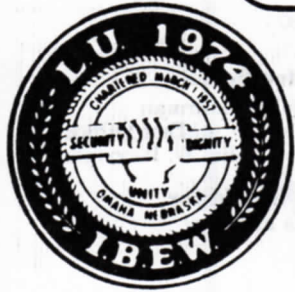


# The Short Circuit



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

1990

**I.B.E.W. Local 1974  
Presents**



## **LAS VEGAS NITE**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 30th**

at the

**I.B.E.W. UNION HALL**

**13306 Stevens Street**

**8 P.M. until ???**

*Food, Games, and Beer*

**\$5<sup>00</sup> per person**

*Tickets Sold At The Door*



# 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

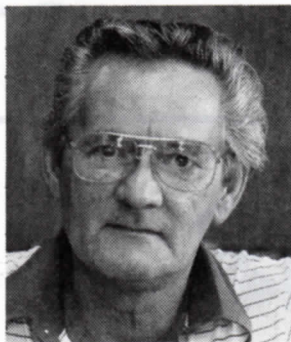
Third Friday of Each Month  
 Dayshift — 8:00 p.m.  
 Nightshift — 12:30 a.m.

### Executive Board

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

**Newspaper Editor**  
 Dennis Fleming

## March 16, 1990



### The President's Message

Local Union 1974 President Frank Possinger

## 1990

### Where Is Local 1974 Headed and What is the Future of the Omaha Works?

At the time of this writing, the Company has informed the Unions, that they will be downsizing both management and salary graded personnel. They are talking of having meetings on this in the auditorium to inform everyone of what is currently taking place.

I believe **this is serious** and the **entire Network's System is affected, not just OMAHA**. There is a need for this **entire division** to contribute dollars and cents to the bottom line of AT&T. So far, this year Network Cable and Wire Division has posted **negatively** to the profits, and corporate leaders "have sent out the word" to get the business Units into the plus side of the scale, and if that means cutting people, so be it. Management in **Omaha is not looking at hourly rated** at this time; **ONLY EXPENSE PEOPLE**. The numbers have not been worked out yet, and they are looking at possible other alternatives instead of layoffs.

At times, it's not easy to understand what goes on at Corporate levels. Recently, Greg Hughes, was here in Omaha and had nothing but praise and good words for Omaha. He stated, at that time, that we were doing everything as "right as rain" to maintain production levels and maintain quality improvements, and I believe that those who were present in the auditorium believed that the Omaha Works was on "safe ground." Then, on Monday, March 5, 1990, we wind up on "shakey ground." **Dollars and Cents** is where it's at. What was OK yesterday, is not good enough today.

I know that one of our major problems has been the material usage in the Cable and Wire shops. We drop out 20% of our product materials before we ship our product out the door. Nobody is "blaming" or faulting anybody. There needs to be an **effort by everyone** to help eliminate the problems without pointing fingers. I feel there is a need to look at ways

to eliminate the "human error" factor so that machinery **couldn't or wouldn't** run, unless **ALL** switches, pumps, hoppers, coders, printers, etc. are all functioning and functioning properly.

In December of '89, after talking with several members in the Cable Shop, I entered into a series of meetings with management and employees and we addressed a number of issues that had been creating a lot of friction and turmoil. The biggest was overtime and who worked in what IBU and why one group got more overtime than another. **It took all of us longer than expected**, but we, in fact, **came to an agreement** on restructuring of the Cable and Wire IBU's. I'm sure there will be a complaint here and there on this new restructuring, but with this plan the vast majority of employees should find it a big improvement which is both fair and equitable to everyone involved. It is a good agreement, and should result in a smoother operation.

**Competition** in the Cable and Wire business is something that everyone here should be aware of. **It's not a joke, nor can it be used as a scare tactic**. Our cable shop is too big of an operation and **too important** to the Omaha Works to fool around with it. I am convinced that we have some of the "best" and dedicated employees in the business. The problems that are hurting us can be worked out. With the people's input and help, we can survive the '90's.

