

FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21



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Answering The Call To Serve

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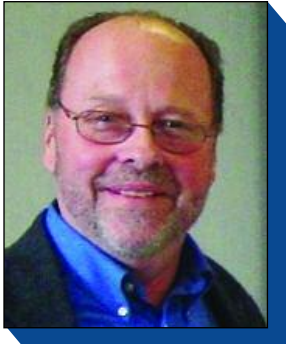
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Organized Labor still has Clout

By Ronald Kastner



Passage of the Healthcare Reform Bill shows that politicians do hear organized labor. Our efforts not only helped pass the bill, but Labor also played a role in modifying the excise tax on employer-provided health plans. Furthermore, organized labor succeeded in delaying the start of that tax to the year 2018.

Large companies, naturally, provided the usual scare tactics and propaganda against this very important legislation. Many of them, including AT&T, pronounced that the plan would cost billions of dollars, money they allegedly do not have. Implicit in their message was the idea that employees would have to pay the extra costs. In my opinion, these false statements are only part of a national attempt to sabotage the President and start an early campaign to hold him to a one term President.

Nothing in the reform bill changes employer obligations under federal law to bargain collectively with our Union on mandatory subjects of bargaining such as health benefits. All members will continue to be insured. Another falsehood is this rumor that your health care plan will be taxed. Our bargained for AT&T healthcare plan currently prices out at \$16,500; the so-called Cadillac plans talked about in the Healthcare Reform Act are defined as plans worth \$27,500. There will also be an annual adjustment made to this \$27,500 limit based on the average percentage increase to healthcare costs as compared to the Consumer Price Index (inflation rate). If healthcare costs increase at a rate higher than the inflation rate, the \$27,500 will be adjusted appropriately.

By helping to bring down health care costs, this reform will strengthen our position at the bargaining table and make the \$27,500 limit an unrealistic number in 2018. Those who will be affected by this excise tax are individuals who claim \$200,000 of income or a joint return of \$250,000.

Furthermore, this new law protects Americans from some of the worst abuses of the insurance industry. Starting this year, it bars insurance companies from denying coverage to children with pre-existing conditions and dropping people because they get sick. It also eliminates lifetime limits on benefits. Additionally, this plan stops wasteful spending on executive salaries by limiting how much of an insurance premium can go toward company administration and profits as opposed to actual healthcare.

There is little truth to the argument that the bill was passed

too quickly. Congress debated health care reform for 14 months. Senate Democrats incorporated 147 Republican amendments and abandoned the popular public option. The bill mirrors the plan championed by Republican Governor Mitt Romney in Massachusetts and a 1994 proposal by Senate Republicans. Polls show a majority of Americans approve of its various components.

On another subject, The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is again working after President Obama utilized the recess appointment process, something his predecessor used 170 times, to circumvent Republican maneuvering that kept the Board crippled with only two members. Both appointees are former union attorneys, Craig Becker and Mark G. Pearce. Both men had been approved by the appropriate Senate panel but bitter Republican opposition fueled by business interests kept the Senate majority from voting on the two. These appointments mean the NLRB will have a Democratic majority for the first time since December 2001.

The board had been limping along with just two members, Chair Wilma B. Liebman, a Democrat, and Peter C. Schaumberger, a Republican. As a result there are hundreds of backlogged cases and about 70 cases the two determined couldn't or shouldn't be resolved by just the two of them. Now cases brought before the NLRB will be resolved in favor of organized labor. A lot of these cases involve organizing campaigns. Winning these type cases will be a big step toward increasing union density.

Union density remains a huge concern for those of us in the labor movement. Currently we are under 8 percent organized in the private sector. That number makes it very difficult for organized labor to carry the water for all of the middle class, and it is one of the reasons that the middle class is disappearing. Only 8 percent of us can take advantage of the Collective Bargaining Process; only 8 percent of us can demand a living wage. The other 92% are out there alone, bargaining with large and small employers for their wages, healthcare, and working conditions. Think about this like a check and balance system. If more people were making more money, if more people were able to bargain

collectively, the economy would likely improve.

And if the economy gets better just maybe employers would have to treat employees better.

Right wing pundits hammer away at every decision President Obama makes, claiming it puts his chance of a second term in jeopardy, if not an impossibility. Politics aside, we in Labor are benefitting from the policies of the Obama administration and see a second term as essential to the causes of working families.





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

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“To know what is right and not do it shows a lack of both courage and principle.” – Winston Churchill

*By Kevin Curran, Vice President,
Assistant Business Manager Marketing*



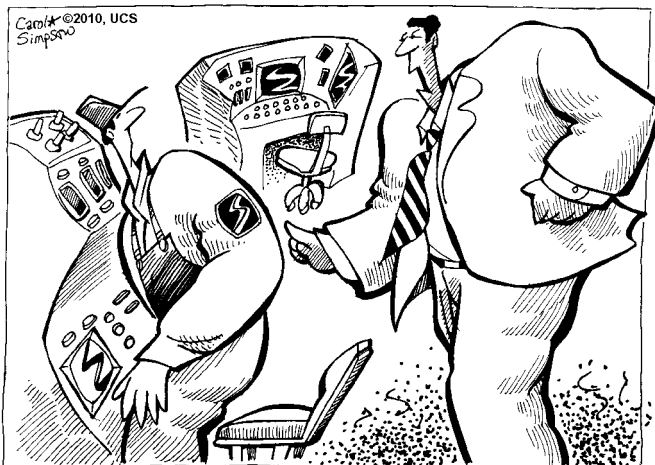
For over a year now, our Union steadfastly refused to accept AT&T’s proposal for an **incentive plan in Consumer** due to unjust components in management’s proposal. As we have done over the years, we entered into these negotiations with an open mind. However, one thing we cannot and will not compromise on is fairness and justice. We know many of our members in Consumer were interested in having an incentive plan. Nevertheless, you stood with us in solidarity over this issue.

I’m happy to announce that your perseverance has paid off. We reached an agreement on an incentive plan without the unjust provisions the company demanded. I would like to personally thank all of the members who stood with us and supported this struggle. I know most of you realized it would have been easier to just cut a deal regardless of whether or not it was right. At the end of the day, **our Union must stand for what is right**, not what is expedient. Thanks again!

IBEW Local 21 recently received an arbitration award in the **Consumer Mandatory Overtime** dispute with AT&T, and we won. It was our contention that AT&T violated the contract as well as a previous ruling by Arbitrator Helburn. In that case, he ruled AT&T could **ONLY** implement mandatory overtime in response to extraordinary circumstances, and **NOT** as a way to supplement the normal work schedule.

In this case, we asked the Arbitrator to rule that management violated the Helburn decision and the contract in the way they implemented mandatory overtime in Consumer. We sought for him to direct AT&T to bargain in good faith with our Union to negotiate a process to deal with instances of extraordinary circumstances, and to determine when mandatory overtime could be permissible and when it would **NOT** be permissible.

The Arbitrator agreed with Local 21 on both counts and these negotiations should be under way shortly.



“We can’t afford any more absenteeism... especially when you’re doing the work of a 10-person department.”

Everything's a Struggle

By Jerry Gast, Assistant Business Manager Network



In I&M a 3rd step grievance was filed because AT&T is allowing copper based DSL to go through D-

Slams for IP service. Management is assigning the work to Prem Techs however, our members working in I&M should perform it. We will request arbitration.

We are waiting for hearing dates from the arbitrator who will be deciding the case of "CONNECT TECH" work being performed by contractors. The first day of hearing was held for the arbitration dealing with increased scheduling caused by U-Verse helper tickets. The practice is a violation of the scheduling language found in Article 18 of our old contract.

In C&E the arbitration for the contracting out of the cable mining work is complete we will let you know when we get the decision. We continue to meet with the C&E Vice President to resolve issues as they come up.

I&M is over headcount and because of the protections provided by the LightSpeed Agreement, management is looking for other ways to reduce headcount. Their solution is to cut it by **firing our members**. Be aware; don't put yourself in a situation to give the bosses an opportunity to go after you.

We've been meeting with the Vice-President of I&M in an effort to get our members back on a half hour lunch. We have proposed putting 25% of the employees on volunteer four tens to give the company the late coverage it's looking for and allowing everyone to take a **half hour lunch**. We are awaiting his answer.

