



IBEW LOCAL UNION 21 FRONTLINE

Vol. 20 No. 1
March 2015

A LITTLE HELPS A LOT!



My Joyful Heart

Sharing the love of Christ with
Chicago's children in need

August 23, 2014

Dear Mr. Bob Przybylinski,
Thank you for your contribution to My Joyful Heart. Your donation will make a huge impact immediately, as the Chicago Food Depository provides food to more than 142,000 adults and children this week.

Thank you for your contribution raised from your recent food drive of \$1,381.00 to the Chicago Food Depository. Your donation will make a huge impact immediately, as the Chicago Food Depository provides food to more than 142,000 adults and children this week.

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January 26, 2015

Dear Bob,
Blessings from Mercy Home for Boys & Girls! IBEW Local 21's \$760 gift to our children through the Michael J. Kunas Memorial Fund will go far in providing for our kids' needs in this New Year. Your friendship is such a wonderful blessing around here, and I could not be more grateful for all you share.

I hope 2015 is off to a beautiful start for you. I want to tell you that I read your letter and was touched by it. Thank you for sharing your wealth with our children. Your dedicated kindness means that they have a year ahead of them filled with promise, success, and the joy of knowing they are safe within our Home. Your commitment has helped these young ones make so much progress already, and I can't wait to see how much further they will go in 2015.

May God bless all of you at IBEW Local 21 in the year ahead! Know that you are in my most thankful thoughts and prayers. May God bring you love, joy, and peace!

Blessings,

Fr. Scott Donahue

P.S. - Mercy Home for Boys & Girls is a 501 (c) (3) organization, Tax ID: 36-2171726. Since no goods, services, or other things of value were furnished in consideration of this gift to Mercy Home, you may use this letter as a receipt for tax purposes. Thank you again for your kindness.

CC: Paul T. Wright

Crittenton Centers
PRO CRISIS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Ken Klobonides, Vice Chair
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Jan Barahona

October 23, 2014
Dear Mr. Bob,
On behalf of the children and families we serve, it is a pleasure to say thank you for your generous contribution to the 3rd Annual Stocking Stuffer Store! As a result of your generosity, children in our community will receive the services needed to help them thrive and be healthy. We are able to further our mission of protecting and providing for our most vulnerable children and families.



February 24, 2014
Local Union 21 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Paul Wright
1397 Butterfield Rd Ste 422
Downers Grove, IL 60515-5823

Dear Friends,
Welcome to the dedicated group of Foodbank supporters who recognize the importance of our mission to collect and distribute food to charitable agencies serving people in need. Your recent gift of \$343.00 (check #32086, dated 02/12/2014) from the "IBEW 21 Days of Giving Food Drive" is greatly appreciated. Your support helps fight hunger 365 days a year, ensuring individuals and families receive nutritional food and warm meals through the nearly 450 agencies with whom we partner.
In Central Illinois 17,600 people receive emergency food weekly through our agency partners. Last year, the Foodbank distributed 9 million pounds of food - a more than 500,000 increase over the previous year. We also continue to work hard to ensure available foods with high nutritional value.
To learn more about the Foodbank and how you can help, please call 618-233-3333.
To schedule a tour please call 618-233-3333.
Sincerely,
Pam Mollitoro
Executive Director
www.centralillinoisfoodbank.org

February 24, 2014
Mr. Bob Przybylinski
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers - Local 21
1307 Butterfield Rd Ste 422
Downers Grove, IL 60515-5806

Thank you for your contribution raised from your recent food drive of \$1,381.00 to the Chicago Food Depository. Your donation will make a huge impact immediately, as the Chicago Food Depository provides food to more than 142,000 adults and children this week.

February 21, 2014
Paul T. Wright
President-Business Manager & Financial Secretary
1207 Butterfield Rd., Suite 422
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515-5806

Dear Mr. Wright:
The Peoria Area Food Bank is in receipt of your check in the amount of \$472.00. Thank you so very much, because of our many wonderful food partners every dollar donated to our food bank allows us to purchase enough food for 5 meals, our donation will allow us to have enough food to serve 200 meals to our many hungry families. We have over 100 member pantries that help us feed people throughout our eight county service area. We distribute over 300,000 pounds of food, breaking all of our records. We are grateful for all our donors and volunteers. We couldn't do what we do without you. We are so pleased to have been chosen as one of our partners.

February 21, 2014
Paul T. Wright
President-Business Manager & Financial Secretary
1207 Butterfield Rd., Suite 422
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515-5806

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Paul Wright - President - Business Manager - Financial Secretary



We Are Getting Stronger

I am pleased to announce the newest addition to the Local 21 staff, Heather Brown. Heather is part of my ongoing initiative to diversify the make up our Local's staff, which isn't an

easy task. Staff members put themselves in harm's way with their employers by representing you, and I can't discount their dedication to our Union. As I make changes, I feel it is an asset to have a staff that is well balanced so all members feel they are represented.

