



IBEW Local Union 551

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers - Santa Rosa, CA

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3rd Quarter 2008

From the Business Manager - Jack A. Buckhorn



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

John McCain wants to tax our health care. He wants to send our jobs overseas, and he doesn't want to provide us with any unemployment assistance. He wants to take away our pensions and throw our mortgages out the window.

After eight years of George W. Bush, America's working families are in desperate need of a change in direction. But John McCain is out of touch with the issues our members face every day. Visit www.McCainRevealed.com to see for yourself.

The Economy

McCain thinks we are better off than eight years ago. He said, "There's been great progress economically," under Bush. But we all know the real story; our economy is floundering, unemployment is on the rise and wages are stagnating. We're losing our homes, our pensions and our health care because of Bush's failed economic policy.

John McCain supports the Bush economic plan. He voted with Bush 90 percent of the time, and he will continue such Bush policies as the \$175 billion a year in tax cuts for corporations. We need change that helps working people, not more bailouts for Big Business.

Barack Obama has stood up for working families. Even as a young community organizer, Obama helped Steelworkers recover from massive layoff in Chicago. In the Senate, Obama has voted with our unions 98 percent of the time. He is committed to creating good, middle-class jobs, and wants to end tax breaks for corporations that send jobs overseas.

Healthcare

John McCain's health care plan would tax your health care benefits. He would force those without insurance to buy it in the private market. Insurance and drug companies get rich and our families get the short end of the stick. Barack Obama's plan will make it easier to get affordable health care and he has pledged to work with unions to create real

healthcare reform.

Jobs and Employment

John McCain opposed job-creating development projects. He voted to

- send government contracts overseas,
- privatize hundreds of thousands of federal jobs, including homeland security jobs, and
- outsource Veterans Affairs jobs, many held by blue-collar veterans.

And it doesn't end there. He voted against

- increasing minimum wage and living wage,
- extending federal unemployment benefits for jobless workers, low-wage workers and workers seeking part-time employment,
- increasing spending on unemployment insurance by reducing Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy,
- providing low-interest loans to help workers in job-training or job-assistance programs make their mortgage payments, and
- job training, unemployment and health benefits for aviation workers displaced after 9/11.

Barack Obama would invest in our core industries so that good jobs would stay in the U.S. In the face of economic crisis, Barack Obama has committed to pass tax relief for the middle class, so working families will not be unfairly burdened.

The Right to be in a Union

Under the current (NLRB) system, over thirty percent of successful union elections do not result in a union contract, because employers frequently refuse to recognize the union and bargain a contract. We need to level the playing field by allowing workers to organize free from employer interference and intimidation. That is why we are so committed to passing the Employee Free Choice Act, which would allow workers to organize through majority sign-up, or 'card check'.

Senator Barack Obama is a sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act, and he knows how important unions are to working people.

(Continued on page 4)

ATTEND YOUR LOCAL UNION MEETINGS!

General Meeting/2nd Thurs/6pm

Eureka Unit Meeting/2nd Tues/5pm

******ATTENTION******

We would like to remind our members that according to ARTICLE XI of the IBEW Constitution the death benefit is automatically payable to the following individuals if no other beneficiary has been designated

- Member's spouse, or if none;
- Member's children if equal shares, or if none;
- Member's parents in equal shares, or if none;
- Member's estate

Example: If you named a beneficiary such as a ex-spouse, brother, sister, cousin etc. prior to your marriage or having children your death benefit from the IBEW will be paid to them UNLESS you fill out a new form.

If you are not sure if you originally designated someone call the International office at (202) 728-6206 to see who your beneficiary is on file. If you need a new form it can be requested from the Union office.

Keep the Local Union Trust Fund office current with any beneficiary changes. Members may call to inquire who their current beneficiary is.

Inside Construction	(707)-526-1996
Residential	(800)-498-6080 (Pension) (800)-748-6417 (Health & Welfare)
Sound & Communication	(800)-804-2385 (Pension) (800)-748-6417 (Health & Welfare)

INTERNATIONAL DUES

The International dues for "A" members will be increasing on January 1, 2009. The new monthly dues will be \$27.00 per month. Please make every effort to make this change. We do accept credit cards as a convenience for you to pay

International dues only. To keep our credit card processing cost down it would be appreciated if you pay at least 3 months when using your card.

CONDOLENCES

Condolences to the families of our recently departed members.

James Roff, passed on 7/15/08, 76 years old, 33 year member

Dante Panfiglio, passed on 7/18/08, 86 years old, 62 year member

Robert Schoenmehl, passed on 08/24/08, 57 years old, 30 year member

Maxim Rotherham, passed on 9/22/08, 79 years old, 49 year member

DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, October 11, 2008—Health Faire at Petaluma Sheraton— 10am—2pm

Friday, October 17, 2008—Old Timers Dinner/Member Service Appreciation. Years of service pins are awarded to members with 20 or more years of service. All members/retirees and one guest are invited. If you plan to attend and haven't done so, please return your reservation no later than October 9th.