We met with Prem Tech V.P. Derrick Hamilton on the mountain of problems that are coming out of his U-Verse organization. The good news /bad news is there have been a large number of accidents affecting our U-Verse members and he has agreed to form safety committees. He's also looking into several issues Business Representative Mike McCormick presented.

The Central Offices scheduling trial is ending and we will meet with management to resolve any problems and then implement it in all areas.

Local 21 Scholarship Winners

By Jacquie Fields, Treasurer



The IBEW Local 21 Scholarship committee, Jim Noble, Nancy North, Jim Nink and I, really look forward to the day when we

review the essays submitted for our annual scholarship awards. It is inspiring to read the essays because we usually get a refreshing perspective about the labor movement from our members and their children. The theme of this year's essay was "How can a pro-labor President help the working class?" As in previous years, the quality of the submissions was very impressive.

The Local 21 scholarship program was established to help Local 21 members who are attending college or have a child in college. Members get the chance to use this venue to educate their children on labor history and its affects on the future of the labor movement. We look forward to many years of enjoyable essays from all.

Congratulations 2010 IBEW Local Union 21 Scholarship Winners:

Melissa Bagnara
Michelle Benegas
Aimee Jalley
Guilia Lino
Jason McGrady-Szromba
Eric Mullins
Christopher Stancato
Joseph Stancato
Caitlin Sullivan
Kevin Yatsushiro



PHOTO: KAITLIN SACCO

Members Mike Lombardi and Michael Sacco, along with family and friends, participated in the MS Walk along Chicago's lakefront on May 2nd.

Michael A. Kunas Memorial Fund

By Lynn Arwood, Business Representative, Recording Secretary, Benefits Coordinator



A couple of times a year we get a call in the Benefits Department from a member asking for help after tragedy. Sometimes the

call comes from a concerned co-worker who tells us about a family who has lost everything because of a house fire or perhaps a sudden death that has left a child without a parent. These calls are difficult and often result in collections being taken at unit meetings. When asked you always respond generously.

In January 2008, IBEW Local 21 suddenly lost Business Representative Michael Kunas. Mike is remembered as man who was dedicated to representing the members of our Local. He was intelligent, hardworking, funny, and always ready to volunteer his time, even if that meant putting on a green suit and white tights to march down Western Ave. in the Southside Irish Parade. His smile was genuine and was always accompanied by a twinkle in his eye that made you wonder what was coming next.

As much as we miss Mike, the real tragedy is in the loss to his family. Mike's death at 42 left his wife without a husband, and his young daughter without her dad far too early. As his family mourned his loss, we were left with a feeling that there should be something more we could do.

To honor Mike's memory and his passion for helping the members of this local, **The Michael A. Kunas Memorial Fund** was established. The Fund will hold an annual fundraising event with the inaugural year proceeds going to Mike's family. Each year following, a committee will accept nominations from our members to decide future recipients. The nominees must be members in good standing who could use a helping hand after suffering a loss or tragedy.

The idea is **Union Families helping**

Union Families. The inaugural event will be a golf outing and dinner held Saturday, June 26th. Golfing with a shotgun start at 2 pm will be at Lincoln Oaks golf course in Crete, Illinois. If you are not a golfer, we ask that you please join us at dinner

that evening at the neighboring Lincolnshire Country Club. There will be an auction and door prizes. For event and ticket information, call 630-960-4466 Ext 567.

IBEW 21 Michael A. Kunas Memorial Golf Outing



Saturday June 26th, 2010

Sign-In Starting 12:30 P.M.

2 P.M. Shotgun Start (Scramble)

Practice putting and driving range included

Lincoln Oaks & Lincolnshire Country Clubs

390 E. Richton Rd. Crete, IL. 60417

Lunch during registration

Banquet Dinner 7 P.M.

Open Bar with Dinner

Foursomes: \$500

Singles: \$150.00

Dinner only \$40 P.P/ \$75 per Couple

Promotional Prizes

Donations Accepted

Many Sponsorship Levels Available



To Reserve your spot

Call The Union Office: 630-960-4466 ext. 567

Safety in the Air and on the Street

By Melanie Probst, Business Representative

AT&T issued a new **Aerial Balcony Access Procedure** which covers all aerial cross boxes including the new 3M box. The training shows all aspects on how to access these boxes including the use of attachment points, handles, extension of the safety strap, ladder pole placement, and how to transfer to the balcony. It covers pole obstructions, securing a ladder to the platform, and how the upper ladder strap is used.

Upper ladder straps are now available. Notify your supervisor if you have not received one. Management has the new training procedure and training has begun. We must reiterate do not access the new 3M box if you have not received the new training. Contact your manager if you weren't trained.

We met with AT&T management to follow up on our requests to help our members who work in known **Dangerous/High Crime Areas**. Our first request to bring back the "key fob" was denied. The company feels the best way to handle any emergency is to use the company provided cell phone and dial 911. Your manager can order two bumper stickers for you, "Driver carries no cash" and "Assault on a Utility Worker is a Felony."

The Directors of Construction, I&M and U-Verse agreed to roll out the "Street Smart" training in all garages. "Street Smarts" provides education on how to be more aware of your surroundings and how you can avoid or get out of possible dangerous situations.

AT&T will continue professional safety training courses for techs working in dangerous areas as new techs are transferred or detailed. Non-company professionals teach this separate training. We reached an agreement where local management will work with your Business Representative to establish work rules in high crime areas.

The **DEG group** received **new trailers** to transport generators. Members contacted their union representatives because managers told them to load the trailers and get them out to the jobsite no matter what it takes—ignoring weight limit, braking system and hitch regulations.

We discussed the new trailers and management's disregard for safety with AT&T Corporate Safety. We now have the company practice for hauling these trailers. It clearly spells out the requirements. Fleet advised DEG of the towing requirements. If any vehicles need different hitches or electric brake controllers let Fleet Services know so they can be installed.

Don't avoid this safety practice because your manager told you to; it is your responsibility to know your vehicle's limits. No job is so important and no service is so urgent that it cannot be done safely.

In I&M, we hope you've heard about the new **"Core I&M Environmental Health & Safety Committees Agreement."** The program recognizes the need for a safe work environment. A technician at every work location will serve as a safety advocate and will work directly with local management on safety issues.

The safety advocates will make sure occupational and motor vehicle accident

results and trends are covered with our members along with EH&S Flashes and alerts. They will investigate member's safety concerns and escalate legitimate concerns to management.

Please let your Chief Steward or Business Representative know if this new program has not been rolled out in your location. The IBEW Local 21 Safety Committee is meeting with Construction management urging them to consider their adoption of this agreement.

At our recent Union-Management Safety Committee meeting, the company advised us of their recent discussions with OSHA regarding AT&T employees filing claims for issues that are not OSHA's responsibility. Below is a copy of the flier that should be posted in your work location. Please review and use the number or email provided to report issues at your work location. The EHS Group will respond quickly to your issues.

2009



AT&T Environment, Health & Safety

We Can Help!

Environment, Health & Safety Support

Call 1-800 KNOW EHS

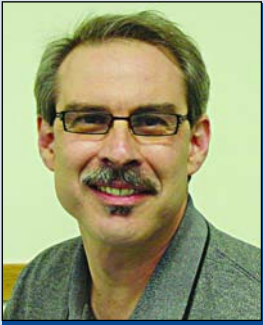
- Prompt 1 - Emergencies (chemical spills or releases, regulatory agency inspections, storage tank alarms) and MSDS sheets**
- Prompt 2 - General inquiries about environmental topics**
- Prompt 3 - General inquiries about health and safety topics**
- Prompt 4 - Hazardous waste management and waste disposal**
- Prompt 5 - Reporting Automobile accident claims and non-employee injuries**
- Prompt 6 - EH&S Training, vendor requirements, legislative/regulatory issues, website, or Compliance Data Management System**
- Prompt 7 - Reporting Job-related illness or injury to AT&T Workers Compensation**
- Prompt 9 - Asbestos information or issues**

Or you can...

Send email to us at knowehs@ems.att.com
Visit the Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) Web site at
<http://www.ehs.att.com>

Perfection Demanded

By Michael Sacco, Business Representative



Perfection is a ridiculous impossibility but these days it seems as if most AT&T managers expect it. No infraction of an increasingly long and

complicated set of rules goes unnoticed or unpunished.

