



IBEW LOCAL UNION 21

# FRONTLINE

Vol. 21 No. 2  
October 2016



# UNITY

## *In this issue:*

|                     |   |                   |    |
|---------------------|---|-------------------|----|
| Paul's Report       | 2 | Across the Local  | 8  |
| Sisterhood          | 3 | Anonymous Reply   | 9  |
| It's Time to End It | 4 | I'll Be Fine      | 10 |
| Your Moment         | 5 | Age of Compliance | 14 |
| Endorsements        | 6 | Union Meetings    | 15 |

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Paul Wright - President - Business Manager



## It's Your Call

The election is a few short days away. I think we'll all be happy when the oddest election cycle any of us can think of comes to an end. While I voted for her in the Primary, and she does come from my hometown, I can

honestly say I'm not totally enamored by her. She does have her faults but Hillary Clinton is the only candidate running for President who can help working families and members of the IBEW. The other candidate running for President has stated that he'd support the right wing agenda and push Right to Work Legislation that would kill the union movement. I won't comment on his other faults. As your President/Business Manager part of my responsibility is to support candidates running for political office who will have your economic interests in mind.

You may have other personal reasons for supporting candidates, however I need to look out for the pocket book issues that could affect you and your family. If you don't have a good paying job with benefits your family will suffer. What we gain in our contracts can be taken away by politicians who only care about their corporate donors.

Union members across Indiana have been suffering because of the decisions voters in their state made in previous elections. In Illinois because union voters didn't show up and others failed to vote for labor endorsed candidates, a governor was elected who is screwing everyone. You can choose to believe the rhetoric he

is throwing out there but the problems in his turnaround disaster began back in the days of Jim Edgar. As governor, Edgar approved budgets that didn't properly fund the pensions many union members rely on in their retirement. Both sides have their faults but as your union leader I'm the person charged with deciding who will do the most to look out for you.

If you don't vote for the Illinois candidates we support, your decision will affect the Illinois Telecommunication Act that is up for renewal next year, as we go into bargaining with AT&T. The Telecom Act affects the majority of our members who work in telecommunications. If you're a government worker or work for an employer who relies on state funding you've already seen the effects of poor choices made in the last election.

In September, your other elected delegates and I attended the 39th IBEW Convention in St. Louis. It was a great experience. This was my third convention and I think you elected the best group of delegates, they represented our Local well. They voted on changes to our Constitution and learned about problems other IBEW members are facing. Our BA members' per capita tax which goes directly to our International will increase by two \$1 increments over the next five years; our A members will also see additional increases. You may not realize that \$18 of your current monthly dues goes to our International. That amount allows our International to operate as well as to fend off the attacks all IBEW members face for the poor decisions made at the ballot boxes. (continued on next page)



IBEW 21 delegates along with I.O. President Lonnie Stephenson and 6th District VP David Ruhmkorff at the IBEW Convention.

## Sisterhood

IBEW – International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the name of our international union makes one think it’s a men’s only organization, doesn’t it? Well it’s not, there is a sisterhood within the brotherhood. There are female electricians, journeymen, manufacturing employees, tree trimmers, broadcast workers, 911 dispatchers, as well as female telecommunication workers.

In the IBEW 6th District, which includes the members from Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota, women are acknowledged annually during the Progress Meeting in September. This doesn’t happen in all eleven districts of the IBEW, but for more than thirty years the 6th District has held a Women’s Conference. There are workshops and speakers who encourage our sisters to become more involved in the IBEW. Before becoming our new International President, Lonnie Stephenson was the 6th District’s Vice President. One of his first acts after taking office was to appoint a woman from each district of the IBEW to a newly formed Woman’s Committee.

I’m honored to announce I was chosen to represent the 6th District. Since my appointment, I’ve spoken with women from many 6th District locals and heard interesting ideas on how women can become more connected and

be a part of the IBEW in more ways than just as a member. I encourage you to contact me with your ideas. I will take them back to the IBEW Woman’s Committee meeting. We, as women, need to make sure our voices are heard. I am so thankful our IBEW President has made it clear that there is more to the IBEW than just “brotherhood.”



### Congratulations!

I want to congratulate our 2016 IBEW Scholarship winners! This year we tried something new and in addition to an essay, applicants could express their thoughts through artwork, or a video, etc. This year we asked for, “An interpretation of the role union members play as a positive force in the community.” Applicants responded with creativity, submitting essays, artwork, and videos. Eight students were chosen to receive our \$1,000 scholarship award. The recipients this year were Jacob Bergman, Sarah Colberg, Natalie Cutrano, Katrina Kerr, Melissa Marcus, Samantha Reattoir, Amanda Rodriguez, and Thomas Stancato.

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## It’s Your Call (continued from page 2)

As many of you have heard by now the IBEW SCT-3 Council reached historic agreements for AT&T- DirecTV employees. These agreements have no direct impact on Local 21 members. The IBEW members covered by the new contracts do not work in Local 21’s jurisdiction in Illinois or Northwest Indiana. Kevin Curran from the International and I, along with the new locals in the SCT-3 Council, their members and Local 21 staff assisted in the negotiations. As the SCT-3 Chairman I included Local 21 staff because of their experience in dealing with AT&T and their working knowledge of our contracts. The agreements overwhelmingly ratified on 8/15/16. I’m happy to report that we continue to welcome new members into the IBEW and the SCT-3 Council.

