

**LOCAL UNION 160, IBEW  
2909 Anthony Lane  
St. Anthony, MN 55418**

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## **NEWSLETTER - 161ST EDITION**

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013**

### **OFFICERS**

Thomas G. Koehler - Business Mgr/Financial Secretary  
Alan P. Rademacher - President  
Kurt W. Zimmerman - Vice President  
Barbara L. Oakes - Recording Secretary  
George G. Huber - Treasurer

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

James P. Brereton  
Martin A. Carey  
Dan A. McConnell  
Daniel S. Seawell  
James M. Tobin

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Daryl C. Tindle - Business Representative  
Daniel J. Kieffer - Business Representative  
Thomas V. Arnold - Business Representative  
Robert J. Boogren - Business Representative  
Shawn T. Daly - Business Representative  
Charles R. Sable - Business Representative  
Jon D. Michels - Business Representative  
Kevin J. Peterson - Membership Development Rep.  
Rose M. Eiden - Bookkeeper  
Shari L. Johnson - Office Manager  
Jenny L. Olson - Receptionist, Referrals

# General Membership Meetings



## Our Next Union Meetings Will Be Held:

- Minneapolis:** February 7 & March 7, 2013  
7:30 p.m. - St. Anthony Union Hall  
2909 Anthony Lane
- Becker:** February 21 & March 21, 2013  
7:30 p.m. - 12423 Pine St  
Becker Union Hall
- Mo Valley:** February 26, 2013 - 7:30 p.m.  
St. Anthony - Union Hall  
March 22, 2013 - 7:30 p.m.  
Sawmill Inn  
2301 S. Pokegama Ave, Gr. Rapids



## Local 160 Phone Ext.

- |                   |
|-------------------|
| Jenny - Ext. 101  |
| Rose - Ext. 103   |
| Shari - Ext. 104  |
| Shawn - Ext. 106  |
| Dan - Ext. 205    |
| Tom K. - Ext. 115 |
| Kevin - Ext. 126  |
- Tom A. - Ext. 105  
Charlie- Ext. 108  
Bob - Ext. 109  
Jon - Ext. 125

Minneapolis Tel # (612) 781-3126  
Minneapolis Fax # (612) 781-4225

Jon Michels, Grand Rapids  
Tel. # (218) 326-0533  
Fax # (218) 326-0534

Becker Office Numbers  
Daryl Tindle - (763) 262-1197  
Dan K.- (763) 262-1198  
Tom A - (763) 262-1189  
Fax # (763) 262-1168

**Local Union 160 web site - [www.ibew160.org](http://www.ibew160.org)**

## **From the Editor**

Rose M Eiden

The information contained in this newsletter has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, & the editor has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy. However, the Local Union does not guarantee that contents of the publication are correct, & statements attributed to other sources do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Local Union #160.

**“DO YOU PLAN ON RETIRING IN 2013? NOW IS THE TIME TO START PLANNING!”**

**Take advantage of a complimentary, no obligation retirement planning meeting with Union Advisors.**

**We'll help answer questions about:**

- Pension Options
- 401(k)
- Retirement Income
- Social Security.

**Contact Mike Dolezal or Mark Reichow with Union Advisors at 651-447-2235.**

**2728 East County Road D  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110**

**[www.uadvisors.com](http://www.uadvisors.com)**

## **LOCAL UNION 160'S ANNUAL STEWARDS MEETING**

**When:** Saturday, March 2, 2013

**Where:** Local 160's Union Hall  
2909 Anthony Lane  
St. Anthony, MN 55418

**Time:** 9:00 A.M.

All Local 160 union stewards are welcome. If you are interested in attending, please contact the hall at (612) 781-3126 no later than February 25, 2013 for reservations.

## **Retirement Club**

The Local 160 Retirement Club would like to welcome Brad Stewart to the club.

All Local 160 retirees are welcome to join the club. They meet every 4th Wednesday of the month. Post cards will be mailed out to members of the club as a reminder.

# *A Word or Two From Your Business Manager/Financial Secretary*

After 32 + years as a Business Representative, Lynn Martin retired December 31, 2012. Ray Ring appointed Lynn as Business Representative for the outside construction in 1979. Lynn and I not only worked together for many years, but became good friends at work and outside of work and I know first hand that he will be greatly missed. Thank you Lynn for your years of dedication to Local 160. Enjoy your retirement the way it is meant to be enjoyed.