Heather is the first Premise Technician to join the Union's staff. She is an active and involved member. Heather has been a shop steward for over six years in different locations at times representing as many as 65 technicians. She is a member of the Local 21 RENEW steering committee, representing our young members at RENEW conferences. Heather was a delegate at the RENEW/Political Caucus meetings. During 2013 AT&T bargaining, she served on the Premise Technician sub-committee.

When I was a Business Representative one of the most impressive things I noticed is the way she manages her role as a steward with her role as a Premise Technician. Heather is a stand out technician when it comes to quality and customer care. She truly understands the balance of representing our members while raising the bar by being a true union craftsman.

December and AT&T never seem to be a good combination. As last year ended, the corporate bean counters and executives took another swipe at the very employees who helped build the company into the powerhouse it is today. They can't seem to treat these employees and their families with an ounce of compassion or appreciation for their efforts.

Yes, we should have our eyes wide open to the changing technology in our industries and its effect on our jobs. But is that any reason to declare surpluses during arguably the most emotional and mentally stressful month of the year? Sure management tells us that it has to do with projections and fiscal budgets. But have you ever seen a budget that they could keep?

Many members have asked if it is legal. The answer is yes, but is it ethical or moral? It seems to me, that AT&T (the old Ma Bell) executives should dig deep into their souls and find a moral compass. There is never a good month to declare surplus, but there certainly is at least one month that our members should have some peace. Imagine that!

I promised all of you working at the City of Chicago 911 OEMC; this Local will not endorse a Mayoral candidate who takes shots at our members. The current mayor has shown us twice in the last year how he manages his budget. First, he blamed his budget overages in part on our members' overtime instead of acknowledging that the critical understaffing at the OEMC is causing the alleged overtime issue. We all know this type of economics, overtime is cheaper than adding headcount to the benefits equation. The second instance was the restructured pension obligation. I'm not willing to play ball with a mayor who already took two swings at our members this past year.

Since taking office, I've worked hard addressing our finances. They are now stable and we are seeing positive results. This has allowed us to fortify our reserve which is great news for us all. Managing our finances allows us to tackle other lingering problems like modernizing our computer systems.

Over the past several months I've been working closely with our Executive Board and Officers to interview IT providers and analyze their bids. The E-Board recently approved the expense to start these much-needed improvements. The first phase of replacing equipment and computers is now underway.

A Little Helps a Lot

The Michael A. Kunas Beneficiary Committee was formed to select union families as recipients of the Michael A. Kunas Memorial Fund. This fund is solely sponsored by voluntary donations.

In 2014, our Local hosted The Michael A. Kunas Memorial Fund Golf Outing and Dinner. We were so proud because your participation made the event successful. A portion of the proceeds were donated to our late Union brother Terry Quandt's daughters Amber, Ashley and Angela in their father's memory. We were also able to help Local 21 members who suffered from acts of devastation. As co-chairperson along with Robert Taylor, and our fellow committee members, Kevin Beallis, Byron Bonham, Dennis McCafferty, and Grace Rivera, we are honored to be a part of something that helps our union Sisters and Brothers.

I also had the honor and privilege to work with Bob Przybylinski and David Webster on our IBEW 21 Days of Giving campaigns. We started the year with a food drive followed by a back to school supply drive and ended the year by collecting toys and coats for children in need. All three of these events brought out the best in IBEW Local 21 members. Your donations were abundant and we were able to help many communities throughout the states of Illinois and

Indiana.

Within the IBEW there is an organization called the EWMC (Electrical Workers Minority Caucus). This organization began for one reason, and has flourished into something pretty amazing. I say that because the IBEW membership is so diverse, not only people of color are members, but women and men of all races meet yearly to train, and explore different ways for union members to grow. This year's conference was held in Atlanta, this is the second year the RENEW members held workshops during the event.

At the conference each EWMC charter group gives a yearly report. One of the best parts of EWMC annual conference is the first day when the delegates go out into the host city and participate in community service. This year IBEW 21 delegates worked at the Atlanta Habitat for Humanity. What a great feeling you get when you are able to serve others!

I'm looking forward to 2015; we have lots of work ahead of us, Brothers and Sisters. The best way to lead is to help others, through service and giving.



We Are Getting Stronger (continued)

Once these hardware improvements are completed, we will search out the most sensible software that will allow us to best utilize and archive our Local's massive data and paper records. This is no small feat and once we do hone in on the right products and services, the immense process will start to digitally and redundantly store this information. Doing so will allow our Local to migrate toward a more functional and paperless environment.

In closing, please keep your eyes and ears glued to the CWA/AT&T bargaining opening this spring. I made a choice in 2013 bargaining to negotiate a four-year deal. I know many of you understand my logic. With that being said please support our fellow brothers and sisters in labor and keep them in your thoughts during their negotiations.