In closing, I’m not telling you who to vote for, but in this issue of *Frontline* there is a list of candidates from both sides of

the aisle whom we support because they believe in a strong middle-class and they previously voted to help you with issues that affect you at work and as union members.



Local 21 Officers, E-Board Members, Heather Brown and Mike Sacco attend the dedication of the Henry Miller Museum in St. Louis.



## It's Time to End It

Having just returned from the 39th IBEW International Convention in St. Louis I'm proud to say our Union is in good hands. We elected one of our own Lonnie Stephenson, who hails from Rock Island as

our International President. Delegates also voted on many resolutions and changes to our Constitution. While in St. Louis, I was also able to attend the Women's Conference and the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC). They were insightful because I learned about the advancements and the struggles that members of both groups still face.

It's 2016 and you wouldn't think discrimination could still exist on our country considering all of the laws and regulations put into place. Unfortunately it does and there are some members who can't move past it. Recently I received an email sent into [ibew21.org](http://ibew21.org) and it was absolutely disgusting. I keep saying "It's 2016, how can this still be happening?"

Today's political environment isn't helping. Almost eight years ago with the election of Barack Obama

I thought the walls of discrimination would tumble down. In some ways I think things may have gotten worse. It seems as if more racists have come out of the closet. With the election around the corner I can definitely say there is something wrong with the Republican candidate. The man can't stop calling out people because of the religion they practice, where they come from, their physical appearance, their disability, or their gender. It's 2016 and time we look past physical traits; they don't matter it is the soul of the person that counts.

Coming out of our Convention we are determined to make our Union even stronger. The IBEW stands against harassment. We stand against discrimination in every form, it doesn't matter what the color of your skin is, your religion, sexual orientation or identity. We all must be treated with equality and respect based on the person we are. We are an all-inclusive organization; it will take all of us to reach our goals to improve the lives of all working people.

How can we demand respect from our employers when we can't respect one another? We are all Sisters and Brothers; it's time we all start acting like it. Let's begin by ending all forms of discrimination and harassment. Those who aren't mature enough will be left by the wayside. I'm committed, are you?

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By Dave Webster, Organizing Business Representative



## Is Everyone Ready?

This year at union meetings I've spent time talking about getting ready for 2017 AT&T bargaining. The contract expires on June 24th and we should all be prepared to support our Union bargaining team well

before that date. We've highlighted the fact that the key to solidarity, therefore a fair contract, is communication.

In order for us to communicate effectively we need to make sure we have all of our members current contact information so we can send email and text messages ensuring everyone is educated and informed on what's happening.

Your Stewards have already gone through the process of updating their personal email and cell phone numbers with their Chief Stewards and Business Representatives. Be prepared for your Stewards to continue the process by asking you to provide your contact information. In fact, you don't have to wait, you can provide the needed information by visiting [ibew21.org](http://ibew21.org) and clicking on the Contact Information - Volunteer - Change of Address Form.

Remember, union membership is NOT a spectator sport, engaged and educated members bring in good contracts. Even experienced negotiators can't bring home a contract that works for us all without everyone's involvement.

## Don't Let the Moment Pass You By

Well, election time is once again upon us and as predicted, no matter how you feel about the process it has already proven to be anything but dull. We've reached the decision making point. It's time to see through all the divisive, polarizing rhetoric and choose candidates who will faithfully serve every day with our best interests at the forefront. Nobody said it was easy but it is our duty as working-class citizens to make these choices because the right to vote is the bedrock of our democracy. This is your opportunity to make it clear what we as a people are about and the direction we should take to achieve the political, social and economic justice we all have earned and deserve. It's up to you, don't let the moment pass you by!

It all starts with being registered to vote. We will be reaching out to those of you who aren't registered and strongly encourage you and your family members to participate in the process. If you happen to be one of those members, please take advantage of this unique opportunity Local 21 is offering you to get engaged. Once that is accomplished, it is incumbent on all of us to actually follow through on that commitment and cast a ballot. Many of us are very fortunate to live in a progressive state that actually makes it easier to have your voice heard, unlike states that are all about exclusion and disenfranchisement.

In this issue of *Frontline* we have included information about your options in regards to early voting, absentee ballots, etc. as well as lists of the officially endorsed candidates from the Illinois AFL-CIO, Chicago Federation of Labor, Northern Indiana Area Labor Federation and our own International Union as well. As always, if you have a question about the particular district or precinct you live in or where you have to go to vote, please don't hesitate to contact the Political Dept. at (630) 960-4466 ext. 353 or send an e-mail to [dmac@ibew21.org](mailto:dmac@ibew21.org) and I will be more than happy to assist you.

Many of you can recall me telling you every election cycle that "this is the most important election of our lives," and I'd be lying to you if I said anything different this time. Nationally, the potential for two or three Supreme Court Justices to be replaced will lay in the hands of the next President and the U.S. Senate for confirmation. Why wouldn't you want a say in who makes those decisions?

