



Issue 9

August 2009

From the Business Manager

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to say thank you to everyone who took time from your schedule to attend the Code of Excellence event at Gallo Center of the Arts on Wednesday, June 3, 2009. The event was a success! It was attended by many invited guests, contractors, and most importantly you the members of Local 684. I have received several positive comments from individuals outside of the electrical industry. The Code of Excellence is just a small piece that is being used to get the word out to the awarding agencies and the general public about the benefits of utilizing the skills of the IBEW. The official press release is available on our website at www.ibewlu684.org for your viewing. Contractors, foremen, and journeymen please read and think about the article on Mentorship on page 5 of the newsletter. Thanks again for all of your positive efforts in representing Local 684.

President Obama and Congress have a big job in front of them; two items of interest to working people are: Healthcare Reform and The Employee Free Choice Act. The President has moved healthcare reform to the top of his list and we know from the Clinton era that changing the current healthcare system is not easy. The cost of healthcare and pharmaceuticals has been on a steady increase. Over the last nine years premiums have more than doubled and quality of care has not improved. There were 46 million uninsured Americans under age 65 in 2007, not to mention the illegal aliens who use emergency rooms as primary care centers. These issues are driving up costs.

The Federal Government will be involved because they already are:

Medicare, Medicaid, and VA. I am not suggesting that single payer or socialized medicine is the answer; just ask the Canadians who cross the border for treatment. The true capitalists say the total free market is the best option; how is that working? Some sort of cost containment and regulation must be implemented. Right now it appears nothing will be done before the August recess and this is one issue that requires much debate and shouldn't be rushed.

On July 28th Governor Schwarzenegger finally signed California's 2009-2010 budget fix. When the economy went south last year the expected tax revenue went with it. Major cuts were made to Education, Health and Human Services, General Government, State Employee Compensation, and Corrections.

We must get the message to Sacramento that funding for public works projects is the one sure way to directly benefit the public, create good jobs, and gets the economy moving again.

You should be receiving your yearly pension statements by the end of the month if not sooner. Our pension plan year ends on March 31st, the good news is that the stock market has made considerable gains in the positive direction reducing the losses which occurred in the previous plan year. We are not out of the woods but it appears investor confidence is returning.

Keep the faith and remain strong.

Fraternally,

Billy Powell

Business and Membership Development

Most issues being discussed by our political leaders are of big importance to our Brotherhood. They are taking longer to get implemented than what we were expecting. The Stimulus program is not doing anything at this point to put any of our trade to work. The Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) has not been voted on yet. We cannot do a lot about how the stimulus moneys are handed out, but we can let our Representatives know how we feel on EFCA. Please let Senator Dianne Feinstein know you want her support on this issue. You can call her office or write a letter.

Fresno

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We must continue to tell non represented workers about their options. Our goal is to have all electricians represented if they so choose.

In the past few years we have lost local signatory contractors. We have another who is considering retiring. He is looking for someone who is thinking about going into business. You can call me for more information if you're interested.

Fraternally,
Richard Venema



Darryl Wearin

Training Director News

June 26, 2009 was the last day of classes for 2008-09. Congratulations to the following graduates, our new IBEW journeyman: **Anthony Bond, Erik Calef, Rod Fulkerson, Andrew Harrison, Thomas Ludwig, Justin Lytal, David Marrujo, Clayton McClanahan, Michael Mendoza, Jonathan Pound, Brandon Strohmeier, Erika Watson and Pete Zamaripa.** Our graduation ceremony will be August 14, 2009.

We wish our graduates the very best where ever your careers may take you, remember the sky is the limit.

As of this writing we have 6 new first year apprentices eager and ready to start their new careers to become IBEW inside wireman, **Clarence Eachus, Christopher Guthrie, AC Kuykendall, Daniel Renwick, Steven Salabor and Timothy Swanson.**

We also wish them the very best!

Our continuing education classes, unfortunately, have not been doing well in the month of July. So consequently we had to **cancel** the **OSHA 10, OSHA 30** and the **Hilti** classes for this month. On the up side, the **EPS 1** class is full; 1 out of 4 not bad for the month of July. We will reschedule these classes sometime after the 1st of the year. In the future, classes may not be scheduled in the summer months.

In the month of December, we have had a couple of changes in our continuing education classes. The first one is the **AC Motor Calcs** class; this class has been **cancelled.** Also, the **Raceway and Box Fill** class it has been **moved** from December 16 & 17, to December 2 & 3, 2009.

On a sad note, one of our apprentices **Brother Doyle Rice** lost his father unexpectedly a few weeks ago. Doyle and his father were very close and spent a great deal of time together on the track in Sacramento racing cars. Please keep Brother Doyle and his family in your prayers.