A Busy Start to the Year

I wish I had better news to start 2015. As many of you know, we are working through **AT&T** declared surpluses. Many representatives on our staff and I are working

to secure as many open job requisitions as we can so the affected Local 21 members will have as many job choices as possible available to them. This enables members to make informed decisions that will affect the future of their careers. After the bumping process was completed there were 135 employees on the surplus list.

We secured open job requisitions in the Sales Consultant Title in our Chicago and Rock Island centers. In Danville, Decatur, Mt. Vernon and Peoria we obtained open Customer System Technician job requisitions. These open positions will be offered to priority placement employees before being released to Career path. Those surplused will also have access to current VSIPP jobs.

We are not happy with the cuts made by AT&T however, your leadership was able to avert a surplus in the Cable Splicing title. This happened through negotiations with AT&T management (see Article 30 of our AT&T Contract); the end result was a preference agreement that relieved the Splicing headcount issue. While we realize some members were disappointed by the preference, at the end of the day 138 members jobs were saved.

Johnson Controls (JCI) notified us on January 16, 2015 that it was declaring a staff reduction on the AT&T Project. They expect the cuts to be completed by close of business on February 28, 2015.

These were some long negotiations. We were able to reduce the number of at-risk employees and invoke the bumping rights of senior members as provided by Article 19 in the JCI Collective Bargaining Agreement. Layoffs will be by inverse seniority and severance options for members volunteering to go on layoff are protected.

Johnson Controls declared some job locations as surplus, without declaring our members surplus. Beginning with the most senior person whose job is surplused; all members will have the right, by seniority, to bid on the AT&T Project jobs-work locations within Local 21's jurisdiction.

In early December, Johnson Controls management announced it reached a five year contract with AT&T to continue operations. Previously, in October, Johnson Controls stated it was divesting itself of its facilities management business unit, Global Workforce Solutions. The business unit is up for sale. The IBEW Local 21 Contract has successorship language, should a new buyer take over the AT&T project.

Altura Communications announced a surplus in their West Coast operations. Management has moved forward with their layoff. Our Local has filed a grievance with the company over the issue and charges with Region 32 of the National Labor Relations Board in Oakland, California. As of today the grievance is sitting at the arbitration level and the NLRB is investigating the charges

In January, I met with the new **Frontier Communications** Vice President of Illinois Operations. We discussed open job requisitions, construction positions and the new drug policy.

We're still working with upper management to move Frontier legacy employees into the IBEW Family Medical Care Plan. They've taken the position that they won't move any additional bargained employees into the plan until they get one of their managers placed on the Family Medical Care Plan's Board of Trustees which oversees the plan. We raised this issue with our International Office in D.C as well as with plan administrator. We're waiting for a response.

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Dishing Up Proposals at DirectSat

DIRECTV installers working for DirectSat in Mokena started 2014 off with a bang by joining Local 21 with their two-to-one organizing victory. Following their win, we appealed to the National Labor Relations Board to force the company to pay the money that management illegally withheld from the workers in an attempt to get them to vote “no.”

Our new members won that battle too; DirectSat was forced to pay over \$13,500 they rightfully owed the technicians. Once we cleared that hurdle, we began bargaining. Since negotiations began we’ve proposed almost an entire contract minus economics, which will come very soon.

These workers have stuck together through it all and we are very proud of their solidarity. Management continues to take shots in weekly meetings hoping to make the technicians feel hopeless by insisting that they won’t get a fair deal, but our Brothers continue to stand strong and anxiously await their first contract.



In other news, we are investigating several leads where other communication workers have contacted us looking for guidance on how to get a union started.

We’ll continue to work with them to get more of their coworkers involved so Local 21 can move forward with a full-fledged organizing drive.

One group of workers is the 911 dispatchers in Lake County Indiana. The state has decided that all 911 dispatchers will be consolidated from their individual municipalities into one large group in the county building. In addition the move diminishes wages, hours and working conditions pushing the dispatchers to seek the protection of union representation.

We’re always seeking out workers who are looking for representation. We’ve expanded our view beyond the communications industry and have started talking to workers in manufacturing and warehousing.

It’s Scholarship Time!

By Michael Andel - Chief Steward

Do you have a high school senior who is planning to attend college or another child already in college? Are you a college student? How does one thousand dollars for tuition or books sound? It is scholarship time at IBEW 21.

The 2015 scholarship program is a worthy benefit for all IBEW Local Union 21 members and their immediate family. The scholarship committee will select up to eight winners based on the completed application package, quality and creativity of the written essay, and the applicant’s personal resume.

The topic for the 2015 scholarship essay is “Looking beyond our own needs, how can Local 21 members help build a sense of community in our

union?” The essay is more than an answer to a question: The responses could possibly change the way labor unions fight for our right to exist in the future.

IBEW Local 21 is committed to supporting the next generation of union leaders through our scholarship program. Only completed scholarship packages will be considered, so be sure to follow the instructions carefully. All applications must be received by **Friday, April 24, 2015**. Scholarship applications can be downloaded at ibew21.org and will be available at all unit meetings.

