



Watt's Up ?!!!!



IBEW Local 890's Newsletter



BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Members of Local 890,

LOCAL 890 OFFICERS

- Leo "Pancho" Sokolik, Business Manager/ Financial Secretary
- Dan Uschan, President
- Sam Gulotta, Vice President
- Mike Duda, Treasurer
- Don Kautz, Recording Secretary
- Dale Buchholz, Exec. Board
- Ed Buck, Exec. Board
- Nick Bell, Exec. Board
- Denis Fitch, Exec. Board
- Marty Kelly, Exec. Board
- Mark Mezera, Exec. Board
- Troy Harris, Exam Board
- Chad Hein, Exam Board
- Tom Loomer, Exam Board

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Finally, an opportunity to put together a newsletter with some positive news instead of just continuing with the economy sucks and we are very slow. Well the economy definitely still sucks and we do have quite a few guys on the Books. However, on a positive note we have been putting a few guys to work this past month. Most of the calls have been short calls, but we have also put some of our members out on long calls too. Recently there has been an increase in target requests, that is a good sign. Jason has been doing a great job keeping the contractors informed of any work opportunities. The biggest obstacle we see, is that there are now fifteen contractors bidding projects when there are normally four to five contractors bidding. Even the size of the projects don't seem to make a difference in the amount of bidders everyone is hungry for work. On a good note the Dean/St. Mary's Hospital and Clinic will break ground in October. In addition, we have been assured it will be an all union project. There appears to be much more work coming in the medical sector such as the Monroe Hospital addition and remodel as well as the new Edgerton Hospital and Assisted Living, which is back on the slate and picking up steam to be a go for this fall. We also have been putting a few members at the Elkhorn Hospital for Venture Electric; with the very real possibility of more remodel work and an addition. All of this is so much better news than what we have experienced this past year and I will do everything I can on my end to stay engaged with all of these projects to try to secure work for our members.

In Solidarity,

Leo "Pancho" Sokolik

COMING SOON: A NEW and IMPROVED LOCAL 890 WEBSITE!!!

www.IBEW890.org

Solar Power and the IBEW



This year, the State of Wisconsin issued a grant to the I.B.E.W. State Conference, the grant was divided and dispersed to each Local to train our members in the Photovoltaic Field. Each local was requested to send three members, employed by contractors interested in this type of work, to a Photovoltaic Train-the-Trainer course in Custer, WI. The course

was hosted by NJATC at the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) site in late July. The three members we sent returned certified and ready to train our members in the photovoltaic field. In addition to the training, the money left over from the state grant will pay for two training labs to be set up and used in our Hall. We will also receive two separate solar arrays to be installed on our building. The instructors are currently developing a class curriculum for our members. We will soon have a sign-up sheet posted at the Hall and we will keep all the members updated on the progress in our future newsletters.



Pension Money Withdrawal



Approximately six months ago I made a proposal to the Pension Trustees to allow members to take a withdrawal from their Pension Fund to help get them through these tough financial times. This proposal was met with some very stiff opposition from some of my fellow Business Managers. After much heated discussion and many questions the proposal was tabled until the following meeting. In the three months leading up to the next Trustees Meeting I had many conversations with fellow Business Managers, the attorney and the Fund Administrator. I am happy to say, that at the Pension Trustees Meeting in August, I made the motion to give members the ability to withdraw a portion of their pension fund, it was seconded and the proposal was passed. The attorney is currently drawing up all the legal documents and on October 1, 2009, all members will have the ability to make a once in a lifetime \$15,000.00 dollar withdrawal from their pension fund. There will be no stipulations as far as why members want this money, the only thing I wish you to consider is the tax liability involved. First, there will be a penalty from the IRS of 10% of which one third goes to the state of Wisconsin. Then at the end of the year, the remaining money gets added to your yearly income as untaxed income. So, please before you take this option talk to your tax person to see how much of the fifteen thousand you'll actually end up with and decide if it is worth it.