In Illinois, the balance of power between an anti-working class Governor and a Labor friendly General Assembly is at stake. In Indiana, we have an opportunity to turn back 12 years of anti-Union attacks in the State House by electing a worker-friendly Governor as well as several State Representatives who will have his back in Indianapolis.



Ultimately, the choice is yours and as far as I'm concerned, the choices could not be any clearer. Democracy, much like Union membership isn't easy, it's not supposed to be. I learned a long time ago that anything worth having is worth fighting for so please keep that in mind when you cast your ballots.

Now far be it for me to ever write an article or give a COPE report at a Unit meeting without shaking my tin cup or asking for help. If you would like to take your game to the next level by volunteering to do some of the heavy lifting required to run a successful campaign such as phone banking, door to door canvassing or would like to contribute financially through voluntary COPE payroll deduction, please don't hesitate to contact me. There are plenty of campaigns looking for assistance I'm sure we can find one that suits you. Thank you for all you have done



Local 21 members headed to Springfield and joined over 10,000 union members voicing their displeasure with Gov. Rauner's attacks on the middle class.

# 2016 GENERAL ELECTION ENDORSEMENTS



## President of the United States

Hillary Clinton - D

## U.S. Senate

Tammy Duckworth - D

## U.S. Congress

1st Bobby Rush - D  
2nd Robin Kelly - D  
3rd Dan Lipinski - D  
4th Luis Gutierrez - D  
5th Mike Quigley - D  
6th Amanda Howland - D  
7th Danny Davis - D  
8th Raja Krishnamoorthi - D  
9th Jan Schakowsky - D  
10th Brad Schneider - D  
11th Bill Foster - D  
12th C.J. Baricevic - D  
17th Cheri Bustos - D

## Comptroller

Susana Mendoza - D

## Judicial

1st App Elieen O'Neill Burke - D  
1st App Bertina Lampkin - D  
5th App Brad Bleyer - D  
5th App Jo Beth Weber - D  
  
1st App Joy Virginia Cunningham - D

## Ballot Initiative

Redistricting - Oppose  
Transportation Funding - Support



## IL Senate

1st Tony Munoz - D  
2nd Omar Aquino - D  
4th Kimberly Lightford - D  
5th Patricia Van Pelt - D  
7th Heather Steans - D  
8th Ira Silverstein - D  
10th John Mulroe - D  
11th Martin Sandoval - D  
13th Kwame Raoul - D  
14th Emil Jones III - D  
16th Jacqueline Collins - D  
17th Donne Trotter - D  
19th Michael Hastings - D  
20th Iris Martinez - D  
22nd Cristina Castro - D  
23rd Tom Cullerton - D  
25th Corinne Pierog - D  
28th Laura Murphy - D  
29th Julie Morrison - D  
31st Melinda Bush - D  
34th Steve Stadelman - D  
38th Christine Benson - D  
40th Toi Hutchinson - D  
43rd Pat McGuire - D  
46th David Koehler - D  
49th Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant - D  
50th Sam McCann - R  
52nd Scott Bennett - D  
56th William Haine - D  
58th Sheila Simon - D  
59th Gary Forby - D

## IL House

1st Dan Burke - D  
2nd Theresa Mah - D  
3rd Luis Arroyo - D  
4th Cynthia Soto - D  
5th Juliana Stratton - D  
6th Sonya Harper - D  
7th Emanuel "Chris" Welch - D  
8th LaShawn Ford - D  
9th Arthur Turner - D  
10th Melissa Conyears - D

## IL House (continued)

11th Ann Williams - D  
12th Sara Feigenholtz - D  
13th Gregory Harris - D  
14th Kelly Cassidy - D  
15th John D'Amico - D  
16th Lou Lang - D  
17th Laura Fine - D  
18th Robyn Gabel - D  
19th Rob Martwick - D  
20th Merry Marwig - D  
21st Silvana Tabares - D  
22nd Michael Madigan - D  
23rd Michael Zalewski - D  
24th Lisa Hernandez - D  
25th Barbara Flynn Currie - D  
26th Christian Mitchell - D  
27th Monique Davis - D  
28th Robert Rita - D  
29th Thaddeus Jones - D  
30th Will Davis - D  
31st Mary Flowers - D  
32nd Andre Thapedi - D  
33rd Marcus Evans, Jr. - D  
34th Elgie Sims, Jr. - D  
35th Fran Hurley - D  
36th Kelly Burke - D  
38th Al Riley - D  
39th Will Guzzardi - D  
40th Jaime Andrade - D  
42nd Kathleen Carrier - D  
43rd Anna Moeller - D  
44th Fred Crespo - D  
45th Cynthia Borbas - D  
46th Deb Conroy - D  
50th Valerie Burd - D  
55th Martin J. Moylan - D  
56th Michelle Mussman - D  
57th Elaine Nekritz - D  
59th Carol Sente - D  
60th Rita Mayfield - D  
61st Nick Ciko - D  
61st Nick Ciko - D  
62nd Sam Yingling - D  
63rd John Bartman - D  
66th Nancy Zettler - D  
67th Litesa Wallace - D  
68th Tricia Sweeney - D  
69th Angelique Bodine - D  
71st Mike Smiddy - D  
72nd Mike Halpin - D

