

The Short Circuit



Official Monthly Publication of Local Union 1974, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers AFL-CIO, Omaha, Nebraska

NOTICE!

This month's Union meeting is **extremely** important to the membership because **discussion** and **voting** will take place on the **following Proposed Bylaw change** which is:

Article 3, Section 7 which currently reads:

"Sec. 7. The Executive Board shall consist of 5 elective members."

Be Changed To Read:

"Sec. 7. The Executive Board shall consist of 3 elective members."

A second proposed Bylaw change was also introduced at the November Business meeting. That proposed bylaw change is as follows:

Article 9, Section 6, Paragraph (c) which currently reads:

"(c) Effective upon the completion of any contract negotiation with the company which result in any increase in wages and upon ratification of the membership, the Local Union's portion of the monthly dues as provided for in (a) above shall be increased in the same percentage basis as any Wage Increase received by the members."

Be Changed to Read

Article 9, Section 6, Paragraph (C):

"(C) Effective upon the completion of any contract negotiation with the Company which result in any increase in Base Rate Wages and upon ratification of the membership, the Local Union's portion of the monthly dues as provided for in (a) above shall be increased in the same percentage basis as any Base Rate Increase received by the members."

On submitting that proposed bylaw change to the International Office in the week following the November Union meeting, this local was informed that the proposed bylaw change affecting Article 9, Section 6, Paragraph (C) that deals with Union Dues and Assessments would, in fact, be in conflict with Article 15, Section 2 (b) of our Local Union Bylaws which states that any changes affecting Article 9 — "Assessments - Admission Fees - Dues" requires a mailing to the membership at **least 20 days "PRIOR"** to the next local Union Meeting.

Due to the holidays and the earlier meeting date of our December meeting, there was not enough time to comply with Article 15.

This mailing will take place prior to the Christmas shutdown.

PLEASE ATTEND THIS MONTH'S UNION MEETING!

President's Report continued ...

Trades Committees

Several months ago when I was out of town, a petition was delivered to the Union office. It was signed by a number of tradesmen, and left for me on my desk. It asked that the trades be allowed to vote into an "elected position" individuals that would be the elected Trades Reps, and the "Trades Coordinator" for two years.

I had not responded to that petition until now (after I had been reminded of it) because truthfully, at first, it upset me, because this was a big issue during the last election and I had said then, there would not be a coordinator; instead, I intended to make a **"working"** trades committee, which I have done, to handle trades issues, and then I became preoccupied with other things and just didn't take the time to respond. Although I had spoken with at least three tradesmen who I thought were very much in agreement with the petition, I still neglected my duty to **answer all** who had signed it for whatever their reasons.

The one thing I would like to point out is it had never been questioned at a Union meeting.

The following is my response as to why I would not agree with the intent of that petition:

1. The IBEW Constitution and local bylaws do not allow for any elections other than those specified. The President shall make all appointments in regard to any representatives and/or committees.

2. The President is the sole responsible person for any and all actions of a Local Union. This is not only true with IBEW, it also holds true in the Courts of law. This definitely would create a problem as to "who" would have final authority.

3. Holding **"another"** election takes time and **costs money**. It would have to be held in the same way as the regular elections are held, because if it wasn't, it surely would be open to criticism.

4. Any time any individual(s) disagree with those elected person's decisions, then someone would want another election.

5. If trades were allowed to elect their own for two years, surely other production areas or crafts might also (when would it end).

I fully realize that some will not agree with my position on the issue of electing reps or coordinators, but the President could be faced with unending mayhem, if that were allowed,

because then, "who would be whose Boss and be liable for any and all decisions or agreements that would have an impact on 'you.'"

There has always been complaints about the past trades coordinators and that's why the Committee was formed. Decisions are now made by more than one person. Currently, there are four various tradesmen representing that committee, including myself and I will stand ready to defend any decisions or actions made by that committee, because I know **they** are trying to represent all of us. This includes you, in the trades, and those of us who would like the opportunity to enter a trade through either a Jr. trades program or apprenticeship. We have just received an ok to put together a program that this will address and is what currently is being discussed in our Joint Trades Committee meetings. Now, comes the hard part, setting up a **fair, equitable working** program that will set in place what qualifications would be used for the many crafts: Where people would slot into the program; movement of personnel; overtime pools; shift realignments; training on the job; class room training, etc., etc.