If you have any questions about the 2015 IBEW Local Union 21 Scholarship program, please contact Jacquie Fields at 630-960-4466 ext. 374.

Workers' Compensation – What You Need to Know

What is workers' compensation?

Workers' compensation is a state law that provides benefits to employees who suffer a work-related injury or illness, regardless of fault. Coverage begins upon employment and the employer is responsible for carrying workers' compensation insurance to cover medical bills and lost wages resulting from an on-the-job injury or illness. The employer cannot charge the employee any cost related to Workers' Comp Insurance. Because it is a law, an attorney is the best person to represent and guide an employee. That being said, here are some basics every employee should know.

Who is covered? Virtually every employee who is hired or injured in the state is covered.

What is covered? Injuries or illnesses that result from the employee's work are covered.

What benefits are provided? All reasonably required **medical care expenses** resulting from treatment of the covered injury or illness.

Temporary Total Disability (TTD) benefits while the employee is off work, recovering from the injury, per doctor's orders. The TTD compensation rate is 2/3 of the average weekly wage and is not taxable.

- In **Illinois** TTD is not payable for the first three (3) working days unless the lost time continues for at least fourteen (14) days from the date of injury.

- In **Indiana** TTD is not payable for the first seven (7) working days unless the lost time continues for twenty-two (22) days.

There are also provisions for additional benefits should the worker suffer from **Temporary Partial Disability (TPD), Permanent Partial Disability (PPD), Permanent Total Disability (PTD), Vocational Rehabilitation, Disfigurement or Death.**

What to do if you suffer an on-the-job injury?

1. Notify your employer right away. Even if the injury does not seem serious, notify your supervisor and request to fill out an accident report. Your employer must be notified within forty-five (45) days.

2. Get prompt medical attention. Give an accurate history of the injury to any treating health care provider (i.e. doctor, nurse, or hospital) and specify that the injury is work related. You want that fact to be on the medical records. Discuss your job requirements with your doctor so that your return to work and need for restrictions is properly evaluated. Do not file a medical claim with your insurance.

3. Choosing a doctor.

- In **Illinois** you have the right to choose your own doctor, but there are restrictions on the number of doctors you may see. If your employer is not enrolled in a Preferred Provider Program (PPP), you have the right to treatment from up to two (2) doctors of your choice and any doctors to whom you are referred by your chosen doctors. A Preferred Provider Program (PPP) is a group of medical providers approved by the employer to treat workers for their injuries. If your employer has provided written notice of their enrollment in a PPP, you may "opt in" or "opt out" of the PPP by providing written notice to your employer. If you "opt in" you will be eligible to receive treatment from two listed providers and any providers you are referred to. If you choose to "opt out" you are limited to only one choice of doctor and any doctors you are referred to. First aid and emergency care are not considered one of your choices.

- In **Indiana** the employer/insurance carrier has the right to direct medical care, meaning that they choose the doctor who will treat you for your injuries.

4. Keep detailed records. Make notes about the injury (e.g. date, time, place, any equipment or machinery involved, witnesses and their contact information).

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All Bets Are Off...

The November elections brought about a lot of changes. A lot of different things can be said about change: how it's the only constant in life, how the more things change the more they stay the same, and even the suggestion that you have to roll with the changes. The one thing I learned from change is the uncertainty that comes with it and the need to prepare the best you can for it.

Every level of government, from Washington D.C. to Springfield, IL. and Indianapolis, IN. will fall under every one of the above mentioned categories at one time or another in their legislative sessions this year. Add to that some municipal elections that are taking place as *Frontline* goes to press and well let's just say there's much to do.

The new Republican majority in the U.S. Senate will join the existing House majority in crafting bills that will have only the veto power of the President standing in its way. This is because the majority party holds the control over the legislative process. They appoint the Chairmen and members to the various committees that hear, then decide which bills move forward to the entire body for consideration.

I'd love to tell you all bills get a fair and equal hearing based on their merits but that just isn't so. In reality, the fate of most, if not all legislation, is based on power, politics and perception.

In Illinois, we have the added treat of getting front row seats to what could be a battle the likes of which we haven't seen in any of our lifetimes between the new Governor and the veto-proof majorities of the State House and Senate. Keep in mind that the Illinois Telecom Rewrite which is essentially the legislation that dictates how our industry is regulated (or not) is up for consideration this session, and that's where the majority of our attention will be devoted.

At the time this issue was going to press, there was no legislation regarding the Telecom Rewrite filed but please be **prepared to act** on very short notice when called upon.

Indiana is the other end of the spectrum. While it too has veto-proof majorities, they sit at the pleasure of a same party Governor. They're so fond of each other that they introduced a bill to allow him to continue running for Governor while he runs for President! (you know, just in case it doesn't work out for him). As I've been researching and analyzing the bills introduced in this session and the people introducing them, I've come across some very interesting things. Much of the legislation introduced in all the varying, wide-ranging industries and sectors (Energy, Financial, Tax Reform, Education, and Telecom) were introduced by members of ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council). This "non-partisan" group has been influencing legislation and law makers with their conservative, corporate driven agenda for over 40 years. I could devote an entire article to ALEC's under handedness. When one of their members introduces a bill, they are doing so because it was handed to them by ALEC.