## IL House (continued)

74th Bill Butts - D  
75th Martha Shugart - D  
76th Andy Skoog - D  
77th Kathleen Willis - D  
78th Camille Lilly - D  
79th Katherine "Kate" Cloonen - D  
80th Anthony Deluca - D  
81st Greg Hose - D  
83rd Linda Chapa LaVia - D  
84th Stephanie Kifowit - D  
85th Emily McAsey - D  
86th Larry Walsh, Jr. - D  
92nd Jehan Gordon-Booth - D  
93rd John Curtis - D  
94th Bobby Pritchett - D  
95th Mike Mathis - D  
96th Sue Scherer - D  
98th Natalie Manley - D  
99th Tony DelGiorno - D  
101st Christine Law - D  
103rd Carol Ammons - D  
110th Dennis Malak - D  
111th Daniel Beiser - D  
112th Katie Stuart - D  
113th Jay Hoffman - D  
114th Latoya Greenwood - D  
115th Marsha Griffin - D  
116th Jerry Costello II - D  
117th John Bradley - D  
118th Brandon Phelps - D

## Appellate Court

Eileen O'Neill Burke 1st District  
Bertina E. Lampkin 1st District

## Cook County State's Attorney

Kim Foxx - D

## Cook County Clerk of Circuit Court

Dorothy Brown - D

## Cook County Recorder of Deeds

Karen A. Yarbrough - D

## Cook County Board of Review Commissioner

Michael Cabonargi 2nd District - D

## Metropolitan Water Reclamation District - Six Year Term

Mariyana T. Spyropoulos - D  
Barbara McGowan - D  
Josina Morita - D

## Metropolitan Water Reclamation District - Two Year Term

Martin J. Durkan - D

## Circuit Court

Rossana Patricia Fernandez  
Alison C. Conlon  
Aleksandra Gillespie  
Carolyn J. Gallagher  
Mary Kathleen McHugh  
Brendan A. O'Brien  
Maureen O'Donoghue Hannon  
Daniel Patrick Duffy

## Subcircuit Court

Eulalia "Evie" DeLaRosa - 6th  
Richard C. Cooke - 6th  
Jerry Esrig - 9th  
Eve Marie Reilly - 10th  
William B. Sullivan - 11th  
Janet Cronin Mahoney - 12th  
Carrie Hamilton - 6th  
James Edward Hanlon, Jr. - 12th  
Ketki "Kay" Steffen - 13th



## Northern Indiana Area Labor Federation 2016 Political Endorsements

### Governor of Indiana

John Gregg - D

### Superintendent of Public Instruction

Glenda Ritz - D

### U.S. Senate

Evan Bayh - D

### Indiana Attorney General

Lorenzo Arredondo - D

### U.S. House of Representatives

District 1: Pete Visclosky - D

### Indiana State Senate

District 2: Lonnie Randolph - D

District 3: Eddie Melton - D

District 5: Jim Harper - D

### Indiana House of Representatives

District 1: Linda Lawson - D - I

District 2: Earl Harris, Jr. - D

District 3: Charlie Brown - D - I

District 9: Scott Pleath - D - I

District 10: Chuck Moseley - D - I

District 11: Jim Metro - D

District 12: Mara Candalaria Reardon - D

District 13: Mike Childress - D

District 14: Vernon Smith - D - I

District 15: Tom O'Donnell - D

District 19: Shelli Vandenburg - D

D - DEMOCRAT

I - INCUMBENT

## IMPORTANT TIMELINES:

**REGISTER TO VOTE:** The deadline on paper or in person in the states of Illinois and Indiana is: **Tuesday, October 11, 2016**. In Illinois, you can register online until **Sunday, October 23, 2016**. Illinois Grace Period & Election Day Registration and voting begins **Wednesday, October 12, 2016** thru **Monday, November 7, 2016**. Locations are limited and you must have 2 pieces of identification and cast a ballot immediately after registration.

**EARLY VOTING IN ILLINOIS:** Traditional early voting takes place **October 24-November 7, 2016** at various County, Township and Municipal offices across the state.

**IN INDIANA,** in person early absentee voting begins Wednesday, October 12, 2016 thru Monday, November 7, 2016.

**YOU MUST HAVE A PHOTO ID TO CAST A BALLOT.**

# WHAT'S NEW ACROSS THE LOCAL?

Altura ★ AT&T ★ Avaya ★ CenturyLink ★ City of Chicago OEMC- 911 Center  
Heddington Oaks Nursing Home ★ CBRE-Johnson Controls ★ JULI

Bill Henne,  
Vice-President, Assistant Business Manager



## AT&T Surplus & Negotiations

★ **AT&T** again decided to declare another surplus in the 3rd quarter, causing members to leave the payroll right in the middle of the holiday season. It's another declaration that AT&T shareholders

are more important than the average employee. This announcement comes at the tail end of increased profits and a stock increase of almost 30% over the last 12 months.

