



IBEW LOCAL UNION 21

FRONTLINE

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Good Times at Grace Street



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Paul Wright – President – Business Manager – Financial Secretary



No Time to Rest

We've seen our membership grow in Chicago, new contracts at JULIE and Vermillion County, NLRB victories for our members at Altura and DirectSat, and arbitration wins at Comcast. Every time it looks like we can

take a breath and enjoy a victory it seems like we get hit with something that could harm our members. Layoff announcements, managers who'd rather screw over their employees instead of furthering their career development, politicians who don't understand issues affecting working people, and simple labor relations issues that get dragged out, occupy our time.

We saved hundreds of jobs with the AT&T layoff moratorium, and we reduced the severity of announced surpluses and stopped the contemplated Premises Technician layoff. While many members were able to keep working, unfortunately some were forced off the payroll by AT&T's inability to manage a surplus. We know technology is a job killer, however management's incompetence destroyed the lives of many good people. We filed multiple grievances addressing several aspects of this surplus because the company screwed it up from A to Z.

Politics in Illinois heated up as we stopped the contemplated layoff off of Premise Technicians and reduced the effects of other AT&T force reductions. Senate Bill 1451, the small cell bill, was pushed through the fall veto session by Senate President Cullerton. It was sold to politicians by AT&T and other cellular carriers as a jobs bill. What many didn't realize is the legislation will kill the careers of many AT&T employees. To no one's surprise the Governor turned his back on IBEW 21 members by signing it.

While our public sector membership grows, the future of their rights remains in peril because of our Governor and the *Janus vs AFSCME* case "he" convinced the Supreme Court to hear. At the State level it was argued that the case wasn't properly filed because the Governor wasn't a union member. Facing defeat the Governor and his other billionaire friends concocted a plan and trolled the State's employment database until they found a sucker to substitute his name on the suit. The "AFSCME member" who is supported by the Governor and his radical friends now feels his rights are being infringed upon because he has to pay union dues. This is another attempt by the rich to kill off funds unions use to defend the rights of their members. They think they can silence us. They forget union members have been attacked for over 100 years, we've been regulated, beaten, killed and we still come back to fight for the rights of all workers.

As soon as word started spreading about our Comcast arbitration victories, management retaliated by eliminating home garaging and the 4-10 hour shifts. I was having none of that BS and immediately shot a letter off to the company telling management we would take further action if they didn't back off. It appears they got the message. Jerry received a call saying they wanted to talk. We will see where that goes or if we will have to give them another wake up call.

DirectSat lost again at the National Labor Relations Board. As I previously mentioned, we filed Bad Faith Bargaining Unfair Labor Practice charges against them; we won yet they keep filing appeals. After our latest victory, AT&T decided to jump into the case to prevent DirectSat from turning over the contract the companies have with each other. The NLRB case and bargaining delays are a result of DirectSat claims that they can't give their employees certain things because of that agreement with AT&T. We said, "Prove it, show it to us." The NLRB said the same thing. Well instead of turning over the document, both companies are taking their losses to the US Court of Appeals. The fight continues.

(continued on next page)

What If Your Child Goes Missing?

Many times I hear, "Why are we involved with community service and what are we doing to help IBEW 21 members?" We heard you and are doing something about it. We are giving members an item that will hopefully collect dust and never be needed.

In the U.S. over 800,000 children go missing every year. Think about that number for just a moment 800,000..... it is astonishing.

By the time you finish reading this article three children have vanished, that is one child every 40 seconds. Now think about your children..... what if one them went missing, would you be prepared?

Don't feel bad, most parents aren't. Many think losing a child only affects other families. Few parents have the information needed for the police if their child goes missing. I'm proud to say Local 21 is participating in a program sponsored by our IBEW International to help you prepare for a reality that, hopefully will never happen to your family.

The IBEW partnered with the National Child Identification Program to make it easier for members and their families to be prepared if their child goes missing. Your leadership is participating in the program, and recently we received Child Identification Kits for IBEW 21 members.

The kits contain a fingerprint medical information DNA card, applicator and an envelope. After filling out the

information and taking your child's prints and DNA, you place the information back in the envelope and store it in a safe place. Like I mentioned earlier, hopefully it will collect dust and years from now you can tell your children they need a kit for your grandchildren.

The National Child Identification Program was started in 1997 after the murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Arlington, Texas. After she was abducted, efforts to ID her were slowed by a lack of fingerprints and DNA information. The activation of the child abduction system when a minor is reported missing is called the Amber Alert in her honor.

We are asking all IBEW 21 members who have children to get their free Child Identification Kit. I have boxes of them sitting outside my office, if they are collecting dust here they aren't helping your children. Contact me to get your kit 630-960-4466 ext. 447, bobp@ibew21.org.

