

FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21



Volume 13, No. 3 • October 2008

SIZZLING SOLIDARITY



INSIDE

Members and their families enjoyed a Quad Cities Bandits baseball game in Davenport Iowa. See inside for more summer solidarity events.

Business Managerpg 2
Curran's Reportpg 3
Gast's Reportpg 4
Benefit Reportpg 4
COPEpg 5

Endorsementspg 6
News Across The Local .pg 8
Solidarity Eventspg 13 & 17
Scholarship Winners . .pg 14

911 Centerpg 15
Pizza 4 Patriotspg 16
Retireespg 18
Meetingspg 19

Changing America's Direction

By Ronald Kastner



The political infomercials and ads on TV are getting old, aren't they? As this presidential election gets closer, television viewing is dominated by these ads. And, there's no changing the channel. They are everywhere. However, I do have a favorite political video, one which I absolutely agree with, and one I encourage all union members to see.

It's called *Turn Around America 2008*,

and it was put together by the AFL-CIO. Most members who attended unit meetings in August and September were able to see this. Also, Local 21's Mobilization Coordinators and Group Coordinators are sharing the video at various locations. This short video depicts the worsening economic picture in our country which seems to degenerate further every day. The video does a great job getting members to talk about corporate power, our economy, what's gone wrong, and what can be done to change the direction of our country. More than ever, working Americans need this change, and we need it now.

Since 2001, worker productivity improvements have been impressive, statistically the best in decades. The income and living standards of working families should have improved, moving upwards as well, along the same path. They have not. The weakened ability of American workers to claim their fair share of our country's growth, growth that workers themselves are creating, can be told every time we turn on the radio, watch television or read the latest news. Working families are struggling every day just to make ends meet. How and why did this happen? And, what can we do to reverse this frightening trend?

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan fired 11,000 PATCO (Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization) air-traffic controllers after they went on strike for higher wages and fewer hours on the stress-filled job. Many historians view Reagan's firing of the controllers as the green light that gave corporations license to be much tougher with organized labor. American corporations like Comcast and Verizon have increasingly opposed unionization, spending millions on anti-union consultants, running campaigns that use maneuvers and tactics – many illegal - to block workers' attempts to organize, and to get rid of Unions where they already exist.

This happens constantly to our own members in Local 21, and if you are a member in telecommunications the lack of organizing in the cable industry has already affected your pocket book and working conditions. Despite stellar efforts by our organizing department, elections with Comcast workers rarely result in unionization of the group. Worse than that, the companies use other illegal methods to draw some of our members out of our Union. The most frustrating aspect of all this is that the companies manage to do this because there are no consequences for violating our rights. Workers get no redress because of the composition of the National Labor Relations Board, whose members were

appointed by Bush. It's been lopsided toward management for the last 8 years. Barack Obama will have the opportunity to shift the power by appointing a pro-worker NLRB. In fact, I commonly call it the National Management Board instead of Labor board.

America's current corporate agenda is all about power and numbers, or realistically from our point of view - the lack of it. The percentage of union members in the total workforce has declined sharply since it last peaked at 35.7% in 1953. Union membership rates exploded in the 1930's and 1940's, propelled by the effects of the Great Depression and World War II. Today, only 12 % of American workers are unionized. U.S. private-sector union density has dropped to around 7.5 %, a level lower than we have seen since the dawn of the 20th century. Again, we see this happening to us in Local 21. Since 2001, we have lost approximately 2,500 members.

I hope by now I have managed to connect the dots for you. The corporate agenda is all about reducing our numbers which in turn reduces our bargaining power. As our numbers go down, carrying the water for working families becomes tougher and tougher.

The Employee Free Choice Act, EFCA, (H.R. 800, S. 1041) would level the playing field for workers and employers and restore our freedom to choose a Union. EFCA would reform the nation's basic labor laws by requiring employers to recognize Unions after a majority of workers sign cards authorizing union representation. It also would provide mediation and arbitration for first-contract disputes and establish stronger penalties for violations of the rights of workers seeking to form Unions or negotiate first contracts. This bill will most likely get voted on next year. Senator Barack Obama has committed that as President of the United States, he will sign this bill into law. John McCain will not. In fact in McCain's acceptance speech he bragged about fighting union bosses. Although I consider myself a union leader, I can't help to view this as a direct challenge to all Unions.

Our next president will shape the future for working families. We have a tremendous opportunity to elect a president who will stand up for the issues that matter the most to us: securing employment, reducing the hours of daily labor, fair pay for our work, security for the individual, and a higher standard of living. America's direction, America's future, and our ability to grow economically, depends on who we elect as our next president. I'm betting on Barack Obama.

Brothers and sisters, your vote is your own, but try not to let the color of a man's skin drive your choice. Our enemies have created these "divide and conquer" strategies to divert attention away from working family issues. When we travel and fly on a plane, our very life rests in the hands of the pilot, the one we trust to take us safely to our next destination. Yet we don't look in the cockpit to see what color the pilot is. The time to look beyond skin color and to choose the person best suited to bring union density, our national economy, and our personal economies back to the levels we deserve is right in front of us. Please remember organized labor's future, and your own future, when you cast your vote. This is not their country. It is ours, and we need to take it back.



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

Newswire hotlines

630 415-2711 / 866 423-9582

OFFICERS

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

Kevin Curran, *Vice-President / Assistant
Business Manager Marketing*

Jacquie 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

EDITORS

Nancy North email: nnorth@ibew21.org
Bob Przybylinski email:
bobp@ibew21.org

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

All rights reserved to the entire content of the print or on-line versions of this publication. No content may be reproduced, reused or redistributed in any form without the express written consent of the IBEW. All requests must be submitted in writing to the editors of this publication. All violations of this policy will be prosecuted to the fullest extent under all applicable laws.

“Victory is reserved only for those willing to pay its price.” - Sun Tzu, the Art of War

By Kevin Curran, Vice President/Assistant Business Manager Marketing



At midnight, on June 27, 2009, the Core Collective Bargaining Agreement with AT&T will expire. That day will be here before you know

it. Local 21's leadership has been taking steps to prepare for that moment for some

time now. One part of the preparation is to take every opportunity available to increase solidarity. Local 21 has engaged in numerous solidarity events throughout our jurisdiction because, we believe one of the best ways to promote solidarity is to bring our members and their families together. The participation that we've had at these

events has been truly remarkable. Over 800 members and their families participated in our Great America Solidarity event on August 9th.

AT&T's Scab Hiring Plan- Local 21 received a copy of a letter AT&T is secretly sending to retired managers soliciting them to sign up to work as scabs if we go on strike next year. In addition, the Union has received a copy of an email management in Construction and Engineering sent out which includes a detailed list of the number of scabs they need in each department, their training requirements, scheduled dates of training, as well as other interesting info. Any member who obtains information concerning AT&T's strike plans should contact the Union office as soon as possible.

These events help remind us that what unites us is far more powerful than those things that could divide us. We all want a better life for ourselves and our families. We all want a decent day's pay for a hard day's work. We all want to ensure our families have access to the best health care and benefits available.

Believe me; I know it's hard to be focused on solidarity when you're getting beaten down by **unjust corporate policies, dim-witted management decisions, and immoral executives** who will eliminate a

thousand jobs if it saves the corporation just one nickel. Our solidarity and unity will be our strongest weapon in the battle against AT&T for a fair and just contract.

Through these solidarity events and Internal Organizing we will ensure that all of our members realize one simple truth:

We are ALL part of something much bigger than ourselves.

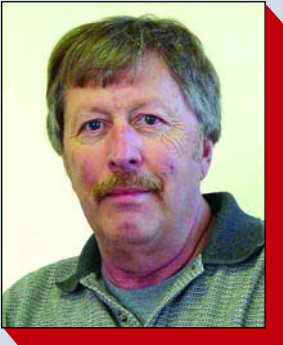
If we are all willing to fight side by side together, there is **no limit** to what we can accomplish.

PAR Arbitration- We are still anxiously awaiting Arbitrator Brookings ruling on the first discharge under the Consumer Performance Management Plan (a.k.a. "PAR"). The moment the decision comes in, we will communicate it through all means available to us.