Missouri Valley Line Constructors Apprenticeship & Training Program is finalizing a lease agreement with Dakota Vo-Technical College. Mo Valley lost access to the Donovan Construction pole yard for training and could not find a viable alternative close by. The move out date has not been set, but most likely it will be towards the end of January or early February. Local 160 will miss having the apprentices at our building, but the new set up will be a much more effective training center.

By the time you receive this newsletter, Tom Arnold and I will have met with Xcel Energy management to start negotiating the transition at the Black Dog Generating Plant. I do not have all the details as of yet, but with the environmental requirements placed on old coal plants, it appears that Black Dog will cease burning coal in early 2015. There is a meeting scheduled for January 14, 2013; more information will become available after this meeting.

As you know, the Xcel Energy contract expires on December 31, 2013. I have received a number of questions regarding when negotiations will start with Xcel Energy. The IBEW side is made up of the five locals representing Xcel Energy employees; Locals 23, 160, 949, 953 and 1426. The idea of starting early is complicated due to the fact that a couple of the IBEW Local Unions have their elections this year. Those elections are similar to ours, nominations in May, vote in June and installation of officers in July. If the Business Managers are challenged, the Local will want to wait until they know who is elected. So I would say that the survey cards will go out towards the end of June and the five locals will then meet middle to late July to put together the IBEW amendments. I would hope the Company will be willing to start negotiating at the end of July or early August.

On the next page of this newsletter is a communication from International President Hill and Secretary-Treasurer Chilia. Please take the time to read this and contact your elected representatives both State and Federal to inform them of your priorities and protections of working class citizens.

Fraternally,

Thomas G. Koehler

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## **New Year Resolution**

The Minnesota 2013 legislative session begins on Tuesday, January 8. Democrats now control the House, Senate and the Governor's office. Minnesotans overwhelmingly voted for a change away from misguided thinking. All of our States economic issues cannot be solved through cuts to schools, infrastructure, and those most in need without asking for shared sacrifice from those at the top of the income ladder.

With that being said, it is important that the Democrats do not over reach. One of the best ways to ensure this is to hold them accountable for their actions, and the best way to do this is to keep in touch with your individual legislatures. If we all take a few moments to email or better yet, write an actual letter to you State Representative, Senator and the Governor it puts them on notice that you did not vote for a rubber stamp last fall and that you will hold them accountable for their actions. Keeping in contact with the folks that represent us in Washington D.C. and in Saint Paul is really the other half of the election process.

There are a number of ways to find out who your State and Federal Representatives are. One of the easiest is to use any number of search engines and type in "Minnesota State Representatives" or "U.S. Senators".

Jim Brereton

Executive Board Member

A Message from Edwin D. Hill, President of the IBEW

Good Day Everyone:

As we all prepare to celebrate the New Year, reflect upon 2012 and welcome in 2013, we wonder what the New Year will bring for the IBEW and the labor movement. To recap the past year I personally am discouraged and concerned with the attitude of the public toward "Unionization of the Workforce". My concern is that working men and women are forgetting that people suffered to gain the conditions that we work under today. These are the same conditions that are on the chopping block presently and I am afraid that this attitude will escalate into 2013 and beyond. We all should look at what is at stake in 2013: attack on Pensions, attack of working conditions, attack on a living wage and a union wage, and an attack on what some believe to be "entitlements". Entitlements like Social Security and Medicare, things that our taxes paid for, money that was paid into protecting these "entitlements" as part of our fair wages while giving a fair days work.

Brothers and Sisters, we are the last defense against the abuses that working men and women endured in the past and those that will eventually come our way in the future. We have to be vigilant in protecting the very lifestyle that we enjoy because of our membership in the "Union" the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. I want to thank you for all of the work that you have done in the past and now join me in this continued quest for a better future for working men and women into the coming New Year.

"Every person working in each of the branches that we represent deserves to be a member of the IBEW. Let's all work toward that Goal in 2013, a goal that will strengthen our resolve for a better working life for all working men and women."

I wish for you all a prosperous and Happy New Year.

Ed Hill  
President, IBEW

Sam Chilia  
Secretary-Treasurer, IBEW

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**Statement by AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka On Senate Agreement on Fiscal Showdown**

January 1, 2013

The agreement passed by the Senate last night is a breakthrough in beginning to restore tax fairness and achieve some key goals of working families. It does not cut Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid benefits. It raises over \$700 billion over 10 years, including interest savings, by ending the Bush income tax cuts for families making over \$450,000 a year. And in recognition of the continuing jobs crisis, it extends unemployment benefits for a year. A strong message from voters and a relentless echo from grassroots activists over the last six weeks helped get us this far.

