



# THE 1439 TIMES

News and information for, and about, the members (and families) of IBEW 1439 who proudly serve: *The electrical industry*: Ameren UE (Missouri), Alliant Energy (Iowa) and Entergy (Arkansas); *the natural gas industry*: Atmos Energy (Missouri); and *city employees* (except police and firefighters) in Potosi (Missouri)

Volume 18, Number 5 September/October, 2011

## Around the jurisdiction: updates on 1439 bargaining units

By MICHAEL D. WALTER  
Business Manager

### Atmos soon to be Algonquin

Atmos Energy has announced the sale of its Missouri gas utility to Liberty, a subsidiary of Algonquin Energy Company of Canada. Although Atmos Energy has been forthright regarding their opinion of organized labor, the last 10 years have not been terribly burdensome or full of turmoil and bitterness. The Atmos Company has treated its employees and the Union office well. With any acquisition, there is always the concern with the unknown. Anxiety levels run high with feelings of uncertainty. The first agreement is always the biggest challenge.

Local 1439 views these acquisitions in a positive manner and with hope of opportunity. We have been advised that the employees in Illinois and Iowa, who are also included in the sale but are not part of our bargaining unit, are interested in becoming organized by Local 1439. In the past, when the unorganized employees would express interest, the fear of God would set in as they felt intimidated by supervision. They would be fearful of losing their job if someone found out they were considering union

representation.

However, there seems to be a sense that the Algonquin Energy company may even encourage all of their gas employees to be covered by one collective bargaining agreement. The Union can bring consistency to the workforce and labor relation issues. In fact, the Union can, as illustrated many times, be a partner in legislative and regulatory issues. We can assist in problem solving, training and safety. We always insist on our members working up to the philosophy of the IBEW "Code of Excellence."

We will soon meet with the management of Algonquin/Liberty and hope to initiate a mutually respectful relationship. This type of sale typically takes about one year to complete. We will continue to stay involved and meet with the membership.

### Deficit staffing at Entergy

On the Entergy property, we continue to be concerned about the deficient staffing levels in Northern Arkansas. The United Coordinating Council (UCC-6) and IBEW Locals 647, 1703, 750 and 1439 have written to Entergy's CEO in New Orleans, La. requesting to meet on what appears to be a critical situation throughout Arkansas. An understaffed workforce creates

serious safety concerns for our members and the public. Entergy, like other utilities, has been struggling. I believe our members have been extremely patient but the time has come for a change.

We have been busier than normal addressing staffing issues as Servicemen who service a particular territory retire. The demands of the customers must be met, but travel to the area for coverage might be in excess of 60 miles. The jobs must be filled, but by whom?

There have also been some grievances which have been long in the process. Fortunately, most have been resolved. We have processed our first overtime grievance in over 20 years on the Entergy Arkansas/Missouri property which really says a lot for the work groups and ARK/MO seniority division at Entergy.

The UCC-6 will also be meeting soon with the Entergy IBEW locals in Texas, Mississippi and Arkansas to discuss the common issues and our strategies.

### Relatively calm at Alliant

Grievances are rare within the Ft. Madison and Keokuk, Iowa work groups and that is good. We rarely receive any complaints from the company.

Even the difficult issues proposed in the recent contract negotiations were handled in a harmonious and respectful manner. This a testament to our members in Iowa. They have a good work ethic and good working relationship with management. The mutual respect certainly pays dividends. We need more members in that jurisdiction like so many areas we represent.

### City of Potosi struggling

Members working for the City of Potosi certainly understand what the "trickle down" theory is all about. As the economy continues to depress and the recession becomes greater, the negative effects are trickling down. Our negotiations were centered on a community that has experienced serious decline in tax revenue and revenue from

utilities. Unemployment is up, which results in less spending at local businesses. Our members have not had an increase in wages in two years.

I believe that the city administrators are forthright in their claim that expenditures are greater than income, even with conservative assumptions. Our members at the City of Potosi are remarkable. Obviously no one lives beyond their means. However, with present wages, just how do they survive and raise their families? Their loyalty to their employer and their community is to be commended.

### Ameren Missouri negotiations

The Ameren contract is the Union's largest with approximately 800 members. The

**See BARGAINING page 4**

## Franklin County Solidarity Barbecue

Thanks to James E. Haynes for the photos



Left to Right: George Mueller, Richard Stearn, Mrs. Stearn and Ted Roth.



Left to Right: Bob Henderson, Virgil Gerner and James Pollock.



June Shinnars, Director of the Hope Lodge of American Cancer Society receives check.

## The Union of Hearts and Minds

June Shinnars, director of the American Cancer Society accepted a check for \$5,691.60 for the ACS Hope Lodge, Business Manager Mike Walter presented the check in July on behalf of the golfers, sponsors and volunteers who raised the money at the 16th annual Tom Kraus Memorial Golf Tournament.