Consumer Mandatory Overtime- As we have discussed at many Unit meetings, there was an arbitration decision a few years ago by Arbitrator Helburn that stated the company could impose mandatory overtime in certain situations. The decision went on to say that mandatory overtime must be imposed only in response to extraordinary circumstances and NOT as part of the normal scheduling process. Since the imposition of mandatory overtime in Consumer, we have been monitoring the issue each week, including analyzing the call volume data we demanded from the company. After consulting with our attorneys, we believe mandatory overtime is being imposed in violation of the Arbitrator's ruling and therefore we are initiating grievances in all Consumer centers throughout the state. Your Union has been successful in overturning discipline for refusing to work mandatory overtime. Be sure to grieve ANY discipline, including verbal warnings/coaching for not working mandatory overtime.

Budget BS

By Jerry Gast, Assistant Business Manager Network



As we move in to the 4th quarter we're already hearing about AT&T's budget problems in Construction. On August 29th, **245 term**

employees were job completed, of which 218 were outside tech's and the rest were in clerical support. Twenty-one senior plant assigners and six plant engineering clerks are being kept on a month to month basis. We have been told more cuts will be coming.

The company wanted to let the terms go by location not straight seniority. We negotiated straight seniority for the cable splicers and linemen in Joe Dimelis organization.

A preference by seniority from the garages over headcount to those under headcount is completed. The business

representatives and chief stewards worked hard to make sure the preference was done correctly by the company.

In C&E some of our members who were affected by **the identity theft issue** still haven't signed up for the \$25,000 identity theft insurance plan we negotiated for them. We strongly encourage all affected members to sign up for the protection.

Members are still working **3 week details**. There will be no details Thanksgiving week or the last 2 weeks of December so members can spend quality time with their families during the holidays.

In the **central offices**, we are still trying to work out the scheduling problems prior to going to arbitration. Management told us they plan to rearrange some orbits. They plan on completing a universal preference to move some techs around. Your business representatives are working on these issues.

The **I&M organization has canceled the scheduling trial** where no techs were

scheduled on the weekends. In the 6 garages that had it there were no problems and the company admitted it was working. Now they are coming to the Union, wanting to have more techs scheduled on the weekends and off hours to cover U-Verse tickets. We are still working on these issues. The trial was solving these problems. We were told the company now has budget problems.

In August we were hit by several storms. You stepped up to cover the trouble and get customers back in service. You were productive as evidenced by the record number of trouble cases that were cleared. We allowed the company to bring in CWA to help out. After all your hard work we were then told CWA techs were being sent home and our members in the Chicago district were being forced on **mandatory OT**. We thank our members who stepped up to get our customers back in service because you knew it was the right thing to do.

Benefit Report

Open Your Mail ! It's Open Enrollment time at AT&T

By Lynn Arwood Chief Steward



Let's face it; we all do it.

We get a mailing from AT&T marked "important benefits information enclosed" and we set it aside

to read later. Sometimes we get to it, but sometimes we forget and important deadlines pass. As benefits coordinators for Local 21 we get calls every year after the deadlines or the correction periods end. Many times there's an increase in contributions, or valuable benefits such as Careplus or Vision Plus are offered. **This year when you receive your Annual Enrollment information please read through it carefully and be aware of the dates and deadlines.** Your time will be well spent because the information ensures you and your dependants will have the benefit coverage that best suits your needs.

AT&T notified us effective September 1st, **Caremark will be implementing a new collection procedure on past due accounts.** You will receive notification of the new policy in the mail. If your account balance is less than 30 days old and below \$200 a billing invoice will be sent with any new shipments. A billing reminder will be sent on accounts that have a balance of 31 to 60 days; a new order will still be shipped as long as the balance is less than \$200.

All prescription orders for accounts over 61 days past due will not be shipped until the past due balance is paid. Those who have accounts which are 91-120 days past due will receive a collections call. After 121 days accounts with balances over \$25 will be referred to a collection agency. There is also the possibility of a report being sent to one of the three credit reporting agencies. None of this should result in any disciplinary action. Caremark is reporting a total outstanding balance of unpaid co-pays totaling \$3.4 million for AT&T accounts.

The main job of the Local 21 Benefits

Department is safeguarding the benefits we have won in bargaining at AT&T. We receive notifications from the company in the form of Labor Notices when a change is coming or an error has been made. Problems are usually uncovered prior to us receiving notification because calls start coming in from our membership. We have liaisons in the different benefit areas such as FMLA, Medical, Dental, Disability, and Workers Compensation. We work with our contacts to help you resolve your situation. Your calls provide the information we need to be successful in protecting what is ours.

We want to thank you for calling us and encourage you to keep the calls coming!

You can reach us in the Benefits Department by calling the Union hall at 630-960-4466 ext 228. You can also reach us at our personal extensions:

Lynn Arwood ext. 445

Mary Jo Hindes ext. 236

Graciela Rivera ext. 257

Vote "No" for a Constitutional Convention

By Rosetta Shinn & Dennis McCaffery, Committee on Political Education



For the past four decades, Illinois has enjoyed one of the most forward-thinking and citizen-friendly state constitutions in America. Every 20 years, voters are asked whether a constitutional convention is needed to rewrite that document. The question will once again be on the ballot in November 2008.

A broad-based, bipartisan coalition of the most respected consumer, education, good government, business and labor

organizations in the state has, along with foremost legal experts, formed the Alliance to Protect the Illinois Constitution to ask voters to reject a costly and unnecessary 2010 constitutional convention. Voters voted "no" on the same question 1988 by a 3-to-1 margin, and they should do so again in 2008.

There are significant risks and financial costs with bringing together politicians, special interests and single-issue groups to turn our state's legal framework upside-down, and possibly erode strong protections on such issues as discrimination, basic freedoms and tax caps written into the constitution now. Specific articles of the constitution can already be amended at any time, and new provisions can also be added at any time.

There's no question the state faces real problems, but electing better representatives and leaders is the real answer. And, at a time when the state faces large budget deficits, the staggering cost of a convention should be put to better use.



Mobilizing 1 Million Union Members for the Employee Free Choice Act

Across the country, union members are mobilizing to collect 1 million signatures in support of the Employee Free Choice Act—national legislation that will break down the barriers faced by workers when forming unions and bargaining for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

It's called the Million-Member Mobilization for the Employee Free Choice Act, and IBEW 21 is pledging to get at least 10 percent of our members to sign up. Here's why.

With an economy in recession, mounting home foreclosures and skyrocketing costs for health care, gas and groceries, working families are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. Union members know a union card is the best ticket to the middle class and a bolster against tough economic times. After all, union members average 28 percent higher wages, are 62 percent more likely to have employer-provided health coverage and are four times more likely to have defined-benefit pensions than workers who don't have unions.

But more than that, union membership gives us a strong, united voice at work and in society so we can demand and win better working conditions and government policies that strengthen the economy for all, not just for corporations and the wealthy.

And the more union members who take on these fights together, the stronger we are.

But when workers try to form unions to improve their lives,

most companies do everything they can to stop them. The current company-dominated system for forming unions allows corporations to coerce, intimidate and even fire workers who are trying to form unions. Today, 60 million workers say they would join a union now if they could—but corporations are stopping them cold.

That hurts all of us—union and nonunion workers alike.

The Employee Free Choice Act would give power back to workers by allowing them to form unions once a majority has signed authorization cards. It also would require stronger penalties against companies that break the law when workers try to form unions and bring in mediation and binding arbitration so companies can't deny workers first contracts by dragging their feet in negotiations.

This November, we're going to elect a new president and new members of Congress. When they get to Washington, D.C., we'll have 1 million signatures waiting for them, urging them to support the middle class by enacting the Employee Free Choice Act. Meanwhile, the Million-Member Mobilization is preparing union members to take on the opposition that corporations will sling at the Employee



Free Choice Act. We all know they don't want to give up power to workers.

Please sign up for the Million-Member Mobilization. Help build an economy that works for all of us by restoring workers' freedom to form unions and bargain for a better life.