The announcement affects two different title groups. In Title Group 10, one Technical Specialist in the northern suburbs is being surplused. In Title Group 2 there is a surplus of sixty-eight members affecting every RCA (Reasonable Commuting Area) in Illinois and Indiana; seventeen in Chicago and Northwest Indiana, nineteen in north suburban, eighteen in south suburban,

two in RCA 2, three in RCA 3 and ten in RCA 4. We are currently working through Article 30 with the company to try and make this sensitive situation the least impactful to our members.

Members represented by the AT&T contract are eight short months away from expiration, make sure you are prepared financially for those upcoming contract talks. A prepared Union membership is a strong Union membership.

### In other Local 21 contracts...

We have ratified the MIFA 2 agreement with **Frontier Communications** which includes 1,300 members represented by four IBEW Locals: 21, 51, 702 and 723 in Illinois and Indiana. Members also ratified the **Frontier Legacy** contract in September. That contract covers 75 employees in Illinois represented by IBEW Locals: 21, 51 and 702. My thanks to all who helped on these negotiations.

We are currently in contract talks with **CenturyLink**, that contract expired on September 30th.

## Union Shirts \$10!



IBEW Local 21 logo on front pocket!

"Keeping You Connected Since 1891" on back.



CONTACT YOUR CHIEF STEWARD,  
BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE OR CALL  
THE UNION HALL TO GET YOURS!

VISIT US ON THE WEB: [IBEW21.ORG](http://IBEW21.ORG) LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

Karen Battisfore,  
Business Representative



### My Anonymous Reply...

★ In light of all the rhetoric surrounding the Presidential election I shouldn't have been surprised when an anonymous email was sent to IBEW 21 from a member who allegedly works in the sales call center at 10 S. Canal.

In a nut shell it appears this person is upset with the union stewards who represent the office and the fact that all of them are African-American and that Paul had better appoint a "white" steward quickly. Neither Paul nor I responded because the email was sent anonymously. The email struck a nerve with me and I feel this is the best way to reply so everyone can see my response.

I'd like to educate the anonymous person by saying your stewards actually volunteer for the position. They go to union meetings and get involved to the point where they want to be a union steward and stand up against the oppression the company puts upon us. We've asked many times for employees to step up and take on the responsibility. So far no "white person" has volunteered.

My priest put much of this in perspective for me in his recent homily. We are the United States of America.... keyword, United. We are the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.... keyword, Brotherhood. While I believe everyone should pull their own weight and do the best job they can, I don't understand the ignorance of wiping away nearly 200 years of history and building a wall and refusing to work with people because of the color of their skin. I don't understand why people would choose to be divided.

We are stronger together and right now in our country we need each other. Our employer needs us to maintain our health and come to work to take care of our customers. We need to keep good paying union jobs with excellent benefits here in this country. I challenge anyone to step up and become more involved with the daily tasks of union representation, whether you are white, black, purple, orange or green. We are not just the union ... You are the Union!

I want to thank Cheryl Crooks, Pez Whatley, Janita Tyner, Claudette Brown, Trina Bliss, Jerry Mills, Celia Estrada, Anthony Williams and all our stewards for your service and dedication. None of us are perfect, but I want to say thank you for standing up against the wrongs presented by management. Thanks for the time you sacrifice away from your families to help fellow employees through the issues and frustrations of the jobs. You give of your time handling paperwork and grievance preparations. Thank you for the different hats you wear from steward, to friend, to mother or father, therapist, confidant, and back to steward again. Not to mention the balancing act you must maintain to keep up your performance expectations in your consumer job while also representing our members.

### On the move...

Before the end of first quarter in 2017, employees at Chicago North Grace Street will migrate downtown to 10 S. Canal. With the 2020 initiative having nearly 250 sales reps in one location, this still isn't even a shadow of the number of employees we used to have working in northeastern Illinois. We are slated for growth in the new "10 South" offices, there is plenty of room for new employees.

In light of all the layoffs we've had the past few years I challenge you all again Sisters and Brothers to do what you need to do to maintain your health and that of your families. Keep your job by proving you want it by coming to work every day when you're scheduled. Ask yourself, "Do you appreciate the lifestyle you currently afford with your good union paying job and could you afford to maintain it, if you lost your job?"

I can't make any promises and I won't try to...but at the end of the day do your part by coming to work every day so that Illinois call centers can thrive. Prove to AT&T this is where they want to put the work.

I appreciate all the hard work you do every day and the juggling needed to take care of your family. God Bless the United States of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Mike Scime,  
Business Representative



## I'll be Fine...

★ My article addresses a subject that is a little uncomfortable but very necessary and one that most of us don't devote enough attention to... our own wellness. We go to work each day and perform our job duties, try to work

safely, follow our work rules, and generally abide by the company policies and creed.

Our days at work vary by job title and environment but we all focus on our work and take pride in what we do. That brings me to the hard question: "Are we endangering our own health for the sake of work, convenience, or time constraints?" I know sometimes I do and many of you as well. It's our own fault. It is unnecessary and unsafe.

We get so used to ignoring ailments and pains because we assume that we know the cause. A constant backache becomes "I must have pulled a muscle" or a recurring digestive issue is dismissed as "I get them all the time, it'll go away" or "I'm fine, it's the flu, it's an infection, I just need more sleep." Sound familiar? This behavior is commonplace with many of us.