As your Local President, this has been a hectic year. March '89 was election time; that no sooner settled and the politicking by "opponents" started all over again. Then, we started preparing for Bargaining, and just as quick, everybody had to "VOTE" on the new and different contract that would affect your every working day for the next three years. "Lump Sum" wage increase, something new to all of us; Voluntary Separation for Tradesmen; combining of certain Trades classifications; new IBU and SBU structures; a chance of having to make payments on medical insurance if not retired before March 1, 1990; but one of the biggest issues was **TEAMWORK** and **JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT** committees; **COOPERATION** instead of **ADVERSARIAL** relations between Unions and Management, and Employees and Management.

(It can't happen, Union in bed with Company; won't work — Union selling out on you; officers probably offered management jobs"), these are some of the statements I am faced with and this also creates dissension on the floor. The thing I would like to know is "why would I, in an elected job as President, deliberately set out to let the Company or Union **SCREW** the people. This is absolutely crazy. I am in this plant, and on the shop floor, far more than anyone else has ever been and I would have to be plain nuts to put myself or other Officers into that kind of a position deliberately.

Industry, nationwide, moving their products and factories overseas or across our southern border into Mexico; factories no longer profitable enough to stay in business close

*Continued on Page 5*



## Report Of The Vice-President

Local Union 1974 Vice President Marlene Wilson

### Grievance Report

By Marlene Wilson, Vice-President

- 88-11 Level II's in Dept. 281 doing Level III work with temporary upgrade. Job should be Level III. Pote/Job Grades Committee. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-16 Level I employees in Dept. 269 doing Level II work. Pote/Job Grades Committee. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-18 Employees in Dept. 281 denied overtime opportunities. VanDyke/O'Dell. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-19 Employee in Dept. 269 suspended for two days. Not warranted. Maxwell/Bruning. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-32 Employee in Dept. 577 received two-day disciplinary suspension. Parker/Browns. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 88-33 Employee in Dept. 533 terminated under ACP for clock card irregularities. Possinger/Wilson/Filiak. Waiting Arbitrator's decision.
- 88-34 Employee in dept. 237 terminated under ACP for clock card irregularities. Arbitration demand submitted.
- 89-272 Employee in Dept. 575 moved incorrectly under Movement of Personnel. Majeski/Bruning. Denied at 5th step. Decision to arbitrate. Arbitration demand submitted November 14, 1989.
- 89-279 Empl. Dept. 533 - denied pay for sick absence. O'Dell/Kempkes. Pres. at 5th. Denied at 5th. Decision to Arbitrate. Arbitration demand submitted January 30, 1990.
- 90-01 Employees - Dept. 552 - wrong employees worked overtime. Gillham/Armbrust. Pres. at 5th.
- 90-02 Employee Dept. 573 wrongfully given personal absences during Christmas shutdown. Majeski/Trimble.
- 90-03 Employee Dept. 559 given excessive disciplinary action. Lubash/O'Dell/Kempkes. Presented at 5th.

Grievance in Dept. 573, Level I doing Level II work. Settled satisfactory. Back pay to Level I and Level II assigned to job. Pote/Gulizia.

### Union Meeting Tonight

The monthly membership meeting will be held Friday, March 16, 1990, at the Union Hall, 13306 Stevens.

Second shift meeting: 12:30 a.m. First and third shift meeting: 8:00 p.m. \$100 Drawing.

## Highlights of Articles 11 Through 15 in the Contract

### Article 11 — AT&T Performance Award for NonManagement Employees.

— Profit Sharing for non-management employees effective January 1, 1990.

— Eligibility — Have a minimum of 88 days of active employment with AT&T as a non-management full time employee on December 31st of the plan year.

Except employees separated due to lack of work, facility closing, retirement on a service or disability pension.

Award payments: Separate check — at the end of the first quarter following the plan year.