I would like you to read the rest of this issue of *Frontline* from cover to cover, but stop now and do this for your children. In the time it takes, one child will go missing.



No Time to Rest (continued from previous page)

The cover story is about our newest members working at the new Grace Street call center. It was no easy task, gaining a new center in Illinois: it took years to achieve. We're very proud to represent our newest members, it's been a pleasure meeting all of them at our New Member Orientations. We've stressed the importance of being at work and getting involved as IBEW 21 members. They are a part of our future.

Members who attend union meetings understand the ups and downs we face. Some people focus more on the negative than the positive. As you can see, a lot of good things have been happening in our Local. I'd like to take credit for all of this good news; it takes the hard work of the Local 21 staff, our stewards, and all our members who've chosen to get involved. These successes are rewarding and we'd like to celebrate them, however it's more important we continue to work to solve new problems that pop up.



IBEW Women Have Power

In 2016 IBEW International President Stephenson appointed me to represent the Sixth District to the IBEW's Women's Committee. Our District includes Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

There are 11 IBEW districts whose representatives hold bi-monthly conference calls. We hold annual meetings: one year during our IBEW Women's conference, and the next year we meet at a mutually agreed upon location. This year's conference is in Minneapolis from June 6th-June 9th. IBEW Women from the U.S. and Canada attend workshops and discuss conditions women face in their various workplaces. IBEW Women are journeymen, office workers, tree trimmers, electricians, and work in many other different jobs. IBEW Women's Committee representatives help our sisters establish a Women's Committee in their own locals. I would love to see Local 21 sisters establish our own committee. Contact me 630-960-4466, ext. 374 if you are interested in forming our Women's Committee.

The AFL-CIO holds a Global Leadership workshop for Union women annually. Women from Unions throughout the U.S. and Canada apply to attend; 50 women are selected. Three sisters from the IBEW were chosen, and yours truly was one of them. It is an amazing workshop focused on the global economy and how we as Union members can learn from it, and make changes within our Locals to promote growth. We were encouraged to help sisters understand their place in the global economy, and change the conversation - to look at policy through the lens of change and empower others to take a more active role in transforming policy. We learned to not be intimidated by rule makers, be confident in our knowledge and understanding of the rules, and be fearless in the resistance. Our hash tag became [#resistandpersistwithbliss!](#) This workshop in New York coincided with a delegation of Union women visiting the United Nations to speak on their working conditions.

We heard from women who worked in India, Africa and South America. I would suggest every woman interested in learning more about change in the economy and how we as Union women can affect that change to apply to attend in 2019.

Paul Wright, Bob Przybylinski, and I have been welcoming new Local 21 members to AT&T's new Chicago call center. New Member Orientation with Business Rep Dave Webster, Chief Steward Cheryl Crooks, and Area Steward Pez Whatley has been taking place for almost 300 new employees. AT&T says the center will hire 500 "agents" this year. Orientation is a great opportunity to educate our new sisters and brothers about Unions, give them information about their contract, and explain the rights they have as IBEW 21 members. It's an educational experience for this long-time employee to see AT&T from a new employee's perspective.

Attending monthly IBEW 21 Unit meetings is really the best way to keep up with what's going on within our Local Union. I bring this up because I noticed that a lot of the questions posted on our Facebook page (IBEW TwentyOne) are discussed at the meetings. The Unit meeting schedule is in this issue of *Frontline*, on your Union bulletin boards and on ibew21.org. Have a great summer everyone, looking forward to seeing you!



Members at Grace Street having some fun in their new lunch room.

Benefit Verification & Account Changes

AT&T Dependent Verification Project

AT&T is conducting a Dependent Verification Project to ensure that only eligible dependents have coverage under the health benefits available to employees. The scope will include spouses, legally registered partners, and step-children added prior to January 1, 2015; since circumstances, such as divorce, change these relationships. Generally, biological or adopted children are not required to re-verify.

Affected employees will receive letters via US mail at their home address in mid-March. The letter will indicate which dependents require verification, details on acceptable proof of eligibility, instructions for document transmission, and the timeframe to provide documentation. The verification window will begin March 13 and will end on June 29, 2018.

CVS/Caremark Change to the “Dispense as Written” (DAW) Penalty Exception Criteria

Effective April 1, 2018, employees with prescription drug coverage administered by CVS/Caremark (this includes those enrolled in the bargained medical plans) will no longer be required to try a generic alternative within the 90 days before filling a brand drug in order to have the DAW penalty waived through the exception process. Instead, the employee’s doctor only has to attest that the generic is not appropriate and that the brand drug is the only safe and effective treatment, and the penalty will be waived for that generic for three years from the date it is approved. The current time frame to resubmit a request for the DAW penalty exception is one year.