We have the forms at all Unit meetings to sign or contact Executive Director Legislative/Political Affairs Rosetta Shinn at 630 960-4466 ext. 327 or Legislative Director Dennis McCaffery at ext. 353.



Deborah Head-Baker, Congressman Phil Hare, and Donna Stoner

ILLINOIS AFL-CIO GENERAL ELECTION ENDORSEMENTS

ILLINOIS SENATE

2nd District – Willie Delgado (D)
3rd District – Mattie Hunter (D)
5th District – Rickey Hendon (D)
6th District – John Cullerton (D)
7th District – Heather Steans (D)
8th District – Ira Silverstein (D)
9th District – Jeff Schoenberg (D)
11th District – Lou Viverito (D)
12th District – Martin Sandoval (D)
14th District – Emil Jones, Jr. (D)
15th District – James Meeks (D)
17th District – Donne Trotter (D)
18th District – Edward Maloney (D)
20th District – Iris Martinez (D)
23rd District – Thomas Cullerton (D)
26th District – Bill Gentes (D)
29th District – Susan Garrett (D)
30th District – Terry Link (D)
33rd District – Dan Kotowski (D)
36th District – Mike Jacobs (D)
38th District – Steve Stout (D)
39th District – Don Harmon (D)
41st District – Audrey Manley (D)
42nd District – Linda Holmes (D)
45th District – Marty Mulcahey (D)
47th District – John Sullivan (D)
56th District – Bill Haine (D)
57th District – James Clayborne, Jr. (D)
59th District – Gary Forby (D)

ILLINOIS HOUSE

1st District – Susana Mendoza (D)
2nd District Edward Acevedo (D)
3rd District Luis Arroyo (D)
4th District -Cynthia Soto (D)
5th District -Kenneth Dunkin (D)
6th District -Esther Golar (D)
7th District- Karen Yarbrough (D)
8th District -LaShawn Ford (D)
9th District- Arthur Turner (D)
10th District -Annazette Collins (D)
11th District - John Fritchey (D)
12th District-Sara Feigenholtz (D)
13th District -Gregory Harris (D)
14th District -Harry Osterman (D)
15th District - John D'Amico (D)
16th District - Lou Lang (D)
17th District -Daniel Biss (D)
18th District -Julie Hamos (D)
19th District -Joseph Lyons (D)
20th District – Michael McAuliffe (R)
21st District -Michael J Zalewski (D)
22nd District -Michael Madigan (D)
23rd District -Daniel Burke (D)
24th District -Lisa Hernandez (D)
25th District -Barbara Flynn Currie (D)
26th District -Will Burns (D)
27th District -Monique Davis (D)
28th District -Robert Rita (D)
29th District -David Miller (D)
30th District -Will Davis (D)
31st District -Mary Flowers (D)
32nd District- Andre Thapedi (D)
33rd District -Marlow Colvin (D)
34th District -Connie Howard (D)
35th District -Kevin Joyce (D)
36th District- James Brosnahan (D)
37th District -Kevin McCarthy (D)
38th District -Al Riley (D)
39th District -Maria "Toni" Berrios (D)
40th District -Deborah Mell (D)
43rd District -Keith Farnham (D)
44th District -Fred Crespo (D)
45th District -Jim Haggerty (D)
50th District -Mary Schneider (D)
51st District- Amanda Howland (D)
53rd District -Carol Javens (D)
56th District -Paul Froehlich (D)
57th District -Elaine Nekritz (D)
58th District- Karen May (D)
59th District -Kathleen Ryg (D)
60th District -Eddie Washington (D)
63rd District -Jack Franks (D)
64th District- Robert Kaempfe (D)
65th District -Aurora Austriaco (D)
66th District - Mark Walker (D)
67th District -Chuck Jefferson (D)
69th District -Greg Tuite (D)
71st District -Mike Boland (D)
72nd District -Pat Verschoore (D)
74th District -Donald Moffitt (R)
75th District -Careen Gordon (D)
76th District -Frank Mautino (D)
77th District -Angelo "Skip" Saviano (R)
78th District -Deborah Graham (D)
79th District -Lisa Dugan (D)
80th District -George Scully (D)
81st District- Rich Kelly (D)
83rd District -Linda Chapa Lavia (D)
85th District -Emily Klunk-McAsey (D)
86th District -Jack McGuire (D)
87th District -Bill Mitchell (R)
91st District -Mike Smith (D)
92nd District -Jehan Gordon (D)
96th District -Dianne McGuire (D)
98th District -Gary Hannig (D)
101st District -Robert Flider (D)
103rd District -Naomi Jakobsson (D)
104th District -Lori DeYoung (D)
106th District -Tom Shrier (D)
107th District- Patti Hahn (D)
111th District- Daniel Beiser (D)
112th District- Jay Hoffman (D)
113th District- Tom Holbrook (D)
114th District- Wyvetter Younge (D)
116th District- Dan Reitz (D)
117th District- John Bradley (D)
118th District -Brandon Phelps (D)



JUDICIAL

1st Supreme McMorrova vacancy – Anne Burke
1st Appellate Burke vacancy – Sharon Johnson Coleman
1st Appellate Campbell vacancy – John O. Steele
5th Appellate Hopkins vacancy – James M. Wexsten

OBAMA VS. McCain

Compare the Contenders

Employee Free Choice Act

Barack Obama is a co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act, recognizing workers' right to start a union.

John McCain said he is "firmly opposed" to the Employee Free Choice Act and voted against it.

Trade Agreements

Barack Obama wants to close corporate tax loopholes for sending jobs overseas and voted against the Central American Free Trade Act.

John McCain voted for NAFTA said "NAFTA was a good idea." He repeatedly votes in favor of overseas trade deals and voted to weaken or waive Buy American laws.

Construction Prevailing Wage

Barack Obama, while a state senator in Springfield, voted for prevailing wages and pledges to support them and project labor agreements.

John McCain consistently voted against prevailing wages and opposes project labor agreements.

Social Security

As a U.S. Senator, **Barack Obama** voted against benefit cuts. He pledges to protect social security and not raise the retirement age.

John McCain supports privatizing Social Security and his staff says he will not rule out raising the retirement age or reducing cost-of-living increases.

Windfall oil taxes

Obama supports a windfall profits tax on oil companies and promises to close loopholes speculators use to drive up gas prices.

McCain wants to give the oil companies \$3.8 billion in tax breaks and opposes a windfall profits tax.

Health Care

Obama calls for a health care plan that guarantees coverage to all, including coverage for those who switch jobs or have pre-existing conditions.

McCain wants to tax health benefits and espouses free market insurance purchase by individuals, not group health plans.

I.B.E.W LOCAL 21 NORTHWEST INDIANA CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENTS

The Committee On Political Education (C.O.P.E) Department in conjunction with the Indiana State AFL-CIO and the Northwest Indiana Federation of Labor, CLC have made the following Official Endorsements for the November 4, 2008 Elections:



STATEWIDE CANDIDATES:

GOVERNOR- Jill Long-Thompson (D)

ATTORNEY GENERAL- Linda Pence (D)

SUPERINTENDENT OF

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION- Richard Wood (D)

STATE SENATE:

District # 3 Earline Rogers (D)

District # 5 Larry Balmer (D)

STATE HOUSE:

District # 1 Linda Lawson (D)

District # 2 Earl Harris (D)

District # 3 Charlie Brown (D)

District # 10 Chuck Moseley (D)

District # 11 Dan Stevenson (D)

District # 12 Mara Candelaria-Reardon (D)

District # 13 Chester Dobis (D)

District # 14 Vernon Smith (D)

District # 15 Myron Sutton (D)

District # 17 Nancy Dembowski (D)

District # 19 Shelli VanDenburgh (D)

It is vitally important to the future of the Labor Movement in our state that we elect candidates that are committed to helping working-class families. Please contact Rosetta Shinn Executive Director Legislative/Political affairs at 630 960-4466 ext. 357 rshinn@ibew21.org or Dennis McCafferty C.O.P.E Director at (630) 960-4466 ext. 353 or by e-mail: dmac@ibew21.org to find out how you can get in the fight to protect our jobs and UNION way of life.