Local 1439 is deeply appreciative of the support of Ameren Missouri as a major sponsor of the Kraus Memo-



rial Golf Tournament. Every year the company has stepped up to help raise money for charity. Thank you!

# Local 1439 again asks for job training as part of Ameren rate increase

By  
**MICHAEL D. WALTER**  
Business  
Manager



In late 2010 Ameren filed for another rate increase with the Missouri Public Service Commission. Local 1439 filed as an intervener.

IBEW Local 1439 filed as an intervener for several reasons. First and foremost, "if you are not at the table, you may more than likely be on the menu." We also recognize the need for the

utility to invest in the system which requires serious capital spending. Local 1439, as does the IBEW in general, believes all commissions and regulators are required to focus their interest on the aging utility workforce.

Local 1439 testified in support of a rate increase with an emphasis on the aged infrastructure and an aged workforce. The commission ruled 5-0 in favor of the Union's concerns. The commission allocated \$1.25 million dollars to be spent on training of the underground workforce. Most of our emphasis was on the "Heavy Underground" seniority division.

Initially we brought light to the Heavy Underground, Distribution Service Test, Relay Technician, Telecommunications, Substation, Stores Reclamation and Shop and Overhead associated classifications. As the process continued through its course, we found the necessity to focus on what we believe to be critical areas. In this instance, the "Heavy Underground" appeared to be of great concern to the Local. We are proud to announce that, again, our efforts provided \$1.25 million dollars to train our existing and future members performing the work on our Heavy Under-

ground (network) system.

In addition, the P.S.C. set out a committee, consisting of one member of the Union, one member of Ameren Missouri and one member of the P.S.C. staff to oversee the training dollars. It will ensure proper spending of the money but more so identify with the value to the company and ultimately the customers.

There will also be a requirement for Ameren Missouri to provide reports on the replacement of the infrastructure and plans for addressing the aging workforce.

Ameren Missouri was ap-

proved for a rate increase of \$173 million dollars, approximately 80% of what they had requested. Most of the exclusion involves the tragedy at the Taum Sauk power plant. The company has appealed the exclusion to the appellate courts. They will also seek value in cost recovery of fuel and vegetation expenses. The company did receive full recovery on the \$600 million scrubber installed at the Sioux Plant.

In summary, the rate case resulted in a positive fashion for the company, the customers and the Union. It was a "Win-Win" for all.

## August 2 St. Louis Meeting



**Jim McHugh, district director for Congressman Russ Carnahan (D-3rd district), addressed members at the August St. Louis meeting. He discussed the link between energy and economic development and the need for us to get involved as citizens and as Union members.**



### Guest Editorial

## Laws hurting unions won't create jobs

By **ROSS EISENBREY**

*Economic Policy Institute Washington*

Unsurprisingly, your editorial "Giving Workers a Union Choice" (Feb. 2) supports Republican attempts to destroy unions in Indiana and Wisconsin just as they've been crippled throughout the South. Voters want politicians to help create jobs and raise wages, but the corporate CEOs who put millions into the last election are looking for something else — political payback against a Democratic constituency. They want a misleadingly named "right to work" law passed to make it illegal for employers and unions to agree to require every employee who gets the benefit of union wages and benefits to help pay the costs of negotiations.

Right-to-work laws do not create jobs, but they do weaken unions and lead to lower pay and reduced pension and health care coverage. Businesses seeking cheap labor will eventually move to Mexico or China, even from "right to work" states.

Attacking political opponents is a lot easier than creating middle class jobs.

*Originally appearing in The Wall Street Journal 2/15/11*

## Numbers that matter

**28%:** How many U.S. workers participate in a traditional (defined benefit) pension plan.

**82%:** How many union workers have access to traditional pensions.

**21%:** How many non union workers have access to traditional pensions.

### TAX FACTS

**Taxes in the U.S.:** Are today at the lowest levels in more than **60** years.

**Tax Revenues in the U.S.:** At **14.8%** of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are the lowest they have been since 1950.

**1.3% of GDP:** How much corporations contribute to over-

all federal revenue.

At **1.8%:** U.S. has the lowest corporate tax load among **32** countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD).