In Solidarity,

Leo "Pancho" Sokolik

Unemployment Benefits

Because of long term unemployment so many have been experiencing, some of you have received notices of work searches. I have been working with Wisconsin Unemployment on some of the rules and regulation to better serve our members.

Here is a brief outline of the current unemployment process: Initial unemployment from the state is for 26 weeks. During this time you do not have to do a work search that is required of most unemployment recipients as signing the Book at the hall fulfills the State's requirement.

After the 26 weeks you move into Extended Unemployment Compensation 08 Federal Extension. This period is for 20 weeks and again there is no work search requirement if you are on the Book. After the 20 weeks you are then moved into Extended Unemployment Compensation Tier 2. This period is for 13 weeks and also does not require a work search if you are on the Book.

The first three periods of Unemployment cover 59 weeks and you are not required to do a work search as long as you are on the Book.

Once Extended Unemployment Compensation Tier 2 is exhausted you become eligible for Extended Benefits, another federal program, for 13 weeks. This is when the rule allowing the Book to serve as your work search changes. While on Extended Benefits the federal rules require you to do a work search. When Extended Benefits are exhausted there is High Extended Benefits which go for 7 more weeks.

You are eligible for 20 more weeks of unemployment but you need to do a work search during that time. Working with the Department of Workforce Development which oversees unemployment on some of the rules, it's unlikely we can do much about the work search requirement as it is a federal requirement. However they have changed how you are transitioned to the Extended Benefits so there will not be such a delay between checks.

BOOK REPORT

BOOK I: 70

BOOK II: 62

APPRENTICE: 5

RESIDENTIAL: 4

Quote of the Month

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls, and looks like work.”

~Thomas A. Edison

Health and Welfare Report

In June we received a \$.75 total package raise. We also saw an increase in the cost of health care. We have always been overfunded in the health and welfare contribution in order to cover future increases. Before the recent increase, we were over funded by \$1.85 per hour. This broke down into: \$1.00 to flex and \$0.85 to the dollar bank. The health care cost increased \$0.92 per hour. At the June meeting the members voted to put the \$0.75 raise all into health insurance. They voted to add \$0.07 to the current \$0.85, to cover the increase, and place the remaining money (\$0.68) all into the flex account. This was done to give members a greater flexibility within the Plan. All contributions, forms and plan information are available online at www.weebf.com. Please call the WEEBF office to create a username and password to access your information online. If there are any questions please feel free to contact the Hall.

Announcements

- Next union meeting is Thursday, September 3, 2009 at 7:00 pm at the hall.
- Third quarter dues are due by September 30, 2009. A quarter of dues are \$84.06 made payable to Local 890.
- Death Benefit #127.
- Class sign-up sheets are available for the following classes: OSHA 10 (beginning September 8, 2009) and AC Theory (beginning September 15, 2009).
- Coming this fall: Basic Photovoltaics.
- We are looking at holding a Basic Computers Course, please call the Hall to express interest.
- Volunteers needed for LaborFest: September 5-9, 2009.
- The October Union Meeting has been re-scheduled for the 8th of October 2009.

Our condolences go out to the Dan Jucket, Tom Westerman and Matt Grace families.

Both Brother Dan and Brother Tom passed away in early July and Brother Matt passed away the end of August.





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SEPTEMBER 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 <i>Union Meeting</i>	4	5
6	7 <i>Labor Day</i>	8 <i>OSHA 10 Class</i>	9 <i>A&T Meeting</i>	10	11	12
13	14	15 <i>OSHA 10 and AC Theory Class</i>	16	17 <i>Executive Board Meeting</i>	18	19
20	21	22 <i>OSHA 10 and AC Theory Class</i>	23	24	25	26
27	28	29 <i>OSHA 10 and AC Theory</i>	30			

The October Union Meeting has been rescheduled for the 8th of October 2009