Illinois General Election Deadlines

Last day to register to vote

October 7, 2008

Grace Period Voter Registration to receive a provisional ballot

October 8- October 21, 2008

Early Voting

October 14- October 30, 2008

Indiana General Election Deadlines

Last day to register to vote

October 6, 2008

Early Voting

October 6th thru November 3, 2008

NEWS ACROSS

••• At **Vermillion County** the grievance panel is consistently denying all grievances. All are being escalated to arbitration.

The administrator at the **Peoria Bel-wood Nursing Home** has made verbal agreements to settle grievances, but when we go back to get the written response, he denies them. We have filed board charges with the Illinois Labor Relations Board. The ILRB handles labor management disputes for unionized state employees or those wishing to join a union.

In **AT&T Consumer**, we are still waiting for the arbitrator's decision on the first PAR termination case. Hopefully the decision will come soon. The company is still walking people out for not meeting the sales plan's unrealistic expectations.

There was a work swap between the **Wholesale Service Center in Springfield** and the one in Anaheim CA. Headcount will remain the same.

The **United Way** campaign is being directed on a national level this year rather than locally as in past years. We continue to support United Way and ask everyone to follow their heart and help their neighbors. Volunteering your time is even more important than money.

By *Vickie Burroughs, Business Representative*



••• Mandatory overtime was declared again in Chicago. The City had a lot of work. AT&T brought CWA techs in to help, but decided to send them home and again put the entire burden on your backs. It's not as if nobody has been trying to help. In most areas, the techs have been working 6 and 7 days a week. Some people have been working for 25- 30 days straight, and they are tired.

The Monday- Friday scheduling trial ended. The company decided they didn't get enough out of it, so they stopped the trial. The Union is trying to negotiate and maybe revisiting it in the near future.

Lately, we have been experiencing problems with overtime distribution...especially incidental overtime. In the City, we have never really tracked incidental overtime. Lately it's become a problem and now we will need to track it. We've been in meetings with the company, and soon hope to have incidental overtime lists in all garages.

Remember to check your driver's license status by calling the Illinois Secretary of State at 217-782-2720.

By *CJ-Cleveland Johnson, Business Representative*



••• Of the members declared surplus in **Downtown Chicago**, some were involuntarily SIPP'd on the force distribution date of September 12th. Others were extended to September 29th.

No one is safe; no job is safe with AT&T. The company is chipping away at our membership bit by bit. Our work is being shipped out of state. The company is no longer interested in quality, just quantity.

If you have family or friends working in non-union jobs, they'll tell you they must ask for a raise and hope they get what they feel they are worth. Most pay high premiums for health insurance. As the end of our contract approaches, remember you need to support collective actions. You can't afford not to.



By *Liz Hodges, Business Representative*

••• We have been pushing hard in **Consumer** for reduced hours and more headcount to help reduce the mandatory overtime that has been in place for the past year. On 9-5-08 AT&T advised us this is finally going to happen. The new hours for **Consumer and West LACC** will be 7am to 6pm Monday through Friday, and 7am to 4pm on Saturday. The NCVV (National Credit Verification Center) hours will be 7am to 9pm M-F and 7am to 6pm on Saturday.

In **Consumer** we continue to see the PAR management performance plan taking employment from our members. Most recently the company took action against a Service Representative who has been able to do the job for over 22 years but now because of PAR is not qualified. I am anxiously awaiting the answer of Arbitrator Brookins in the first PAR case.

In spite of this, in **Arlington Heights Consumer**, a whole team stood up for themselves and complained about the poor and inept coaching they received from a manager in their center. The employees continued to be covered on their PAR, but collectively they tried to get the coaching quality improved. They filed individual grievances on their results, together they tried to work through the chain of command. Their new General Manager, Jennifer Jones, showed up in Arlington and met with the team. She listened to their issues about the poor coaching, and reviewed their data. Ultimately the January through May 2008 PAR scores were thrown out and all the discipline reversed, for this entire team. I give them, the members who are the Union, so much credit for standing together to say, "This just isn't right."

The **Rosemont Long Distance** group will be moving soon to another floor in the building. It is smaller space but is a new build out. They expect to be moved by the end of September 2008 if all goes well. Along with the move, their systems and equipment will be updated.



By *Kurt Schmidt, Business Representative*

S T H E L O C A L . . .

• • • My North **construction garages** have been the recipients of many members working on details. Members in those garages have not been receiving training to perform the detailed work. The company promised to address the situation and provide training. With the completion of much of the U-Verse work details, AT&T decided to hold off on the training because of the heavy work load. The problem is now following the details into the Chicago garages. I've been working to address the problem. Management said they will begin implementing a **training timeline** for each garage. We'll see how that works out.

In **I&R** the company forced district wide **mandatory overtime** as a result of the storms that swept through the area. In a new twist they asked for 7am start times but refused to allow techs to work more than 10 hours because management is suddenly concerned about your safety. We have been in discussions with the company over their concerns.

In **Marketing**, service representatives have been stuck on mandatory overtime for the past year and a half. They are being forced to work up to an hour and a half of overtime up to three days per week. The company decides which shifts will have to work the additional hours. Grievances have been filed dating back to the beginning of this implementation and they are progressing through the grievance process.

The apprentice committee met in July and all areas are within ratio.

Michael Cohns, Business Representative



• • • We will be meeting soon with AT&T on the **central office scheduling problems**. Management provided off hour ticket information and we have been analyzing the data to determine if the shifts are really necessary. Busy work does not count.

In **Construction** the company has pulled the trigger and work completed 218 term employees. Not necessarily because of lack of work but more likely due to budget reasons. We just completed a preference from the garages over headcount to locations that are under-staffed.

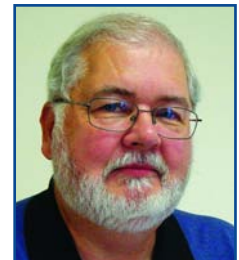
In **I&M** we've met on the Monday to Friday trial being tested in several garages. Management ended the trial because they didn't see a gain for the company, yet the work always got done and they never had a scheduling problem. The techs in those garages made it work; it was good for them. Why not keep it going? Hopefully we can get it reinstated in the near future.

The company has mucked it up again, imposing **mandatory overtime**. After a series of August storms, our members voluntarily stepped up to the plate and cleared more trouble than at any previous time, including periods of mandatory overtime. Yet when the weekend came up AT&T felt not enough techs volunteered to work, so the next week they imposed mandatory overtime once again, only to get caught up early. When are they going to learn? Local 21 members will give as much as they can when the company needs the help; don't slap them in the face by forcing more through the use of mandatory overtime. It's pretty crappy to hear one area has mandatory overtime and in other areas the techs, on overtime, are running out of work and switching to their new IFDs.

The latest problem is one we dealt with before. Management wants **off-hour scheduling** in I&M because they are missing some Hi-Cap and helper tickets. The Union raised this issue when they got rid of the DOG crew. At the time management said the Hi-Cap type work was diminishing and the crews would be blended into I&M. The occasional trouble ticket that comes in off hours does not constitute a reason to schedule a tech; there are other avenues such as a call out or on-call. Asking for volunteers to work the off hour shifts without first coming to the Union is wrong.

Lastly, anyone who has old cell phones can put them to good use. Bell West Community Credit Union is participating in the **Cell Phones For Soldiers program**. Old cell phones are recycled and the proceeds are used to buy prepaid calling cards for our soldiers in the Middle East. Bell West CCU is an official drop off site. So far Local 21 members have donated over 50 phones. If you want to donate an old cell phone to this worthy cause please give it to your Chief Steward or Business Rep and I will make sure that the phones are forwarded to Bell West CCU for the program. Thank you in advance for your support.

By Steve Unterfranz, Business Representative



• • • At AT&T, I am happy to report Exhibit 3 **Construction** technicians have been working in their home garages most of the summer. I&M details have also slowed.