We must commit to doing better. Begin by taking advantage of our medical benefits with preventative care and routine checkups. I'm past due for mine as I write this. How about you?

In mid-July, a customer service technician in Peoria, Bob "Skip" Burger, decided he finally had enough of being worn out and working with increasing discomfort. He was feeling poorly and with his wife's urging decided to get it checked out. Within days he was not only off work but had been diagnosed with stage four pancreatic cancer and went on disability. With aggressive chemotherapy he was given 9-12 months to live.

Bob's union brothers offered support. Peoria SD&A union steward, Jason Higgins arranged a Solidarity/ Labor Day event in honor of Bob, a Peoria Chiefs Class A baseball game with Bob throwing out the first pitch. We all attended the August 27th game with the exception of Bob and his wife Donna, they unfortunately needed to go to the hospital. None of us at the game knew he was too ill to join us. Twenty four hours later Skip passed away. Roughly six weeks prior he was clearing trouble and working orders.

Bob was a good worker, a good friend, and a good union brother and will be missed by many. He was two months shy of 43 years of service at Illinois Bell/AT&T, and 61 years of age. He won't get to enjoy his hard earned retirement. It is a reward we all richly deserve, as do our family members who are fully invested with their time, support and love.

Please, Brothers and Sisters, take a moment the next time you're not feeling quite right and make a smart decision and get checked out. Often we find time to pick up that extra job and go the extra mile to satisfy our customers. We must focus just as diligently on ourselves. Practice the "creed" in your personal lives because the shared time with our loved ones, is really the reason we work. A better life - a safer and longer life.

In solidarity, "No job is so important and no service is so urgent, that we can't take time to do it safely".



Members from Central Illinois enjoyed the Union Day tailgate before the Illini took on North Carolina, even though U of I lost our members had a great time.

Mike Grindle,  
Business Representative



## Get informed...Get involved

★ Those of us who are employed at **AT&T** stand less than one year away from the expiration of the 2013 contract. For myself, it seems unbelievable that three years have already passed. Most of us at AT&T have seen little that

is encouraging about our long-term futures especially when the company announces a surplus in our Local's jurisdiction. Many of you look to the leadership with questions that boil down to: "What is the Union going to do?"

A concerted effort is planned to positively reach out to each and every one of you for your up-to-date contact information. So we can engage you, the membership, in what is going on in your Union. You will be asked to make

yourselves available for mass communications in the form of emails and texts. We will utilize those communications tools, our website ([ibew21.org](http://ibew21.org)) and Facebook page ([IBEWTwentyOne](#)) to keep you informed, and to ask you to participate in actions geared towards building our solidarity. Not simply in preparation for the upcoming contract, but as a constant and continual way of life.

Brothers and sisters, working people face an ever-increasing set of challenges from our employers and the marketplace which can only be effectively met and overcome with our solidarity. Get informed. Get involved. We are all better for it.

In other news, the Local filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board over what we believe is **Altura's** unwillingness to bargain in good faith during our ongoing contract negotiations.

Byron Bonham,  
Business Representative



## Momentum and Participation is Crucial

★ Where did the 2016 summer go? Last year, AT&T acquired **DIRECTV**. An agreement in the existing Local 21 AT&T contract gave the IBEW an opportunity to organize new units under the

parent company. After DIRECTV employees joined the IBEW, Local 21 representatives, International Representative Kevin Curran, and members from these new units were assigned to begin bargaining. The chance to negotiate better benefits prior to the open enrollment period came with an accelerated timeline for the bargaining teams. Two tentative agreements were reached for these units and were quickly ratified. While these new agreements do not directly apply to Local 21, the experience and relationships built with our new Sisters and Brothers is invaluable.

While reaching tentative agreements with new

employers is unfortunately very rare, support from the workers remained strong from union recognition through contract ratification. This was also the case for the **Lake County 911 Emergency Center** in Indiana. After just over one year of bargaining, a tentative agreement was reached for our newest IBEW 21 members and ratified by another strong majority.

All three of these new contracts started with new member organizing last year. Our new Sisters and Brothers were enthusiastic about bargaining. Their involvement in the process was essential to the success of these contracts. Thank you to everyone who voted and participated in these historic agreements.

With those three big contract ratification elections behind us we now look toward the November election and the bargaining for the AT&T contract which expires next summer. Momentum and participation will be crucial in the months and years to follow. This summer has flown by extremely fast, but it will not be forgotten.

**THIS ARTICLE WAS CORRECTED ON 11-10-16. IT SUPERSEDES THE ARTICLE THAT APPEARED IN THE EDITION THAT WAS SENT TO YOUR HOMES.**



Jerry Rankins,  
Business Representative

## Comcast Units Ratify New 3 year Agreements

★ Despite **Comcast's** best efforts to eradicate both the Chicago Cortland and West Suburban area bargaining units through vicious bad-faith

bargaining and deceptive practices, our members didn't become faint-hearted. Through much adversity these courageous workers battled until fairness was achieved.

The three year Cortland agreement gives members significant hourly increases up to 24% for the first year, a signing bonus, enhanced job-security language and overall improvements to the contract language. The previous agreement expired on February 28, 2014.