I am seeing more and more petty suspensions for things that were unheard of one year ago. Mistakes in payroll that once were fixed by managers are being ignored, now member's paychecks are being short or zeroed out altogether.

MSOC demands perfection from all gears (people) in the machine. No accounting for imperfect engineering, management, weather, traffic or supply chain. No mercy for a bad day, a headache or a sick kid. No

benefit of the doubt is given to a long time employee—the customer is always right—even if they are defrauding the company or just don't like the employee.

There is no room for error any more at AT&T. I sound like a broken record, but I'll say it again: If you don't know something, ask your boss, preferably in writing. Don't take short cuts. Do the job the way they tell you to do it. Management will check up on you and discipline you for poor work. Be where you're supposed to be when you're supposed to be there, doing what you're supposed to be doing. Follow all of AT&T's rules; no matter how stupid they are, unless they put you, your co-workers or a member of the public in danger.

Speaking of demands for perfection, AT&T bosses are not the only ones. I'm sad to say some Local 21 members seem to think our union's leadership should also be perfect. I have heard some outrageous demands for crystal ball reading made at unit meetings lately. I've also heard some criticism of the contract that is disrespectful

and unfair to the people who worked hard (myself included) to negotiate it.

Our 2009 Agreement is far from perfect. In fact, some of it sucks. I was recently at a conference of telephone workers from across the globe. What's happening with us regarding technology and benefits is happening everywhere—particularly at companies affiliated with AT&T and Verizon. In some places, it's far worse than in Illinois.

Throughout our 63 year history as a Union, we have had great contracts, bad contracts and pretty good contracts. We are in an amazingly bad economy where all employers have the upper hand and can demand things from us they could not get in a normal economy. This does not mean that we turn on each other. This too shall pass. We need to stick together and strengthen our Union, not destroy it by beating each other up about things that we cannot change. We risk weakening ourselves before the time when we can fix the bad things AT&T stuck us with when we were vulnerable.

Workers at Comcast Demand Justice

By Jerry Rankins, Business Representative



Workers at the Comcast Cortland Chicago facility demanded justice by letting their voices be heard at the annual shareholders meeting on May 20th in Philadelphia.

These brave workers stood up to CEO Brian Roberts and demanded that economic and social justice be by deed, not by mere words alone.

Joined by other union leaders, clergy and special interest groups these workers sent a strong message demanding that Roberts and company end the corporation's unethical, discriminatory practices against its workers—practices that hurt working families. They want the hypocrisy which violates the corporations own Code of Ethics policy to end.

The Cortland Chicago contract expires February 11, 2011 and we are ready to battle for justice!

The Cortland Score Card arbitration has been rescheduled for July 12th. The case for a member who was terminated will resume on July 21st. We are confident that worker justice will prevail.



"I wonder what 'U-Scan' registers think about."

Fighting For Justice at OEMC

The hearing dates for the unfair labor board charge (ULP) filed by Local 21 against the City of Chicago over the unilateral implementation of the COUPE agreement has been rescheduled for June 14th and 17th. The City lobbied hard to postpone the hearing that was previously set for March 20th.

We have been meeting over grievances on an ongoing basis at the second and third steps. Progress is being made. The current collective bargaining agreement expires on December 31, 2010. The Illinois Labor Board has not ruled on the Union's appeal to sever from Unit II.

In our fight for justice, we are counting on the solidarity of each and every one of our members. Without it, the fight ahead of us will be much more difficult in these tough economic times. Solidarity!

Springfield Update

By Rosetta Shinn, Business Representative, COPE Director



Both Houses of the General Assembly passed the Telecom Rewrite of 2010 in Illinois. As *Frontline* goes to press, the bill awaits Governor Quinn's signature.

The State faces a \$13 billion budget deficit for the coming fiscal year which means cuts are coming in education, health and human services and to the Illinois State Police.

Governor Quinn is asking for a 1% surcharge or tax increase to prevent the layoff of 17,000 teachers. The House and Senate leaders have vowed not to raise taxes or create new taxes prior to the fall elections without a bi-partisan vote.

I've been in Springfield a long time yet here's another first for me. The General Assembly passed a bill in a 12-hour time frame

that cut pensions for future state and municipal employees, including teachers and some police officers. Labor protested that there were no negotiations nor did they get a voice in the agreed-bill process.

With no plans to raise revenue, there will be cuts in state worker's pensions. The average state worker's pension is about \$20,000 a year. The new bill forces state employees to work until they turn 67 instead of 60. This is not a good year for working people in the State of Illinois.

On April 28th, we honored Illinois workers, who were killed on the job, by laying roses at the Workers Memorial in Springfield. Many State Labor Federations and Central Labor Councils also held services to honor those who lost their lives on the job. Our prayers go out to their families.

No matter if you support the Democratic or Republican Party, we must remember anything can be taken away at the stroke of the pen. We must be at the State and Federal Capitols to protect our rights.

Workers' Memorial Day Fallen Workers Remembered

On April 28th union members across the state honored the men and women who have died or been injured while working at their jobs. There were 10 services held around the state including in Alton, Bloomington, Decatur, Galesburg, Joliet, Peoria, Rock Island, Rockford, Springfield and Spring Valley.

President Obama released a proclamation marking the day and honoring the 29 miners who lost their lives on April 5 in West Virginia. It was the first time a U.S. President has issued a Presidential Proclamation in honor of Workers' Memorial Day. In Illinois both the House and Senate unanimously passed resolutions designating April 28 as Workers' Memorial Day in Illinois. The resolutions were sponsored by Rep. John D'Amico (D-15) and Sen. Dave Koehler (D-46). Since 1971 Workers' Memorial Day has been held on April 28th each year. It marks the day the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) went into effect in the United States.



In Springfield (top right): Jonathon Gordon, AFFI Local 37 Honor Guard; Tim Drea, Illinois AFL-CIO secretary treasurer; Cheryl Neff, IDOT Division of Public Safety; Michael T. Carrigan, Illinois AFL-CIO president; Terry Reed, president Springfield CLC; Carl Hinman, AFFI Local 37 Honor Guard; (front row) Anastasia Jones, Aaron Shipman and Aiden Shipman, all helpers at the ceremony.

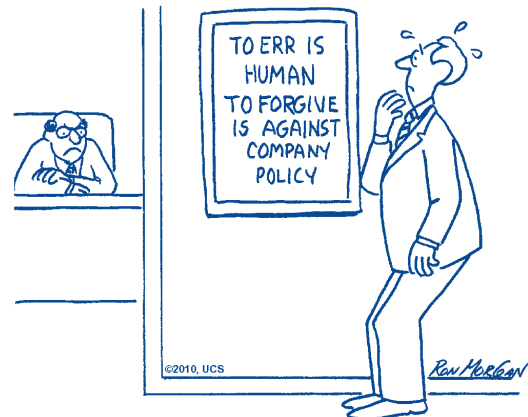
PHOTO: ILLINOIS AFL-CIO

Great America Discounted Tickets Available

IBEW Local 21 members will be able to purchase discounted tickets to Six Flags Great America Park.

Tickets regularly priced at \$56.64 will be available for \$26. The discounted tickets are valid for a single day admission on one of these four dates 7/17, 7/18, 8/14 or 8/15. Children 2 and under get in the park free. Parking is not included.

Tickets may be purchased AFTER June 16th by visiting www.sixflags.com once there pick **Six Flags Great America** as your park and enter promo code **IBEW10** in the upper right corner to receive your union discount.



March for Wall Street Reform



IBEW Local 21 members joined over a thousand working families, small business owners and community activists who marched through Chicago's financial district. They demanded that Wall Street banks: stop standing in the way of federal reform; start lending to communities and small businesses; pay a fair share to restore the jobs they destroyed.

• • • In **Vermilion County** bargaining, management gave us their last, best and final offer. We will take it to our members soon so they can vote on the proposal.

The patient census at the **Bel-Wood Nursing Home** in Peoria County is down. The numbers required management to close one of the wings. Fortunately, none of our members were furloughed or laid off. A new attendance policy was instituted in August 2009. The employees are still trying to adjust to it.