Currently, there will be four crafts that will have a person in charge of training for the company and this also should be of benefit to those already in a trade, as well as those who will enter. Also being discussed for trades is **"where are the training dollars to be spent** where it will **benefit people** the most." We have some very skilled craftsmen who, because of '89 contract, have been composited into other trades and they also require time and training.

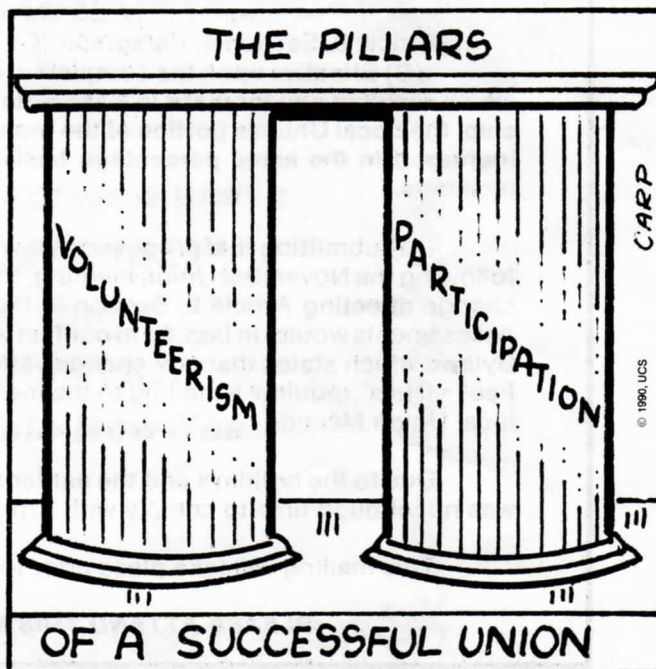
I can only hope that the members would help the union in putting together these types of programs.

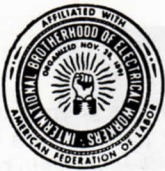


November Winners

COPE Drawings:
A.M. — Doug Johnson
P.M. — Bob George

Winner of \$100.00 Door Prize
Nancy Beasley





International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

LOCAL UNION NO. 1974



13306 STEVENS STREET

OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68137

TELEPHONE 895-4080

OFFICERS

Frank P. Possinger *President*
 Marlene Wilson *Vice-President*
 Sparky Bruning *Recording Secretary*
 Mary Ellen Maxwell *Financial Secretary*
 John Schwenck *Treasurer*

Union Meetings

Third Friday of Each Month
 Dayshift — 8:00 p.m.
 Nightshift — 12:30 a.m.

Executive Board

Tom Van Dyke, Chairman
 Mike Kelly Dan Lubash
 Marlene Majeski Jim W. Perryman

Newspaper Editor

Dennis Fleming

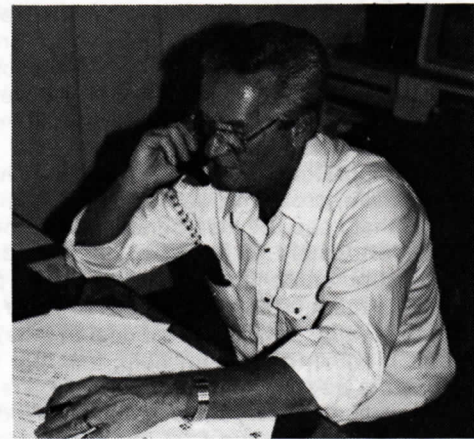


December 14, 1990

President's Message

by

Frank Possinger
 Local 1974 President



To All Members:

My apologies are extended to any one for any pictures that appeared in this publication that may have been construed to be offensive, derogatory or in bad taste.

It has never been intended by this administration or any previous administration, to publish anything in this paper that would offend any one's race, religion, gender, or personal beliefs (this is in regard to any pictures, inserts or written materials).

It becomes a little more difficult to preside over any organization these days, because of the high degree of sensitivity in today's society. Pictures that may be humorous to one, may be offensive to another; a written statement can be interpreted as many different ways as there are readers. It is my intent and responsibility to assure this membership that your interests and feelings are the number one priority.