For some, the new three year Comcast West contract comes with hourly wage increases up to nearly 27% over the life of the agreement, a signing bonus, and contract language improvements. Initially many of the company's proposals were regressive; they essentially equated to a pay-cut for over 50% of the bargaining unit. But facing our members on the bargaining committee, who were educated and well prepared, management eventually changed their position enabling both sides to reach a new agreement. The previous Comcast West agreement expired on April 30, 2015.

## Local 21 /City of Chicago 911 Agree to Contract Extension

An eighteen month extension agreement at the OEMC—Office of Emergency Management Communication 911 Center in Chicago has been reached. The previous agreement expired on July 30, 2016. The extension includes hourly wage increases of 1% retroactive back pay to July 1, 2016, 1% increase January 1, 2017 and 1% July 1, 2017. For the first time ever, the Union was successful in negotiating a paid Maternity, Paternity, and Domestic Partner Benefit Leave with no other changes in the current contract.

The Unit 2 extension allows for the Union to start bargaining for a new successor agreement around the same time that the majority of other City employee contracts expire June 30, 2017. With similar economic issues in relation to other unions, bargaining with a greater number sends a message to the Mayor's office that we're not isolated. It encourages other City unions, the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), community and political supporters to stand in unity with us. This will translate to greater bargaining strength.

## Union Workers Need To Vote

Union workers will make a difference in all the national and local races in the November General Election. The next President could appoint up to three new  
*continued on next page*



IBEW 21 members working at the City of Chicago 911- OEMC center received numerous awards for going above and beyond the call of duty.



John Dolsen,  
Business Representative

## Battery Safety Issue

★ Well they did it again!  
**AT&T** management decided to put the band back together. The Installation and Repair department that was separated into two groups,

and operated independently from one another for the past few years is now back together as one. Local stewards recently completed going over the data used for weekend and off-hour scheduling in the new TFS Organization. If you are experiencing issues with the transition, please reach out to your steward.

In U-Verse we continue to have discussions and meetings with the directors about a new preference agreement. We'd like to see technicians allowed to move to garages which are closer to their homes. If an agreement can be reached we'll be sure to share the good news with you as soon as possible.

We stopped the company from closing the St. Charles construction garage. Management planned to move technicians and the work to Montgomery. The move is officially on hold for the moment while the company is gathering more data to see if their proposed change is necessary.

In DEG we found **a serious safety issue** when it comes to battery replacement in CEVs. The company does not have an official policy or procedure in place for locking out the battery terminals. Currently, technicians learn in the field from others and perform battery work many different ways. The IBEW 21 safety committee is working with the department and corporate safety to ensure a policy is put into place to keep our members safe. If you have any questions or concerns about CEV battery safety be sure to ask your supervisor for clarification before performing the work.

Hopefully everyone enjoyed their summer and had a chance to enjoy some of your union bargained vacation time. We all deserve this time off... We earned it!

Finally, PLEASE be careful out there and work safe!

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## Rankins (continued)

Supreme Court justices. Working families and all union members could be affected when the Court is asked to decide cases regarding labor laws. Laws, policies and worker's rights could be eroded if the Justices take the side of big business. We have an opportunity to strengthen rights we all enjoy as workers if we vote for the candidate who will appoint judges to the High Court that understand our values.

Just as importantly we must vote in support of working-family candidates in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to assure our foes are not elected. Our adversaries will stand-up for tax-cuts for the rich and give them additional benefits by crushing the middle class if they are also able to pass anti-worker legislation.

State-wide races are equally important. We need to look no further than our adjacent states of Wisconsin and Indiana, they along with Michigan all are now right to work states. Public Unions have seen their bargaining rights taken away or completely eliminated, and their pension, salary, and other benefits are being cut while those who least need them, the rich, were given tax-breaks.

We can't allow ourselves to be passive, we must vote and we cannot cast our votes for candidates who stand against our economic interests. It's been said many times: what we gain in our contracts can be lost at the ballot box.

"In the End it's not the Words of our Enemies but the silence of our Friends" - Dr. Martin Luther King

Our strength is in our unity!



## The Age of Compliance

Recent grievance meetings and dismissal hearings put a spotlight on behaviors we should avoid. AT&T is a top technology company and devotes significant resources toward monitoring us in many ways.

Don't think this company would hand us an expensive electronic device without being able to track it or how it's being used.

Don't take a company tablet or I-Pad home without a manager's permission and if possible get it in writing, even if that means by email. I would say no one should be taking any expensive device or tool home with them unless they are being compensated.

Too many members have been held liable for taking things home without permission, then they leave equipment in their car and the car gets broken into or someone else in their home uses it for non-business purposes. I've had members dismissed for each of these type of incidents.

We all know if we have an occupational or motor vehicle accident in a company vehicle, we must tell our manager right away. I'm now more concerned with off duty incidents. Since 2010, the Code of Conduct has required written notification of all driving infractions. This includes any type of ticket or citation issued by the police. There is an on-going reporting obligation to convey the status of that charge i.e. disposition of the ticket or charge in court. This applies if you are issued a citation, have your license taken, or are detained for arrest or charged for any offense by the police. In 2015 changes to the Code of Business Conduct requires notification, "as soon as possible," and documentation of the relevant facts are required to be inputted into an AT&T database.