The new phone system installed in the **AT&T Peoria Credit and Collections** office won't allow members to log in prior to their scheduled start and will automatically log them off at the end of their tour unless they are on a call. Then it logs them out as soon as they hang up from their last call of the day. Because of this, management put some ridiculous rules in place forcing our members to rally together in solidarity.

They made signs and hung them in their cubicles until the bosses demanded them to be taken down. We then made signs for the union bulletin boards that management removed after I refused their demands. There is now one sign that says "Morale Huh... wonder why it's so low."

The solidarity by our members forced the bosses to relax some of those ridiculous rules. The sign remains. The same phone system was installed in the **Springfield BCS** center without the outrageous rules.

No phone system was installed in the **Springfield Wholesale Service Center**. However, the employees have been covered on a "new" policy regarding accurate time reporting and the same rules apply to them as if they had the new system. Also in the Wholesale Service Center, we were successful in winning the 2009 appraisals grievance. Management had to redo all of the appraisals.

Recently, because of P.A.R. there have been many terminations at the **Rock Island Consumer Care Center**. Management gave us "New" performance guidelines. The only things that changed were the name from P.A.R. to A.C.E. and they added another step of discipline. We are grieving it!



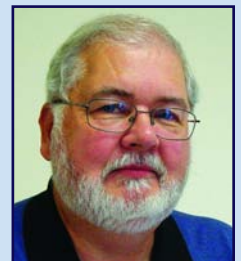
By Vicki Burroughs,
Business Representative

• • • We are in the closing stages of the **AT&T Central Office** off hour scheduling trial. A few CO's were selected for the trial and the Stewards have been reviewing the work performed on off hours. Once the trial is complete, we'll meet again with the company and hopefully determine what type of work should be included. If the trial is successful we hope to expand the data review process to all CO's. It will bring consistency in the way the management schedules techs on evenings and weekends.

Construction is at it again. **AT&T** barely got performance management started and now they are in the process of trying to implement MSOC. OMG! Instead of concentrating on getting a quality job done out there it seems management is more interested in the bottom quintile. (Quintile is just a fancy way of saying employees who are in bottom 20% in work performance.) When asked what MSOC is all about, bosses only say they are as confused as anyone. I understand the department has to do what the corporation says and they're expected to report the results but it still seems like time could be better spent. Like I said in my last article, management needs to train technicians properly instead of expecting them to do more work just to satisfy some new program.

In **I&M** we were able to get the company to sit down and talk about the hour lunch problem. Those meetings are proceeding and hopefully the outcome will be something that is good for all of us. As I said before, don't open your IFD or start working before your normal start time. Don't work during your lunch time or breaks. I know it can get boring, after all, it only takes about 15 or 20 minutes to eat, but I'm sure there are other things you can find to do for the remaining 40 to 45 minutes. Get creative.

Problems with driver's licenses have come to our attention. Make sure yours is valid; the bosses are checking. If you aren't sure, call the Illinois Secretary of State at 217-782-2720 and follow the prompts. It's a very easy verification process if you have your driver's license and social security numbers handy. If you have SR22 insurance and get rid of your car, you must maintain the insurance for 36 total months to keep your driver's license valid.



Remember to be where you're supposed to be doing what you are supposed to be doing and give the company 8 for 8 and always Work Safely.

By Steve Unterfranz,
Business Representative

• • • It is that time of the year again. **AT&T** recently completed another audit of driver's licenses and again moved to terminate several members. Our members must be more vigilant. You need to make sure your driver's license is valid and related tickets or other infractions are resolved. Call the Secretary of State's office, in Illinois 217 782-2720, in Indiana 317 233-6000. If you're charged with a misdemeanor or felony, you must take care of that situation. Don't allow management to use you as a way to trim their budget.

In all **Network** departments, AT&T continues to try to implement performance management programs. If you're put on some type of action or performance plan, make your manager lives up to their commitments. They should put their plan in writing, explaining exactly what they are going to do

to help you improve. Hold them to it.

While your local manager probably isn't the person who decided to put you on the plan, they are fully aware if the plan fails to improve your numbers, they will make the decision to defend their actions and try to walk you down the path of discipline and out the door. Managers know in the end, it will be their job or yours on the line. If upper management wants to cut their expenses, make sure they have to fire one of their own.



By Paul Wright,
Business Representative

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

• • • All eleven Customer Advocates in the **Federal Group at 225 W. Randolph** in Chicago were declared surplus by AT&T management because the work is moving to Knoxville, Tennessee. The last day on the job was April 30th for members who voluntarily accepted the SIPP. The Force Distribution Date (FDD) for employees who want the company to find them a different job is June 2nd.

Six Telecommunications Specialists (TS) were declared surplus in the **Provisioning Center**, but the **AINLNP** is getting more work and requested eight additional TS's at 311 W. Washington. The good news is the surplus was satisfied and everyone kept their job.

*By Liz Hodges,
Business Representative*



• • • Chief Steward Mark Fulcer and I would like to thank everyone working in the **Evanston and Des Plaines** garages who were very generous with their cash donations to help one of our members in a time of need. Thank you, thank you, and thank you!

In the **Central Offices**, **COESM** is here and must be followed. It is your personal GPS for accounting all your time. Please fill it out appropriately. Managers review it and AT&T expects 100% accuracy, so just do it.

In the garages, **MSOC** is your new "friend." Management rolled out MSOC and is using it in **Construction and I&M**. They can change the name for a Category 1, 2 & 3, or Good Jobs in 8, but it's still the same.

We asked that your Stewards be involved from the beginning. If you're in a meeting, reviewing your data, your Steward should be sitting next to you. The manager should be able to give you specific information as to why you are not meeting your numbers.

After its roll out, Mark found many managers were just using the sample letter and considered that exhibit to be the process. He sat down with several managers and technicians to get the plan personalized to specific needs and he's been successful in getting some PIP's overturned.

The Construction Stewards sat through an overview of the MSOC process and we've asked I&M give an overview to those Stewards. We're still waiting.

In March, managers became mechanics, performing the GPS upgrade work. We've collected all the information in our area and will be filing a grievance for our Mechanics.

Our grievance for Construction Techs forced to Chicago is waiting to go to arbitration. AT&T's Labor Relations department denied our grievance at the third step and we are now in the process of scheduling an arbitration date.

*By Jim McLaughlan,
Business Representative*



• • • I've talked about these issues many times but many **Prem Techs** are still getting in trouble for these same things over and over again. On average, we sit in two to three dismissal panels per week. Time and time again, we get the same answers "**I didn't know**" or "**I was never told by anyone.**" I will review these issues with all of you again this time with more of an explanation.

Many of these panels involve techs who have **attendance problems** because they've exceeded days off allowed by the plan. Most, if not all the techs, are unaware of **Intermittent FMLA**.

You can ask your doctor to fill out Intermittent FMLA paperwork when you or a family member has a chronic illness and you are the only family member who can take care of them. Intermittent illnesses examples would be a family member receiving chemo-therapy, a child who has asthma and you are the only person who can take care of them or if you have asthma, chronic migraines or another acceptable recurring condition. Contact your doctor or your family member's physician and have them fill out the request for Intermittent FMLA when you first start to deal with the problem. DON'T WAIT.

I've sat in many dismissal panels for members who have a **suspended driver's license**. Many techs, when they get to a panel, say once again, "I didn't know" or "I was never told by anyone." AT&T will go to the Secretary of State offices and pay \$12 to get a copy of your driver license abstract. It contains all of your moving violations and indicates if your license has been suspended for any reason including not having car insurance. You have to inform your manager if you get a ticket or if you get arrested.

We now have dates scheduled for many of the cases we have going to arbitration. We will keep you informed on the cases as they move forward.

*By Mike McCormick,
Business Representative*



• • • Our members in the **Glenview I&R** garage were combined with those in the **Evanston** garage. On May 10th, they moved to the Evanston location. Management explained the reason for their decision. When they moved the Term Techs to Construction, the garage lost manager headcount; instead of hiring a new manager the company decided to combine garages. The vacation schedules will remain separate until the end of the year. The seniority list for tours will be combined at the end of the current six week schedule. The **Safety Committee** in Evanston is checking to make sure the building meets fire department safety standards.

The Apprentice Committee met and all areas are in ratio.