**18.11%:** Effective tax rate paid by **400** of America's richest people down from 26.38% 20 years ago.

**30 of the 400** richest Americans: have an effective tax rate of less than **10%**

**100 of the 400** richest Americans: paid between **10 and 15%.**

"**No new taxes?**" President Reagan raised taxes in seven of the eight years he was president  
—Label Letter May-June 2011



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### Officers and Executive Board Members

**Business Manager/Financial Secretary:** Michael D. Walter

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**Vice President:** Tim Flanagan

**Treasurer:** Cedric Childress

**Recording Secretary:** Ken Bohning

**Executive Board Members:** John Brennan • Kris Covert • Richard Rapp • Jim Diedrich • Ruth Eagan • Kirk Kinnison • Lisa Parr • David G. Long • Terence O'Laughlin • Jeff Gottman • C.R. Stalter

**Business Representatives:** Doug Mueller • Mark Staffne

**Office Staff:** Karen Krshul • Marianne Lindsey

**Local 1439 is affiliated with the following:**  
Arkansas State AFL-CIO • Illinois State AFL-CIO • Iowa Federation of Labor • Iowa State Conference • Iowa Utility Workers • Lee County Labor Council • Missouri State AFL-CIO • Missouri State Conference of Electrical Workers • Missouri Utility Workers Conference • National Safety Council • Northeast Arkansas Labor Council • Safety Council of Greater St. Louis • St. Louis Labor Council • St. Louis Union Label & Services Trades Council • Labor Employment Relations Association (LERA)

## From Atmos to Algonquin: Another change in ownership

BY  
**MARK STAFFNE**  
Business Rep



“Here we go again!” This is what our current 40 members at

Atmos Energy have to be thinking after Atmos announced that Algonquin Power out of Canada is buying all their properties in Missouri, Iowa and Illinois. For some of the current Local 1439 members, this will be their sixth company that they will work for.

Here is a little background

on Algonquin Power. They consider themselves to be an innovative and socially responsible company, dealing mainly with renewable energy. Atmos Energy and a utility out of New Hampshire (currently in the process of acquiring) will be the only two gas distribution companies in

Algonquin’s portfolio.

Algonquin’s current portfolio includes:

- 42 renewable generating facilities fueled by wind and water
- 242 megawatts of capacity
- 11 thermal generating facilities fueled by natural gas, municipal solid waste, biomass and landfill gas
- 173 megawatts of capacity

The current labor agreement with Atmos Energy is not set to expire until May 31, 2012 at which time we hope a new long-term agreement can be reached with Algonquin Power.

### 17 private water and wastewater utilities serve over 70,000 customers

Out of the 17 water and wastewater companies that Algonquin owns, three are in Missouri. Holiday Hills is a small water distribution company located in Taney County,

Mo. just south of Branson. It has 473 connections.

Timber Creek is a water distribution and water reclamation company located in Jefferson County, Mo., with 53 connections.

Ozark Mountain, a water distribution and water reclamation company just west of Branson, Mo. in Stone County has 481 connections.

None of these companies are under a collective bargaining agreement with the IBEW. Currently, the Algonquin utility out of New Hampshire is the only company with an IBEW collective bargaining agreement. IBEW represents the Electrical Workers, United Steelworkers represent the gas workers and Utility Workers represent the water workers.

Hopefully in the new future, IBEW Local 1439 will be able to organize the remaining Atmos Workers in Missouri, Illinois and Iowa that are not part of our great union.

## Red light tickets must be reported

Several Local 1439 members have received red light camera violations. Some have occurred on company time while driving a company vehicle; others while driving personal vehicle on their own time.

If a violation of this nature is received while on company time, driving a company vehicle, expect to be responsible for the associated fine and prepare to receive a written reprimand for a serious work performance failure. The company views a camera ticket as a violation of the Ameren Safety Rules, State

BY  
**DOUGLAS MUELLER**  
Business Rep



Law, and an action which puts the public and the company at risk.

While the Union has strongly disagreed with the severity of the discipline, we have been unsuccessful in the grievance procedure thus far.

If it occurred on your per-

sonal time, it is still necessary to inform your department management that you received a camera violation. Many feel this is not necessary due to the camera ticket not being a moving violation; however, it is still viewed by the company as such.

The reality of the issue is that this violation does not affect your ability to drive, the status of your license or your vehicle insurance. So humor the decision makers, document that you informed management of the violation, address the violation on your yearly D.O.T. form, and move forward.

## Union benefit package: Use it or lose it

In November 2010, Local 1439 rolled out what has been referred to as the “Local 1439 Union Benefit Package.” We offered a variety of different benefits such as a V.S.P. discount optical plan paid for by the Union and the Humana Dental Discount Plan available to members at group discount prices.

This benefit program was provided with hope of enhancing it as we see possible. The future of these benefits really depend on the experience and benefit recognized by our members. In September 2011 we will evaluate the usage of each benefit and determine whether

or not to continue to offer that benefit in 2012. Obviously, a lack of participation would indicate a lack of value to our members. We would also appreciate any suggestions as to new union benefits which would be more attractive to our members. Your input is very much encouraged.

Again, do not forget that you have the opportunity to participate and utilize the union benefits offered by your Executive Board and Officers. For more information, contact Matt Kopecky at 314-495-9166 or call the Union office at 314-644-6111.



