From the Business Manager - Jack A. Buckhorn

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the general membership meeting in May our local took a major step towards the purchase of a state-of-the-art training facility by allocating twenty-five cents of our two dollar and seventy-five cent June 1st wage increase to the Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee. The resolution that passed designated the money exclusively towards the establishment of a building fund. In the true sense of an organization that is proud of its democratic heritage, the union hall meeting room was filled with close to fifty members who participated in a spirited debate. I realize how hard it can be to take the floor at a union meeting to express opinions before peers, so I want to thank all who attended this important meeting for their participation in the decision making process. I truly believe this investment in the education and training of our membership is a firm foundation upon which we will continue to build a strong and mighty union; however, the ultimate decision will always rest with the rank and file as expressed in our monthly union meetings.

The opportunity to achieve these types of milestones within an organization only comes along once in a lifetime and is the result of long range planning. Working with the executive board through a series of meetings, the vision for the future of our union is constantly being defined and evaluated. The primary goals that we have identified are: 1) to organize contractors, 2) to increase membership, 3) to expand our membership educational programs, 4) to improve our IBEW/NECA relationship, and 5) to amplify our political involvement. A key factor to achieving these goals is membership participation, for it would be foolish to believe that a hand full of activists could effectively accomplish the desired results. We all have a role to play and everyone has something to contribute. It could be attending union meetings or actively working on organizing drives or political campaigns.

To kick off our membership participation drive, we have decided to resurrect the worksite delegate program with the executive board members taking the leadership positions in the structure of the program. The basic concept is one-on-one communications with members leading to specific actions and the exchange of opinions. This two-way exchange of information is critical to building a healthy and vibrant union. To start with, the executive board has decided to hold a BBQ before union meetings this summer to stimulate attendance. If you have not attended in awhile set aside the second Thursday of each month for an evening of union brotherhood and solidarity. The BBQ will start at 5:30 PM with the union meeting starting promptly at 7:00 PM and lasting approximately ninety minutes.

As I access the current state of our union it seems clear to me that we are well positioned to capitalize on opportunities to increase market share and expand our membership over the next five years. I am very encouraged with the progress we are making in the community through coalition building with like minded organization that share progressive values for smart growth. The best illustration of this is represented in the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART) Railroad Square project where a group of labor, environmentalists, housing advocates and progressive students have worked together and will soon be negotiating a Community Benefits Agreement with the developer. This type of proactive approach to securing union jobs is very time consuming but the benefits are long lasting and the relationships established in the process will pay dividends for years to come.

(continued on page 2)
From the Business Manager continued

Another area where we are making great strides is up in Del Norte County where we are close to announcing the formation of a career construction academy at the high school. Students who complete the academy curriculum will be given direct entry into the various construction apprenticeship programs of the building trades. In order for the academy to function properly there must be jobs for the graduates to work as apprentices. We are currently meeting with community leaders and believe that we will secure a large portion of the public works construction projects that are necessary to offer on-the-job training while developing a local highly skilled building trades labor force. Once successful in Del Norte this program can be duplicated in other rural counties within our jurisdiction and possibly around the state.

Work smart, work safe and may God bless you all.

Member Assistance Program (MAP)

Please take advantage of the Benefit of MAP. This program will provide member assistance care. Your eligible dependents and all household members are eligible for 3 free counseling sessions for each “incident” or problem that you may need help with. Just call PBH (Pacific Bay Health) for preauthorization prior to receiving any services. The PBH toll-free number is 877-225-2267. When calling, please mention you are a participant of the Redwood Empire Electrical Workers Health & Welfare Plan. This benefit is not available to retirees.

SONOMA COUNTY FAIR BOOTH

We need volunteers to work the fair booth on Saturday, July 29. Please call Steve at the Union office to volunteer a couple of hours of your time.