Feedback

I recently had a phone call from a member who proceeded to tell me exactly what was on his mind, and in no uncertain terms. He brought up several issues in which he felt, that as President of this Local Union, I, and others, have not represented the membership in a way that a Union should represent its membership. His main point being that "as a member, I have a right to disagree with the manner in which you run this Union, and if I don't like it, I will tell you."

My response to this is "AMEN." Not that I wish to get "chewed" out every day, but this member, who also had attended many union meetings had taken time to let me know that "he has not agreed with what has been going on." My point being with this article is:

Attendance at the Union meetings and input from the membership has been **seriously lacking**.

Is it because you don't care?

Is it because you feel that it won't matter?

Or, is it because you feel that you are being represented fairly and equitably?

I would never proclaim that we do everything right, but I know we don't do everything wrong either.

I know that a lot of the membership may find it difficult or impossible to attend meetings, but how else can a person, who is responsible for policies and agreements, know if he is right or wrong. When someone does call the Union Hall and complains of a rep or officer, I will do my best to talk with that person and try to make sure that proper action is taken, or that "it" won't happen again. Please keep in mind that there are very few people who would even take the job of rep or officer.

If every one, rep and/or officer, was re-moved from any areas of responsibility because of a complaint(s), I'm afraid no one would be left. Then what? Don't believe any one who would let you believe that you'd be better off without the Union, because you wouldn't and that is a proven fact.

Attendance at Union Meetings shouldn't be a "boring evening" or a waste of time. It should be productive, informative and a place to correct what you feel needs correcting. Even if you didn't vote for those in office, don't sit back on your "laurels" and let everything go down the drain for three years until the next election.

Attend your Union meetings and be a part of helping it help you!

Continued on next page ...

Union Meeting Notice

The monthly membership meeting will be held Friday, December 14, 1990 at the Union Hall, 13306 Stevens Street.

Second Shift Meeting: 12:30 a.m. First and Third Shift Meeting: 8:00 p.m. \$100 Drawing.

The Year in Review

By Frank Possinger, L.U. 1974 President

Looking at this past year, I can reflect on some very positive and good things that have happened, as well as looking at some mistakes that had happened along the way, but on the whole, I feel that the considerable time and effort I have put forth has been very rewarding. We have come a long way with "**Movement of Personnel**." The ability of "**volunteering**" for movement has gone a long way, with only minor problems which were corrected; maybe not immediately but most of them in a very short time period. (Remember, how it was prior to '86, when you needed all kinds of qualifications to bump a 33 grade job).

Also, **shift realignment**, within Level I's is now within TOTAL IBU and not just a specific job or code number. Level II's realign within overtime pools and are moved by overtime pools, and still have the "volunteering" for movement with the right to realign, if they so choose, in their new pool.

More people are in more areas and on their preferred shifts, and are in more preferred jobs than ever before. In this past year alone, we have moved more than 150 people both by upgrades and volunteering within levels, to move to other overtime pools within their IBU. **Don't ever let anyone ever talk you into losing this!**

The "**Joint Benefit Committee**" that was formed has come a long way in solving problems, getting answers and jointly writing notices that keep the membership aware of what is happening. Unfortunately for all of us, getting decisions made by the insurance companies we deal with, plus just getting "them" to respond to a phone call or letter, takes a great deal of time (and, **I mean a great deal of time**). Sometimes those who come in to us for help, feel that they get forgotten along the way, but that is not the case; it is just that it takes time because of everything that is involved. Sometimes, a doctor uses the wrong CPT code, operative notes weren't supplied, HealthCheck got involved or the insurance claim person makes a mistake or fails to forward the proper information.

In July of this year during an EM-3 Council Meeting, I had stated, with the Committee's help, the problems and delays we were experiencing in Omaha and wanted something done. I requested that the insurance reps, corporate benefit, International IBEW and EM-3 Council President, come to Omaha and listen to our Committee and the problems we have encountered. This was done and some of those cases have been resolved. Recently, one of \$1,400 plus was paid after almost two years.