### Article 12 — Hours of Work

Work Schedules  
Rest Periods  
Minimum Pay Allowance  
Portal to Portal  
Lunch Periods  
Wash up or Clothes Changing Time

### Article 13 — Premium Payments

Overtime — New 49 hour rule includes vacation, holiday and paid EWP day in 49 hour build.

7 Day coverage and night work bonus.

Called in emergency.

### Article 14 — Vacation

Eligibility  
Scheduling

Any carry over vacation rescheduled due to absences for reasons beyond employee's control must be used by April 1st.

### Article 15 — Holidays

New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Good Friday	Day after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Day before Christmas
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	Floating Holiday

In the event an employee is absent for reasons beyond his or her control, the Floating Holiday may be rescheduled in the following calendar year provided it is used prior to April 1st.

NOTE: Special Supplemental Monthly Pension Benefit Table, Page 172 in the 1986 Agreement are in effect in the 1989 Agreement.

## The Record

Wes Zaugg, Dept. 704, Father.  
Steve Griffith, Dept. 551, Father-in-law.  
Jim E. Matthews, Dept. 583, Mother.  
Judy Radke, Dept. 559, Father.  
Linda Jurgens, Dept. 572, Sister.  
Larry Glasshoff, Dept. 571, Father-in-law.  
Sheri Parks, Dept. 573, Father.  
Dana McGrath, Dept. 575, Brother.  
Sandy Davis, Dept. 581, Brother.  
Betty Snodgrass, Dept. 581, Brother.  
Bud Widger, Dept. 571, Mother-in-law.  
Charlie Williams, Dept. 583, Mother-in-law.  
Betty Drews, Dept. 575, Mother.  
Joanie Powers, Dept. 573, Husband.  
Harold Dickman, Dept. 579, Grandfather.  
Paulette Mullen, Dept. 575, Father.  
Frank Hoepner, Dept. 584, Brother.

# Cable Plant Restructuring

By Frank Possinger

The following letter is the agreement reached between your local officers and management for the restructuring of SBU's in the cable plant.

This will confirm our understanding of March 5, 1990, in which it was agreed as follows with respect to EW&C SBU Restructure:

## D-Station

D-Station will be reassigned from IBU 551 to IBU 553 with no change in overtime pools.

Shift realignment will be handled during the annual shift realignment.

## Insulating and Twisting (excluding D-Station & Plenum)

1. Combine current Insulating in IBU 551 and IBU 553 into one overtime pool in IBU 551.

2. Combine current Twisting in IBU 551 and IBU 553 into one overtime pool in IBU 551.

3. Zero out overtime in both new pools effective the date of this agreement.

4. Shift alignment will be handled during the annual shift realignment.

## Jacketing and Stranding

### Jacketing:

1. Declare five (5) jacketing openings in IBU 553 and four (4) in IBU 559.

2. IBU 552 has six (6) excess jacketing operators - solicit volunteers for all nine (9) openings.

3. If no volunteers the six (6) shortest service jacketing operators in IBU 552 will be assigned to jacketing openings in IBU 553/559.

4. Operators will go into overtime pools at high hours in accordance with the General Agreement.

### Stranding:

1. IBU 552 has an excess of nine (9) stranding operators

Solicit for six (6) Stranding openings in IBU 553 and/or

Solicit for three (3) remaining Jacketing openings in IBU 552/553/559

2. Operators will go into overtime pools at high hours in accordance with the General Agreement.

### Rewinding/Reellex

1. IBU 552 will no longer have small cable rewind and reellex operations - These will be transferred to IBU 553 and 559.

2. Excess of thirteen (13) Level I's in IBU 552. Four (4) in rewind/reellex and nine (9) in large cable rewind.

Canvass the Level I's in large cable rewind and room with a view to fill the six (6) needs in DIW and seven (7) needs in Plenum.

If no volunteers assign the thirteen (13) shortest service in large cable rewind and room with a view.

3. Operators will go into overtime pools at high hours in accordance with the General Agreement.

## Management Salaries

The following paragraph appeared in the Newark Star Ledger during February, 1990.