JOB STEWARD CLASS

Thank you to the following members and contractors who took the Job Steward Training on April 8, 2006:

- Craig Foley
- John Kroeher
- Jeff Bechler (Absolute Electric)
- Jene Brown (Mike Brown Electric)
- Jolene Corrigan (Joe Lunardi Electric)
- Anna Thomas (NECA Chapter Manager)
- Ken Tyler (K. Tyler Inc.)

A big thank you to Frank Maio, 9th District International Representative for teaching the class.

COMET CLASS

The International Office has requested that all members of the IBEW attend a COMET (Construction Organizing Membership Education/Training) Class. When you get your letter please make every effort to attend. Thank you to the following members who have completed the COMET class since April 1, 2006 (last newsletter):

- Cassey Adamson
- Micah Ashley
- Jefferson Beadle
- Kyle Buckhorn
- Michael Chirco
- Joe Cinino
- Benjamin Cole
- William Cross
- Michael Franceschi
- Thomas Goyne
- Joseph Hart
- Rick Johnsen
- Brian Lujan
- Joseph Lydon
- Edward Mattiolo
- Jose Mendoza
- Eugene Moore
- Jesse Moore
- Steven Rangel
- Sergio Sales

National Photovoltaic

Enclosed is a flyer about the National Photovoltaic Construction Partnership (NCP). Sharp Electronics Corp has agreed to manufacture this new roof package with IBEW personnel. The intent is to supply—through volume—this top notch solar package at price low enough to permit IBEW members and IBEW contractors to compete across the board for Residential Solar.

NCP’s plan is to introduce a full value finance program for our members. NCP has found a way to offer each member an electrical solar system, - (power up your own home) - complete with a reasonable finance program—very low or no money down and a low payment per month.

If you are interested in the program, please follow the instructions on the enclosed flyer. Fax a copy back to NCP at 604-983-2869 and fax a copy to this office at 707-542-9134.

Summer is here and along with that comes lots of job calls. Most of the Contractors that have been awarded jobs in our jurisdiction are participating in the Drug Free Workforce Program and are requesting that “new hires” be tested. If you plan on being a participant as a rank and file member you need to get an authorization form here at the hall prior to the test.

Thanks to Tom Ritch for volunteering on a Saturday to help out at Ashton Avenue Apartments, a project for HomeAid, a national non-profit organization. We’ve been approached by Santa Rosa City Schools to assist with some Football Field lighting at Montgomery High School – this is very similar to the work that was done a few summers ago at Santa Rosa High. The schedule is asking for our help around the end of July — the middle of August. If you can assist let us know and we can give some firm dates within the next couple of weeks.

The Sound & Communication Agreement will expire on 11/30/06 and negotiations have not started yet, but very soon. It is important that members be involved with this whole process. Whatever happens in the next four or five months, if you don’t participate then you can’t complain. GOOD LUCK in your negotiations!

Hereman Marchbanks - Business Representative

Well here we are and the summer and work looks good. The physical education project at Humboldt State has started. They have not yet called for any local workers but we are expecting them to do so soon. Northern Electric has a Safeway store remodel in Fortuna that will be starting in August, and will need workers; the Home Depot in Crescent City has also started, and they too need workers. The P G & E project is scheduled to start January 1, 2008.

On September 1st, we will be having our Old Timer’s Dinner for Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. All workers and their wives are invited to attend. It will be held at the Red Lion.

We have tested 65 applicants and interviewed nine of those for the apprenticeship program. The nine are ready and waiting to be called for work.

I would like to encourage each of you to attend your unit meetings. Changes are happening and it is imperative that you come and voice your opinions at the meetings. If you don’t come and participate, then you won’t have a say in the changes. We want to hear your opinions so please come.

Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of Brother Gary Hixon who passed away April 30, 2006. Gary was initiated in March of 1969. Donald Enos who passed away June 9, 2006. Donald was initiated in January 1963.

Melvin Banthall who passed away June 25, 2006. Mel was initiated in September 1977.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 551

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 551