



LOCAL 702 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

APRIL/MAY 2009

THE LINK the official newsletter of IBEW 702

- Remember when scheduling your vacation the Local Union golf tournament on June 19, 2009.
- Check out our new webpage at www.ibew702.org
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Welcome

Brothers and Sisters, we are introducing another new feature to complement our new website and that's the new electronic version of THE LINK, our locals newsletter.

In the past, we have had problems getting current information to you. The time lag from when articles were turned in until the final product reached your house was a

few weeks and it made it impossible to make the newsletter a useful item.

You can now go to our webpage or contact our office and sign up to receive the publication electronically through email. It will also be posted on the webpage. At this time, we do not intend to use the U.S. Postal Service for delivery. However, if you do not have access to a com-

puter, we will mail or hand deliver you a copy.

I hope you enjoy this new format and as always if you have any ideas for stories either for the newsletter or webpage contact the local union office at (618) 932-2102.

State of our Union

While we watch some of our most trusted institutions fall apart around us and our nation face some of the greatest problems in our 233 year history we must know the state of our union is strong.

The one thing I find the most comfort in is the fact that our low points have always been our turning points. There is no doubt the road to recovery won't come without sacrifice or change, but it will come.

Since June 29, 1911, we have been fighting for a better way of life for the working men and women in our jurisdiction and we will be here 100 years from now continuing that same fight.

Our inside construction branch seems to be turning the corner and it looks like our future will be strong for the next few years with two large

industrial projects at Lively Grove and Baldwin. The Capital Bill would only add to the prosperity.

Our outside branch has been at full employment for a while and with the rebuilding going on after the ice storm it looks like that trend will continue for the near future.

Our Utility members have been holding their own and we are hopeful when the credit crisis gets fixed we can make some gains there as well.

We just settled our agreement with Verizon and our working on a re-write of the telecommunications act in Illinois to benefit our members.

The municipalities have been in tough bargaining due to the economic state but have been able to main-

tain and our hardest hit sector has been manufacturing with some layoffs but we are starting to see some members recalled as the stimulus package starts to work.

Due to the hard work by our members the Political climate has never been better. Healthcare reform is a real possibility now.

The Employee Free Choice Act is the most significant piece of labor legislation since the Wagner Act which gave Americans the right to join a Union.

We have a favorable political climate, we have the membership, officers and staff with the will and knowledge to succeed. Together we will make this the moment when the labor movement restored the middle class in America.



“We have to reverse many of the policies towards organized labor that we’ve seen these last eight years, policies with which I’ve sharply disagreed. I do not view the labor movement as part of the problem, to me it’s part of the solution,”

“We need to level the playing field for workers and the unions that represent their interests, because we know that you cannot have a strong middle class without a strong labor movement,” Obama continued.

“Strong, vibrant, growing unions can exist side by side with strong, vibrant and growing businesses. This isn’t an either/or proposition between the interests of workers and the interests of shareholders. That’s the old argument. The new argument is that the American economy is not and has never been a zero-sum game.

“When workers are prospering, they buy products that make businesses prosper.

We can be competitive and lean and mean and still create a situation where workers are thriving in this country,” the president stated.

President
Barack Obama
January 30, 2009

2009 Ice Storm

03/16/09

January Ice Storm Damage in jurisdiction of Local 702 exceeds 200 Million Dollars. Last month’s ice storm caused record power outages throughout 702’s outside jurisdiction in Missouri, Illinois and Indiana.

Early reports from M & A Power Cooperative in Poplar Bluff, Missouri who lost over 160 H structures in a row, totaling 47 miles of 345kv bundle conductor on the ground, and 30 miles of 161kv down, damages could exceed eighty million dollars (\$80,000,000). Repairs to a critical 500kv line out of Associated Electric Co-op, generation plant for M & A is still under repair at the time of this article.

At our sister Co-op’s in the boot heel, all of them were crippled by this storm. Ozark Border Electric Co-op repaired or replaced 3,500 poles, 2,000 cross arms, 700 transformers, and 1,500 services, suffering \$17,000,000 in damage. Six hundred (600) extra personnel [500 linemen] were called in to assist the 86 regular in-house staff. Pemiscot Dunklin Co-op (7200 poles to date, may reach 8,000) had all of their substations go down for days and estimated 90% of their system was on the ground and had to be completely rebuilt. At peak restoration effort, over 100 linemen were on property repairing or replacing poles, cross arms, transformers, services and over 1100 miles of line (roughly 80% of their entire system). SEMO Electric Co-op’s damage consisted of 3,500 poles, 200 miles of line (the equivalent of a line from St. Louis to Memphis), and required around 935 personnel at peak restoration time (+/- 840 linemen) that took 21 days to fully restore all residential customers at a cost of over \$25,000,000. We appreciate the efforts of all of our members for their work on these properties.

In Missouri, on AmerenUE property, in-house, mutual aid, and contractor crews replaced over 3600 poles, 6900 cross arms, 690 transformers and almost a million and a half feet of conductor. One of the jobs was more than 30 miles of sub-transmission where all but 2 poles were down. Around 2400 linemen, 550 Tree Trimming personnel, 160 field checkers, along with several hundred Stores, logistical and support people, supervisors and others brought the total number to around 4000





If any man tells you he loves America, yet hates labor, he is a liar. If any man tells you he trusts America, yet fears labor, he is a fool.
- Abraham Lincoln

Only a fool would try to deprive working men and working women of their right to join the union of their choice. -- Dwight D. Eisenhower

What does labor want? We want more school-houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures, to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful, and childhood more happy and bright. -- Samuel Gompers

The labor movement means just this: It is the last noble protest of the American people against the power of incorporated wealth. -- Wendell Phillips

Ice storm con't

people engaged in the effort as it took 11 days to restore about 37,000 customers from Cape Girardeau to the Arkansas border.