In Digital Electronics, I am presently in discussions about the lack of routines being done on remote sites. While it is the company's prerogative to not do this work, there are safety issues concerning environmental certifications of CEV's, remote huts, and customer premise. When you enter a CEV make sure the certification is up to date, if not they must be treated like a manhole.

At **Verizon**, we are very pleased to see the success our brothers and sisters on the East Coast had in their contract negotiations. We will be looking for the same success in our upcoming bargaining. I would also like to congratulate brother Jack Bauer on his 50 years in the IBEW.

This summer we had several solidarity events **Downstate**. I would like to thank everyone who attended. A fun time was had by all. Let's make next summer's activities an even bigger success.

By Michael Roach, Business Representative



• • • Terry Sheehan has been appointed as the new Business Rep. for members under the **Altura** contract. Terry's contact info is 815-370-3411 (cell), or at the Union Office 630-960-4466 ext. 402.

Local 21's **Premise Tech Committee** members, Business Reps Dan Greuneich, Terry Sheehan, and Mike Sacco continue to meet on several issues. The meeting to discuss the wage-adders and global preferencing will be rescheduled after AT&T forwards the wage adder documentation to Jerry Gast.

We've had top down discussions about many issues including insufficient notice of mandatory overtime. We don't agree with the company coming out an hour and a half before quitting time on a Friday and telling everyone that they have to stay until "all the work in the State is cleared up." Mike Cunningham agrees AT&T should give at least a day's notice for any forced overtime.

A 2nd step grievance was filed on Frankfort techs reporting to the Rockdale location, and not getting paid detail money. Now the new management team is disregarding both the contract and previous agreement that we had for the money to be paid.

Chief Steward Mike Grindle is in the process of appointing two stewards for Frankfort and Kankakee. Cicerenna Errek and Charles Durham were appointed as stewards in Rockdale.

In **Construction** Gary Nagra was appointed as steward for the New Lenox FWG crew. There will be a meeting concerning their report locations. We all remember the day the company came to the garage and said that the reduction of a management position would not affect the technicians in New Lenox. Another issue affecting the **FWG** techs is the Central Office director's opinion that he doesn't need additional technicians. Jerry Gast has this issue.

Training of the term employees in construction is still an open issue because it impacts which members go on details. Please push for the continuation of training. Information on forced details is still a concern.

Meetings are ongoing with the **I&R** directors in regarding to scheduling, details, and head count concerns. They'd like to address scheduling on off-hours without providing the necessary data. We're concerned about forced details in areas that must close their clocks at 10am rather than 2pm. Head count is an issue in the areas where AT&T feels the workload doesn't support the number of techs working in certain MT areas.

Central Office: After being stonewalled in many meetings on off-hour/holiday scheduling, we finally received some useful data after the higher-ups in Labor became involved. The contractual process requires the company to provide the Union with the data being used for the formation on off-hours/holiday scheduling numbers. After several CO technicians helped us review the data, we sent a response to Labor Relations with a list of questions and concerns. Nothing is ever easy when trying to resolve an issue of this scope. The data shows us the company has been hiding hours under self-generated and other tickets. One example was a technician who only spent 15 minutes on a ticket, yet the ticket showed approximately 2000 minutes charged to it. The minutes were so high because the ticket was dispatched to the technician the day before, when he was NS. There are plenty of other examples, in the documentation supplied to us.

By Mike McCormick, Business Representative



• • • In **U-Verse** we held discussions about the installation of all VDSL equipment. AT&T seems to feel if there is a VRAD on the work order; the work should be done by U-Verse techs. We filed a grievance on this issue. The arbitration is scheduled for October 15, 2008. If you can provide us with any additional information please call Chief Steward Jim McLaughlan or me in the Union office on ext. 354 & 243.

We have received calls from U-Verse techs telling us they are being trained on how to tone pairs back to the Xbox, when they are unable to sync up their modems. They understand this is not their work and we thank them for calling. We approached the company and told them this type of work is not part of the prem tech job description and want it stopped immediately. Management promised to investigate the issue.

On a brighter note, we were able to win a **neutral evaluation** case on ERIC fraud. We were able to prove our technician was innocent of any wrong doing and he reported back to work on Monday July 14th.

By Dan Gruenich, Business Representative



• • • Members in **C&E** alerted us that AT&T has started the **CABLE MINING PROJECT**. The company first has our splicers identify cables to be pulled out of our underground facilities. They mark the cable and cut off the sleeves. When the splicers finish the cable run, the company hires a contractor to set up the manholes and pull out our cable. On the other end the contractor attaches mule tape to the cable being pulled out. They are not using a chopper on these jobs. The contractors wind the cable onto cable reels. This is our work. We filed a grievance at the 3rd step

We need everyone's help. Anyone who knows where contractor is doing this work please get the job number and give it to your steward. This work is being done companywide.

Contractors are delivering telephone poles straight to our garages bypassing our transportation department. Fiber pads are being placed by the contractor "Bore It." No contractors should be placing fiber pads. This is linemen's work. Two contract managers are performing clerical work in IBEW territory Byron is grieving all these issues.

The Coin moves into **C&E** should be completed. Some techs will have to take pole climbing to get into C&E. If you took pole climbing before you should not have to take it again.

It's come to our attention AT&T is not allowing the DEG group (loop electronics) to perform the routines on CEVs. There should be a sticker on the over head door listing all previous inspections. If these inspections are not being done, it's UNSAFE to enter the CEV. You should treat the CEV like a manhole; test and ventilate it.

The **I&R** managers are asking for volunteers for off hour shifts. If the volunteer goes on vacation the company feels they can replace the person by forcing someone else onto the voluntary shift. It is also their opinion they can use the volunteer in other areas without going to overtime lists.

By Terry Sheehan, Business Representative



• • • On May 4, 2008 the **NCSC** (Repair Center) hours were reduced to Monday thru Friday 6am to 6pm. Since then the company has been trying to make these hours work by trialing all kinds of shifts at other centers. AT&T now advised us **Lakewood** could be getting their Saturdays and Sundays back along with extended hours.



Our bilingual group informed the Union they weren't receiving bilingual calls. We approached management who stated the calls were moved to North Hollywood, CA and Houston, TX. We are currently arguing the movement of work along with the Project LightSpeed Memo violation.

The company sent emails to the members asking for a "show of hands" for those interested in 4 ten hour days; 190 out of 200 members were interested in the shift. During a meeting we asked, "When will they start?" The answer was "Since the response was so overwhelmingly high, we aren't going to do it."

The company advised us the Customer Rules Feedback Tool first introduced without discipline will now be changed and used as discipline. The Union is arguing this with management.

Recently a member was terminated for using the restroom. AT&T feels they have the right to do this, OSHA and the Union do not. This case will be going to arbitration.

We were having problems with overtime tracking in the **NDC** (Dispatch Center.) The company didn't seem to take this as seriously as we did. They now have agreed to provide the necessary assistance to keep the tracking up to date and available.

We have had a lot of retirements in the dispatch center. Congrats to those who retired! The company is not replacing the retired MA's. It's causing a lot of stress for the remaining members because of the heavier work loads. We are still looking to have four MA's placed from the surplus agreement negotiated earlier this year.

Recently Mike Roach (Springfield **EWO** Business Representative) and I held a 3rd step grievance meeting with the

company regarding some of our work being done in other AT&T regions. Management argued this is the process of work sharing. We laughed because we are having a hard time getting the company to realize what SHARE means. Share means exactly that, not just giving our work away. I will keep you posted.

We recently received information from the company advising us they are job completing 7 term employees in EWO. We are still discussing their termination dates.

Customer Rules Feedback Tool being used in the Lakewood NCSC will now be used for discipline in the **Chicago Heights business Office**. We are discussing this with the company.

Discipline for customer mistreats has been on the rise. Customers are dropped when our members incorrectly log off the Verint System. Please keep this in mind and log off correctly to avoid discipline.

AT&T was cited by OSHA for **Safety** violations related to improper shoring. Outside techs need to know even if the shoring was done by a contractor and viewed by a manager it's still your responsibility to inspect it to ensure it's done properly before you begin working. Do not assume since others have inspected the shoring it's safe. As a result of the citations the company is providing "Excavation Competent Persons Refresher Training" to employees working in these conditions.