But lawmakers should have listened even better. The deal extends the Bush tax cuts for families earning between \$250,000 and \$450,000 a year and makes permanent Bush estate tax cuts exempting estates valued up to \$5 million from any tax. These concessions amount to over \$200 billion in additional tax cuts for the 2%.

And because of Republican hostage taking, the deal simply postpones the \$1.2 trillion sequester for only two months and does not address the debt ceiling, setting the stage for more fiscal blackmail at the expense of the middle class.

Instead of moving to address our nation's real jobs and public investment crisis, our leaders will be debating a prolonged artificial fiscal crisis. In the weeks to come, as the confrontation over the economic direction of our country continues, the working men and women of the AFL-CIO will continue to fight to keep poor and middle class families from giving more so rich people can continue paying less. That means a fairer, more progressive tax system, an end to Bush tax rates for the 2% and protection of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid from benefit cuts.

## Thousands Protest as Michigan Right-to-Work Bill Enacted

(USC) Amid protests by some 10,000 unionists and supporters who descended upon the state capitol, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder severely limited union power December 11 when he signed into law a right-to-work bill making the payment of union dues voluntary for private-sector unions and most public-sector unions.

Michigan workers covered by a union contract can now reap its benefits but don't have to pay dues to sustain the union. The law will have drastic negative effects on workers' wages and their right to have a voice at work.

According to AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, in right-to-work states the average worker makes \$1,540 less per year while 28 percent more people lack health insurance.

The legislation quickly passed through the house and senate without public hearings, committee hearings or the support of any Democratic legislators. Michigan's Republican-controlled house of representatives approved 58-51 one bill covering public employees; a second bill covering private-sector workers passed 58-52. The state senate approved both measures December 6.

Republicans pushed the vote as fast as they could, knowing that eight of their number would not be returning when a new legislature reconvenes next year.

Since 2010, when he took office, Governor Snyder has avoided supporting right-to-work legislation, saying the issue was too divisive and not on his agenda. He recently endorsed the bills, however, after being pressured by his party and business interests.

"I view this as an opportunity to stand up for Michigan's workers to be pro-worker," Snyder said in a news conference after he signed the new law. "I don't view this as anti-union at all...I believe this is pro-worker."

Michigan, considered the birthplace of the modern labor movement with roughly 17.5 percent of the workforce unionized is the 24th state to bar workers from being required to pay union dues as a condition of employment, even though, by law, unions must represent every worker, process his or her grievances and negotiate contracts that cover everyone.

But the state's labor movement is losing some of its clout. Voters in November rejected a measure to lock collective bargaining into the state's constitution. The issue increased tension between labor leaders and Michigan Republicans who took control of the state legislature in 2010.

President Obama has been vocal about denouncing right-to-work laws, saying "They don't have to do with economics. They have everything to do with politics. What they're really talking about is giving you the right to work for less money."

Trumka said in a statement that Snyder "showed his true colors...He's a puppet of extreme donors, and he is willing to ignore and lie to his constituents. His action will undoubtedly please the Koch Brothers and corporate CEOs, but it will diminish the voice of every working man and woman in Michigan."

Protest outside the state house were relatively calm but Michigan State Police officers wore riot gear as some demonstrators became aggressive. Officers reportedly sprayed tear gas at at least one demonstrator. Two other protesters were arrested when they allegedly tried to break into the building that houses the governor's office, the Associated Press reported.

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## Fox News Blows Another One

(USC) Fox News and other right-wing outlets blasted the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) for refusing to allow non-union workers from Decatur Utilities in Alabama to help with Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts in New Jersey. Problem was, the entire story was false.

*In These Times* magazine writer Mike Elk reports that according to a press conference with Decatur Utilities General Manager Ray Hardin, his company received a set of documents from the Electric Cities of Alabama Association about potential union contracts they might possibly face in the Northeast, and that was the extent of it.

Hardin stated that his company never had contact with IBEW or the utility companies in New Jersey. Decatur Utilities was merely concerned about whether the union contracts might apply to them since they were non-unionized.

Fox News: "Fair and Balanced." Except when it isn't.

## What is Social Security?

Social Security embodies the principle that we are all in it together and reflects the basic American values of hard work, personal responsibility, caring for family and neighbors, prudent financial management and respect for dignity and independence. Social Security recipients earn their benefits by paying into the system throughout their time at work.