### TOPPED OUT! CONGRATS!

From left: Ray Madier, Relay Tech; Shannon Fields, Journeyman Lineman; James Willis, Power Meterman and Business Manager Mike Walter.

## Objectives of the International Brotherhood

- To organize all workers in the entire electrical industry in the United States and Canada, including all those in public utilities and electrical manufacturing, into local unions,
- To promote reasonable methods of work,
- To cultivate feelings of friendship among those of our industry,
- To settle all disputes between employers and employees by arbitration (if possible),
- To assist each other in sickness or distress,
- To secure employment,
- To reduce the hours of daily labor,
- To secure adequate pay for our work,
- To seek a higher and higher standard of living,
- To seek security for the individual,
- And by legal and proper means to elevate the moral, intellectual and social conditions of our members, their families and dependents, in the interest of a higher standard of citizenship.

## Abuse of agreements can bring discipline or discharge

A few members on all of our properties, working under various collective bargaining agreements, are creating some hardships for your entire bargaining unit. In many cases, you are setting yourself up for discipline and possibly discharge.

There is an increase in reports and calls to our office from Shop Stewards that members are “pushing the envelope on many of our benefits and conditions.” There is reason for our office to be concerned

that our members are testing the waters related to: premiums for meals, overtime, rest period, jury duty, bereavement leave, sick leave and bid procedures.

Abuse and/or simply testing our benefits and conditions are as old as the labor movement. We are all human. However, these challenges lead to deterioration and in some cases, a loss of the condition or benefit. We ask that everyone live up to the agreements just as we demand that the employers do so. Both sides must live up to the lan-

guage as well as the intent and spirit of the agreements even if we don’t like it.

Although sick leave usage on all properties has reduced, we still have those who are finding themselves without sick leave pay and/or being disciplined for sick leave usage. The benefit is there to protect you and your family when you are legitimately ill and incapacitated.

Please keep in mind that the IBEW “Code of Excellence” is our guide to being the best workforce available.

# Class 1 gloves: Why not for everyone?

Those who have Class 1 rubber gloves know the benefits of having them. Compared to Class 2 gloves, they are much thinner, lighter and more flexible. Class 1 gloves improve dexterity and lessen hand cramps, strains and fatigue, as well as wrist and elbow pain.

Electrical Workers have to wear rubber gloves for long periods of time in all weather conditions so if there is more bearable, or user-friendly safety equipment available, why should we not be allowed to use it?

Recently, some line workers at an Ameren Works Headquarters were given Class 1 gloves and some were not depending on the area that they worked in. After seeing the gloves and the benefits of these gloves, others requested Class 1 gloves and were denied based on cost.

It is understandable that not everyone gets Class 1 gloves; for instance, Apprentices, URD Mechanics and S.L.D.s. But even line workers who work mostly in 12KV areas could benefit from having Class 1 gloves because they may change

crews periodically or assist other crews in 4KV areas; work callouts or storm restoration in 4KV areas of work reliability in 4KV; or work 4KV areas because of the workload.

Class 1 rubber gloves are a safety item that may reduce or eliminate hand cramps, tendinitis of the elbow, carpal tunnel etc. The cost of these extra gloves is insignificant if they prevent aches, pains or possibly permanent injury. How many Class 1 gloves could be paid for with the amount of money one carpal

tunnel surgery costs?

When the company's safety supervisor (on behalf of the work group) brought this issue up to local management, he was told that if they push the issue, everyone could lose their Class 1 gloves. Do these threats/statements illustrate the company's and/or local management's position on safety?

Is this the company's new motto? "Safety is great if it doesn't cost too much or it's what management wants."

Safety talk is cheap!

## Early start times help workers fight intense heat

By DOUG MUELLER

The extreme heat has put a toll on everyone, especially the members of Local 1439 who make their living working outdoors. Even though we hydrate and take cool down breaks, the heat remains relentless, a constant reminder that the day will never end.

Recognizing these extreme

conditions, management at many operating centers made the proactive decision, which was approved by the Union Office, to alter the present working hours to avoid the unbearable afternoon heat.

The Union Office would like to recognize and acknowledge the management of those operating centers who

addressed the adverse conditions accordingly. Decisions of this nature further illustrate the company's commitment to safety and the well being of their employees. We will never know the exact number of heat related illnesses which were avoided. The boost in morale will continue long after the heat.

## Make no mistake: heat kills

Heat waves are the most lethal type of weather phenomenon overall. In 2010, the National Weather Service reported 138 deaths from heat, as compared to 103 from flooding, 45 from tornadoes and 0 from hurricanes. (The deadly twisters in the Midwest this year will doubtless push the tornado category to first place for 2011. We hope

that is a one-time occurrence.)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recorded 18 of July's 31 days having a temperature of 95 degrees or above. Of those, eight were 100-plus degrees and four of those were consecutive. The average temperature for July 2011 was 94.8, compared to our area's average July temperature of 85.7.