There is a lot more going to happen with our insurance carriers and I know those on the Benefit Committee and our Employee Resource personnel will do everything they can to make sure things are done correctly.

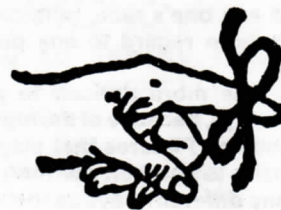
This year we established the ERC room, staffed with personnel from management (2) and one each from Local 1974 and 1614. Without any guidelines, rules, established procedures or criteria, these four individuals made the ERC room and its purpose something we can all here in Omaha be proud of. They have put together a working committee that has been dedicated to serving the employees' needs. Several other locations of the IBEW have come into town to see and listen to our people explain what they believe to be their charge, and that is what these other locations take back with them as they undertake setting up their ERC rooms. This group has taken on the responsibility of working with ETOP, TAP, ATS, Benefits, Educational Institutes, B-Tab testing preparation or guidance, along with answering other questions that are posed to them.

My appointment to the Executive Board of EM-3 Council and appointment to the Employee Assistance Oversight Committee is also something I'm proud of. I recently attended my first meeting with all of the "EAP" Oversight Committee members. The EAP program was bargained in 1980 with

CWA, and in '86 with IBEW. The program was designed for employees who have problems, but don't know where to turn. It is **not** just for someone who may have a chemical dependency problem; it is for **any one** who has job stress, marital problems, credit problems, trouble with kids or elder parents, plus a great deal more. This program **demands and has** confidentiality. Without that, it would never work. No one in this Company will ever know your problem. The counselor here in Omaha, Bill Ivans, is not an employee of AT&T, but is under contract with AT&T for his services. He has been in this line of work for a good many years and is dedicated to his profession.

These are just some of the many things that have come about this past year.

Looking ahead to next year, there are a number of things that **I know** have to be done in the representing of this membership. Some will be easy to accomplish and some not so easy. The one thing **I need, or any local Union President needs**, is the membership's **input, support** and understanding.



**Remember to attend
this month's union meetings.**

**Drawing for 100
\$10 Gift Certificates,
\$100 Door Prize and the
COPE 50/50 Drawing.**



Report Of The Vice-President

By Marlene Wilson
Vice-President and Grievance Coordinator

Grievance Report

- 88-11 Level II's in Dept. 281 doing Level III work with temporary upgrade. Job should be Level III. Pote/Job Grades Committee. Submitted to National on 5-15-90. (The National Grievance was held in Washington, D.C. on July 18th). Denied at National level. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-16 Level I employees in Dept. 269 doing Level II work. Pote/Job Grades Committee. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-34 Employee in Dept. 237 terminated under ACP for clock card irregularities. Arbitration demand submitted. Pending Arbitrator's decision.
- 90-15 Employees in Depts. 581 and 583 forced to use vacation while on 1/2 benefits during Fourth of July shutdown. Sent to 5th step. Wilson/Possinger. Denied. Sent to National. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 90-17 Employee Dept. 552- suspension. Lubash/O'Dell. Sent to 5th step. Denied. Requested expedited arbitration.
- 90-18 Employee Dept. 581 - unreasonable attendance review. Newell. Sent to 5th.
- 90-19 Employee Dept. 597 - refused benefit payment. Pote/Pallas. Sent to 5th step. Denied.
- 90-20 Unreasonableness of outside smoking areas. Deegan/Kempkes. Sent to 5th.
- 90-21 Employee - Dept. 592 - wrongfully found fit for work. Majeski/Pallas. Sent to 5th step. Denied.

Expedited arbitration case No. 90-17 is scheduled to be heard December 13, 1990.

The Record

JoAnn Hrabik, Dept. 583, Father.
Delores Lusero, Dept. 581, Sister.
Hugh Cappen, Dept. 576, Sister.
Sam Palermo, Dept. 583, Mother.
Gerry Carroll, Dept. 552, Sister.
Naomi Bole, Dept. 597, Mother.
Cheryl Jaixen, Dept. 596, Father.
Al Light, Dept. 559, Step Son.