Social Security provides a guaranteed income each year to more than 55 million American workers and their families who have lost income due to retirement, disability or death. That's nearly one family out of four.

Between 1960 and 2008, Social Security helped cut the poverty rate among seniors by more than two-thirds, from 35 percent to just under 10 percent.

Social Security also provides important disability and life insurance protection, each worth more than \$400,000 for young workers and their families, according to the National Academy of Social Insurance. In early 2012, more than 8 million workers with disabilities were receiving Social Security benefits as were 4.4 million widowed spouses and 4.4 million children. More than 1 million children are kept out of poverty by Social Security.

Social Security does **not** face an immediate crisis, and its modest funding shortfall over the next 75 years can be addressed **without** benefit cuts or major changes to the program. Social Security does **not** contribute to the federal budget deficit, and benefit cuts must not be part of any deficit reduction package.

## Social Security is Not In Crisis

The Social Security trust fund is fundamentally sound with a surplus that, according to both the Social Security Trustees and the Congressional Budget Office, will continue for years to come. The trust fund is projected to grow from \$2.7 trillion in 2012 to \$3.06 trillion in 2020. Social Security can meet 100 percent of its obligations until 2033. And even if no changes are made, it can then pay about 75 percent of scheduled benefits.

The Social Security surplus is invested in Treasury bonds backed by the federal government. These bonds are as solid as all other Treasury bonds.

## Social Security Does Not Contribute to the Deficit

Social Security does not contribute to the deficit and should not be lumped in as part of the long-term deficit problem. The Social Security trust fund is a separate account with its own dedicated source of funding— employer and employee payroll tax contributions. It cannot pay benefits unless it has funds to do so—that's the law. Social Security cannot borrow or spend dollars it doesn't have. The real causes of the projected deficits are the Bush-era tax cuts, two wars that were not paid for, the recent recession and health care costs.

Social Security should not be cut and proposals to do so have been included in various congressional plans to reduce the federal budget deficit. All three of the following changes to Social Security are benefit cuts that would hurt working families and retirees.

**Cutting the Annual COLA.** The automatic annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security protects value of benefits from shrinking due to inflation. Proposals to adopt a supposedly "more accurate" formula to calculate the COLA, such as the "chained Consumer Price Index," are really disguised attempts to lower COLA payments and reduce Social Security for current and future Social Security beneficiaries. The chained CPI makes the inflation rate look lower than the index now used by Social Security. As a result, the annual COLA payment would be about 3 percent less after 10 years, and the benefit reduction would increase over time, reaching more than 6 percent after 20 years. These larger cuts would have a greater impact on those receiving benefits the longest, including senior women who rely more on Social Security than men and those disabled at a young age who go on to live long lives. Because the chained CPI does not take into account the fact that seniors spend more on health care, it is an inaccurate way to measure inflation for them.

**Cutting Benefits by Raising the Age for Full Social Security Benefits.** Raising the age when workers can claim full Social Security benefits is an across-the-board benefit cut. Increasing the age from 67—the full retirement age for workers born in and after 1960—to 69 would reduce lifetime benefits by about 13 percent. For each year the full retirement age is increased, Social Security benefits are reduced by roughly 7 percent.

**Cutting Benefits through Benefit Formula Changes.** Benefit formula changes are often described as affecting only workers with higher than average earnings. One proposal, dubbed "Bowles-Simpson" after its proponents, would cut Social Security benefits for workers with average lifetime earnings as low as \$27,000, with bigger reductions for workers with higher average earnings. Other proposals, such as "progressive price indexing," would reduce benefits for those with average lifetime earnings of \$22,300. These kinds of changes reach deep into the middle class. Such changes weaken the connection between the Social Security benefits and the payroll contributions workers make throughout their careers.

*Continue on next page*

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### **Strengthen Social Security Benefits**

Social Security benefits should be strengthened. Today's benefits are modest, averaging some \$16,500 per year for men and \$12,800 for women. The portion of wages that Social Security benefits replace is already decreasing as the full retirement age rises to 67 and Medicare premiums increase. Other sources of retirement income are non-existent for most workers, declining in the case of workplace pension plans, or collapsing, like home equity. In light of growing retirement insecurity, Social Security benefits should be increased across the board, not reduced.