Editor

"With earnings of \$2.69 billion, or \$2.50 per share, on sales of \$36.1 billion, 1989 was the company's best year since 1983 ... According to AT&T's proxy statement, the improved earnings were accompanied by a sharp rise in compensation for its top executive officers ... As a group, the company's five most highly paid executives received \$13.4 million in cash payments last year, compared with \$8.11 million in 1988."



## ETOP Update

By John Schwenck

I'm sure you've noticed the new posters that are out announcing the ETOP classes that will begin in April.

If you're wondering what Lotus and Autocad are maybe this will help.

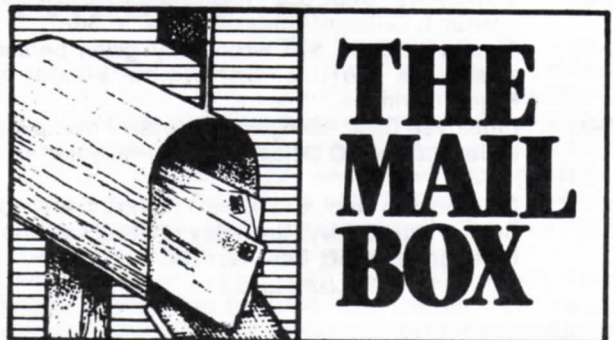
Lotus 1-2-3 will help students acquire an understanding of electronic spreadsheets. Database and graphics capabilities will also be explored. Fundamental skills of building spreadsheets using labels, numbers, formulas and functions will be explored.

Autocad (Computer Aided Design) will familiarize the student with the contribution, role and impact that computer technology has made in the world of design and manufacturing. Hands on use of the software application, Autocad, will be used to demonstrate the role of CAD in industry, manufacturing, blueprint design, industrial robots, inventory control and information sharing. Students exercises will include creating basic drawing elements, kitchen blueprints, classroom layouts and automobile drawings.

Both of these software programs are used by many firms in the business world today. These courses will really give you hands on experience to explore specific and important modern software.

These will only be the start of several programs we hope to introduce to you in the next several months. We hope to have several combinations of courses to keep you very busy. We also hope everyone will only sign up for the classes and times they are really interested in and be patient so everyone has a chance to attend the classes and also, so we are able to keep the classes full at all times. Future courses will include graphics, word processing, database concepts and typing.

Your ETOP Committee would like to thank everyone for their participation in the past and your interest in the future.



## Thank You

Thanks to all my friends in the Union for the addition to my collection that I bought with the check from the Union. I will miss you all, but am really going to enjoy retirement.

Thanks, again to all.

Myron (Bud) Widger



## Are You Receiving The IBEW Journal?

By Mary Ellen Maxwell  
Financial Secretary

If you are a Union member, you should have the Journal coming to you each month. It covers articles concerning all the IBEW Local Unions.

Some of our members haven't been getting the Journal due to an address change or incomplete information.

If you are not receiving the Journal, just fill out the information shown below. Give the completed form to your Union Representative who will see it gets to the Union Hall. I will look up your card from our files and send the information on to the International so they can update their mailing lists. The Company receives your address change from you when you move, but that information isn't given to our Local. The information on this card is the only way we have to make the mailing change for the Journal.

Take time now to fill it out and hand it in to your Representative.

Please print or type giving full name.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

New Address \_\_\_\_\_

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Present Local Union No. \_\_\_\_\_  
(If unknown—check with Local Union.)

Old Address \_\_\_\_\_

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Former Local Union Number \_\_\_\_\_ Former Name If Any \_\_\_\_\_

(IF YOU HAVE CHANGED LOCAL UNIONS—WE MUST HAVE NUMBERS OF BOTH)

## A Steward's Prayer

Grant me, O Lord, the genius to explain to my brothers and sisters the plans and policies of our great union, though no one explained them to me.

Give me understanding, that I may forgive the apathetic member, curb the over-ambitious, and accept the views of the member who does nothing until I have done something and then tells me how I should have done it and what I should have done.