Now this is important, "As soon as possible" applies to notification to your manager. Say you get arrested on a Saturday night but aren't released until Monday morning, with insufficient time to get to work, or you want to call off because you've been up all night. If you call in to get the

day off, that is the time to make notification of the incident to your manager. The documentation and self-reporting submission can wait until you are back at work because that must be done via a company computer and must be done when you are on the clock.

We all can agree that OP78 is an overreach in the way it is enforced in most workplaces. But it is a top compliance issue for AT&T. I'm old enough to remember when we had to leave our vans unlocked when we parked them for the night. Today management is addressing the security of their property and vehicles. Make every effort to challenge discipline where there are any mitigating circumstances. For example: after a three day holiday when the tech has not touched his truck since his last shift. As members we have to get in front of this issue instead of fighting an uphill battle after the fact. We must make a routine of locking our vehicles and all the cabinets. If you are using someone else's truck take a minute to walk around it and make sure all doors and cabinets are secured.

We took a long time to adjust to GPS enforcement when it was new. We left a lot of lost wages on the table before we stopped going to breakfast or running personal errands. We've reach the point with OP78 where we have to stop giving management the low hanging fruit of an unlocked cabinet or a half open window. We work hard for our money let's keep them out of our pockets.



IBEW 21 members attend the Sickle Cell Walk in Alton, IL.

## Get involved—attend an upcoming Union Meeting!

|               | OCT  | NOV  |
|---------------|--|--|
| <b>UNIT 1</b> | <b>13th - 7 pm</b><br>Spring Hill Marriott<br>8101 W. Higgins Rd.<br>Chicago, IL 773-867-0000        | <b>10th - 7 pm</b><br>Gideon Welles<br>4500 N. Lincoln Ave.<br>Chicago, IL 773-907-2226            |
| <b>UNIT 2</b> | <b>11th - 7 pm</b><br>Gaelic Park Banquet Hall<br>6119 W. 147th<br>Oak Forest, IL 708-687-9323       | <b>8th - 7 pm</b><br>Lansing American Legion #697<br>18255 Grant St.<br>Lansing, IL 708-474-5906   |
| <b>UNIT 3</b> | <b>20th - 7 pm</b><br>Gurnee American Legion<br>749 Milwaukee<br>Gurnee, IL 847-244-9282             | <b>17th - 7 pm</b><br>Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites<br>495 Airport Rd.<br>Elgin, IL 847-488-9000      |
| <b>UNIT 4</b> | <b>12th - 7 pm</b><br>IBEW Local#145<br>1700 52nd Ave. Suite A<br>Moline, IL 309-736-4239            | <b>9th - 7 pm</b><br>Lemont VFW<br>15780 New Ave.<br>Lemont, IL 630-257-9859                       |
| <b>UNIT 5</b> | <b>19th - 5:30 pm</b><br>IBEW Local #538<br>1290 N. Michigan Ave.<br>Danville, IL 217-442-0996       | <b>16th - 6:00 pm</b><br>U.A.W. Local #974<br>3025 Springfield Rd.<br>East Peoria, IL 309-694-3151 |
| <b>UNIT 6</b> | <b>18th - 5:30 pm</b><br>IBEW Local #193<br>3150 Wide Track Dr.<br>Springfield, IL 217-544-3479      | <b>15th - 7:00 pm</b><br>IBEW Local #193<br>3150 Wide Track Dr.<br>Springfield, IL 217-544-3479    |
| <b>UNIT 7</b> | <b>17th - 7 pm</b><br>American Legion Post 365<br>1022 Vandalla St.<br>Collinsville, IL 618-345-2508 | <b>21st - 7 pm</b><br>IBEW Local #649<br>4051 Humbert Rd.<br>Alton, IL 618-462-1627                |

## CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

**Vermilion**  
Anna Sykes  
**Heddington Oaks/ Peoria**  
Arleen Ray  
**AT&T**  
Tod Johnson  
Allen Smuda  
Carolyn Brady  
Wendy Trausch-Benson  
Becky Cadena  
Gloria Jude  
Patrick Cernekee  
Steven Schaufuss  
Stacy Harris  
Robbin Perkins  
Karen Beck  
Steven Plovich  
Dorothy Reynolds-Tyler  
Emma Munoz  
Steven Paine  
Marisa Reyes  
Thomas Udvance  
Scott Hansen  
Juliann Anderson  
Susan Boitz  
Aprille Callier-Spikes  
Calvin Moore  
Linda Clark  
Ann Corrigan  
Unette Cromwell  
Valerie Edwards  
Lori Oladipa  
Michael Russell  
Claudette Springs  
Reshonda Anderson  
Charlotte Cannon  
Yvette Casey  
Mark Fazio  
Leotha Offutt  
David Taglioli  
Lillian Trobl  
Karen Ward  
Donna Woods  
Michele Lang

## FRONTLINE



### International Brotherhood of Electrical

#### Workers, Local 21, AFL-CIO

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

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## White Sox Solidarity Event