*Michael Cohns,
Business Representative*



• • • On the **Southside of Chicago** and across the area, performance, productivity, and the associated numbers are the issue. The I&M department has been dealing with this for years. Real jobs in 8, good jobs in 8 and now MSOC, it's a new name, but same old game. Since MSOC's rollout in Construction, our members have been struggling with it.

Historically, **Construction** has not really managed performance. There were measurements but they weren't managed like in I&M. Not anymore. Because Construction management doesn't have any experience managing performance they were doing it all wrong.

We said many times, the company can't discipline strictly on numbers, but Construction did. As a result, we have many grievances and I'm sure more to come. The jobs are not engineered correctly and the time to complete them is charged out before the techs get the jobs. Our members can't make the numbers under these conditions.

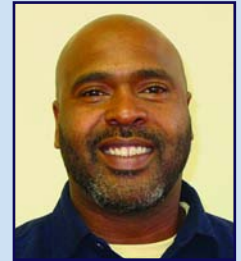
The **Central Offices** are now being hit by performance management. With **COESM**, management has effectively put a time clock in the offices. Central office technicians must

create tickets to show when they start and end their shift, breaks, lunch, and for time traveling between offices. If that isn't enough, they must account for every minute of everyday they are scheduled to work. They are held to measurements they are not allowed to see. If they exceed the time allotted, they are scrutinized and disciplined if they cannot justify their time.

Many grievances are being filed over all these issues. Everyone needs to know they must document everything they do. Don't leave it up to your memory or the memory of your manager. This applies to all members in every department. We are fighting for you. The more information and documentation you have about the work you are performing including the roadblocks you run into, the better it will be when we are arguing the grievances.

Remember, we are fighting bean counters, so we must keep account of our beans to beat them.

By CJ-Cleveland Johnson,



• • • We are receiving many complaints in **C&E** because managers are doing quality audits in Chicago. Technicians completed much of the work over five months ago. You would think management would have audited these jobs when they were fresh in everyone's mind.

Bosses wanted to issue discipline but in the end, we were able to work it out so no members were suspended. This just goes to show why you need to **document everything you do on your jobs**.

Document items on your time sheets. If you have to buy a notebook to document everything you do, buy one. You can even use the union calendars we get every year with our union cards to keep notes. Write down any road blocks and make sure you tell your boss. They are supposed to work on removing them.

Construction is in the process of rolling out **MSOC**, management's way of tracking performance. We've had many problems in the beginning with the company violating its own policies by trying to discipline people based on a flawed system of numbers.

Fortunately, we've been successful in getting suspensions removed, and almost all discipline overturned; at least in cases where all the company had was numbers.

One issue with MSOC is managers are posting peoples' performance numbers on bulletin boards for everyone to see. These numbers could lead to discipline. We believe this is a violation of your privacy, and possibly a violation of the Illinois Personnel Records Review Act.

Anyone who does not want their name and results posted should first let their boss know they are against it. If the foreman won't listen, you need to file a complaint with the Illinois Department of Labor. Contact your steward or chief steward to get a copy of the complaint form.

We have a couple of grievances in the **Engineering Assistant group** which are now at the third step. One involves the number of contractors AT&T hired to replace departing union members. We are waiting for a response from management.

In the **DEG group**, we've been talking with the company to ensure our members aren't violating any transportation laws when they are pulling the 8 or 10-pack generator trailers. Our Local 21 Safety Committee is working on this issue. In the meantime, if you are asked to do something which you believe violates a law or safety rules, it is your right to refuse the work. If you have any problems please call your steward or chief steward immediately.

In **I&M, details** started in multiple locations. The word from AT&T is this will be business as usual for the indefinite future. We are doing what we can to alleviate these details by demanding managers to ask for volunteers in as wide an area as possible to keep the same people from being repeatedly forced. We will work to keep them honest. It has been agreed that if an area with techs forced out is being back-filled, a change will be made and the techs that were forced out will be brought home.

The **Central Office** scheduling trial is ongoing. After it ends, we will review the data and report our findings back to you.

In the areas where managers were doing CART testing, we settled the second step grievance by demanding they cease and desist doing the testing.

*By Terry Sheehan,
Business Representative*



• • • The Illinois Commerce Commission approved the proposed **sale of Verizon to Frontier** on April 21st. The Administrative Law Judge who presided over the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) hearings to approve the sale recommended that the commission should deny the petition for the sale. However, the commissioners seemed more focused on Frontier's promises of increases in broadband access. It appears that promise trumped any financial concerns in their minds.

In the mean time, many Verizon members have been retiring. The company thinks hiring may be problem for Frontier and they have begun replacing retirees in Illinois. This is good news in these hard economic times.

Two **Centurylink** arbitrations are complete. One arbitration has been settled and we are working out the final details; we are waiting for the decision from the arbitrator on the second case.

MSOC is the latest 4 letter word at **AT&T** where management is turning up the pressure on productivity. We all know the system is flawed. Please do not fall into the productivity trap by cutting corners on quality or safety in order to make your numbers. Be where you are supposed to be, doing what you are supposed to be doing. I know that is an old line, but it is the truth. All Techs' should keep a daily log book of the things preventing them from making their objectives.



By Michael Roach,
Business Representative

• • • At **JULIE**, it's that time of year when we welcome back our members who were laid off for the winter. Glad to see all of you have returned and hope digging season keeps everyone busy. It's off to a good start, two part timers were just promoted to fulltime positions.

As a reminder to all members, anytime you plan to dig you must call **JULIE first at 800-892-0123 or 811** to get all underground utilities located. If you are working on a jobsite that is not located, avoid hidden dangers by giving your sisters and brothers a call. They can also assist you online at www.illinois1call.com.

In March, **AT&T** announced a surplus of 10 Customer Advocates working in ABS Global Billing in **Chicago Heights**. The affected Customer Advocates have been busy testing and were successful in receiving job placements.

Under the **Technology Change Article** in our contract with AT&T, the company advised the Union in Full Committee that the **Network Dispatch Center** will be installing a new computer system. We received an overview of the new system called "FORCE." Management claims it will maximize flow-through in the NDC by automating processes performed manually today. Dispatch personnel will only handle exceptions. We are closely watching its rollout as we are hearing rumors management will be doing some of the work currently performed by our Maintenance Administrators.



By Melanie Probst,
Business Representative

• • • The move of the **AT&T West Live Accounts Collection Center (WLACC)** from the Kedzie office to downtown Chicago is finally complete. It was done in phases with the employees reporting to the fourth and fifth floors at 225 W. Randolph on April 19th and April 26th. The new space is very nice, and gives our members options for transportation as well as many food and shopping choices.

At the **National Credit Verification Center (NCVC)** office, Chief Steward Karen Battisfore and I met with our members about attendance. Local management wanted us to talk to them even though NCVC met its corporate goals. Usually we are trying to handle damage control but in this situation, we thanked our members for the good job they are doing and asked them to continue their efforts. Again, keep up the good work. It pays off for the company and you personally.

Now for the bad news in **Consumer** AT&T advised us it was changing its attendance policy on May 1st by making it more restrictive and punitive. Management introduced a zero tolerance attendance policy and eliminated the thresholds for absences and tardies. There will no longer be two tracks of discipline for incidental absences and disabilities. Your first absence, tardy or disability not covered by FMLA will be chargeable under the new plan. Since AT&T is bound by the just cause article of our Collective Bargaining Agreement we

offered to go to the offices and talk with the members about attendance. Management refused our offer and implemented their policy.

The **Rosemont Long Distance** contract expires at midnight on June 26, 2010. On a good note, bargaining on benefits was completed last year when the AT&T CORE agreement was ratified so one major item is off the table. Wages, incentives and work rules are all items open for discussion. We will keep you updated as bargaining continues.

Finally, our Union won the **Consumer Mandatory Overtime** arbitration. The ruling didn't eliminate management's right to schedule mandatory overtime, but the ruling does state that conditions need to be met before it can be implemented. Mandatory overtime cannot be used to create a new tour, as it had for over 15 months. We will be sitting down soon with the company to set those conditions as directed by the arbitrator.



By Kurt Schmidt,
Business Representative

Local 21 Member Making a Difference in our Communities

By Tom Hopper, Business Representative

It's important to educate our families about unions and the good they do. After all, many of our children will go on to become members of a union and maybe even workplace organizers. I've worked hard to make sure that by the time my children entered the work force, they clearly understood that virtually every pro-worker, family friendly piece of legislation in our country was put in place because of organized labor.