CVS/Caremark will be sending letters to members who currently have an approved DAW penalty exception on file to notify them of the change and the current exception will be extended to 36 months from the date it was approved.

AT&T HRA and FSA changes

At the end of 2017 the administrator for the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) changed from ADP to WageWorks. Effective January 1st, 2018 the administrator for both programs changed again to Alight Solutions, also known

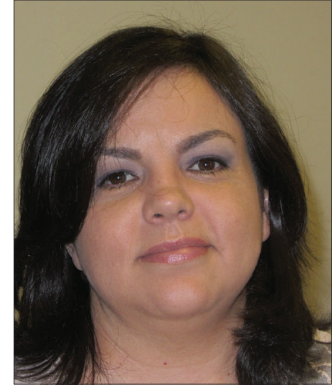
as Hewitt, the current benefits eligibility and enrollment administrator. Previously, in order to get reimbursed for an expense from your HRA you were required to file a manual claim by either faxing, mailing or uploading supporting documents. The FSA accounts were set up for automatic reimbursements, but you had the option to change them to manual claims processing, which many members did in order to have more control over what claims were paid.

If you had or have both an HRA and an FSA with the company, the plan administrator always processes claims from the FSA first because these funds don’t carry over from year to year and if not used they are forfeited.

As of January 1st, 2018, with the change in administrator, the company also announced a change in the HRA claims process. The HRA accounts changed to automatic claims reimbursements, which means that as soon as an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) is processed with either the medical, behavioral health, prescription, dental, or vision plans, it is forwarded to the HRA/FSA administrator for reimbursement. At the same time all FSA accounts were defaulted to automatic claims reimbursements when established with the new administrator, Alight Solutions.

Members who had a balance in their HRA may receive reimbursement checks for claims that have processed automatically. If you prefer to have claims processed manually log into the benefits website www.att.com/benefitscenter, the same website where we complete our open enrollment elections, and change your preference.

If you had an FSA and elected to have claims processed manually in the past, you must log into the benefits website to reestablish that preference since the new administrator defaulted all accounts to automatic claims reimbursements, as per the Summary Plan Description language.





Another Year, Another Build

Last year, Local 21 members assisted in building a home for U.S. Army Veteran SPC Anthony Chobanov and his family. We partnered with A

Soldier's Journey Home.

Our members donated their time, food, and money over the nine-day build; this was a greatly rewarding experience.

Almost one year later, we did it again! A *Soldier's Journey Home*, and *Nine Line Foundation*, in a joint effort, chose to build a home in Texas for U.S Marine Veteran Sgt. Eric Morante. Local 21 members Ed Bash, Paul Woolmer Jr, Galation Norman, Roy Figueroa, Executive Board Chairman Devon Jennings, President Paul Wright, and I took vacation days to help on the first four days of the ten day build. Sgt. Morante received the keys to his new home on March 3rd.

The 2018 build was a little different. First we left home and traveled to Texas in an ice storm. The weather didn't want to cooperate, it rained almost every day. Last year there were over 550 volunteers; this year there were fewer "local community" volunteers. If the organizations' core volunteers and IBEW 21 members didn't make the trip the build may not have been completed on time.

Our members, four from last year and three new to the build, jumped right in when we arrived. We found where we could help, and assisted anywhere possible. We placed walls, roof trusses and decking. We pulled and terminated wiring, and cleared obstructions in the trenches that carried the feeds for power, water, and fiber.



As second-year participants, we recognized many of last year's volunteers, and they welcomed us back with extreme gratitude. IBEW 21 members were treated like family by the organizations involved, and we were able to spend quality time with Sgt. Morante, and his son, during the duration of our stay.

This year's project built more than a home for a veteran. It built solidarity amongst our members, it built friendships with all the volunteers from across the United States and it built a new friendship with a very grateful and deserving veteran, and his family.

More Local 21 members showed an interest in this volunteer opportunity, but due to other obligations, they were not able to attend. We hope to continue this awesome opportunity in the years to come. As soon as we find out about next year's build we hope another team of Local 21 members will be able to experience this extremely rewarding event.

I'd like to thank the Local 21 members who gave up their vacation time to help Sergeant Eric Morante, and his family. I hope by sharing this experience the participation grows for years to come. It was truly an honor to share this experience with all of you, and I hope to see you throughout the year at other IBEW 21 volunteer events.



Welcome to Grace Street

Last year we organized a new AT&T consumer call center in Chicago. The operation started with 17 members, is up to around 300 and still growing! The center is designed to focus on customer service for AT&T customers who have a combined bill that includes DirecTV. This is the first center that has taken work away from a vendor, and has been organized into a collective bargaining agreement.