Tuesday, November 11, 2008—Veterans Day

Thursday, November 27, 2008—Thanksgiving Day

Friday, November 28, 2008—Day after Thanksgiving Day



Fall back on
Sunday, November 2, 2008



The names of Inside Graduate Juan Rodriguez and Instructor Gary Giuliani were left off in the 2nd quarter newsletter. Congratulations and sorry for the oversight!!

STEVE STOBEL - BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE

Congratulations to the members that attended our latest Steward Training class taught by I.O. Rep. Mike Meals on Wednesday August 6 : Leland Cole, Todd Fronsman, Bill Henry, Rich Klein, Matt Larsen, and Chuck Talley.

I'd like to thank the members that helped me by donating their time to install the new lighting system for the football field at Maria Carrillo High School: Craig Foley, Jeff Kostka, Matt Larsen, Charlie O'Neil & Patrick Wheeler. Good time had by all. Also donating their time on another phase of this project were members Todd Rotherham, Joe Crean, and O'Rourke Electric employees. It's great to see the large

number of fans that come out and watch Friday Night football games, when this lighting system is installed.

There is a VDV Exam Preparation Class scheduled for Tuesday 10/21 & Thursday 10/23 here at our JATC. If interested call NorCal @ (408) 453-3101 ext. 1823.

The Examining Board is ready to administer another test to Book 3 Wiremen that would like to get Book 1 status, if you fit the criteria listed in Article 4 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. If you are interested please stop by the Hall and get signed up.

JOHN LLOYD - ORGANIZER

We have made great progress in compliance issues with the non-union contractors, but we have problems with some of our own members with an active C-10 license which is a violation of the IBEW Constitution and the Oath and By-Laws of Local 551. I have been continuing the work on our competition to bring them in line and even the playing field for our electricians but I am also seeking out the members with active licenses. These members know that those licenses need to be inactive to take calls for work from our signatory contractors. I will be contacting each of you personally that have an active license. We have already made progress with some of these in signing letters of assent or deactivating their license and this will continue until it is complete.

Our growth is slow but steady here in this jurisdiction and I hope to continue this progress although with the residential taking a hard hit thanks to the loan companies we are slowly working our way around this problem. Since I started organizing for this local and started compliance on SJ Cimino Electric Inc. we have successfully seen him fined \$72,102.00 to date and that figure is sure to climb as we complete the investigations into all his public works projects. This is a huge victory for the local as it sends a message out to all non union contractors that we are watching them and will take all actions necessary to see to it that they are in compliance with all applicable laws. I will continue to protect

the interests of this local at all costs. We are currently working compliance on many contractors within the local's jurisdiction.

In July we held an Industry Night event on the 11th and 12th. I am sorry to say that it was not the great success we had hoped for. We did get a few people in but our contractors with a months notice did not feel it was important enough to attend. We will hold this event again in the future but this time we'll change it from the way the I.O. has it laid out and make it more of a family affair. It will cost less and I feel be more effective if we include the family and hold the event here with a BBQ and things for the family to do and participate in.

I would like to see more outreach in the near future for the local. We need to get this message of ours in the public eye. Public outreach and education is the best tool any organization can have to get the message that we are promoting a living wage and benefits to potential members. I would also like to see an article in the La Voz bilingual newspaper to help reach out to all workers in the industry. I hope to have a booth at the various street markets next year to help bring our information to the public. I have had many requests to make presentations at schools and at the Ya-Ka-Ama Indian Education and Development Center for presentations.

DAVID BORGESON-BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE

Greetings from the North. Although progress comes slower than I would like, we are re-establishing a presence in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties that should benefit our members and signatory contractors.

We have been actively engaging elected officials, candidates for offices, commissions, awarding bodies, developers, and friendly grass roots organizations to "sell our product". As we educate these decision-makers about the difference a well trained, well compensated workforce means to a community, they begin to understand the true value of organized labor along with our signatory contractors.

At a time when budgets are strained, we are seeing cut-throat local and out of the area contractors actively pursuing, and being awarded, our local public works jobs and money. Our message has been that it is irresponsible policy to award these contracts without considering the "responsible bidder" language in their requirements. I'm confident the message is being heard and prequalification language will be implemented to not just level the playing field, but to reward and honor the workers and contractors we represent. Please help these efforts by continuing to be the best example of quality and efficiency on whatever job you're on.

DENISE SOZA—BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE

We have been working hard here in collaboration with our Central Labor Council to help local candidates get elected that have a true interest in working family and labor issues.

If you have not yet volunteered now is a good time. You can give me a call, or come down to the hall and sign up. Just remember, your actions will create the future of your local union.