O Lord, make me formidable in debate, logical in argument, fearless in confrontation; a lawyer, actor, mathematician, sage, philosopher, sociologist and economist; pleasing, cajoling, threatening and belaboring so that I may make the best of a good case from no case at all.

Teach me, O Lord, to stand at all times with both feet on the ground — even when I haven't a leg to stand on.

Lord, I am an IBEW steward. In your infinite wisdom, see my need for all these things, and in your mercy, grant them to me; and when I have them, Lord, move over.

Adapted from Ottawa CUPW Nouvelles

## President's Report continued ...

their doors; competition within the U.S. competing with other U.S. producers of similar products fighting for the market share and survival. This is what we are all faced with as working men and women employed by AT&T. Do all the new Joint-efforts work? Not every time!

Does "Teamwork" (almost sounds like a dirty word anymore) work? Will it save my job? Will it keep the factory opened?

I feel that these questions don't really have a "yes" or "no" answer. It becomes argumentative either way — **no body** can absolutely show you proof positive that it does or doesn't work.

I personally am not opposed to trying new things, as long as I can see that **no body** of the 2,400 Union members which I represent, can get hurt. I also use common sense in my approaching anything new or unfamiliar, and I try to look at the fairness of any given situation.

I talked with the Bargaining Agent last week about all the various "Teams" that were meeting and how they were creating problems for employees, the Union and the Company. I felt we maybe had gone too far with this Team concept and it was time for the Company to go back to running the factory and managing the business, and putting our people back to work making the product.

I really don't feel that the majority of the people will be opposed to my making that statement, and seeing us get back to work producing a product.

As of now, except for the awards Teams and QWL, the remainder of any other teams or groups will be scaled back, and we now need to address staying in business. As for joint efforts and coming up with workable solutions to the various problems that we deal with, I feel that the Company and Union, here locally, have come a long way in resolving a number of things. We do work together on a number of issues and we have fair and equitable results. Joint Benefit work, joint trades meetings, QWL process and individual cases (restructuring in Cable Shop), that get resolved to the employee's benefit. We still have our differences on a given issue, but there will always be those differences because there are some things locally, that we cannot do anything about.



# Bell Federal Credit Union — Annual Meeting

Not much has improved for the employees of Bell Federal Credit Union. We just bargained an insurance re-opener January 1990, and took a stop-gap settlement measure until June to rebargain with wages on the table. The attitude of the Company is cost-shifting insurance to the employees, and lack of interest in retaining the tenured employees. It appears that this Management is trying to break the Union by forcing bargaining insurance costs separate from wages, and one year contracts. Morale is terrible and turn-over of employees is high. This affects the service you receive as members, but this Management does not understand, or maybe doesn't care.

IBEW Local 1974 was very supportive and helpful during our strike last June, and again the employees of Bell Federal thank you. However, the Annual Meeting of the Credit Union is coming up soon and this is an opportunity for you the Union Members/Credit Union members to help and to express your views in a BIG WAY. By electing new, good people to the Board seats up for re-election, you can send Bell Federal Credit Union a strong message. A message that says the Members of the Credit Union are not happy with the current direction the Credit Union is taking, and are not happy with some of this Management's recent decisions and the unfair treatment of employees! This is a chance for your voice and vote to really count!

The annual meeting will be held Wednesday, March 28, 1990, at the Holiday Inn Central located at 72nd & Grover Street. Use the north entrance. Voting will begin at 12:00 noon and to end no earlier than 5:45 p.m. The annual meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. You must be 16 years of age, have a picture ID and know your account number.

The following people, who are recommended by the "Committee of Concerned Credit Union Members", have agreed to run for election to the vacated Board seats:

**James Curran** — current employee AT&T Omaha Works. Current member of BFCU Supervisory Committee, once served on Board of Directors of CU. Member of IBEW 1974.