## • Bargaining units *from page 1*

expiration date of the collective bargaining agreement is June 30, 2012. We've already held one meeting; at the next meeting we will review the present contract suggestions. **The final date to submit a contract suggestion is October 31, 2011.**

An actuary is scheduled to meet with the committee to begin the education process regarding the pension benefit. We will also learn the pros and cons of other pension benefit structures. Health care is always an issue in negotiations and it is anticipated to be on the table again.

During the term of all agreements, we negotiate operational changes and new agreements. Presently we are having discussions related to the Metropolitan **Overhead** and **Trouble** seniority divisions. For 30 years, our members in all overhead districts have been discussing and making contract suggestions to modify their seniority structure. We believe this potential change will be one more step toward the massive project of restructuring the seniority. The proposal was provided to the shop stewards in early July.

This topic has been discussed at our monthly meetings since December of 2010. We are receiving very little opposition to our draft proposal and can only assume it reflects approval by the membership.

We may also be going back to negotiations related to a roaming construction crew concept for Overhead. This is another big issue we must address. It has been said that "these are the company's problems, why do we feel we need to find resolution?" Wrong! These are our problems as well. We may not create them, but if you look at the collective bargaining agreement, you will note that "we do the work."

**Heavy Underground** is in the midst of some significant changes in the training and qualification areas. We believe it will not only save this group but will develop opportunity for future expansion. It is not always just about us here today but the good of our local and our brothers and sisters in the future as well.

We are facing some very difficult times related to our **Janitor** group at the General

Office Building. There is so much turmoil among the bargaining unit that there are serious concerns that members with short tenure may find themselves with lengthy suspensions and possible termination. Furthermore, the future of this work is at serious risk of being contracted out. This will change the method for new hires and entry into the company and Local 1439.

Although we try to assist our members in personal matters, alleged harassment, etc., we must direct our resources toward contract-related issues. Any complaints brought to our attention which may, with merit, fall within the state and federal laws will be brought to the company's attention.

### Find out more about your job

Brothers and sisters, there is something going on in every work group – good, bad and neutral. If you are interested or concerned, attend a scheduled union meeting.

### Giving up on safety?

Safety is of great concern to our office. It appears that the "Blue Hat" program on

Ameren's property is no longer effective as it was the first three to four years. This is no reflection on our sole "Blue Hat," Brother **Rob Nguyen**. The attitude of many of our members has changed for the worse. We continue to be confronted by members, and now management, regarding brothers and sisters dropping out from safety programs and committees.

Refusing to participate in safety programs is not recommended but we understand that once a human being gets frustrated and disappointed, they will react in some manner. With

that said, members must follow safe work practices, watch out for each other and go home each day the way you came to work. Don't let a bad attitude get you injured or killed.

### Pay it forward

I ask that everyone consider donating to the United Way campaign. Your donation is needed more now than ever to support our unemployed brothers and sisters. You can direct your money to your own community, significant organization or even the United Way Labor Liaisons to assist union brothers and sisters in need.

**Safety:  
Incorporate it  
in every job**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Asking me to overlook  
A simple safety violation  
Would be asking me  
To compromise my entire attitude  
Towards the value of your life.*

# Camaraderie, morale, teamwork impact safety

By  
**ROB  
NGUYEN**  
Blue Hat,  
Ameren  
Missouri



## Start Right – Start Now

Many of Ameren crews have spent a lot of time away from home in the past few months due to storms that seemed endless. Given the logistics to feed, lodge, and collaborate with other utilities – not to mention the coordination and stress behind the scenes that accompany storms – it is truly incredible that safety is still being preached over production.

Companies across America are finding out that safe workers will be more productive and cost effective in the long run. But along with safe workers, employers who openly communicate with employees with dialog that is sincere and consistent creates a relationship that can persevere through adversity.

Morale also plays a big part in fostering a safe atmosphere. Bad attitudes that are not addressed can bring down enthusiasm and the desire for other workers to even want to be there. No doubt bad morale will produce a higher rate of problems that can destroy anything. History shows empires have crumbled from poor morale, work places are not exempt from this fact. The answer to maintain, create or continue

a safe environment is to look yourself in the mirror and say, "What can I do for others to inspire them to be better?" and be willing to do it!

This year when we tackled these storms and gathered at various locations, I saw an emphasis on safety like never before. The priority of starting off with safety was seen in parking lot meetings, from hotel lobby gatherings, to breakfast tables, with safety being number one. Things will never be perfect but we sure can make things remain pretty darn good.

Let's Start Right and Start Now.

## Equipment inspection

I spoke about this a couple of months ago in a Blue Hat news article but I feel it important to touch on it again.