Contract Highlights

AT&T organizations will neither help nor hinder efforts by the IBEW to organize and represent employees who occupy job titles or occupations in which other employees in the same AT&T organization are already represented by the Union as of the date of this Agreement; provided, however, that the Company is not precluded from responding to employees' inquiries related to the issue of Union representation.

The Company will recognize the Union as the bargaining agent of such employees.

A. The Company and the Union have mutually agreed that the bargaining unit in which the Union seeks recognition is an appropriate bargaining unit.

B. The Company and the Union have mutually agreed upon the number and identity of the employees eligible for representation in such unit.

If the Company and the Union fail to agree upon either of the conditions, the matter may be referred to the NLRB.

Employee Identified for Layoff:

Treatment to be afforded an employee who has been identified for layoff and on the effective date of such layoff is absent due to a sickness or accident disability.

1. If such an employee is not on the Sickness Disability Benefit roll or the Accident Disability Benefit roll as of the effective date of layoff, he/she will be terminated as laid off as of that date.

2. If such an employee is on either Sickness Disability or Accident Disability Benefit roll as of the effective date of Layoff, the employee will remain on the company roll and will be laid off when and if the employee is found fit to return to work prior to the expiration of benefits. For recall purposes, the employee's Term of Employment as of the **Originally Scheduled Layoff Date** shall apply.

EXCEPT: If the employee has a service bridging anniversary during this Disability Benefit absence and if the employee's revised Term of Employment would have protected them from Layoff.



E. M. 3

I. B. E. W.
A T & T TECHNOLOGIES COUNCIL

ED KELLER
President

801 N. JORDAN STREET
ALLENTOWN, PA 18102

FRANK KUZMIN
Secretary-Treasurer

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NOV 29 1990

November 27, 1990

Frank Possinger
President Local 1974
13306 Stevens St.
Omaha, NE 68137

Dear Frank,

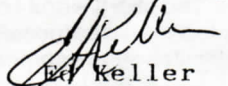
I want to sincerely thank you for your participation in our meeting with International President Jack Barry on November 14, 1990 concerning opposition to SB1981.

Your awareness, research and LOBBYING against this critical legislation was among the best I have witnessed in my 30 year labor career.

Although SB1981 appears to be dead at this time, similar legislation will be introduced in both houses in the next session of congress. I know I can count on you to assist the EM3 in opposition to any bills that affect our job security. You are a credit to your local and the EM3 Council.

Thank you.

Fraternally,


Ed Keller
President
EM3 Council



Benefit News

By Mary Ellen Maxwell

Financial Secretary & Benefit Officer

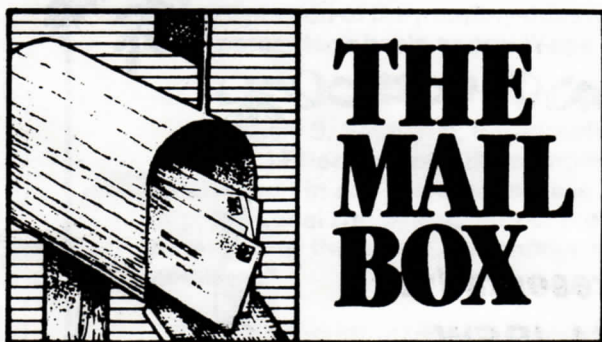
Well, you probably have already heard, the DEPENDENT REGISTRATION FOR HEALTH CARE has been postponed until after January 1, 1991. It will still come in the mail to your home but not as soon as we were originally told. We will keep you updated as we learn anything further.

By this time anyone who enrolled into a HMO, one of the Reimbursement Accounts, or a Class II or Sponsored Dependent, should have received a confirmation letter verifying the enrollment and the amount. Keep this confirmation letter. If you have not received this confirmation letter please call 1-800-662-8439.

Starting January 1, 1991 all active non-management employees will have Blue Cross and Blue Shield as their insurance carriers. Any professional charges will be sent to Blue Shield instead of Travelers. Any bills prior to January 1, 1991 will still go to Travelers for processing.

If you are already retired, as of January 1, 1991, you will stay with Blue Cross and Travelers for your insurance carriers. Anyone retiring after January 1, 1991 will change from Blue Shield back to Travelers for the professional charges. If you have any questions just ask one of us, we will be happy to help you.