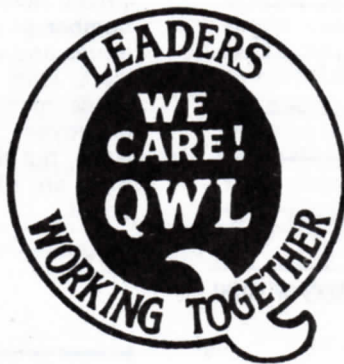
**Ray Schmidt** — current employee US West. Currently holds office of Treasurer for CWA Local 7401 in Grand Island.

**Mary Nickell** — current employee of US West. Member of CWA Local 7400. Past Vice President CWA Des Moines, Iowa Local.

**Gordon Schempp** — retired Director Labor Relations US West.

Please make every effort to stop at the Holiday Inn and vote March 28, 1990. If possible, attend the meeting, it should be very interesting. Pass the word and urge other Credit Union members to vote also. It is your Credit Union — remember, you are a member, not a customer. Let us remember, the current Management and Board of Directors does not!

*Michele Janney, Executive Vice President, CWA Local 7400*



## QWL's and Team Awards

In spite of what you may have heard or in spite of what anyone has led you to believe, **QWL's will continue to be. Please, don't let anyone talk you into dropping out or canceling out your whole team.** QWL is a contractually bargained item through the '89 agreement. I know that because of the other Team Awards program and "suggestion ideas," you have been led to believe that, there is no point in having QWL. Keep in mind that the "other" program could end, and then we would have nothing; besides you will still want to work on your ideas that makes your working life a little more comfortable, and QWL is the way to get that done.

Let me say a few things on the "New" suggestion program.

Some employees feel that the new program was designed to give management a piece of the action and that they don't have to do anything to get award shares. This is not fact. The following is:

In October of '89, both Union Presidents were called into a meeting, and the discussion centered on, ending the "old" suggestion program in November and why they felt it needed to be ended. It came down to **dollar** and **cents** — the "old"

was too costly to administer for the 50 or 60 people, average number over the last three years, that turned in any ideas at all, and **when** and **if?** an idea was accepted **most** of them were of little value in cost savings for the Company. Also, only 15 to 20% of adopted ideas were ever implemented. If employees had any problems with the amount of money awarded, they had to challenge this on their own; they had no one backing them up because no one else cared.

When the Unions were shown the "New" program, it most definitely appeared to be better than the old. The new program will "reward" all, but **three** people in the entire factory, so that they would be responsible and committed, to help ideas become accepted and implemented.

It gave the "teams" an opportunity to select tradesmen, engineers and Bell lab people to be party-to, working out what was needed for an idea to be accepted and acted upon.

The program's basic design is to reward people for cost savings ideas, **and not to eliminate people**, and **still** remains voluntary. The question of "Will this work?" has no answer now. Time will tell us if it works.

# **YOUR SAFETY IS AT STAKE!**

## **THE SCAB DRIVERS OF THE BUSES DON'T HAVE THE PROPER AMOUNT OF TRAINING OR EXPERIENCE!**

Union Greyhound Drivers are on strike. Our dispute is with the Greyhound company and company president Fred Currey. We have grave doubts about the **SAFETY** of passengers on the buses during the strike. The Greyhound Company has imported scab drivers from California to maintain a shortened schedule. These drivers have only 6 days of training to drive these buses. These "drivers" are not experienced!

On Saturday, March 3, 1990, a scab driver leaving the Redding, California Terminal crushed a picketer against a wall then ran over him with the bus. **HE KILLED THIS MAN.** We have received numerous reports of minor accidents with these scab drivers.

Regular drivers in this area have up to 35 years of experience..... Are you going to trust your life and the lives of members of your family to these people? Remember these people are overworked, under-trained and in-experienced?

## **For your safety we recommend other forms of transportation.**

AMTRAK provides a competitive system of transportation without the risk. In some cases AMTRAK will honor Greyhound tickets.

We have been driving these buses for years and ask that you not take any chances during the labor dispute. Thanks for your support and understanding.

Members of ATU Local 1126

### **Editor's Note:**

The following article is a portion of a letter sent to all union members of the Amalgamated Transit Union by their International President Jim LaSala.