Last but not least, there are municipal primary elections going on in many of our communities. Once again, as of press time there are many offices where Local 21, along with many of our Labor colleagues, have not made any official endorsements- most notably in the race for Chicago Mayor. Contact me for more information regarding our Local's endorsements.

Keep in mind, in many cases the Primary IS the election for all intents and purposes. So please remember to get out and vote, elections absolutely do have consequences!

Till next time Take care and GOD Bless!



WHAT'S NEW ACROSS THE LOCAL?

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

Karen Battisfore,
Business Representative



It's Really Easy For Them to Flip that Switch!

★ I'm talking about AT&T's decision to close the WLACC call center, and at the same time declare a surplus in many other work

groups. There's a wide spectrum of emotion. This is a sad and emotional time for those being displaced. On a brighter note, some employees who worked outside before may have the opportunity to go back outside if they find a VSIPP match.

My best advice to all of us working in call centers is prove to management why it's so important to keep IBEW members working here. If you were unemployed and came to AT&T for the first time for a job interview, how would you sell yourself? I would say... We provide much better customer service than the vendors. Our sales skills are much more stellar than any "feet on the street people." There is no one better than us who understands how our products work and how they benefit our customers.

We sure as heck can't do anything about losing positions because of technological progress or lack of work. By showing our value and the pride in the work we perform I'd surely like to see the next center consolidation bring work here instead of pushing it out. I truly pray and hope that all of our at-risk employees find a new home and a position they will be able to enjoy for years to come.

It's good to hear AT&T is continuing to hire in our U-verse sales offices. It will be a big transition for employees currently in Arlington Heights to start coming downtown this spring. Many employees in our Grace Street call center hoped for the opportunity to be relocated downtown, but Labor Relations is telling us only Arlington will be relocating at this time.

I have to say "See you real soon" to my very good friend Winifred (Winnie) Brown. She retired after 35 years of service. Since 1986 she served as a Steward and Area Steward. Winnie spent much of her career representing WLACC members. She said it was her pleasure to do so. It is our pleasure to have known and worked with you, Winnie. Congratulations on a happy retirement and thanks for your dedication all these years.



IBEW 21 members from Vermilion County show their solidarity in their support for the Kiwanis at their annual Pancake Day.

Byron Bonham,
Business Representative



A Year of Change

★ Time has been going pretty quickly as we approach the halfway point of the four year **AT&T** Collective Bargaining Agreement. In 2014, AT&T released its 2020 plan and

required us all to watch a video on the announcement. Management continued the restructuring they believe gets the company to their 2020 goal. Last year we saw them split and merge CIM into three departments with new management after the new management chains of command were created.

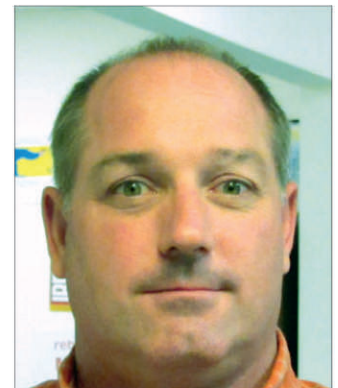
It was a dynamic year-end transition. In **C&E and DEG**, AT&T restructured much of its workforce to avoid a potential surplus and layoff. During this time, many other workgroups suffered through a surplus and the job search process; for some employees the process is not over.

In **Global Services**, also known as Datacom, AT&T announced a layoff, postponed a layoff, and then made job offers to all those identified as over headcount. The job offers came after many discussions, and I am happy to say no one in Global Services was forced to leave the payroll.

Many of our Sisters and Brothers will be in different locations and titles after the effects of the announcements play out, but many, hopefully all of them, are still working. In most cases these changes are unwelcome and there will be struggles to adapt in our new roles.

CWA Midwest is about to start bargaining with AT&T. Let's keep an eye on them for some positive bargaining news, Solidarity!

Mike Roach,
Business Representative



Welcome New Stewards

★ I would like to report that after 14 months of negotiations that began in October 2013, we now have an agreement with **Gardenview Manor**. The nursing

home was formerly a county owned facility known as Vermilion Manor and covered under the Local 21 Vermilion County Non-Judicial contract. The Vermilion County Board voted to sell the facility in 2012 and subsequently the home was sold to Premier Healthcare in August 2013. At that time we were able to get the company to agree to recognize our Local as the exclusive bargaining agent for the 100 plus members working at the facility.

I would like to thank Doris Halls, Shirley Moody, and Melanie Probst for their hard work and countless hours spent forging the first agreement with this new employer.