We are still arguing the need for sunscreen to be supplied by the company for our outside techs as required by OSHA's, PPE Standards (Personal Protective Equipment). We will discuss it when the Safety Committee meets.



With winter approaching I want talk about jumping auto batteries. If you are not qualified (experienced/trained) to jump a frozen battery you are not required to do it. The lack of training creates an unsafe working condition. **A battery exploded when an untrained tech attempted to jump start his company vehicle.** It's a very dangerous situation. The proper process is to contact your manager who is responsible to send a trained person to charge the battery.



Over the past year the **JULIE** building has gone through a major reconstruction. The building expanded; a new call and training center was added along with new offices and a safe room

designed as a safe haven in case of a natural disaster or intruder. Our members have weathered through the construction work which was done while the office ran as normal. On July 18th we attended a dedication ceremony and open house. President Kastner and I enjoyed talking to our sisters and brothers at JULIE and hope they have settled into their new work environment.

By Melanie Probst, Business Representative

• • • I marvel that AT&T still expects us to carry them through their bad management decisions. They expect us to cover their disinvestment in the outside plant. The company invoked mandatory overtime when there hadn't been a cloud in the sky for seven days. Their short-term style does long-term damage to the spirit of the people who built the company. This company looks on all of us as numbers.

Congratulations to our sisters and brothers at Verizon on their great victory. I was amused at how the day after the tentative agreement was announced AT&T declared that they were different from Verizon. An effort to squash our Union's expectation of a good contract. Verizon is different; they invest in their outside plant.

We are still working with the new second level manager to fix the scheduling issues at the Montrose garage. There is still a Hi Cap integration scheduling problem.



By Michael Sacco, Business Representative

**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
LOCAL UNION No. 21**

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

DECEMBER 31, 2007 AND 2006

December 31,

	2007	2006
ASSETS		
Cash on Hand and in Banks:		
Petty Cash	\$ 750	\$ 750
Checking Accounts	946,153	405,545
Total Cash	946,903	406,295
Investments (Notes 1b and 3)	5,720,884	5,350,853
Total Cash and Investments	6,667,787	5,757,148
Property and Equipment (Note 1c):		
Automobiles	408,025	405,130
Furniture and Equipment	735,065	727,960
Leasehold Improvements	21,849	21,849
Total Property & Equipment	1,164,939	1,154,939
Less - Accumulated Depreciation	(827,812)	(779,786)
Net Property and Equipment	337,127	375,153
Total Assets	\$ 7,004,914	\$ 6,132,301
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Payroll Withholdings	\$ -	\$ 638
Deposits	137	-
Total Liabilities	137	638
Net Assets	7,004,777	6,131,663
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 7,004,914	\$ 6,132,301

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES MODIFIED CASH BASIS

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007 AND 2006

Year Ended December 31,

	2007	2006
REVENUE		
Dues Income (Note 4):		
Dues and Admission Fees	\$ 7,461,477	\$ 6,027,777
Other Income:		
Interest and Dividends	296,144	279,427
Loss on Trade-Ins of Automobiles	(19,471)	(10,789)
Increase (Decrease) in Fair Market Value of Investments (Note 3)	(157,239)	(15,768)
Total Revenue	7,895,389	6,280,647
EXPENSES		
Per Capita Taxes	1,561,514	1,515,955
General and Administrative Expenses (Page 13)	5,460,761	5,162,961
Total Expenses	7,022,275	6,678,916
Excess (Deficit) of Revenue Over Expenses	837,114	(398,269)
NET ASSETS		
Beginning of Year	\$ 6,131,663	\$ 6,529,932
End of Year	\$ 7,004,777	\$ 6,131,663



Peoria Chiefs



Summer Solidarity Events



Joliet Jackhammers



Great America



Illinois State Fair

Local 21 Scholarship Winners



Caitlin Sullivan



Beth Roach



Caitlin Lawrence



Kevin Eric



Kelly Sheehan



Colette Morgan



Joseph Stancato



Julia Arwood



Stephen Yatsushiro



Kyle Koslowski

Union Victories at Chicago 911 Center

By Jerry Rankins, Business Representative



City Can't Compel Shop Steward to Testify.

Local 21 settled an Unfair Labor Practice charge (ULP) with the City of Chicago's OEMC

crime or imminent risk of physical injury of another person. 2) OEMC WILL NOT, through its officers or agents interfere with, restrain, or coerce employees in the exercise of rights guaranteed by the Illinois Labor Relations Act.

As part of the settlement agreement, a **Notice to Employees** will be posted at the OEMC for sixty (60) days. Great work Michelle!

The Union won a big Indebtness Arbitration Case, although the arbitrator's ruling did not give us everything we wanted. Local 21 sought to get rid of the policy simply because it violated the "just cause" provision of the contract. However, the arbitrator did rule that: *1) the OEMC administered the policy in a disparate manner and 2) it was unconscionable that, the OEMC would levy a minimum 10-day suspension to members of the bargaining unit after they have paid the parking tickets and fine.*

The ruling gives complete back pay for some members, for others discipline but no suspension time and in future all discipline must be progressive with just cause.

Again, Great work Clarence Cooper, along with all stewards.

Bargaining News: The City cries broke. What else is new? The bottom line is your bargaining committee refuses to accept anything less than a fair contract. Some are concerned about layoffs. I find it very difficult for the Mayor to cut staffing at the already understaffed 911 center.

Comcast News: We requested early negotiations for the West contract which is set to expire April 30, 2009.

Grievance and Arbitration: The Union has requested binding arbitrations regarding the Company's attendance policy, job repeats (score card) for both the Cortland and West contracts. Recently, a lot of discipline has been imposed without "just cause." Comcast continues to take aim at attempting to destroy us but it will never happen.

The fight for justice is everywhere. **"I say bring it on, it's OBAMA TIME! The best thing for working FAMILIES! Solidarity!"**

regarding protected rights of shop stewards. The Union filed charges with the Illinois Labor Relations Board (ILRB) when steward Michelle Driver was threatened with discipline by the City's law department after she rightfully refused to divulge information of a member who she had represented. The law gives special rights to union stewards while acting as an employee's union representative. The settlement states: *1) OEMC WILL NOT, compel or seek to compel any union steward to disclose information he/or she may have acquired from an OEMC employee while acting as an employee's union representative unless it is necessary to prevent the commission of a*

The Future of our Country

By Michael Sacco, Business Representative

It's election season again and our country is in the worst mess it's been in since the darkest days of the Great Depression. Real wages have fallen nearly 35% since 1980. Unemployment doesn't look as high as in 1930, because our government hides millions of the unemployed in prisons, the military, and by a sleight of hand in the way they count people who are out of work or underemployed. They're kidding us. We are now ranked 18th in living standards among industrialized nations. In 1980 we were number two, after Sweden.

Additionally, we are the largest debtor in the world at the same time. We are the largest importer of foreign goods. The dollar is crashing and we still consume fossil fuels at an astounding rate. We haven't learned from our own history—again. We forgot the oil shocks of the 70's and 80's and the corporate economic terrorism of the 20's, 80's and 90's and we did it with the encouragement of our government. A group as short-sighted as the corporate bosses who put and keep them in power.

They told us government regulation was

bad, even though it ensured the banks couldn't rob us like they did in the 1920's (and they're doing again now). They told us small government was good and public spending on ourselves was bad, even though it brought us out of the Great Depression, won two world wars and built the greatest middle-class in history. Our education system crashed from neglect. What we spend in Iraq in a year could replace every school in our country today.

This was mostly done by the Republicans, but they had cooperation of many corporate Democrats. We have the government we deserve because we let big money overtake our democracy. We allowed ourselves to be distracted by marginal issues like abortion, gay marriage, prayer in school and flag burning. These may be important to some, but they are not critical to our country's survival.