The center is a state-of-the-art paperless environment. There are electronic boards that share company information, results and information about top performing reps. Music is piped through the building, all to create an atmosphere and attitude of helping customers with a smile. The cafeteria is stocked with all kinds of edibles, including sandwiches and a plethora of beverages. There is even a quiet "theater" like room where employees can watch TV and just chill out. Every floor has its own theme with murals of Chicago. The transition from the old to new Grace Street center is remarkable.

While Customer Care Associates do upsell customers their main focus is NOT sales. The goal is to provide customers with "white glove" care to encourage them to stay with AT&T and to tell their friends and family about the great care they received. Adding more new customers creates more work to keep everyone working.

In the initial meeting with the Director and Area Managers, IBEW Local 21 representatives brought forward the concern of Service Reps/Sales Consultants that these jobs could replace the work they perform. The company's response was that nothing could be further from the truth because without them there would be no work for the Customer Care Associates, due to their focus on service rather than sales.

We have forged an outstanding relationship with management and continue to work through workplace issues in a cooperative fashion. By capturing the work done by non-union contractors we are showing AT&T that bringing more work into IBEW Local 21's jurisdiction is a benefit to all of our members, the company and the customers we serve.

The Center's grand opening was quite the occasion. Many of you may have seen it on the local news. Mayor Emanuel, the Governor and employees from across

the country attended. In all my years at AT&T I never experienced an event like this one. Management planned a day of fun for all of our newest members. They had stacks of pizzas, wings and desserts, if you went hungry, you must have been on a diet. There were raffles, games and videos of our members as well as the transformation of the center. Management's goal is to make their employees time at work comfortable and treat everyone like family.

Every new employee attends an IBEW 21 new member orientation during their first week of employment. President Business Manager Paul Wright, Treasurer Jacquie Fields, Recording Secretary Bob Przybylinski, Executive Board Chairman Devon Jennings, Chief Steward Cheryl Crooks, Area Steward Pez Whatley and I cover a wide area of topics. They learn about their contract, pay and benefits. We also stress the importance of good attendance. We don't want these members to face the same fate of other employees who lost their jobs in call centers because employees didn't want to show up for work. We also teach them about what it takes to be engaged union members. Life is more than just work. It is getting to know your Sisters and Brothers who may become friends for life.

We are proud that we captured this new work and even prouder to welcome our newest Sisters and Brothers to our IBEW 21 family.



WHAT'S NEW ACROSS THE LOCAL?

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

Bill Henne,
Vice-President, Assistant Business Manager



Issues at Many Employers

★ It's springtime and **AT&T** announced another SIPP offer, this one being a General (voluntary) SIPP. The members affected by this SIPP are employees at the 10 S Canal St. Chicago office and the Rock Island office

employing the Service Representative, Sales Consultant and Technical Associate titles; the Customer Account Specialist title at the Peoria office is also included in the SIPP offering. This voluntary offer was announced on March 14th as the previous surplus was wrapping up.

The previous surplus has been completed with six employees leaving the payroll as described under Article 30 of the AT&T contract. Another 21 Customer System Technicians and Cable Splicing Technicians displaced Premise Technicians in the Chicago RCA. One Cable Splicing Technician displaced a Premise Technician in RCA 2 downstate. The Local disagrees with management on how they handled the surplus and we filed the appropriate grievances.

Recently the company has been offering a lot of E-Time in the **Chicago and Rock Island Consumer** offices. We are constantly working to increase the work volumes and call types into these centers so management will stop offering the E-Time. We recommend that members don't take E-Time when it is offered, unless you need that time off for an emergency. When you take it you are showing the company they don't need you!

AT&T announced the movement of DEG work into the TFS organization. We've had some conversations with the management on the movement of this work. They discussed this issue multiple times with us over the last 12 months and never moved to transfer the work to TFS, in the past it has just died on the vine. More to follow on this issue as information becomes available.

Locals 21, 51 and 702 met with **Frontier Communications** again to discuss contracting out. With the recent ISP offer Frontier seems to feel they can contract out behind the construction employees who left under that offer; the Locals are exploring our options. Frontier is having issues with their clothing supplier. We are working through this problem. We hope to have it resolved by early summer so members can start selecting clothing. Employees have been getting in trouble for not being on the job, it is very difficult to defend you when the GPS in your truck or phone shows you in a different location other than the customer location you're dispatched on.

The preapproval process and appeal process has changed this year for your medical benefits, something that was preapproved last year may not be preapproved this year. Verify with your doctor or the FMCP (benefit plan) that the procedure is approved before moving forward. There are some significant cost differences if you have something done and it wasn't preapproved.