Mark Bowden

From the President

It's summer time so let's have a picnic! Our union picnic will be August 22, 2009 at Hagaman park. The invitations were sent out just a few days ago. So RSVP as soon as possible.

We had a lot of fun last year with the horseshoe games, bounce houses, face painting and games for the kids. This year is looking to be even better.

Linda and Elaine Marlett have been working hard at getting the bounce houses and games together for the kids. We are looking for parents to volunteer and help with the different activities for the kids. If anyone is interested in helping please call Linda at 524-5171. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

We will be having our annual horseshoe tournament at the picnic; Allen Avalos has volunteered to run the tournament. Thanks Allen. We would like to get the horseshoe games started early so we can finish the tournament at a decent time. We will be starting at 10:00 a.m., so if you want to play please get there a little before 10:00.

There has been talk about a Tri-Tip cook off this year; if anyone is interested in participating we will furnish the Tri-Tips. Please call Mark at 579-5417 so arrangements can be made to sign up and also pick up a tri-tip if you want to marinate it ahead of time. If you decide you want to participate in the cook off, you will also be signed up to help us with the cooking. Those wanting to participate in the cook off will also need to get there around 10:00 a.m. There will be a prize for the best tri-tip.

I would like to thank those in advance who have already volunteered to help with the picnic, **Allen Avalos, Ed Ventura, John Kincanon, Linda Sadler, Jim and Elaine Marlett, Josh Grider, Janet Williamson, Adam Jautaikis, Richard Venema and Billy Powell.** There is plenty of room for more volunteers, if you are interested please call Mark at 579-5417 or Linda at 524-5171, your help will be appreciated.

Speaking of volunteers I would like to give special thanks to **Jennifer Call** for stepping up to the plate and organizing the trade's booth at the Merced County Fair this year. Our local manned the booth on Saturday, July 25, 2009 from 2:00 p.m. till 11:00 p.m.

I would also like to thank **Ed Ventura, Allen Avalos, Scott Whitley and Billy Powell** for taking time out of their Saturday to help man the booth with us. Good job guys!!

Let's not forget the raffle! Again this year we plan on having a good raffle with lots of prizes. So make sure you bring some cash to buy raffle tickets, we will keep them at a reasonable price so you can get several tickets with just a few dollars. Platt electric has already donated some raffle prizes and 8 - \$25.00 gift cards. Thank you Platt Electric you are one wholesale house we can always count on.

Fraternally
Mark Bowden

Cardoza Linguica Fest Old Fisherman's Club



Dave Francis, Mark Bowden, Dennis Cardoza, Billy Powell,
Stan Strohmeier



Know your Agreement

SHORT CALLS EFFECTIVE: August 10, 2009

Job calls 80 hours or less shall be considered **SHORT CALLS**. Member must return to the office and sign the book upon termination.

If a **SHORT CALL** turns into a long call, member will be removed from the book.

Overtime will not be counted toward the 80 hour maximum.

Refusal of a **SHORT CALL** will not receive a strike.

There is no limit to the number of **SHORT CALLS** that can be taken.

“Rolling Short Calls” When a short call is filled, the next short call will begin with the member who is after the person who took the previous short call.

A member who accepts any job, 80 hours or less, after returning to the Out Of Work list will be cleared of all job turn downs upon re-signing.

Don't forget the Picnic Aug 22nd Hagaman Park, Merced



**Fun for everyone. Visit with old friends,
play horseshoes, fun for the kids, and of course good food**

The following Masthead was added to Local 684's Inside Agreement July 1, 2008.

The full inside agreement is available to registered members under contracts at www.ibewlu684.org.

Masthead

Workers employed under the terms of this Agreement shall do all on-site underground power distribution systems (including PVC and rigid conduit), temporary power and lighting systems and maintenance thereon, electrical construction, installation, safe off of electrical materials for the purpose of demolition, and maintenance and running of test of electrical lighting, heat and power equipment. Also included is fiber optic system raceways installation, photovoltaic system electrical installation, including raceways. This shall include all temporary electrical maintenance of pumps, fans, blowers, and other electrical equipment, installation or erection work in new buildings in the course of construction and in existing buildings undergoing alterations, and in subways, tunnels and bridges. Prefabrication of boxes, brackets, bends and nipples are covered by this Agreement, but the use of catalogue items is permitted. Fiber Optic cabling work will be performed by inside wireman or sound and communication employees.

Agreement by and between the Northern California Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and Local Union No.684, IBEW.

It shall apply to all firms who sign a Letter of Assent to be bound by the terms of this Agreement.