Unions have done more good for American workers and received less credit for their efforts than any other organization in our nation's history. Now young adults, my daughter and my sons understand that

service organization, where he volunteers on the ceremonial Honor Guard. His activity with the Knights extends far beyond the Honor Guard. As Chairman of the fundraising committee, Brother Mellenthin coordinate's various fundraising events. Through raffles, garage sales, auctions, dinners, and recycling, he has helped purchase food for the hungry, postage for the "Gifts for the Troops" program, equipment for the disabled and necessities for single mothers.

As Chairman of the drive for the Intellectual Disabilities (ID) program, Brian organizes over 350 volunteers each year and has raised over \$35,000. These funds are used to purchase educational materials and assistive technologies for persons with disabilities, and to help support Special Olympics programs, where Brian also volunteers. Brian is a member of St. Alexander's Church in

Palos Heights where he volunteers weekly to maintain the buildings' various communications and mechanical systems. He also assists liturgically at monthly baptisms.

Last year when IBEW Local Union 21 needed volunteers to install an old donated phone system for ARISE Chicago (the



Chief Steward Robert Taylor and Brother Brian Mellenthin

PHOTOS: TOM HOPPER

former Chicago Interfaith Committee), Brother Mellenthin researched how to get the old equipment to work, and then volunteered his time over three weekends to install the actual system.

During the last several years, Brian has volunteered his time adapting and adding switches to toys so children with physical and intellectual disabilities can enjoy them. He also helped rebuild the home of an elderly woman in Chicago after volunteering his time working with Rebuilding Together.

Brian Mellenthin is a proud union member, advocating for working people each and every day at work, while also helping those less fortunate in our communities. Brother Mellenthin is not one looking for recognition for his valued abilities, skills, and services, nor are volunteer activities a burden to him; they are simply a way of life. Brian is one of the much appreciated human beings of the world, fulfilling the values and decency of pure volunteerism. He lives his life helping to elevate the moral, intellectual and social conditions of our members, their families and those in the communities where he works and lives.

It is for these reasons, with great honor, that the officers and staff of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 21 nominated Brian Mellenthin for the 2010 Robert G. Gibson Community Service Award. First presented in 1991, the Illinois AFL-CIO Community Services Award was established to recognize the good work of rank and file union members, men and women, who have made significant contributions by volunteering in community service activities. We are proud that Brian is a member of our local union and we strongly believe Brother Mellenthin is worthy of the award. The final selection will be made by the Illinois AFL-CIO in early June.



unions are made up of the people in them, and that each and every person can make a difference. One such person in our union is Brian Mellenthin.

Brother Mellenthin is a sixteen year member currently employed as a Journeyman Cable Splicer at AT&T in Chicago. Brian is married and is blessed with two special needs children. The challenges he faces at home have reinforced his own feelings of giving back to the community in which he lives and works.

From 2001 to 2003, Brother Mellenthin held the position of Treasurer with a group called the Parents' Alliance for Compliance in Special Education (P.A.C.E.). Teaming up with National People's Action (NPA) and other grassroots advocacy groups, Brian voiced concerns at the Capitol in Springfield, and traveled to Washington DC to gather the support of numerous legislators for Special Education and to peacefully demonstrate in numbers against predatory lending practices.

Brian is a ten year member of the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic men's



Fair Trade or Free Trade

By Mike O'Connor, Chief Steward



We've had a bailout bill to save the banks, and a stimulus bill that was supposed to fix our roads and bridges. But unemployment in America won't be fixed until we have

real reform of our trade policies.

In the history of America, the operating cost of the government was largely funded by tariffs on imported goods. Until about 1820, the Congress, the mail service, the Army, and all the salaries of government employees were paid by revenue from tariffs. That percentage declined steadily, both due to the enormous growth of government after World War II, but also to a trade policy and tax policy that led to the off-shoring of work and the destruction of U. S. manufacturing.

Many little bites destroyed the manufacturing base in the United States; some egregious legislation in the last two decades (NAFTA, CAFTA) accelerated that

decline, but the roots are in the Pro-Business agenda of Ronald Reagan. Simply stopping the enforcement of the Sherman Anti-Trust laws in 1981, sent a clear signal for giant corporations to become even bigger trans-national omnivores, with no loyalty to any nation or its workers and playing the global market for labor and profit to their own best advantage.

What did it mean to American industry to give China, Most Favored Nation trading status? On simply human rights issues there's a moral reason to deny such status to China. But giving them the same trade status as our best friends in the world community put the Chinese manufacturing platform on steroids. There are thousands and thousands of empty shipping containers stacking up in the port of Long Beach, California. They carry all the goods that Wal-Mart, HP, DELL, Sony, Panasonic make on the cheap and ship to America. But the shipping traffic is all one way.

Every one of the nations in the G20 protects some home industry, all but one nation. Can you guess which one?

If anyone in America tries to bring up tariffs or protection for some industry, there is a hue and cry across the globe about "Protectionism." Somehow Globalism has

made protectionism a dirty word. But the truth is everyone is doing it but the United States.

The end-game of Globalism is unsustainable because it is entirely based on U. S. consumption. And the irony is that without a manufacturing base, the wages of a service economy will not support a middle class, let alone the profits of the rest of the world.

Our government and especially the Democratic Congress we in organized labor elected must make the critical changes to our trade policy. Free trade is scam. The free trade the world has foisted upon America is materially unfair to us. We need fair trade and reinvestment in American industry. It will take tax and trade incentives coupled with disincentives to off-shoring American jobs. If there were a tariff on every printer imported from plants in China or Malaysia equal to the cost savings companies enjoy by building them over there I guarantee in short order corporations would move the manufacturing back to the United States.

The return of the protectionism that built American industry over the past 200 years may well also bring back our jobs and bring back our middle class!

She broke through the Glass Ceiling and is Taking Aim

By Nancy North, Editor



Justice is not blind. It's all in the laws government chooses to enforce and during the eight years of the previous administration industry self-regulation became the norm.

At her swearing-in ceremony the new Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis announced she was, "the new sheriff in town." She's staffed her team with lifelong advocates for working people, some from the ranks of organized labor, and hired hundreds of new investigators and enforcers.

One division, the Mine Safety and Health Administration is now headed by a union man, Joe Main. Labor Solicitor Patricia Smith utilized surprise inspections and community groups as a force multiplier in her previous position as New York state's labor commissioner. Community partnerships are fast becoming standard operating procedure. Phil Tom, a leader with Chicago's Interfaith Worker Justice Committee (a.k.a. ARISE Chicago), was appointed head of the department's Office for Faith Based and Community Initiatives. It was formerly little more than a feeding trough for politically connected evangelicals.

Solis's real influence lies in her power to enforce the nation's labor laws--the primary mission of the Department of Labor. She hired 710 additional enforcement staff, including 130 at OSHA and 250 in the crucial wage-and-hour division. Another hundred will come on in 2011 to staff for a crackdown on the misclassification by

employers of millions of employees as "independent contractors"--a dodge for the corporations to avoid paying taxes and benefits.

Her team moved forward new rules on coal mine dust, silica, and cranes and derricks. She restored prevailing wages for agricultural guest workers and is poised to restore reporting rules on ergonomic injuries.

The Department of Labor faces daunting tasks they must deal with: tens of thousands of unregulated, potentially toxic chemicals, rampant wage theft and an epidemic of ergonomic injuries. Most new investigators were prepared to hand out citations in the field for violations, but they're working with antiquated enforcement regulation tools.

When OSHA threw the book at Wal-Mart after a worker was trampled to death on Black Friday, the fine was only \$7,000. The Protecting America's Workers Act would update those penalties, including criminal culpability for top corporate officials. With all they have to accomplish, the Department of Labor's entire \$1.5 billion enforcement budget couldn't pay for a single B-2 bomber.

The department's new fervor for enforcement will be hobbled if the most disenfranchised workers continue to feel unsafe when reporting nonpayment of wages or workplace hazards. Most observers have no doubt that the new team at the Department of Labor will do all it can with the broken laws and clunky regulatory powers at its disposal. This new vigor for enforcing the laws that protect ordinary citizens demonstrates again how the politicians we elect make appointments in government that can improve our lives. For more information read "A Rump Group at Labor" by Esther Kaplan in *The Nation* April 12, 2010.