It seems **CenturyLink** has no interest in Illinois from a business standpoint. While some new technology has been deployed into the field, they are being overrun by their competition. I've had some recent discussions with upper management about this issue. I'm hoping those discussions will bring some change to their interest in Illinois.

Cleveland Johnson,
Business Representative



Discipline and Disqualification

★ Like most, I've been consumed with the Title Group 2 Surplus and the contemplated layoff of Prem Techs. Having gone through the process before, what struck me this time was the emphasis on how attendance and performance was used.

At the end of the surplus process, some of the Titles in Group 2 have the ability to move into IEFS. Attendance and performance was used by **AT&T** management to determine if Customer System Techs or Cable Splicing Techs were eligible to move.

In the past, AT&T used attendance to determine eligibility. They'd follow staffing guidelines and use the parameters of four incidents or four days of unprotected absences to disqualify candidates from being able to move. Only unprotected absences counted, FMLA protected absences and E-time don't count toward ineligibility.

This is the first time, the company also used what they called "performance" to determine your eligibility to move.

Mike Roach,
Business Representative



Central Illinois

★ The first quarter surplus at **AT&T** is complete. By the time this article is published everyone will be at their new locations. The Finance and Billing center finally moved to their newly remodeled location at 555 Cook. I am

currently working on scheduling issues there due to the split of the wholesale and retail groups. Springfield TFS and Business Services moved into their new locations as well.

Vermilion County decided to enact a state statute changing the title of the Bailiffs who work the front door at

Management didn't use a performance matrix or numbers to determine eligibility. They used discipline over the past twelve months specifically, written warnings and above. Previously performance wasn't used in this way; the techs were disqualified based upon attendance alone. Now any discipline will do even if it isn't related to job performance. One employee received a written warning for not wearing proper footwear at the start of his shift. It was enough to disqualify him from moving to IEFS. Ridiculous!

So...why am I discussing this? Because we knew how to deal with surpluses where attendance was used to disqualify techs from moving. We knew how to advise them how to keep their attendance record straight. Now that we've been through this surplus I need to advise members to keep their disciplinary history clean too.

It means more focus on following the rules and not taking chances on getting in trouble. It means talking to your manager upfront so misunderstandings don't occur. It means if you are unfairly disciplined, you must file a grievance. We could hope there aren't more surpluses to worry about, but that's unlikely. Keeping your record clean is the best way to ensure you won't be disqualified if the time comes.

At least... that's just my opinion.

the courthouse to Court Security Officers which puts them under the Sherriff not the Chief Judge. The County is pushing that because the Sherriff is not a signatory to the collective bargaining agreement, those particular Bailiffs would no longer be represented by Local 21. We are working with our attorneys to keep that from happening.

At **Gardenview Manor** Doris Halls has been working hard resolving some issues in the kitchen. The home has been struggling (as they always do) keeping enough nursing staff, causing the ones who are there to work long hours. Thank goodness for the residents—our members care enough about them to sacrifice their time and energy to care for them.

Mike Scime,
Business Representative



Vote YES for Being Active and Informed

★ The season is upon us with elections on all fronts. We no sooner completed the Illinois primary elections and now we move on to more elections. Our local, state and municipal elections will round out the year. Choices

all members make will shape our labor movement, our state, our schools, our jobs, in reality our lives. Focus on this one action: VOTE, but be informed. Ask questions, attend your local meetings, and become an active member. Then vote your conscience.

An interesting fact: The highest voter turnout by union members is for Federal elections. The truth is our lives are more directly impacted by local and gubernatorial elections. Local referendums also have a direct effect on our jobs, wages and benefits. The same is true for decisions made by state politicians. Many labor unions are affected by decisions made by self-serving politicians who could harm our members.

In this election year, we face many threats to our unions, due to destructive corporate agendas. How do we slow these obscure political financiers? Vote! An unmarked ballot is a wasted opportunity.

This year in all elections—help yourself, your family, your union and be part of shaping your future. It starts by educating each other. Go to union meetings,

be active and decide who will fight with you and for you, and those you can trust with your family's future. Get involved, it does make a difference.

Remember, it is labor unions who championed gains such as: the 40 hour work week, minimum wage, health insurance, pensions, Medicare/Social Security and much more. During the last century, Democrats have supported labor Union's improving our way of life. Make your ballot count. VOTE UNION!

Speaking of Being Involved

On February 22nd I attended a "Resistance Dinner" at the Stern Center in Rock Island, IL. It was a large gathering of candidates running for office throughout the state. Approximately 450 union members attended. This Democratic Party function was rife with excellent speeches, short and concise ones. Yes, it can happen. The dinner, staging, set up, the entire venue was arranged by Sue Elder. It was the smoothest gathering of that size that I have ever attended. This huge event included a dozen speeches, dinner, dessert, drinks and conversation, all in just over two hours.