Why were we able to come out of the Depression? Because our government had resources and borrowed even more to put people to work and drive money to the bottom of our society—not the top, the way

we have been doing for the last eight years. **The Bush Administration has overseen the largest transfer of wealth from working and middle-class people to the rich in the history of modern economics.** Only Pharaoh had it better than our modern corporate titans.

Is Barack Obama a savior? No, but he is a brilliant and conscientious leader who is a damn sight better than our country has seen since JFK. Do I believe he can turn around 30 years of neglect and mismanagement of our nation's great resources? Not right away, and I think we as working people will have to keep him honest and push him hard past the whims of the corporate leeches.

Some of you will say you won't vote for Obama because he is African-American or some even more nonsensical reason. Please don't fall for that BS. **Obama represents real change on national priorities** like our economy, our health care system, our failing schools, the phony wars on terror and drugs and our standing as a world leader for peace and justice. Vote Obama for our futures.

IBEW Local 21 member and his son cook up idea to feed US troops in Iraq.

By Bob Przybylinski, Chief Steward

Mark Evans is a fiber splicer working out of AT&T's Des Plaines garage with over 30 years of service as an IBEW member. In late May he and his son were spending "guys" night together when Kent cooked up an idea that changed their lives.

While devouring a deep dish Lou Malnati's pizza Kent asked his dad if the soldiers in Iraq had pizza. He replied, "No, the food over there is nothing like we have here at home." Mark is a retired United States Air Force Master Sergeant who served as a worldwide communication specialist for 26 years. Kent wondered if they could send pizzas to the troops.

It got Mark thinking. All soldiers are taught to make the world a better place. We brighten their day by sending gifts we often take for granted. They developed a plan to make their world a better place on the 4th of July.

They had a plan, needed a plane, approval and most importantly pizza. During the Bosnian crisis Mark sent 50 pizzas to his friends. He contacted Lou Malnati's to see if they'd help out again. Jim Freiland assured Mark they would provide as many frozen pizzas as he needed. Little did he know they'd be sending 2,000 pizzas including the ones on reserve for the Taste of Chicago.

Knowing he could feed the troops, Mark needed to know if he'd be allowed to share this taste of home. He emailed the Commanding General of the Multi-National Force in Iraq, David Petraeus. Mark's wife, Gail laughed, thinking General Petraeus wouldn't respond.

Astoundingly, eight hours later the General emailed them back: "Many thanks and nothings more important to our troopers than the support of those at home and your request is timely because my staff is putting together a huge reenlistment ceremony for the 4th of July." Mark was now under the gun to get a plane.

Mark began shooting off letters to the major freight carriers. Ethan Mattern, DHL's Senior Manager for the US Department of Defense, responded. Ethan arranged to have DHL donate the air transportation needed to get the pizzas to the patriots.

Mark then turned to his Union Brothers and Sisters working in his own and surrounding garages. Local 21 members in the Des Plaines, Mount Prospect and Villa Park garages rose to the challenge and raised nearly \$1,500 for the cause. He knew the members would come up with the funds because it's Union people helping one another.

Gail sent an email to the *Daily Herald's Someone You Should Know* column. To their surprise the story was picked up by the Associated Press. Suddenly Gail was swamped with emails and phone calls.

It was like lightening in a bottle. Mark and his family appeared on local news and radio stations. Newspapers carried the story, and



Front Row is Left to Right Melissa Evans, Kent Evans, Samantha Evans Back row is Gail Evans, Mark Evans and Ethan Mattern from DHL Express

funds poured in from all over the country. For years Mark thought people didn't care about the troops; now he realized that people do care, that they want to help, but they don't know what they can do to help.

While Mark was doing the media circuit, Gail kept track of all the correspondence and the flood of donations. Their entire family worked as a team. Samantha helped with email. Encouragement came from Melissa, who is in the U.S. Air Force Academy.

The mission was almost jeopardized. The plane packed with pizzas was forced to wait on a runway in Bahrain while a sand storm pounded Iraq for two days. A trip that should have only taken 48 hours now doubled. The pizzas were repacked in dry ice twice while in transport.

When the special delivery finally arrived in Iraq, U.S. troops parked on the tarmac began cheering as the plane taxied down the runway. The pizzas were sent to the troops stationed at the "forward posts" outside the secure green zone.

Mark explained, "When we wake up on the 4th of July it's special for us because we look forward to the celebrations. In Iraq it became a special day again for the troops because of the pizzas." Mark hopes we can all learn from his experience. We need to teach our kids that nothing is impossible. As Union members we must help one another and stick together for the common good. The next project is to send pizzas to the wounded troops from Middle East at the VA hospital in Germany on Veterans Day as a get well wish. He hopes to provide pizzas on July 4, 2009 for all of the 120,000 troops serving our county.

For more information visit <http://www.pizzas4patriots.com>.

“Gentlemen, we shall all stand together or we will surely all hang separately.” —Ben Franklin

By Mike O'Connor, Chief Steward



In my travels across the Local a common complaint is echoed: “What is the Union going to do about Mandatory Overtime?” Or “When is the apprentice ratio going to

change?” The tone of those interactions is always the same, pressing the faceless, amorphous UNION to do something about it.

This is as good a reason to talk about bargaining as any. Our contract with AT&T expires in less than a year. The question is not, “What will the UNION do about the obstacles facing our members?” The question is, “What are WE going to do about them?”

The members in the Chicago Kedzie I&R garage are not waiting for the secret sign from President Kastner or even Divine Intervention. They have already raised over \$5,000 for their “strike fund.” They took it upon themselves to prepare for the worst

next summer. Little by little and week by week, they have been contributing regular sums every pay period. They are building up a resource to survive a worst-case defense of our contract.

If you are not doing something similar at your workplace, I hope you are doing something similar at home. If not saving a little at a time, then pay down credit card debt and defer major purchases.

The reality is we are entering the toughest bargaining environment we’ve seen in a generation. The housing slump and credit crisis may not even have peaked and the side effects won’t be fully known for years. Statistics show real wages for most workers have declined by almost a third since 1978.

AT&T is thriving, posting 22 straight quarters of positive gains for Wall Street investors. The majority of that growth is occurring in wireless and broadband segments of the company. Plain Old Telephone Service is declining—rapidly. Analysts and the company’s own statements to investors indicate they expect line loss of basic dial tone customers to accelerate in the coming years.

Ten years ago Verizon’s business was 70 percent unionized. Now it’s only 30 percent. The overall business has grown, but the union footprint has shrunk. This is the business model across the telecommunications world.

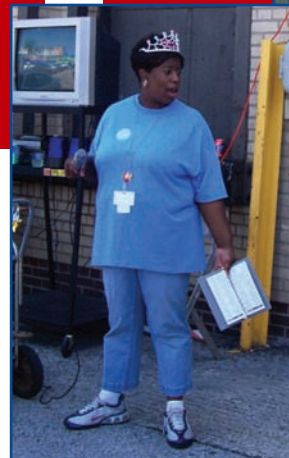
At AT&T we have to move the protections and the guarantees of the core contract not simply to new workers but to all new business lines, technologies, and areas where AT&T is growing!

We are entitled to some of that growth. Don’t let anyone tell you differently. We built this company with our aching backs and knees, with long hours away from our families, with thousands of hours chained to an ACD, a modern-day form of electronic indenture. Our hard work has generated billions of dollars in revenue and PROFIT for this company. It’s the leader in a rapidly changing industry. Remember, it was revenue from the wireline business the company used to invest in fiber optics, DSL, wireless and IPTV.

My message here is simple. Don’t wish for a strike, but be prepared for one.