Secure Your Future by Avoiding These Common 401(k) Mistakes

By Julie Permutt, Scarborough Alliance Corporation Vice President- Investments & Retirement Planning, CFP, CMFC



Your 401(k) plan is one of the most powerful and efficient ways to invest for your retirement. A 401(k) offers immediate tax savings and tax deferral. It also often offers matching contributions from your

employer and access to professional money management. In our years of working with retirement plans, we have identified several common mistakes members make. In order to truly maximize the return on your 401(k), we recommend understanding the common mistakes so you can avoid them.

Being too conservative

Many participants are too conservative for the long haul. Few investors will be able to reach their retirement goals without any exposure to stock.

Taking too much risk

In a 2007 study by the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI), approximately 29% of participants held more than 80% of their balances in stock funds and/or company stock. These include people who are within 10 years of retirement and should have a more conservative mix.

Holding too much company stock

In the 2007 study by the EBRI, 15% of participants put more than half of their money in company stock, with nearly 7% having more than 90% in company stock. In addition, when only viewing participants in their 60's, approximately 11% had more than 90% of their money in company stock, which is the time when workers can least afford this kind of concentrated risk. Most financial planners say you should not be concentrated in one industry, let alone one company.

Trying to time the market

Since many plans offer a 24 hour ability to change investments, some participants use this feature to switch from one investment to another as they anticipate changes in the market by chasing the latest "hot" sector. Long-term investors should be consistent and stick with an appropriate investment allocation.

Failure to allocate or rebalance

The allocation of 401(k) money is more important than choosing the "right funds." Participants who are unsure of how to allocate among investment choices often do things such as selecting the investments that performed the best the previous year (buying high) or dividing their accounts evenly among all investment options.

Taking out loans

Taking frequent loans from retirement funds is often a sign of overspending and will affect what is ultimately accumulated for retirement. The practice is sometimes justified with the concept that "I am paying myself back with interest." In fact, the loan balance is no longer working for the individual.

Cashing out during a job change

In a Hewitt Associates survey of 200,000 401(k) participants, 45% of employees cashed out their 401(k) plan when leaving a job, paying taxes and penalties. The highest rates were among people in their 20's but 42% of employees ages 40 to 49 make the mistake too.

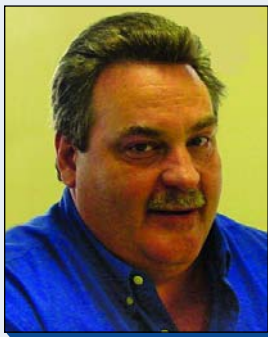
Failure to contribute enough to receive the maximum employer match

Approximately one third of 401(k) participants don't contribute enough to receive the maximum employer match. That's literally turning down free money. For example, the AT&T plan offers a match of 80% of your basic contribution. That's a guaranteed 80% return on your investment!

If you'd like advice on avoiding these mistakes, please feel free to call Scarborough at 800-223-7608 or John Laughlin, our Illinois Regional Manager at 800-545-9057.

Organizing at AT&T

By David Webster, Business Representative



One of the gains that came out of last year's bargaining at AT&T is an organizing tool called the "Card Check/Neutrality Agreement." It allows non-management, non-union workers at AT&T to join the IBEW after a majority in a work group sign authorization cards saying they wish to become members.

As you might have guessed, we are having some difficulties implementing the agreement with AT&T. However, we are still committed to working with those eligible employees who want to join our ranks.

Engineers have come forward as one group eligible for membership. They have shown interest in finding out more about organizing. While we continue to discuss the situation with AT&T Labor Relations, we are talking to the Engineers about organizing with or without "card check."

In the near future, we will be holding informational meetings, so Engineers should keep their eyes and ears open for details on when and where such meetings will be held. We'll try to give them ample notice so they can talk with union reps about the differences in working with and without the protections of a collective bargaining agreement. If you know an Engineer let them know we'd like them to join us and tell them about the meetings.

In addition to the Engineers, we've discovered other potential bargaining units at AT&T in our jurisdiction. We want to identify all AT&T workers who are not supervisors but are working in non-union positions.

We appreciate any help you can provide to help build our union stronger by organizing the unorganized. If you have any questions or comments call Dave Webster at 630 222-9121 or email him at dwebster@ibew21.org. Our downstate representative is Rosetta Shinn she can be reached at 217 836-4380 her email address is rshinn@ibew21.org.

Letters To The Editor



The Bread and Butter Party vs. the Tea Party

By John Cheeseman, retiree

Have you heard about those Tea Party people that the media seems to be glamorizing? It's probably old news now. Anyway I didn't get it. The original Tea Party was about "Taxation without representation" if I remember my American history. But these people have representation, they just don't like who it is. Where were they under the last administration? Would they have formed their tea party if the other guy had been elected President?

From a very early age, I belonged to the Bread and Butter Party, mainly because my father was a telephone man. My siblings and I didn't know we belonged to the bread and butter party at the time, but we knew every day, he went off to work to bring home the bread and butter. And when I started at old Ma Bell, my Union Brothers and Sisters reinforced the lessons. At contract time and in politics we focused on bread and butter issues.

Recently we helped elect a Bread and Butter President because we recognized we needed change. Our President inherited two wars, an economy on the verge of collapse, sky rocketing healthcare costs, an auto industry ready to implode, high unemployment, etc. And we've waited so long for change that we're impatient, but change comes slowly. Our Bread and Butter President is doing the right things, and in my opinion he's doing a pretty good job so far.

Those tea party people say they want change and less taxes. But someone is behind the scenes financing the tea party movement to fight change and keep the status quo! Which means the big banks, big business and big insurance companies will continue to make big money at the expense of our Bread and Butter Party members.

I'm quite proud of our Bread and Butter Party. We've won things like Women's Suffrage, Outlawing Child Labor, Social Security, Civil Rights, Medicare, OSHA, FMLA, Workmen's Comp, Unemployment Insurance, and now Health Care Reform. Keep your campaign shoes, letter writing materials and your checkbook handy, because our work is never done. We will always work to make things better. At the same time remember, our enemies will always be looking for new gimmicks to divide us, because they know we vote. Long Live the Bread and Butter Party!

IBEW 21 Service Rep Dials Up Union Benefits in Time of Need

By Jennifer Wright Dorr, Union Privilege

Complaints are a big part of Temeka Ward's life. As a 12-year customer service representative, she handles inquiries, comments and gripes from the general public with professional tact that would make even the most seasoned diplomats a bit jealous. So when a serious illness kept her from working, Ward, an IBEW Local 21 member, was prepared to draw on her well-honed "people skills" to obtain a Union Plus Disability Grant, but to her surprise the process "could not have been easier."

Union Plus Disability Grants, which never need to be repaid, provide Union Plus Credit Card holders who are sick or disabled with financial assistance of up to \$2,000. In addition to the grant, a payment of \$250 is paid directly to the Union Plus Credit Card holder's account.

"The grant made a big difference," says Ward. "I am very glad that I learned about this benefit and I hope more people learn about it. The application is extremely easy and the help comes fast. I never would have expected this from my credit card."

Temeka's life changed dramatically when she was stricken by an illness. Her days of handling some 70 phone calls a day for AT&T came to a halt. Her regular paychecks shrunk when she was put on disability leave. And her daily rituals with her 7-year-old daughter became even more precious.

She was fortunate during this difficult time to be showered with love and kindness from friends and family members, including her daughters, Brittney and Brienne, and her Aunt Juanita.

"When I became sick, my life changed quite a bit. I wasn't able to work, and my pay was cut significantly. At the same time, my bills continued to pour in. The grant I received from Union Plus was a blessing. It helped me out during a tough time, and I hope other union members learn about this benefit," says Ward.

Temeka's union benefits helped ease the financial strain in two significant ways. First, IBEW-won health care benefits made a tremendous difference. Because her Local bargained for good health care benefits, her share of health care costs is about \$300 to \$400 a month.



Still, the costs associated with a significant illness are steep, especially when disability pay will only stretch so far.

Union Plus recognizes the significant toll that illness and disability can have on working families. That's why the Disability Grants are designed to provide quick financial relief. Ward received a check for \$1,100 within a few weeks of applying.