We all wish you a happy holiday season.



Thank You

Thank you for your kindness during our recent loss.

Mike, Donna & "The Kelly Family"



Apathy and Our Jobs

Submitted by Jerry Pote

APATHY: 1. Lack of emotion. 2. Indifference. 3. Lack of interest or concern.

According to the Webster Dictionary "Apathy" is an act of impassiveness and it really becomes noticeable when we as employees see our jobs going to Mexico, or even to other non-union plants locally.

It seems that no matter what we do or say our jobs still go.

Apathy is certainly the correct term for what we seem to express when we see our jobs leaving our plant, but maybe Apathy is really the wrong word for what we feel. Hopelessness is probably closer, but hopelessness leads to apathy and as more and more jobs leave the plant, we continue to do less and less.

The Company says that the only way that they can make money is to relocate those jobs, but it doesn't stop the company from spending money on important things such as trying to buy N.C.R.

We are told that no one has lost their jobs at the plant but because of retirements and other attritions our total numbers of employees are still going down.

What this really means is that more and more people in the Omaha area won't have an opportunity to work for AT&T because the jobs won't be there.

What happened to the talk that AT&T was going to add more jobs to the Omaha plant?

Perhaps the company's real concerns are best expressed in the following jobs delegated to outside interests.

Plant trades has always been a department with many trade crafts. They did many things like, move machinery, paint, construct walls, rooms and buildings. Trades did the plumbing, the electrical and even layed the tile and the carpets. All in all they did the jobs that kept the plant going and they did it well for years. As tradesmen retired or quit they were replaced by hourly rated people who went through apprentice or junior tradesmen programs.

Now it is a few years later and the company has decided that it has a better idea. They're called "Outside Contractors," and although the company introduced them slowly at first, lately there seems to be a rush to have them working on all aspects of our former tradesmen's jobs.

The company is no longer interested in replacing tradesmen through apprentice or junior tradesmen programs. The standard answer is now "don't worry, no one is being laid off or surplusd, they're just not being replaced."

Plant trades now has so few people left that the outside contractors want to use part of the plant trades building to set up their own shops.

What will we see next, outside manufacturers using our facilities to make our products with non-union labor.

Don't laugh it could happen.

So as our jobs continue to go to Mexico and outside non-union shops what can we do? I'm not sure I have the answer but surely as a group, we the affected employees should do something. Even if we aren't successful we should let it be known that we don't approve or again apathy will set in and we can just set back and watch as our plant slowly disappears.



Sound Familiar?

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following letter is reprinted from an issue of Potters Herald, the official publication of the AFL-CIO International Brotherhood of Pottery and Allied Workers.

Dear Former Brother and Sister Union Members:

I am writing to you to hopefully warn you to avoid what has happened to me and other union members in this plant.

We were once members of an international union with the usual gripes about union dues, slow grievance procedures, seniority disputes, incentives, overtime arguments, etc.

We thought of our stewards and union officers as freeloaders with jobs that commanded no respect and that the company would treat us just as good with or without them, and were in agreement when someone said, "the union is selling us out," never the company.

Well, this was in 1978 and now we no longer have these old problems, for in October, 1978, we voted to decertify and break away from the international union. We are now non-union and pay no more dues!

We no longer have seniority disputes because we are placed by ability, which means whoever is the bosses' pet. The same goes for overtime. Our grievance procedure is no longer slow, it is non-existent.

We don't have an absentee problem; if you miss one day, you must have a doctor's slip, so most absentee problems were fired long ago with nobody to represent them.

All this for less money, smaller hospitalization benefits, fewer holidays and seven days without overtime, if it's an emergency, which is almost every week.

Our ex-stewards and union officers are no longer a problem, we plain don't have any.

How did this all happen?

Each year, there are fewer union members in the United States, but **more importantly** in the Unions that are still around, there is a serious lack of involvement by the membership. Although attendance at all union meetings is down dramatically, we still have those members who attend Union meetings faithfully, irregardless of who the elected officers are, and to those members, **we thank you.**



***The Officers and Representatives
of Local Union 1974, IBEW
wish you and your's
A very Merry Christmas
and a bright and safe New Year!***