The tools and equipment that are so important to our jobs must be inspected upon each use. Most of our tools go through a tremendous amount of physical stress. They are

exposed to heat, cold, moisture, electricity, chemicals, strain, and just plain abuse.

With the amount of strain our equipment goes through, would you trust your life or someone else's life on them without thorough inspection?

While working, it's easy to go grab a tool and hand it to a fellow co-worker who's in a hurry; but if we don't take a moment to check for signs of defects, the consequences could be life changing. Although equipment failure is minimal when it comes to accidents statistically, that is no reason to validate not inspecting them. The main reason has been, and always will be, your personal safety.

When you identify suspect tools and turn them in, you have eliminated a hazard that is bound to hurt someone at some point. So again, please inspect all equipment and PPE before each use.



## Next generation and job briefings

When I was an apprentice, I remember many days that my Repairman or Lineman would allow me to be uncomfortable without suggesting an option or not saying a word when I was doing something wrong – later to go back and fix it. Of course they did not put me in harm's way, but rather they wisely chose when I needed to learn lessons that would help me be a better Lineman; and for that I am grateful.

One thing I have learned is that some things people must learn on their own, and some things must be diligently taught. Teaching is a skill, and trying to challenge a person's mind without cramming things down their throat can be tricky.

There are certain qualities and skills we must not allow people to learn on their own, certain aspects of the job that will indefinitely help people be safe.

One of them is Job Briefings. Conducting good quality job briefings is a learned trait. Beyond it being Federal Law and in our CSM, it is in the benefit of everyone to continually improve our lines of communication when it comes to job hazards.

We all do briefings a little differently but there are some topics that must always be discussed. We must cover the hazards on the job and the way we will protect from them. How you will proceed doing the job and all your equipment needed should be covered. Energy control and WPA must be covered. Consider proper PPE requirements. Know your location if an emergency arises.

We must teach the next generation to job brief with excellence and we must strive to be better communicators. The bottom line is that job briefings help keep us safe, so keep doing them and don't take teaching others how to job brief lightly.

## Improved equipment requires attitude adaptations

By **ROB NGUYEN**  
Blue Hat, Ameren Missouri

If you were in battle and had a choice of a spear or a gun what would you choose? A horse to ride to work or an air conditioned car on a 100 degree day? I am going to take a guess and say you have chosen the latter, as I believe it is the wisest and obvious for many reasons.

The evolution of technology has created a society that wants the best and easiest results for convenience sake. There's always "the next best thing" and keeping up with change is

required to be successful. Getting good is easy, staying good is hard.

The electrical industry has changed quite a bit in its relatively short existence. When you look at how work was done 50 years ago till now, is there not a huge change?

Most if not all changes have improved the lives of millions. For example the introduction of line trucks basically changed the whole game of line work, from how fast work could

be done, to money and man power saved, not to mention the ease on the human body. (Funny though, because line trucks were an evolution of the "Cherry Picker," a platform device that allowed workers to harvest fruit on top of high trees.)

Now aerial devices are a virtual blessing when repairing or constructing utility lines. All of our equipment and tools have gone through this evolution to meet the need of becoming better and more effi-

cient. Sometimes we look at the changes in rules or our working tools as a pain in the neck. But if you were honest with yourself the only way to get better is to adapt and become part of the

solution rather than fight the changing tide.

I enjoy hard work but safe and smart hard work is what will keep us moving along this journey of becoming great.



## Safety reminders

- Make sure capacitors are kept shorted when stored or transported to eliminate risk of shock or death!
- The company vehicle you are driving is expensive but your life and other people's lives are priceless, so stay off the cell phone when vehicle is in motion!
- Keep up with staying hydrated well before the day starts, as well as during work, to reduce chance of heat stress.

## The year that started with a bang is still hectic

By  
**BILLY  
HOWLE**  
President



This has been a year to remember. It all started on New Year's Eve with a tornado tearing through parts of St. Louis and has not stopped. 1439 crews have worked storm restoration not only in St. Louis, but in Alabama, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois and in some cases, gone back several times.

Then the heat wave hit on the 13th of July and is on record as the fourth hottest July in St. Louis history. Ameren Missouri and the Union did some really great things to help us make it through the heat: early start times, having safety meetings in the afternoon, telling the crews to watch out for each other, and taking breaks when you start to get overheated. It sounds like it worked. I've only heard of two people getting overheated. One was on a pole for an extended period during an outage and the other was in the South area.

Speaking of the South area, the 9th Annual 1439 South Guy "Boomer" Barton Memorial Golf Tournament was a huge success. We will have numbers and photos in the next issue, but thanks again to Brothers **Lynn Portell, Sam Johnson** and **Louie Drummond** for making this event such a success for Sayer's Senior Center in Potosi, Missouri!