Union members who have had the Union Plus Credit Card for at least one year, have been out of work for at least 90 days, and who experienced a loss of 25 percent or more of household income due to the illness or disability within the past six months are eligible to apply.

To apply for a Union Plus Credit Card, call 1-800-522-4000, or visit UnionPlus.org to see the wide array of benefits available to union members including those that help in times of financial hardship.



Help Available for IBEW Members

IBEW members participating in the Union Plus Credit Card, Insurance or Mortgage Program may qualify for:

- Hospital Care Grants of \$1,000 to help members cope with large, out-of-pocket hospital expenses.
- Job Loss Grants of \$250 for Union Plus Credit Card holders who have recently been laid off for more than 90 days.
- Mortgage Assistance to help Union Plus Mortgage holders, who are unemployed, disabled, or out on strike, make their mortgage payments.

CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

Peoria/Bellwood

David A Ray
Rosemarie Spann

Verizon

Ken G Smith
Gary McAdams
Cathy Baldin
Robert Weir
William Haas
Gayle D McDowell
Thomas C Wisdom
Larry Baker

CenturyTel

Richard Cruz
Jerry Yoeckel
Leon Ullrich

AT&T 2008

Ronald Sands
Mei Fong

2009

Edith Garibay
Kathy L Simpson
Barbara M
Thompson
Stanley Crawley
Elinor Williams
Cynthia Fuji
Martha Falcone
Shirley Lausted
Verlean Devitt
Debra Mathews
Jeffrey Fuller
Raymond
Wingbermuehle
Shirley Collins
Zonice Gregory

January 2010

George Castillo
Lydia Messina
Deborah Popagain
George Ksycki
Marilyn Hester
Deronda Brengettsy
John Marinello
Allen J Cius
Joyce A Brooks
Susan Layden
Robert Seymour
Tim Chlopowicz
Robert J Halvey Jr
Brenda F McClain
Carolyn Baptiste
Donna M Warren
Doris Elder
William A Rogers
Darlene Ellison
Norman Schinske
Carl Guenther
Thomas Blaul
Elizabeth Zubizarreta
Janet Shepherd
Angela Sokup
Lewis G Anton
August Hudec
Dennis Schiavo
Thomas Ahlfeld Jr
Migdalia Mondragon
Mark Szalaj

February 2010

John Grosse
Anthony Pietrzak
John Blezien

March 2010

Vicente Cantu
Donna Bloodworth
Joyce M Bolden
Wilhelmina Berkley
Careletta Cox
Danette L Bester
Carolina Beltran
Rosemary C
Rodriguez
Linda M Menchaca
Sophia L Neal
Cynthia Hamzik
Janice Reed
Cheryl Hendricks
Karen Swiecicki
Elizabeth A Russell
Merrie Schweigert
John Blezien

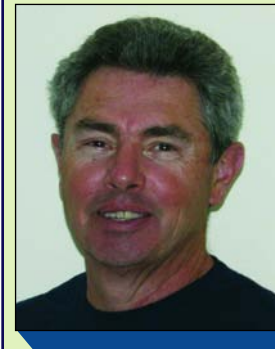
April 2010

Robert Johnson
David Harris
Inez Reed
Shirley Woods
Gloria Strong
Kathleen Collins
Jane Snieg
Arvis Humes
Edward Arcuri
Carter Hoyt III
Alicia Slaughter

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.

A Close Look at the Issues

By Larry Moeller, Retiree Coordinator



The Local 21 Benefits Department and I are dealing with many questions concerning retiree vision care. Retirees who left AT&T after June 27, 2009 can continue to receive

vision coverage by paying the company's group rate. Retirees who are 65 or older get their vision care through Medicare. This leaves a gap in coverage for Local 21 retirees who aren't 65 and left the company prior to June 27, 2009. AT&T has reneged on this group since bargaining. We are currently fighting this issue with the company.

The snail's pace led us to consider a new option. Local 21 is in serious discussions with VSP—an eye care insurance carrier retirees should remember. The coverage would be identical to AT&T's vision plan and if negotiations work out the premium could be less than what AT&T would have charged. Coverage would begin July 1st and run through the end of 2010 upon payment of a 6 month premium. You would make your premium check out to VSP and mail it to the Union office. Local 21 will act only as a clearing house by forwarding the checks directly to VSP. Checks made out to Local 21 would be voided and returned to the sender. If we are able to come to an agreement, a retiree alert will go out followed by a mailing, with enrollment instructions, plan details and costs to all known retiree home addresses.

While I'm on the subject of retiree alerts, you should know all retiree alerts are sent to you from IBEW Local 21 through their email system. If you would like to receive those alerts, send me an email at lmoeller@ibew21.org and I will make sure your start receiving them.

In spite of AT&T, reneging on issuing debit cards the use of the HRA has been successful. There have only been a few reports of benefits being denied. Payments have been prompt. If you have any problems, retirees can call the Local 21 Benefit department at (630) 960-4466 ext. 228 for help.

On a positive note, Ron Butera is heading up a new **retiree club on the north side of Chicago**. If you are interested in joining, please email me and I'll see that Ron contacts you.

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 Lou Byrnes at the union office 630 960-4466 X234.

UNIT MEETINGS 2010

JUNE

Unit 1

Thursday, June 10, 7 PM
Irish-American Heritage Center
4626 N. Knox Ave.
Chicago IL
773 282-7035

Unit 2

Tuesday June 8, 7 PM
Gaelic Park
6119 W. 147TH
Oak Forest IL
708 687-9323

Unit 3

Thursday, June 17, 7 PM
IBEW Local #117
765 Munshaw Lane
Crystal Lake IL
847 854-7200

Unit 4

Wednesday, June 9, 7 PM
IBEW Local #145
1700 52nd Ave. Suite A
Moline IL
309 736-4239

Unit 5

Wednesday, June 16, 7 PM
American Legion Post #979
4501 S. Airport Rd.
Bartonville IL
309 697-2432

Unit 6

Tuesday, June 15, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr.
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, June 21, 7 PM
IBEW Local # 309
2000A Mall St. (Rte 157)
Collinsville IL
618 345-5112

AUGUST

Unit 1

Thursday, August 12, 7 PM
IBEW Local #21
1307 W. Butterfield Rd. Suite 424
Downers Grove IL
630 960-4466

Unit 2

Tuesday, August 10, 7 PM
Lansing American Legion #697
18255 Grant St.
Lansing IL
708 474-5906

Unit 3

Thursday, August 19, 7 PM
IBEW Local #364
6820 Mill Rd.
Rockford IL
815 398-6282

Unit 4

Wednesday, August 11, 7 PM
Lemont VFW
15780 New Ave.
Lemont IL
630 257-9859

Unit 5

Wednesday, August 18, 7 PM
IBEW Local #146
3390 N. Woodford St.
Decatur IL
217 877-4604

Unit 6

Tuesday, August 17, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr.
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, August 16, 7 PM
IBEW Local #649
501 Humbert Rd.
Alton IL
618 462-1627

SEPTEMBER

Unit 1

Thursday, September 9, 6 PM
IBEW Local #134
600 W. Washington Blvd.
Chicago IL
312 474-4186

Unit 2

Tuesday, September 14, 7 PM
Slovak Club
6920 Broadway
Merrillville IN
219 756-5101

Unit 3

Thursday, September 16, 7 PM
Gurnee American Legion
749 Milwaukee Ave.
Gurnee IL
847 244-9282

Unit 4

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

Unit 5

Wednesday, September 15, 7 PM
American Legion Post #979
4501 S. Airport Rd.
Bartonville IL
309 697-2432

Unit 6

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

Unit 7

Monday, September 20, 7 PM
American Legion Post #141
916 Main St.
Mt Vernon IL
618 242-4561

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

IBEW LOCAL 21

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



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



IBEW Local 21 Member Mark Evans is Dishing it up Again.

On July 4th, Mark is planning a 5 continent pizza delivery for our Troops in the Middle East and other countries. This is his third year of providing a slice of home for our troops. Last year he was able to deliver over 28,000 pizzas. IBEW Local 21 supports Mark in his efforts.

He's enlisting your help. If you would like to make a donation please visit his website www.pizzas4patriots.com to make a donation or call him at 847-357-0000. Donate and feel great knowing you made the 4th of July special for our troops.