward Romeoville I&R

Mark Smolen

1963-2007

Former Steward Mark Smolen of the Schaumberg garage passed away. He was only forty-four years old. A blood clot traveled from his leg to his heart, so his death was unexpected. We extend our condolences.

Black-Robed Corporatists

By Jim Hightower

Do you feel as sorry for corporate executives as I do?

These poor babies feel put upon by their own shareholders, customers and workers who have sued them to stop their fraud, monopoly pricing, discrimination, and other illegal acts. The corporate royalty is mightily offended that such commoners have been allowed to interfere in their brutish pursuit of riches, and the royalists have been crying louder than Paris Hilton about the unfairness of having to answer to the law.

Luckily for them, they have friends in high places who feel their pain and can dry their tears with government actions to stop dastardly citizens from bothering them with lawsuits. The corporate wrongdoers have long had the Bushites on their side, and many congress critters of both parties have also been there for them, offering comforting legislative hugs. Now, however, the best friend of the corporate elite is in the third branch of government: The Supreme Court.

With Chief Justice John Roberts at the helm, the nation's highest court is stacked with judges whose legal careers have been dedicated to corporate service, and this bias has turned the court into a safe play zone for corporate ruffians. This year, the Supremes have revealed their corporate coziness by taking a greater number of business cases and stretching the law, precedent, common sense, and their own credibility to enhance corporate power.

In 13 business rulings this year, the corporate majority has favored tobacco companies, automakers, insurance giants, and others over the people harmed. Even more important than each individual case, the court's decisions are making it much harder for those who are injured or defrauded to go to court. In effect, they are building new legal walls for corporate wrongdoers to hide behind, shutting out ordinary people who try to get justice from the system.

These black-robed corporatists are out of control. The court should be working for justice, not for corporations.

*Be Involved!
Attend a Unit
Meeting in 2007*

UNIT MEETINGS 2007

OCTOBER

Unit 1

Thursday, October 11, 7 PM
IBEW Local #134
600 W. Washington
Chicago IL
312 474-4186

Unit 2

Tuesday, October 9, 7 PM
Lansing American Legion Post #697
18255 Grant St.
Lansing IL
708 474-5906

Unit 3

Thursday, October 18, 7 PM
IBEW Local #364
6820 Mill Rd.
Rockford IL
815 398-6282

Unit 4

Wednesday, October 10, 7 PM
Lemont VFW
15780 New Ave.
Lemont IL
630 257-9859

Unit 5

Wednesday, October 17, 7 PM
IBEW Local #146
3390 N. Woodford St.
Decatur IL
217 877-4604

Unit 6

Tuesday, October 16, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr.
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, October 15, 7 PM
Alton Sports Tap
3812 College Ave.
Alton IL
618 465-2539

NOVEMBER

Unit 1

Thursday, November 8, 7 PM
IBEW Local #21 Conference Center
1307 W. Butterfield Rd. Suite 424
Downers Grove IL
630 960-4466

Unit 2

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

Unit 3

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

Unit 4

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

Unit 5

Wednesday, November 21, 7 PM
VFW Post #630
1303 E. Main St.
Urbana IL
217 367-4197

Unit 6

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

Unit 7

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

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

IBEW LOCAL 21
1307 W. Butterfield Rd.
Suite 422
Downers Grove, IL 60515-5601

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Welcome New Members