### **Strengthen Social Security Funding**

The Social Security trust fund is fundamentally sound with a surplus that, according to both the Social Security Trustees and the Congressional Budget Office, will continue for years to come. Its modest revenue shortfall, about 0.96 percent of GDP over the next 75 years, should be addressed. Doing so can be done without cutting benefits. The shortfall is comparable to the cost of extending the Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent. Most of the shortfall could be closed by eliminating the annual cap on wages subject to the payroll tax, currently set at \$113,700 per year. Other options include raising the cap on wages subject to the payroll tax, lifting the cap on wages for employer payroll tax contributions, gradually raising the payroll tax rate over time, applying the payroll tax to income from interest, dividends, capital gains and stock options and a financial transactions tax.

### **New Senior's Exam**

Need 4 out of 10 to pass

1. How long did the Hundred Years War last?
2. Which country makes Panama hats?
3. From which animal do we get cat gut?
4. In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
5. What is a camel's hair brush made of?
6. The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
7. What was King George VI's first name?
8. What color is a purple finch?
9. Where are Chinese gooseberries from?
10. What is the color of the black box in a commercial airplane?

*Answers on back page*

- \* DJ (age 4) stepped onto the bathroom scale and asked: "How much do I cost?"
- \* Clinton (age 5) was in his bedroom looking worried when his Mom asked what was troubling him, he replied "I don't know what'll happen with this bed when I get married. How will my wife fit in it?"
- \* James (age 4) was listening to a Bible story. His dad read: "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned to salt." Concerned, James asked: "What happened to the flea?"
- \* TEACHER: Now, Simon, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?  
SIMON: No, sir, I don't have to, my Mom is a good cook.
- \* TEACHER: John, why are you doing your math multiplication on the floor?  
JOHN: You told me to do it without using tables.

## LOCAL 160 WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Richard Abear	Brian Albers
Joshua Anderson	Melissa Bergstrom
Ryan Berns	Jeffrey Boyles
Matthew Brink	Richard Chase
Bruce Donnell	Troy Fasching
Evan Gesellchen	Ryan Hess
Tonja Honsey	Thomas Jacobsen
Jamie Keller	Bret Kent
Larry Koniarski	Jason Kortus
Drew Lade	William Leehy
Adam Lobitz	Koby Lursen
Alec Marten	Patrick Meuwissen
Nicholas Neubert	Gary Niemczyk
William O'Neill	Matthew Pitoscia
Cole Ripplinger	Matthew Rouillard
Clinton Scheuble	Martin Sedlund
Stephen Sell	Tyler Serena
Randall Smithers	Kevin Sontag
Scott Swann	Cory Swenson
Ma Thao	Edward Unger
Dannie Welch	Matthew Zieniewicz

**Membership Count = 2915**

### *Answers to the Quiz*

1. 116 Years
2. Ecuador
3. Sheep and Horses
4. November
5. Squirrel Fur
6. Dogs
7. Albert
8. Crimson
9. New Zealand
10. Orange



## *GET WELL WISHES WERE SENT TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:*

Kenny Biver - Xcel Energy  
Scott Burkland - Xcel Energy  
Joseph Ceballos - Xcel Energy  
Nordean Hartle - Steele Waseca  
Lee Hoese - Minnesota Valley  
James Horsfall - Mo Valley  
Todd Klande - East Central Energy  
Randy Seeley - Xcel Energy  
Ron Stafne - East Central Energy

## *IN MEMORIAM*

*We are deeply saddened by the loss of our brothers. Our deepest sympathy goes out to their families & friends.*

Jerome Juell - Active Xcel Energy - Died 12/24/12

Thomas E. Miller - Retired NSP - Died 11/30/12

Kennth Patrow - Retired Mo Valley - Died 12/11/12

## *CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS ON THEIR RETIREMENT.*

Gerald Bloms - Mo Valley  
Jim Brereton - Xcel Energy  
Robert Breymeier - Connexus Energy  
Tom Buck - Xcel Energy  
Bill Coleman - East Central Energy-  
James Engelen - Xcel Energy  
David Fladung - Xcel Energy  
Lonnie Frank - Wright Tree  
Anthony Funk - Xcel Energy  
Curtis King - Xcel Energy  
Ron Kogler - Xcel Energy  
Jim Leary - Xcel Energy  
Mark LeDuc - Xcel Energy  
Gary Leither - Wright Hennepin  
Gary Mikkonen - Connexus Energy  
Ed Pacholke - Wright Tree  
John Pflipsen - Xcel Energy  
Richard Radtke - Xcel Energy  
Mike Theisen - Xcel Energy  
Steve Warner - Asplundh Tree