At the Board of Municipal Utilities (BMU), Sikeston Light & Water, a 9,800 customer municipality, there were over 175 poles that had to be repaired or replaced, over 5 miles of 69kv line that had to be rebuilt, about 2000 work orders (some that had multiple locations on them), several hundred damaged cross arms, at least a hundred damaged transformers, and estimated damages of around \$5,000,000. IBEW Local 702 contract crews from Henkles & McCoy and Sturgeon assisted in the restoration effort with the in-house 702 members. Mutual-aid assistance came from the cities of Rolla, Monet, and Jackson, as they provided one two-man crew each. The whole system eventually went down, despite attempts to keep in on throughout the day of the storm. Only one sub came back on the first day, and it took about fourteen days before all of the circuits were re-energized. As with all of the other properties, several single outages and possibly single-phase taps were out an additional week or so.

In Illinois, Ameren customers were restored the fastest as just the southern tip of their customer base lost power from ice. Our 702 crews moved into Missouri the first Sunday night after restoring power in Illinois. Ameren Illinois damages exceeded three and a half million dollars (\$3,500,000).

Our Illinois electric cooperatives that were hit the hardest were Southern Illinois Electric Co-op with estimated damages of 6.3 million dollars and Southeastern Illinois Electric Co-op, (my favorite, since they are my provider) with damages of over three million dollars (\$3,000,000). The City of Cairo's damages exceeded one million dollars (\$1,000,000).

In Indiana, at Southern Indiana Gas and Electric, d/b/a Vectren, damages in the 702 outside jurisdiction were estimated in the Evansville Courier and Press to be between 15 to 20 million dollars.

Paul Noble, 702 Business Manager, and his staff thank ALL of our members from construction linemen, apprentices, trimmers, trainees, and traveling hands who helped restore power. Union Contractors and ALL CSR's and utility members from the Southern, Eastern and Western Divisions of our Local Union, and IBEW members from Cooperatives throughout the States of Missouri and Illinois. THANK YOU!!

Local 702 email contest

Don't forget to register for you local 702 email account on the webpage. The local will be sponsoring an email contest where participants will win cash for using there local 702 email account. We will start in July. All you have to do is sign up for your free account and then respond to an email sent from the local union.

EFCA introduced

The Employee Free Choice Act was introduced on March 10 in both the house and senate launching the legislative battle to restore workers freedom to form unions and bargain for a better life. It's a great day for working families and a sign of change that America voted for last fall. It gives workers the choice to join a union and guarantees a first contract. Call your Congressmen and Senators today in support .

Electricity use to increase

In 2007, the total U.S. electricity consumption was 3800 terra watt hours . Preliminary reports project an 1150 terra watt hour increase in U.S. consumption by 2030. This represents a 30% increase. This represents an increase equivalent to 13 New York City metro areas. It also represents an opportunity and also a challenge for the IBEW and our local union. We will have more discussions on this in the future.

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New Poll Shows Majority Support Employee Free Choice Act

A Gallup poll released on Tuesday shows 53 percent of those polled support the Employee Free Choice Act labor law reform.

The survey polled 1,024 people across the nation. Survey questions did not reference the legislation as the "Employee Free Choice Act" or by the phrase "card check." According to the Huffington Post, Gallup's description of the Employee Free Choice Act in the survey was "to make it easier for labor unions to organize workers."

The respondent break down by political affiliation was: Republicans: 34 percent favor, 60 percent oppose; Independents: 52 percent favor, 41 percent oppose; and Democrats: 70 percent favor, and 23 percent oppose.

States Legislative Updates

ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The most pressing need in Illinois is a Capital Bill. It has been nearly 10 years since the state has had one. A Capital Bill would mean thousands of jobs for Illinois workers; it would also mean a new revenue source. The debate is on in Springfield and we will be certainly be there representing the local union. There is no doubt the Capital Bill will come with a cost, but we believe the cost of doing nothing is far greater. Our State has suffered long enough and we need new infrastructure, new schools and new jobs in every corner of the state. We have several bills we are supporting this session besides a capital bill. There are bills expanding the prevailing wage bill to include TIF districts and line construction and line clearance at municipalities and then SB 219 makes all work on public utilities fall under prevailing wage. We are also participating in the Senates hearings for a Telecommunications bill re-write. The Utilities, Consumer groups and Labor will give testimony at the hearings on April 1 and 2. We will stay engaged until the legislators recess in May.

INDIANA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The State's unemployment insurance is in trouble. The Senate has a bill we are opposing that expands seasonal employment from 26 weeks to 42 weeks and would allow employers who qualify to opt out of the program and that could eliminate benefits to some of our members if they worked for the wrong employer and it also reduces benefits after 4, 6, and 8 weeks if the worker doesn't enroll in a DWD training program. There is also talk of common wage laws (prevailing wages) being weakened by excluding schools and universities and projects under \$500,000.

MISSOURI LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Thanks to all the good work from our members and our brothers and sisters throughout that state, this session of the General Assembly is more civil and less combative than those of the last several years. That is due to the election of less partisan legislators, more moderate leadership and a new governor. The result is fewer bills that attack labor rights and benefits. Still, there are those bills, HB 522, that would reduce or eliminate workers' compensation eligibilities and benefits and HB 258 which would roll back or freeze the minimum wages of tipped employees. The AFL-CIO and Local 702 are both opposing these bills. We have several bills that we have proposed, but the political reality is we have to play more defense than offense at this time.