I would like to welcome our new stewards at **Heddington Oaks** Nursing Home in Peoria: Marcella Waldo, Jacquie Carson Brown, Brenda Rogers, and Sheryl Barnes. Being a Steward is a tough job, and we appreciate your willingness to tackle it. This year we will be negotiating a new contract with Peoria County. I will be reporting on the progress in future articles.

As *Frontline* goes to press, we are going through the painful surplus process at **AT&T**. The closing of the WLACC has greatly impacted the **Peoria Credit and Collections Center**. The Customer Advocate surplus has impacted our Marketing Support Specialists in Springfield.

Jerry Rankins,
Business Representative



NLRB Slams Comcast

★ The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a complaint against Comcast, in Chicago, for direct-dealing with the **Cortland** membership and bad-faith

bargaining. The Board's findings were based on the strong evidence we produced. It showed Comcast "promised benefits contingent on decertification" the same benefits Comcast previously rejected as Union proposals during contract negotiations.

The issuing of a complaint, for bad-faith bargaining is a very rare finding by the NLRB. For over 14 years, our charges of bad-faith bargaining were unsustainable—until now. Comcast's strong disdain for worker rights, its greed, and obsession with power drove management to break federal labor law.

Seven years ago, a union charge like this one would have been dismissed by the NLRB. We can never forget that Reagan and both the Bush's gutted workers' rights under their NLRB. Decisions were made that still haunt us today. Since electing a Democratic President, who appointed pro-labor directors at the regional levels and placed labor advocates on the five panel Board in Washington, we have seen favorable decisions that have benefited members of our Union.

The Chicago Cortland and **West Comcast** workers have been covered by a collective bargaining agreement for nearly 30 years. They refuse to buy into the deception that unsustainable promises could be better than a Union contract. They understand hard work should be rewarded, not punished and worker rights enjoyed today came through yesteryear's workers' sweat and the shedding of blood.

The Comcast West contract is set to expire on April 28, 2015, so the fight continues for work-place justice, victory will be achieved for those who are willing to stand as one. An informed, vibrant bargaining committee will ensure a fair contract will be reached.

"In the end, it's not words of our enemy we remember, but the silence of our friends."

—Dr. Martin Luther King

OEMC, Chicago 911 Center

While we look forward to the Mayoral & Aldermanic elections, we can't forget the importance of pro-labor candidates. Under this mayor, the City Council voted with him 85% of the time, and that's troubling.

What is more troubling are members who vote against their own self-interest, as was the case with newly elected governor Bruce Rauner. We can't forget: what is gained through legislation can be reversed through legislation.

Don't think for a moment discussion isn't being had surrounding the operational cost at the OEMC. It is the City's second highest operational budget next to the Police Department. Four years ago, this mayor's first budget called for cuts to PCO's, forcing a layoff. What are his future plans for the OEMC?

Truthfully, we don't know. But we do know Chicago has a mayor who believes in privatization and outsourcing while Illinois has a newly elected governor who would cut the minimum wage of the most marginalized workers of society. We must support pro-labor, progressive candidates who represent the working class or someday, Illinois will become a state with no public sector bargaining rights. Consider the attacks on your pension. Much of the right-wing viewpoint is to allow Chicago or the State to go bankrupt as a way to get at your pension, as was the case in Detroit.

Remember our strength is in our unity!

Solidarity!

John Dolsen,
Business Representative



It's an Honor

★ As the newest Local 21 Business Representative, I'd like to start out by thanking President Paul Wright for appointing me to this position. Paul also added the northeast suburbs to Chief Steward Mike

Andel's area. I look forward to working with him. It is truly an honor to serve our membership and I am thankful for this opportunity. I look forward to representing the members of Unit 3.

The past few months have been very busy. The first phase of the AT&T Cable Splicing preference is now complete. At the end of January, the company was working on the final steps of adjusting the locations and headcount for the remaining CST/DEG techs in Construction. While some of our members voiced their concerns about this preference, it's important to understand our Union leadership avoided a surplus in the outside forces by negotiating the terms of this preference.

The transition out of the Lakewood Center continues. The last remaining Local 21 members in

Lakewood are those working in the Cable Group. Their move to Arlington Heights is scheduled to be complete by the end of the first quarter.

U-Verse continues to expand, the company plans to hire 250 new Premises Technicians this year. Management has been following the terms of the 2014 preference agreement, for the hiring through the end of January. We have just completed the 2015 agreement. Copies have been distributed to all garages. Safety and Quality are the hot topics in the outside workforce. Safety should always be our number one concern. There is no reason we cannot take the time to work safe and do a quality job. An injury to one is an injury to us all.

Mike and I plan to continue with our quarterly steward meetings. We received positive feedback and we feel they help build solidarity, give us the opportunity to share ideas, and create a network of strength in our area. I am looking forward to increased steward attendance at our 2015 meetings. As we make our way around Unit 3 I look forward to seeing you and discussing issues that may arise. The strength of our Union comes from an active membership. Let's work together to build our strength and solidarity.