As used hereinafter in this Agreement, the term "Chapter" shall mean the Northern California Chapter of NECA and the term "Union" shall mean Local Union No. 684, IBEW.

The term "Employer" shall mean an individual firm who has been recognized by an assent to this Agreement.

The DEATH OF MENTORING?

If you are like me, you did not get to where you are in life without someone mentoring you. I think of mentoring as someone taking a personal interest. Someone really understanding and extending themselves above and beyond a basic relationship. A real connection of trust, communication and mutual benefit. Yes, mentoring is a very powerful tool and concept that no one really learns but almost always plays a key role in most of our personal and professional lives.

It is this powerful and positive force that seems now at risk in our industry. I was unaware of the decline until quite recently, but the proof now seems overwhelming. I have had the privilege of speaking to over 120 local or regional union gatherings in the past few years. The audiences vary but almost always there are a good assortment of contractors, foremen and gray haired journeymen. There are almost always apprentices. And I have asked those audiences the same question over and over. How many of you have had someone mentor you for success? And without exception almost 95% of the older more experienced guys raise their hands. But when I ask this follow up question the problem becomes clear. "How many of you now are taking a personal interest in and mentoring someone in your company or industry?"

The response to this question is startling. In one gathering of 900 foremen almost every hand went up and every guy had been mentored. When asked what they were doing, they were all together only mentoring 26 guys. When I speak at contractor meetings the numbers do not rise much. When I speak for labor management groups or even union leader groups, the mentors are fewer and fewer. And it is truly in our interests to find out why. **This industry cannot survive the death of mentoring.**

I asked the guys that don't mentor why and the responses were as follows;

- the kids today are not willing to be mentored
- it is not worth the time to invest in them
- I don't have the personal time to do it, we are moving too fast
- I just don't think about it that much

On the other hand when I ask the young guys why they think they cannot obtain mentoring this is some of their responses;

- They don't want to teach us because we are a threat to their jobs
- They think mentoring is yelling at you or toughening us up instead of showing us how to succeed in the work and the industry.
- No one has offered and I wouldn't know how to find or ask someone

There has never been a time in our industry where we need to assure that the generations that follow are better than those that preceded. For purposes of competition, pension stability, and union brand, this is a no-compromise strategic necessity. And despite excellent training, relevant curriculum and strong contractor – union leadership no one factor has more upside potential for influencing performance than does mentoring.

I would like to suggest seven strategies that the industry adopt in service of both the mentoring practice and the outcome;

1. Every contractor goes to every foreman and asks them who they are mentoring. Every foreman in the US and Canada should be actively developing at least one guy.
2. Discuss with that foreman the purpose of the mentoring and determine if they clearly understand the benefit and best methodology.
3. Every Business Manager in the US and Canada talks about the importance of mentoring at their next union meeting and at least one time per year in the future.
4. Every union leader ties the message of mentoring to the long term benefits that serve everyone in order to break down any old school thinking about not teaching the new guys out of fear or insecurity.
5. Apprentice Directors obtain a respected volunteer journeyman to be the Big Brother for each apprentice class group of 20+ guys. This is a go-to guy on a personal and professional development basis.
6. Apprentice schools teach new guys the important of mentoring and encourage them to do it for each other and when they rise in the trade.
7. Finally everyone who is reading this take on the task. Find one more person to mentor personally. With all the organizations who utilize this material, we could add between 20,000 and 50,000 new relationships with that one simple step.

I personally am mentoring six guys right now. I am a pretty busy person, but I know that I would have never achieved anything without those who saw in me, more than I saw myself. I meet with them monthly. I hear about life, work, marriage, dreams, problems and more. Mostly I listen. When I do speak, I know it really matters. I see them changing their lives right in front of me. My payoff is the realization that I have done the right thing for the right reason for the right person. And if in the process, I can help our industry succeed then that is even a greater incentive.

As you go on with your business of the day today, ask yourself what valuable life lessons that you have that others need. They are waiting out there for you now. Let us not let this great tradition die.

By Mark Breslin

...the right choice
ibew
Service

Important Dates to Remember

Union Meeting – August, 11 200 – 7:00 P.M.

Retiree Breakfast – August 26, 2009 – 9:00 A.M.

Apprentice Completion Dinner – August 14th

Picnic – August 22nd

Western States Competition – September 19th



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A SPECIAL THANKS to the members and officers who helped in the Stanislaus County Fair Booth on August 5th:

Erika Watson
Jeremiah Nieman
Michael Torres
Larry Machado
Torrey Newton
Dave Jones
Billy Powell
Richard Venema