We are very close to going to the polls and casting a vote. Being an informed union member is an important goal here at your hall, not only for yourself but your family as well. Please use the enclosed recommendations sheet and VOTE! If you are not registered to vote you received two forms in the mail, I hope you took the time to fill it out and get it in the mail. The last day to register is October 20th.

These are crucial times brothers and sisters, we need to elect leaders that care about the working class.

We have a placard here at the hall titled "10 Ways To Kill A Union" I'll give you the top 5..

- Don't come to union meetings
- But if you do come-come late
- If the weather doesn't suit you, don't come
- If you do attend a meeting, find fault with the work of the officers and other members.
- Never accept an office, it's easier to criticize than to do things.

October will be the last bar-b-que meeting. Don't miss out!

Senator Barack Obama is a sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act, and he knows how important unions are to working people.

He is a strong supporter of workers' freedom to join together and bargain for a better life and a strong middle class.

Senator John McCain has said he is 'strongly opposed' to the Employee Free Choice Act, and he voted FOR a national "right to work" law that would attempt to eliminate unions altogether. He even voted against allowing public-sector workers -- such as first responders and aviation employees - the right to bargain collectively, and he voted to let employers replace workers who are on strike.

We need BIG changes this year, not more of the same old Bush mentality. Labor has unanimously endorsed Senator Barack Obama for president, because he will advocate for

policies that will stop wasteful government programs, improve conditions for workers, and help our economy bounce back. "Politics didn't lead me to working folks," Obama has said, "Working folks led me to politics."

Barack Obama and Joe Biden will deliver the change that's needed and restore America's optimism at a time when we need it most. But we can't do it unless we focus our resources. **We've set a goal for our union to get one percent of our members out to volunteer at CLC phone banks, precinct walks and other GOTV events. Please help us meet this goal by contacting our political organizer Denise Soza at (707) 542-3505 ext. 20.**

Let's face it- we can't do this alone. But if we come together, we have the opportunity to affect monumental change in November. Work smart, work safe and may God bless you all.

JOURNEYMAN TRAINING



THE CLOCK IS TICKING.....DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE. DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU NEED 32 HOURS OF TRAINING TO RENEW YOUR CALIFORNIA STATE CERTIFICATION? THE FOLLOWING CLASSES ARE BEING OFFERED NOW!!

OSHA 10 with First Aid/CPR (17 hours Credit)
3 Thursdays & 1 Saturday
Thursdays October 16, 23, 30 Saturday Nov. 1

Arc Flash & Rubber Glove Safety Course (3 Hours Credit)
November 4, 2008 or
December 9, 2008

Workplace Relations: Temperaments (3 Hours Credit)
November 6

Motivation & Leadership (3 Hours Credit)
November 20

For more information go to www.ibewlocal551.org or rejatc.org.

To register call Tom Ritch at 707-523-3837, ext 5 or see Tom at the general membership meetings.

NO INTEREST NOW MAKES IT MUCH HARDER TO SCHEDULE CLASSES IN THE FUTURE!! SIGN UP NOW!

VACATION ACCOUNT

The establishment and transfer of money into our new vacation account is proceeding as scheduled. An account in the Operating Engineers #3 Federal Credit Union (OEFCU) has been established in your name and the first monthly transfer of your Vacation Pay occurred on Friday, September 5, 2008. All subsequent transfers will occur on the 5th of each month.

To activate your account, simply visit an OEFCU branch or complete and return the Membership Application that was mailed to you in June. We have additional applications in the Union Hall if you have misplaced the one we mailed to you. Please note that funds will be available only after your membership application is received. If you have already established an OEFCU account, vacation funds will be deposited directly to your existing account. You can access your vacation funds in the following manner:

- Branch-walk into branch @ 6225 State Farm Dr, Suite 102, Rohnert Park, CA 94928. (707) 585-1552 between the hours of 8:30 am-5pm (M-Th), 9:30 am-6pm (Friday).

- Mail-have a check mailed to your home, call (800) 877-4444 between the hours of 8:30am-5pm (M-F)
- Mail-have a check mailed to your home, call the Touch Tone Teller 24 hour/7 days a week service (800) 499-6328.
- Shared Branch Network - you can go into other Credit Union branch offices and conduct all business as if you were standing in an OEFCU lobby. You can identify all Shared Credit Union Branches at www.cuswirl.com.
- ATM Network - if you get a checking account with OEFCU (which is FREE of service charges) you can use any Credit Union or 7/11 convenience store ATM for free. You can identify all ATM locations at www.coopnetwork.org.

The Operating Engineers Credit Unions website is www.oefcu.org. It allows members to view balances, transfer money, etc. All FREE of charge. If you have questions, the credit union staff would be happy to assist you. Call Kim Horning at the Rohnert Park branch (707) 585-1552.

Keep your dues current. 3 months late equals a reinstatement fee