Henne (continued from page 3)

An arbitrator has been selected to hear the Good of the Union grievance concerning the layoff last year at **CenturyLink**. We are still working on scheduling a date for the hearing. The cuts have created scheduling issues. Management reduced the headcount in Illinois to the point where employees can't keep up with the workload.

JULIE management moved more employees into the Work at Home program. It allows fulltime employees to work from home and allows the company to use work stations at their Joliet office for summer hires. All of our fulltime members worked through the winter. The forecast for work is good; we're told they expect a heavy workload this year.



I Need Your Ideas & Some Help

A big *Thank You* to everyone who made donations or volunteered your time during the first year of Local 21's community outreach initiative. The organizations we assisted are extremely grateful.

The feedback has been positive but members have also asked why we haven't done more with other organizations like Habitat for Humanity or groups that help our Veterans. Quite simply, I don't know who else you would like us to help.

If brothers and sisters in your work location have an idea for a community outreach event please call or email me and if it's feasible we will work together to make it happen.

Spring Cleaning

There is always one project that you keep putting off and saying "Yeah I will get to that when I have time." Last year we got our text messaging system up and running again; making sure those of you who received text messages in the past were back in the system.

For a long time I've been saying we need to clean up our email database. That time is now because the AFL-CIO just announced they are changing their mass email system. As a member union, Local 21 uses this system to email you messages.

We have over 6,800 email addresses. Some of you have two or three addresses, one you may use regularly, the other one you may never use, and the last one may be bad. Please help me clean up your information.

It's simple: you can send me an email (**bobp@ibew21.org**) and let me know the email address where you want to receive IBEW 21 updates. If you have addresses you want deleted, also let me know.

If you don't yet receive emails or text messages from Local 21 you can sign up on ibew21.org. Please fill out all of the information so I can build our new database, or just send me an email or call me and I'll sign you up.

Please be patient since I'm just starting this project. You may get a few emails or text messages from me asking for various information, but if you already contacted me you can disregard them. If you haven't please help me out!



St. Pat's March for Kids Solidarity Events

If you would like to join other IBEW 21 members at the St. Pat's Parades to help the kids at Mercy Home please contact Bob P. for more information.

Forest Park Parade— Saturday, March 7, 2015 12 pm

LOCATION: O'Sullivan's Public House—7244 Madison St., Forest Park, IL

Tinley Park St. Patrick's Day Parade—Sunday, March 8, 2015 1 pm

LOCATION: St. George Parish—6707 W. 175th St., Tinley Park, Illinois

Downtown St. Patrick's Day Parade—Saturday, March 14, 2015 11am

LOCATION: The Chicago Hilton Hotel—720 S. Michigan Ave. Mobley Room—LL

Northwest Side Irish Parade—Sunday, March 15, 2015 11 am

LOCATION: Alderman Mary O'Connor's Office
6107 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago, IL

South Side Irish Parade—Sunday, March 15, 2015 11 am

LOCATION: KFC Parking Lot—10421 S. Western Ave. Chicago, IL

What's Really Important?

Today, we live in a climate of compliance. I'm not even sure that AT&T cares if we know how to troubleshoot a metallic fault. We see ourselves as craftsmen, descended from a long line of people who made reality out of Theodore Vail's mandate of universal service.

However, it seems that we are reduced, in the employer's eyes, to being dim-witted automatons that should only exist to inhale, exhale and follow a script. Yes, I said a script. For just like our brethren in a center environment, we have a script of sorts to follow in the course of our workday.

Like a disengaged parent, management spews ever more pages of rules and dictates to govern our workday. When I started my career, the Technician Expectations was a mere two pages. Now, the company is beholden to a belief that a strict demand of behaviors can somehow be turned into measurable results. The worst offender in this regard is OP78.

The great problem is that in administering OP78, management sends a mixed message of safety and security, when the two should be treated independently. Does it pass any test of reasonableness that someone's truck or tools are really at risk inside a locked garage, surrounded by a locked gate and a fence, topped with razor wire? But leave one cabinet or door unlocked and you are an OP78 violator.

Now this probably has its roots in the legendary break-in when the Hastings garage was brand new. Some ne'er-do-wells came in through the unsecured roof and held their own demolition derby since the old rule required that keys be kept in the vehicle when parked in the garage. For the record, Johnson Control managers informed AT&T during the walk-through to open the building—that the roof access hatches were not secure.

So the backlash is OP78. There is an honest difference between leaving a sweatshirt or jacket on your seat at the end of the day and leaving a capital tool visible in the cab. The problem is management see the two scenarios the same—simply a failure in compliance to a written expectation.

Just like GPS in the beginning, understand what will be enforced, it may be when you least expect it. Possibly every time your manager does a job visit. Don't let them or the boss two levels above, grab the low hanging fruit. Unfortunately, the company established suspension level discipline in many cases of simple OP78 non-compliance.