Sue, besides being the head of fundraising events for the Democratic Party of Rock Island, is also the E-Board representative for Unit 4 and the union steward for the Rock Island Call Center. Thank You Sue for being an excellent example of involvement, volunteerism and union advocacy. I forgot to mention: Sue made 300 cookies for the event... and I tested several, for safety reasons.



Our OEMC 911 Members helping at Mercy Home



Sue Elder is a fan of JB!

Byron Bonham,
Business Representative



Union Pride = Leverage

★ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2017 unionized full-time wage and salary workers had median weekly earnings of \$1,041 while non-union workers were paid only \$829. In addition to the guarantees provided by

a collective bargaining agreement, the earnings difference reflects a variety of influences. Most importantly, the report shows variations in the distributions of unionized and nonunion employees by occupation, industry, age, and geography.

Why is there such a difference? Leverage. It is the power both sides use to influence each other to reach an agreement. Union members bargain collectively and the larger their group, the greater the leverage and influence they have in reaching an agreement. The number of members only makes up part of their union's influence on wages, benefits and working conditions. Members who make it known they support their union builds Union Pride. Union Pride encourages good work ethics, craftsmanship, customer service skills, and advanced citizenship. It creates leverage in communities where members live and work.

At **AT&T** there were layoff and surplus announcements that were announced, contemplated, canceled, and some members did leave the company. A Datacom (Appendix D) layoff announcement was declared due to work volumes. It was canceled after an agreement was reached by offering a volunteer a layoff allowance. A Premises Technician (Appendix C) reduction was contemplated. It triggered the letter negotiated in 2017 bargaining that requires discussions between AT&T and our union before any layoff could be announced. As a result of the talks this contemplated reduction was canceled and a voluntary layoff allowance, opportunities in the National Transfer Plan opened, and a moving incentive was offered. In Title Group 2 a surplus was announced. The provisions in

Article 30 were followed. Many jobs were saved because employees took a SIPP or VSIPP; sadly some members were forced off the payroll. Many of these reductions could have and should have been avoided if the company would have given more work to our members and less to contractors. These contractors have no loyalty. We must remind management that IBEW Local 21 members have Union Pride. It is our Union Pride that built the AT&T brand.

At the **Lake County Emergency Center** training, retraining, hiring, and mandated overtime have been huge topics of discussion. Remind supervisors you would like to have a union representative present in meetings and discussions that could lead you to being disciplined. Your right to union representation is called your Weingarten Rights.

Your collective bargaining agreement allows for yearly wage and benefits discussions. Our reputation and membership involvement are keys in gaining leverage to make improvements in wages, benefits and working conditions. As new dispatchers are hired please welcome them and encourage them to become involved in IBEW Local 21. We are expected to be the best Dispatch Center in Indiana, and expect to be compensated as such. Show your Union Pride. There is Strength in Solidarity.

"WEINGARTEN RIGHTS"

IF THIS DISCUSSION COULD IN ANY WAY LEAD TO MY BEING DISCIPLINED OR TERMINATED OR CAUSE AN EFFECT ON MY PERSONAL WORKING CONDITIONS, I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT MY UNION REPRESENTATIVE, OFFICER OR STEWARD BE PRESENT AT THIS MEETING. WITHOUT REPRESENTATION PRESENT, I CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS DISCUSSION.

LOCAL 21

**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
(630) 960-4466**





John Dolsen,
Business Representative

In Our Area

★ The **AT&T** construction department advised me that their accident and injury rates are a major concern; whenever possible, the Director and or the Area

Managers will be involved. This doesn't change the scope of the investigation, nor the outcome. The department feels that more eyes on the investigations will help them come up with ways to reduce the number of accidents and injuries for our members.

In Full Committee, the movement of the DEG work and technicians to Business Services was discussed. Meetings are continuing on this subject; there will be more info to follow.

In the Central Offices, there are safety concerns about the monthly generator runs. Late last year the company came out with Arc Flash Safety Training. This raised a great deal of confusion and fear for our members. We are

working with Corporate Safety E.H. & S. to better understand the new practice and making sure all applicable OSHA regulations are being followed. Our safety is most important when performing this monthly test.

The Customer Systems Technician Title took a hit in the last surplus. All the techs in our area were able, by seniority, to bump into other work locations per Article 30.

Our Maintenance Administrators from Arlington Heights moved to their new Lombard location. Mike and I will continue to represent them.

In IEFS Area Manager Jeff Moore took over much of Chris Pugh's area and has informally talked to the Union about consolidating garages. John Hudzik has taken over as Director replacing Tim Clements. More info to follow about possible garage consolidations.