Solidarity Days at Total Grace and West LACC



PHOTOS: JACEK JURKOWSKI AND KEVIN SLEDGE

CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

November 2007

Shelly Miller
Steven C. Rucker

January 2008

Ed Novak

February 2008

Sharon Wright
Sal Venegas
James W. Harney Sr.
Pamela Vanzuiden

March 2008

Cheryl Waggoner
Karleen Merchant
Michelle S. Carter

April 2008

Barbara Zechlin
David C. Anderson

May 2008

Lyn M. Coscarelli
Jelena Street
Nancy J. Hagger
Beverly Logan
Edna Sue Mason
Marylou Koeppen
Ora Hughes
Beatrice R. Hampton
Yolanda Smith
Sharon Higashida
Phyllis L. Locander
Linda S. Lockart
Cecelia L. Grey
Barbara Curry
Virginia Huertas
Nilda L. Luna
Jean Mager
Alexis Jayne Maher
Annell Taylor
Robert L. Ewing Jr.
Suzanne Eads
Beatrice Earlene
Heuck

Karen Hearo
Rosario B. McCarrall
Mary Mathews
Michelle Scott
Robert Ewing
Miguel A. Martinez
Larry J. Wimberley
Leandra K. Johnson
Eva M. Casazza
Bonnie L. Neal
John F. Sullivan
Anna Neiswanger
Efigenia Carlos
Diane Meyers
Helen Maxfield
Ronald Forsberg
Richard M. Wagoner
Will Ford III
Sally Hlavka
Glen Holtapp Jr.
Nancy Harmon
Benjamin Medina
Marianne V. Mohler
Mae E. Wells
Mary L. Carey
Shirley Malone
Maurice Collier
Adelaida Brown

May 2008

Lula Abcumby
Ofelia F. Odiamar
Carolyn McCroy-Dodd
Debra McMutyary
Della Ipsen
Susan Melby
Nancy Lohmann
Darla J. Kelley
Rosetta C. Poole
Ronald Daniel
Thomas J. Hosteny
Dale Desota
Anthony Sammarco
Pam Beran
Blake M. Schaake
Tyresa Stepney

July 2008

Ronald H. Bishop
Joann Woodall
Robert J. Corlas
Robert Chamber
Audrey D. Gordon
Eileen Wierer
Ronald G. Flynn
Albert Castellanos
Benjamin F. Pura
Jon Yates
John Walter
Geno Paoni
John M. Coughlin
Richard Schall
Barbara Lindsoe
Tom Richardson

August 2008

Roger Gola
Beverly Hill
Vickie D. Edwards
Dorrell Bryant
Jim Palik
Richard Johnson
Eileen Hagopian
Jim Bono
Steve Jurinek

September 2008

Ora L. Mosley
Rita Denham
Demond R. Jackson
Jonnie L. Buncich
Thomas J. Carroll
Tammy Daley
John "Jack" Krapil

In order to appear on this page you must inform your steward you are retiring and a retiree gift application must be submitted. Without receipt of this application the *Frontline* editors are unaware of your retirement.

Meet the Staff

By Jacquie Fields, Treasurer



If you have ever placed a call to the union office, you were greeted with: "Hello you have reached IBEW Local 21." I mentioned in our

March Issue of *Frontline* we have two confidential clerks working in our office, that lovely voice is our own, **Jean Pilot**.

Jean handles the Local's accounting and bookkeeping functions, as well as providing administrative and clerical support to our officers and executive staff. There are many duties that can take up a day in our office, she is ready willing and able to handle any of them, and do them well. Our staff depends on her to make sure that everything runs smoothly during the many committee meetings that occur in our office.

Jean is the steward of the UFCW Local 881, the union that represents our office staff. She's had the experience of sitting across from our Assistant Business Managers to negotiate their contracts. Her 30th anniversary is approaching; she was previously part of the office staff of IBEW Local 336.

I admire Jean's devotion to the membership, which is exhibited in her work. Jean is a married empty nester, with two children, one graduated from college, and one in college, giving her more time to devote to her two dogs, Sadie and Louis.



"Hey, O'Brien, guess who has to work tomorrow?"

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.

UNIT MEETINGS 2008

The Battle Brings Victory Closer

By Dave Webster, Business Representative



We recently held an election at Comcast's Chicago South location in the historic Pullman District. You have heard me talk about organizing at Comcast for years and may

wonder why we keep trying or why we haven't had greater success. The answer is simple the industry standard and union busting.

Comcast hires "consultants" to train management how to coerce and intimidate employees. Unfortunately for Comcast workers, they came up eleven votes short in the election. Comcast management pulled this one off by holding mandatory captive audience meetings where they fed the workers and scared enough of them into believing they would actually *lose* pay by forming a union. Nothing could be further from the truth. There are a lot of newer, younger workers who don't understand what Unions do for workers and they bought into the company's rhetoric.

Comcast is among the majority of corporations that get away with breaking the weak Labor laws that are not fairly enforced. This is a fine example of why unions need to be politically active. Unions are fighting to change these watered down laws.

The **victory pulled from the battle** here is we believe Comcast broke the law, and we filed objections to the election. Comcast submitted the scripts used in the mandatory meetings as evidence at the ensuing NLRB hearing. We are sharing these documents with the workers at Chicago South. We promised them as long as they stand with us we will continue to back them until we get a fair election. After seeing the documents the workers now know they were fooled by their anti-union, anti-worker employer. Their desire to form a union has multiplied.

Comcast is a perfect example why we need to support and work hard to get the Employee Free Choice Act passed through Congress and on the desk of the next President. Obama has promised to sign the Act into law. McCain has promised that he will not.

EFCA does three things to make it easier for workers to join unions without the fear of losing their job. First, it allows for card

OCTOBER

Unit 1

Thursday, October 9, 7 PM
Irish-American Heritage Center
4626 N. Knox Ave.
Chicago IL
773 282-7035

Unit 2

Tuesday October 14, 7 PM
Gaelic Park
6119 W. 147TH
Oak Forest IL
708 687-9323

Unit 3

Thursday, October 16, 7 PM
Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
495 Airport Rd.
Elgin IL
847 488-9000

Unit 4

Wednesday, October 8, 7 PM
American Legion Harwood #5
705 S. Larkin
Joliet IL
815 725-4333

Unit 5

Wednesday, October 15, 7 PM
Rocky Point Club
3303 Bonasinga Dr.
Quincy IL
217 224-1332

Unit 6

Tuesday, October 21, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr.
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, October 20, 7 PM
IBEW Local # 309
2000A Mall St. (Rte 157)
Collinsville IL
618 345-5112

NOVEMBER

Unit 1

Thursday, November 13, 7 PM
IBEW Local #21
1307 W. Butterfield Rd. Suite 424
Downers Grove IL
630 960-4466

Unit 2

Tuesday, November 11, 7 PM
Lansing American Legion #697
18255 Grant St.
Lansing IL
708 474-5906

Unit 3

Thursday, November 20, 7 PM
Holiday Inn of Rockford
7550 E State St.
Rockford IL
815 398-2200

Unit 4

Wednesday, November 12, 7 PM
Lemont VFW
15780 New Ave.
Lemont IL
630 257-9859

Unit 5

Wednesday, November 19, 7 PM
VFW Post #193
1303 E. Main St.
Urbana IL
217 367-4197

Unit 6

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

Unit 7

Monday, November 17, 7 PM
IBEW Local #649
501 Humbert Rd.
Alton IL
618 462-16217

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.

check, which means to vote for the union you sign a card in confidence. Secondly, it greatly increases the punishment for companies that break the law and lastly, it puts into effect binding arbitration for a first contract if the parties can't reach an agreement

When we go to the polls in November, please remember this is a worker issue that must be considered before we vote. If we do not, we will slowly see our own wages and benefits lowered to the standards of the cable companies. We could be working for half the pay and benefits we have today.

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

© 278

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Downers Grove, IL
Permit No. 424



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**Welcome
New
Members**

IBEW Local 21 Nights!



Dallas Mavericks · Thu., Nov. 13th · 8:30 p.m.
Indiana Pacers · Sat., Nov. 15th · 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia 76ers · Tues., Dec. 2nd · 7:30 p.m.

United Center

On these special nights all IBEW Local 21 members, family and friends have the opportunity to purchase tickets at half price! Tickets regularly priced at \$40 are available for only \$20.

IMPORTANT: For complete details and to order tickets, go to:

http://www.ibew21.org/events/bulls_2008.pdf. Payment must be received by the Chicago Bulls (by fax or mail only) no later than three weeks before the first game ordered. Please note that tickets are subject to availability and due to high demand, we encourage you to fax or mail this completed form as soon as possible. Tickets will sell out!