One of my stewards jokes, "Why doesn't the company just come to us in any year and say how many days of pay they need to get back—because that's all OP78 is." That's the root of why OP78 is a failure. Using knee-jerk discipline in response to ticky-tack infractions drives a belief that OP78 has no credibility.

Going forward be responsible for your own vehicle and take a moment to check your neighbor's truck. In a sweep of a garage, who knows what a manager will look for if the first 10 doors he pulls on are properly locked? Perhaps they would move on to something else. But it's unreasonable today that 10 or 12 of us are getting caught in multiple ways when management descends on a garage to inspect for OP78.

There is a learning curve with this. We, as members, need to stop giving the bosses the opportunity to reach into our pockets for OP78 violations as well.



Workers' Compensation (continued from page 6)

5. Seek legal advice and/or assistance. Do not think for one moment that your employer is going to voluntarily pay all of the benefits that you are entitled to under the law. Never agree to settle your case without talking to a competent attorney. Most attorneys will consult with you at no charge, so there is no reason not to call.

6. Press the insurance carrier. If your claim is not being contested and you are out of work you should begin receiving compensation checks fourteen (14) days after the disability begins. It is important that you or your attorney keep in touch with the insurance company to ensure proper benefits are received.

7. Be wary of statements made to employers or carriers. In order to save money, your employer may try to get you to state that your injury or illness is not work related and encourage you to file medical claims with your group health insurance and/or a Short-term or Accident Disability claims. This can be used to challenge, limit or deny your claim for workers' compensation. Workers' compensation covers all of your medical costs, unlike your group health insurance, which requires deductibles and coinsurance payments. Do not make or sign statements until you have consulted with an attorney.

This is an overview and not a representation of the law.

CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

Vermilion County
Linda Shelly

AT&T

Terri E. Baynes
Nancy Ciszewski
Elizabeth Islas
Diane Pye
Darlene Williams

Winifred Brown
Larry Franklin
Peter Pogwizd
Jeannine Sharpe



Premise Techs John Griffey & George Hovork from Wheaton do what it takes to safely get the job done.



IBEW 21 members work alongside other IBEW EWMC members at a community outreach event in Atlanta.

Get involved—attend an upcoming Union Meeting!

	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
UNIT 1	12th - 6 pm Irish American Heritage Center 4626 N. Knox Ave. Chicago, IL 773-282-7035	9th - 7 pm Park Ridge Veteran's Club 10 W. Higgins Park Ridge, IL 847-825-4588	14th - 7 pm Best Western Hillside 4400 Frontage Rd. Hillside, IL 708-544-9300
UNIT 2	10th - 7 pm Slovak Club 6920 Broadway Merrillville, IN 219-756-5101	14th - 7 pm American Legion Post #697 18255 Grant St. Lansing, IL 708-474-5906	12th - 7 pm Slovak Club 6920 Broadway Merrillville, IN 219-756-5101
UNIT 3	19th - 7 pm Gurnee American Legion 749 Milwaukee Gurnee, IL 847-244-9282	16th - 7 pm Best Western Inn & Suites 1212 Lincoln Hwy. DeKalb, IL 815-758-8661	21st - 7 pm Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites 495 Airport Rd. Elgin, IL 847-488-9000
UNIT 4	11th - 7 pm American Legion Post 5 705 S. Larkin Joliet, IL 815-725-4333	8th - 7 pm Lemont VFW 15780 New Ave. Lemont, IL 630-257-9859	13th - 7 pm American Legion Post 5 705 S. Larkin Joliet, IL 815-725-4333
UNIT 5	18th - 7 pm IBEW Local #146 3390 N. Woodford St. Decatur, IL 217-877-4604	15th - 5:30 pm IBEW Local # 538 1290 N. Michigan Ave. Danville, IL 217-442-0996	20th - 6:00 pm U.A.W. Local #974 3025 Springfield Rd. East Peoria, IL 309-694-3151
UNIT 6	17th - 5:30 pm IBEW- Local #193 3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 217-544-3479	21st - 5:30 pm IBEW Local #193 3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 217-544-3479	19th - 5:30 pm IBEW Local #193 3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 217-544-3479
UNIT 7	16th - 7 pm IBEW Local #309 2000a Mall St. (Rt. 157) Collinsville, IL 618-345-5112	20th - 7 pm IBEW Local #649 4051 Humbert Rd. Alton, IL 618-462-1627	18th - 7 pm Central City Lions Club 140 S Morrison Central City, IL 618-532-9475

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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IBEW LOCAL 21 2015 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED



Up to eight \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to Local 21 members or an immediate family member.

Applicants must submit an application and a 1000 word essay explaining

"Looking beyond our own needs, how can Local 21 members help build a sense of community in our union?"

Detailed requirement information can be found on ibew21.org or by calling:

Treasurer Jacquie Fields
630-960-4466 ext. 374.

All applications must be received in the Union office by

Friday, April 24, 2015.