Our next big event is the Labor Day parade and picnic on September 5. It's going to be all about the kids with games, rides, giveaways, petting zoo, pony rides, and a bounce house. As always, great food and drinks will be served all day. Come be a part of the fun. Last year we had over 600 people. We expect a lot more this year. Come in the morning and walk in the parade or just show up at Wilmore Park from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We have put together the Ameren Missouri /Local 1439 Negotiating Committee. Many members are wondering why we are getting the committee together so early. With all of the potential proposed changes to the pension and health care plan, we want our committee to be educated on all issues.

The committee needs to know what it means to the members and be able to translate that to their respective work groups. We are hoping for smooth negotiations. Given what's going on in Illinois, I think we should hope for the best but prepare for the worst. If you see any of these committee members, please thank them for stepping up. It is a very important job that affects us all, and they are doing most of it on their own time.

Here are your Ameren Missouri Negotiating Committee Members:

**Ken Bohning, Doug Brown, Joe Buneta, Doug Cheatham, Cedric Childress, Matt Curry, Tim Flanagan, Jeff Goatey, Sandy Keevil, Eric Kilman, Dan LeGrand, David**



**THE IBEW LOCAL 1439 NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR THE AMEREN MISSOURI CONTRACT – (Front row left) Cedric Childress, Sandy Keevil, Al Wagner, Nathan Null, Tim Flanagan, Terry O'Laughlin, Eric Kilman, Dave Long, Dan LeGrand; (Back row from left) Marty Politte, Pat Lorenson, Matt Curry, Curtis Tunstall, Doug Cheatham, Jeff Goatey, Joe Buneta, Frank Petruso. Not pictured: Ken Bohning, Doug Brown, Aaron Mehrstens, Quentin Page and Charlie Riley.**

**Long, Pat Lorenson, Aaron Mehrstens, Nathan Null, Terry O'Laughlin, Frank Petruso, Marty Politte, Charlie Riley, Curtis Tunstall, Quentin Page, and Al Wagner.**

### MEMBER UPDATE

#### New Members

Kevin Kraemer  
Tim Hoffeditz

#### Military Leave

Melvin Whirley

#### Retirees

James Knee  
Sharon Clay  
James Jones  
Ken Ollar  
Bill Real  
Tommy Tinder

#### Left Jurisdiction

Patrick Stricker  
Carl Mattox  
Steve Dixon  
Jared Gilomen

#### Withdrawal

Kevin Wehner

#### Deceased

Milton Kaempfe  
Roy Hagan  
Joe Wooden  
Donald Spitznagle  
Paul Schwab

July 14, 2011

Dear Brother Walter;

I want to take the time to write this letter expressing my appreciation to you, our Executive Board, and especially our Business Representative, Brother Doug Mueller.

As you know we recently concluded our contract negotiations with the Alliant Energy Work Group, and all members feel that we came to a positive resolution. We dealt with the company on some very sensitive and hard fought issues concerning our 1.8 overtime provisions and weather clause, as you know.

We all feel that we addressed these issues in a fair and equitable way, while some credit can be given to the company in dealing with the wage adjustments and new provisions in the overtime it did not come without negotiations. I feel our negotiating committee did a great job in representing our members and the purpose of this letter is to once again thank Brother Mueller.

I want you to know how much his work on our negotiations was appreciated by all. It is noticed by our work group that Brother Mueller has taken a real interest in our members and in our contract.

He has followed up on numerous issues outside of our negotiations and has worked to see that our conditions and provisions of our contract have been upheld.

I believe his ongoing relationship with those company officials led to our positive outcome. Thank you once again for your support and please share my gratitude with Brother Mueller.

Sincerely,  
Marvin Conlee  
Steward-Ft. Madison  
IBEW Local 1439



**CONLEE**

## • History from page 8A

much opposition, approved a temporary dues increase of \$3 per month for 20 months to finance the purchase. All members, thus, became stockholders.

In early 1974 the Local closed on the sale and moved into the new union hall/office. After 30 years, Local 1439 finally had a building we could truly call home, where we remain today.

Although somewhat distracted by the purchase of the Kodak building, organizing activities

continued. On a request by the International, Roedder sent Business Representative **Tom Kraus** to Indiana to help the IBEW organize Indianapolis Power and Light employees. The effort was a success, as the IBEW won both the outside physical and power plant employees.

Meanwhile, Local 1439 organized four gas service employees at the Ark-Mo facilities in the Ironton, Potosi and Piedmont, Missouri area. Ark-Mo was an electric and gas utility in Arkansas

and Missouri. We had already represented other gas workers of Ark-Mo. The NLRB agreed to include them in the unit without an election. Simultaneously Local 1439 also was successful in organizing 29 employees of the City of Farmington, Mo.