When we come to work every day, remember the basic rules: show up for work on time, work safe, the goal is to go home in one piece, and do a quality job, then repeat. This is the key to your long, healthy, prosperous career.

Mike Grindle,
Business Representative



ALTURA, CBRE and AT&T

★ At **Altura** we filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board in 2016, and won the case. Altura management appealed that decision in late 2017. During the course of this appeal we met with the

company on several occasions in an attempt to reach a new agreement that we've been negotiating for three years.

The contract for our members working at **CBRE** is set to expire on July 31st. Shortly we will enter into discussions regarding the opening of negotiations with CBRE. Bargaining surveys will be sent to members prior to negotiations.

We recently finished the process for a surplus **AT&T** declared in Title Group 2 in December 2017. Nearly all of the surplus technicians were able to find positions elsewhere

in the company or volunteered to take the SIPP.

In late January, management notified us they were contemplating a Premise Technician layoff. This notification triggered the newly-bargained DirecTV letter from the 2017 Collective Bargaining Agreement, which requires AT&T to enter into discussions with IBEW Local 21 on ways to mitigate any such layoff, particularly through bringing in additional work to lessen, or even end, a contemplated layoff. After much discussion, management agreed not to pursue a layoff at this time. They worked with us by offering a voluntary "buyout," an enhanced National Transfer Plan opportunity, and found other ways to mitigate the company's continued head-count issues. In addition to our requests for more work, we pressed AT&T to fix its issues with its dispatch systems to more efficiently deploy our members rather than unnecessarily dispatching contractors.



Jerry Rankins,
Business Representative

Arbitration Victories

★ **Comcast West** members were recently awarded two arbitration victories. Your Union leadership is very pleased the arbitrators understood

the facts and rebuked management's attempts to strip our members of their contractual rights.

The first grievance was filed when Comcast management violated the "day-off overtime" provision immediately after the newly ratified three year collective bargaining agreement was signed. The arbitrator ruled management violated the contract and ordered Comcast to pay damages.

The second case taken to arbitration involved discipline of our Area Steward. The arbitrator ruled the punishment wasn't warranted because management failed to conduct an investigation. The final warning was removed and our member was made-whole.

Shamefully the company's response to their defeats was to do away with home-garaging and eliminate the 4/10 shifts. Our response to management was that the company is unlawfully retaliating against the Union and its members because we are enforcing our contractual rights. Their actions were a naked power play. We threatened further legal action. Since our response management is meeting with us to discuss their attacks on our members. We will let you know about these issues as the talks continue.

Time flies! Believe it or not we are into the last year of the three year Chicago **Cortland Comcast** contract that expires on March 30, 2019. As you may recall that contract was finally achieved after nearly two years of bad-faith bargaining by the company, two National Labor Relations Board decertification elections and the solidarity of our members. Next year we expect more of the same from management. They most likely will seek to find the

weakest link in an attempt to use that person to deceive their coworkers with snake-charm to convince them to surrender their powerful voice. Once again Chicago labor organizations, the community, politicians, and religious organizations are ready to stand with us as we negotiate for a fair contract and justice at Comcast.

Contract negotiations for our members at the **City of Chicago OEMC Center** are following their traditional slow moving pace. City representatives are meeting with the unions about twice a month to reach a new successor agreement. The 18 month extension agreement expired on December 31, 2017. Your union bargaining committee will provide updates as necessary. For us to grow we must all work together.

The Supreme Court heard arguments in the *Janus vs. AFSCME Council 31* case. The suit is essentially about Mark Janus an Illinois nonunion state employee who now opposes paying union dues to AFSCME after never objecting to a decade's worth of union-negotiated gains and protections. His principle argument is that his First Amendment free speech rights are being violated because of the Union's political activity. In the similar 1977 *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* case the Court ruled unions can require non-union members under the "union security clause" to pay agency fees. If the court accepts Janus's argument to be a freeloader then what stops a person from paying taxes as a protected First Amendment Right or a worker from walking off the job to support a non-affiliate striking worker. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 disallowed sympathy strikes.

The Janus Case and National Right to Work is funded by our Governor and is pushed by anti-working family organizations such as Koch Brothers, ALEC, and is supported by companies like Comcast. Wages in Right to Work states are 2 – 8% less compared to union friendly states. The goal is to strip unions of their ability to fight billionaires who are attempting to silence the voice of working families. *Remember our Strength is in Our Unity.*



Election Season

Well, it appears we've survived another Illinois Primary season in spite of the relentless barrage of negative attack ads and downright character assassinations we've witnessed on the airwaves for the last six months. On March 20th, there emerged a number of winners and many more losers. Our objective now is to evaluate those who are left standing, rally around our common goal of rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies; seize the opportunity to elect candidates at every level of government who will come to work each day and dedicate themselves towards improving the quality of life for working people like us. At the end of the day, what's best for that Union Card in your purse or wallet should be the determining factor in selecting a candidate and not the singular wedge issues that only exist to weaken our strength and resolve.