*This paragraph alone sums up the unions present strike against Greyhound.*

"Your Council made every effort in the bargaining to avert a work stoppage and to persuade management to agree to a fair settlement. In the end, there was no alternative but to strike. We were forced on strike when the Company insisted upon immediate unilateral implementation of its January 10, 1990, offer, which you had already rejected by a 91.9 percent vote. The Council unanimously rejected the Company's last and modified proposal tendered shortly before the deadline because it offered only minimum wage improvements and included many of the same objectionable job conditions which you had previously rejected. These included full time operators earning less than \$15,000 reverting to part-time status with no benefits; the hiring of seasonal employees, further diluting the extra board; the closing of ten garages; the subcontracting of any and all maintenance work; a loser-pay-all penalty on grievance arbitration with a \$10,000 cap; restrictions on the arbitrator's authority to modify discipline in cases of insubordination; no improvements in pensions unless no Company contributions will ever be necessary; no real increase in the Company's contribution for the welfare program; and contract language permitting the Company to sell portions of its system with no union contract obligation."

# Election Notice!!

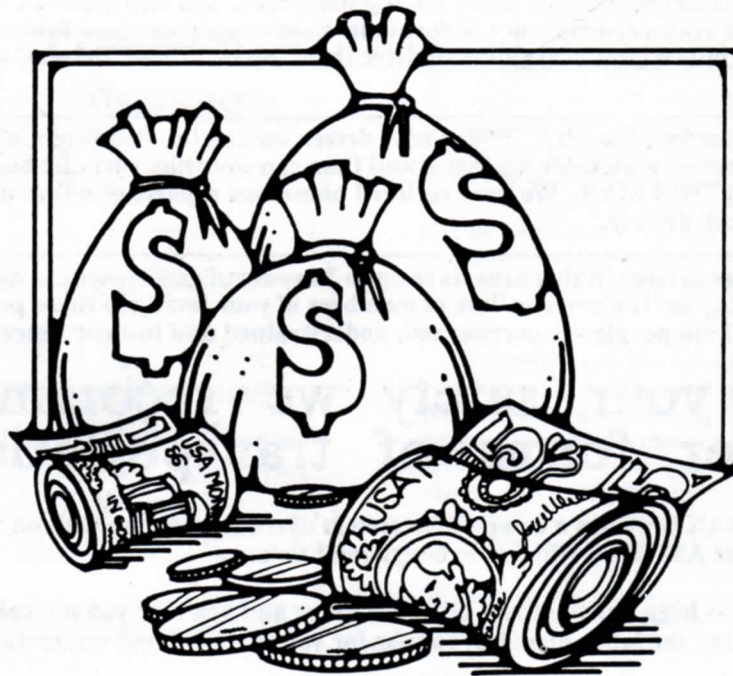
BELL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION on **March 28, 1990** will hold their annual meeting and the membership will **VOTE** for **3** Board members, plus **1** alternate.

Our Union has been working with CWA on candidates who we feel will do the best job representing your best interests. We believe the following will do just that:

**Jim Curran — Mary Nickell — Gordon Schempp**  
and **Ray Schmidt** as alternate.

Please take the time to stop in at the Holiday Inn on 72nd and Grover Streets to vote. Last year, only 100 voted out of 31,000 plus members.

It is imperative to our Union Brothers and Sisters, that we elect the best people to serve and guide that financial institution. Remember, to **VOTE** is a freedom to have a voice in how you feel.



## Vegas Nite

Since we can't take you all to Las Vegas for a night of gambling fun, we decided to do the next best thing.

***We're Bringing Las Vegas to You!***

On Friday night, March 30th, Las Vegas invades the IBEW Hall for a night of food, games and beer.

For only \$5 per person you can enjoy all the glitter and glamour of Vegas for a fraction of the cost of actually going there. Tickets will be sold at the door and the fun starts promptly at 8 p.m., so mark your calendars now and plan on attending.