Also in the biggest organizing drive since 1945, we organized another 248 workers from Ark-Mo. The City of Farmington cooperated in the organizing drive, unlike the management of Ark-Mo. The

Ark-Mo election was not easy. The Union lost the first election and charges were filed with the NLRB. It was determined that Ark-Mo did, in fact, interfere with the election and a second election was held, in which Lo-

cal 1439 prevailed.

Our next issue will summarize the U.E. strike in 1975. Brother **Gene Roedder** retires, **John Durham** becomes Business Manager and **Gene McMahon** serves as President.

## Statement of Official Local 1439 Meetings

In accordance with the IBEW International Constitution, the St. Louis meeting is the official meeting of Local 1439. All official announcements

and all voting, other than mail ballot, will take place at the regular St. Louis monthly meeting.

### September 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 5 p.m. Executive Board meeting (date change)	2	3
4	5 Office Closed for Labor Day Parade and Picnic	6 4:30 p.m. St. Louis meeting	7 1:30 p.m. St. Louis Afternoon meeting	8 4:15 p.m. St. Francois meeting	9	10 
11 	12 	13	14 3:45 p.m. St. Charles meeting	15 3:45 p.m. Jefferson meeting	16	17 IUOE Local 148 Charity Bass Tournament
18	19	20	21 3:45 p.m. Franklin meeting	22	23	24
19-23 IBEW National Convention in Vancouver, British Columbia						
25 	26 5 p.m. Ameren Negotiations Committee meeting	27	28	29 4:30 p.m. Financial Planning Seminar at St. Charles (location to be determined)	30	

**WE DO THE WORK!**

### October 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 5 p.m. Executive Board meeting	4 4:30 p.m. St. Louis meeting	5 1:30 p.m. St. Louis Afternoon meeting	6	7	8
9	10	11 	12 St. Charles meeting	13 3:45 p.m. Jefferson meeting	14	15
12-15 27th International Lineman's Rodeo in Bonner Springs, KS						
16 	17	18	19 3:45 p.m. Franklin meeting	20 10 a.m. Retirees meeting	21 	22
23	24	25 5 p.m. Ameren Negotiations Committee meeting	26 	27	28 	
30	31					

## Fun at the Kraus Golf Tournament



## Congratulations to the 2011 John Durham college scholarship winners

**Ben Schmid**, son of Joe and **Kim Schmid**, has been accepted at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

**Chelsea Noce**, daughter of **Ken** and **Tanya Noce**, will attend Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO).

The two students earned the scholarships with their winning essays on the topic "The Social and Economic Impact of Right to Work". Good job!

The scholarship was established in memory of Local 1439 Business Manager **John Durham** who was tragically killed in a single engine plane crash in 1986.



**Benjamin Schmid**



**Chelsea Noce**



# LABOR DAY



## Monday, September 5

### Parade: 8:30 a.m. — Downtown St. Louis

IBEW Locals and IUOE #148 will line up on the north side of Olive St. between 20th and 21st streets.

### Picnic: 11 a.m. — 3 p.m.

### Wilmore Park, South St. Louis

Kids games, rides, giveaways, petting zoo, pony rides, and a bounce house. Come to the park by 7:30 a.m. if you want to walk in the parade (get a free T-shirt). Or just come to the fun activities and free food at the park! For directions, call the Union Hall at 314-644-6111.



# THE 1439

News and information for, and about, the members (and families) of IBEW 1439 who proudly serve: *The electrical industry: Ameren UE (Missouri), Alliant Energy (Iowa) and Entergy (Arkansas); the natural gas industry: Amos Energy (Missouri); and city employees (except police and firefighters) in Potosi (Missouri)*

Volume 18, Number 5 September/October, 2011

## Our Proud History

By MICHAEL D. WALTER

In 1972 **Gene Roedder** was re-elected as Business Manager and **Carl Spear**, a blind Korean War veteran, was elected as the President. Spear had worked for Union Electric (U.E., now Ameren Missouri) prior to losing his sight in the war. Roedder was successful in negotiating a new classification "Salvageman-Sightless" for a man/brother who had sacrificed so much for his country.

Local 1439 was also in search of a permanent home. In late 1970, the Local moved its office to 2200 59th Street. It considered buying the building and members volunteered their time to renovate the facility. Then it was discovered that the nearby Kodak building at 2121 59th Street was for sale.

The Kodak building, where we reside today, was affordably priced at \$82,500. After much consulting



with the other leaders of the Local, they began the process to purchase the building. The "Local 1439 Building Corporation" was established and reflected in the by-laws. The membership, with

See **HISTORY** page 6

Permit No. 495  
OM SINO T'S  
**PAID**  
STAGE S'N  
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1110 OMSINO T'S  
Street 465 1212  
IBEW 6371 TWCOT