It's obvious both candidates for Governor are wealthy men. What's also obvious is the fact that ungodly sums of money will be spent between now and November in order to sway your opinions. While it's very disturbing to me that the perception in politics appears to have taken the shape of "whoever has the most money wins," it's even more concerning that because of the vast sums involved, voters are having a difficult time differentiating the core values of a candidate and what they truly stand for.

There is one candidate who has used his success to help others in countless ways and another who has chosen to benefit from the misfortune of others all the while profiting from it. There is one candidate who wholeheartedly embraces the concept of public service and another who believes working people like us are the problem and that stripping us of our rights will somehow cure all the State's ills. There is one candidate who will proudly stand

shoulder to shoulder with Unions and take on the fight to protect our hard earned rights while the other vilifies us and would like nothing more than to screw our eyeballs out. I hope you're seeing a pattern here and hope even more you know which candidate I'm referring to in my comparisons. From a working person's perspective the choice could not be clearer, but should you require more clarification please contact me; I would be more than happy to assist you.

This current Legislative session, and the Veto session that preceded it have taught us some valuable lessons not only in regards to the importance of monitoring legislation, but also the legislators who we elect to office and how they arrive at taking their positions on certain bills. There was one bill in particular HB 1451, the Small Wireless Facilities Deployment Act or what we in the business refer to as the 5G/NextGen build out bill and how it could affect our members' employment security. This legislation is the latest quintessential example of the importance of this Local to be involved in the Political and Legislative process.

Last but not least, Primary Election Day in Indiana is Tuesday, May 8th. Please be sure to get out and vote. If you have any questions or concerns, need information in regards to Labor endorsed candidates, what district you live in or who your elected officials are please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail: dmac@ibew21.org or call the Union office (630) 960-4466 ext. 353; I would be glad to help.



Fr. Scott Donahue thanks Devon Jennings for volunteering at Mercy Home

Get involved—attend an upcoming Union Meeting!

	MAY	JUNE	JULY
UNIT 1	10th - 7 pm Irish American Heritage Center 4626 N. Knox Ave. Chicago, IL 773-282-7035	14th - 7 pm Best Western Hillside 4400 Frontage Rd. Hillside, IL 708-544-9300	12th - 7 pm Gideon Welles 4500 N. Lincoln Ave. Chicago, IL 773-907-2226
UNIT 2	8th - 7 pm Lansing American Legion #697 18255 Grant St. Lansing, IL 708-474-5906	12th - 7 pm Gaelic Park Banquet Hall 6119 W. 147th Oak Forest, IL 708-687-9323	10th - 7 pm Slovak Club 6920 Broadway Merrillville, IN 219-756-5101
UNIT 3	17th - 7 pm Marriott Chicago Northwest 4800 Hoffman Blvd. Hoffman Estates, IL 847-645-9500	21st - 7 pm Gurnee American Legion 749 Milwaukee Gurnee, IL 847-244-9282	19th - 7 pm IBEW Local #364 6820 Mill Rd. Rockford, IL 815-398-6282
UNIT 4	9th - 7 pm Lemont VFW 15780 New Ave. Lemont, IL 630-257-9859	13th - 7 pm IBEW Local #145 1700 52nd Ave. Suite A Moline, IL 309-736-4239	11th - 7 pm IBEW Local #21 1307 W. Butterfield Rd. #422 Downers Grove, IL 630-960-4466
UNIT 5	16th - 6:00 pm U.A.W. Local #974 3025 Springfield Rd. East Peoria, IL 309-694-3151	20th - 5:30 pm VFW Post # 630 1303 E. Main St. Urbana, IL 217-367-4197	18th - 7 pm U.A.W. Local #146 3390 N. Woodford St. Decatur, IL 217-877-4604
UNIT 6	15th - 7 pm IBEW Local #193 3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 217-544-3479	19th - 5:30 pm IBEW Local #193 3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 217-544-3479	17th - 5:30 pm IBEW Local #193 3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 217-544-3479
UNIT 7	21st - 7 pm Central City Lions Club 140 S Morrison Central City, IL 618-532-9475	18th - 7 pm American Legion Post 365 1022 Vandalia St. Collinsville, IL 618-345-2508	16th - 7 pm IBEW Local #649 4051 Humbert Rd. Alton, IL 618-462-1627

FRONTLINE



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