



**LOCAL UNION 1600
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS**

OUR UNION VOICE

Volume 42, No. 9

September 2017

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER

By Steve Knoebel



Labor Day (Your Day) what it means as defined by the United States Department of Labor: Labor Day is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the

contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity and well-being of our country. This is why I say Labor Day is Your Day. So if you are at a picnic, hanging out with friends and co-workers or just hanging out at home and you crack open that can of union made Budweiser hold it up and give yourself a toast, "For all I do, this Bud's for me"

On to business. After a long 12 months, the handling of Talen displaced employees concluded. The process started on 8/2/2016 when we received a list of 128 employees identified as displaced. We took the action to grieve the displacements for each affected job title and the majority of these grievances have been submitted to arbitration. Under the provisions of Article X in the contract, the first displaced employee was handled on 8/30/16 and the last day of action for the employees handled under this process was 8/14/2017. As I stated in the beginning we started with 128 but through the bumping process we ended up handling a total of 179 employees.

Throughout the 12 months there was a lot of effort put into minimizing the negative effects on employees. There were 2 grievances filed and settled favorably to allow additional options that created more opportunities

for retirements with enhanced benefits and allowed displaced employees to stay in their own progression line. There were some employees that became undisplaced during the process and there were some employees that had recall offered to them. It must be noted that we never went through the Article X process to the extent we did. We had some bumps in the road and we had to address some issues that you could not foresee. Both sides got educated and recognize there is a need to improve the process if there would be displacements in the future. We will be discussing such changes.

While we did lose members due to the company downsizing their workforce, and some members had to relocate due to limited options in bumping rights, at the very end of handling 179 members only 5 went to lay off. All the other that left the company chose to retire or sever. I know 5 doesn't sound like a lot but it is 5 too many in my mind and we are working to get them back to work. Hopefully we never have to go through this again.

In addition to working through displacements, we were busy negotiating contracts at the same time. Negotiations for a new 5 year contract for the Brookfield Renewable employees are complete and a tentative agreement was signed and will be presented to the members. They will be voting to accept or reject the proposed contract. That brought the total to 4 contracts negotiated in the past 10 months with the Talen and Comcast contracts scheduled to be negotiated next year. Thanks to all the committee members that assisted in these negotiations.

(Continued on Page 4)

Sign up for
Text Alerts!



Visit Us At:
www.ibew1600.org

Sept. Membership	
PPL	1292
Talen	944
Comcast	63
Ephrata	27
Hansen	26
Brookfield	16
Total	2368



**AUG'S
IBEW PAC
winner was
Mark Scheuchenzuber
Unit 3**

REPORT FROM V.P. FRANK GRABOSKI

Hello Sisters & Brothers of IBEW Local 1600.

As we enjoy some really nice weather here lately I can't help but think of what's happening in Southeast Texas due to the Category 4 hurricane known as Harvey. Everything changed for those folks in a blink of an eye. Our IBEW International website reported that members have experienced property damage but no deaths of members have been reported. Houston Local 66 has 1500 utility members and reported if they can get to work they're working. Galveston Local 527 and Houston Local 716 have been assisting with rescue efforts. If you are interested in helping with relief efforts, the TEXAS AFL-CIO has set up a fund. You may also donate to the Red Cross. Let's all offer our thoughts and prayers to our Sisters and Brothers along with all the victims of Hurricane Harvey.



UNION BUSINESS

PPL:

- **G16-CEN-019** – Contractors/Snow Removal
The Union and Company reached a settlement agreement. Snow removal will be returned to the Facilities Department at the SFC for the 2017-2018 winter season.
- **G16-NE-040** – Contractors/Snow Removal
A settlement agreement has been reached to return a portion of snow removal to the Facilities Department at the Scranton Service Center for the 2017-2018 winter season.
- **G17-GO-007** – Job Description
A settlement is pending, it entails a Facility Management worker getting compensated for performing Facilities-Tech-I duties at the General Office.
- **G17-GO-002** – MCP Working
Management performing B.U. duties in Facilities

Department at Windsor location. No settlement at third step. Union requested additional information

- **G17-GO-004** – Vacancy
Company not filling a Tech -II at GO. No settlement reached at third step. Union requested additional information
- **G17-GO-005** - Vacancy
Company not filling Tech III vacancy at GO. No settlement at third step. Union requested additional information.
- **G16-GO-016** – Vacancy
Company not filling Tech I vacancy at GO. No settlement at third step. Union requested additional information.

Service Techs:

I believe it's safe to say we all agree we are shorthanded, the Company may not agree and they control how many hard hats are in the field. You folks have been doing a great job getting work done and supporting areas that need help by volunteering. In an effort to make volunteering attractive and more beneficial to you I am working with Company representatives to create a Memorandum of Agreement that will address staying, commuting directly to the volunteer temporary work locations or starting and ending at your roster. This M.A. is still in progress and not completed at the time of this writing. I will keep you posted.

- President Knoebel and I attended the RTC Safety Symposium at Walbert. It was really great to get out there and celebrate safety with our Union workers.

TALEN:

Montour – The Company notified Local 1600 of the need to return to five work days per week at eight hours per day, Monday to Friday in the mechanical and electrical lines. President Knoebel and I met with the nightshift crews and the dayshift crews to conduct a vote on the starting time.

(Continued page 5)

LOCAL 1600 Newsletter

Published by Local 1600 I.B.E.W.

P.O. Box 470, Trexlertown, Pa. 18087-0470

President & Financial Secretary Steve Knoebel
Vice President Frank Graboski
Recording Secretary Donna Kancsal
Treasurer Lucinda Erdman
Newsletter Editor Rafael Cuevas

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

LOCAL 1600 HOTLINE NUMBER

1-800-344-2200

Local Union Hall

610-395-8167

Or 1-800-342-5515

FAX 610-395-6158



REPORT FROM BUSINESS REP JANE BIEVER



As summer comes to a close and fall quickly approaches, many of us change gears. We prepare our children for school; we put away our summer toys and get ready for our hibernation period. I hope that everyone had an enjoyable summer.

Here are some of the issues I've been working on since my last article

Ephrata Borough

- **Waste Water Meet & Discuss** – A Meet & Discuss was held to address concerns over the work environment. At this discussion, the parties agreed to a monthly discussion between the steward and the supervisor to address concerns and work on promoting a better work environment.
- **Public Works Meet & Discuss** – A Meet & Discuss was held to address concerns on the poor working relationship between bargaining unit and management due to a lack of communication and trust. The parties agreed to promote a better communication in the work group by beginning to hold crew leader meetings to accomplishments within the work group/projects and to provide suggestions for further improvement. Although the bargaining unit is cautious with this approach, if done right it can be a success for both sides.

Hansen

- **Meet & Discuss** – A Meet & Discuss was held to review the Enrollment Billing Clerk job description in relation to the duties performed. Future meetings will be held regarding revisions the job description.
- **Termination** – An employee has been terminated for excessive unapproved time off. Local 1600 is investigating this termination.

PPL

Third Steps

17GO-003 – Vacancy not filled and contractor performing BU work (Loading Dock G.O.) – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

16CEN-006 – Management performing BU work (Logistics SFC) – withdrawn work in question has been automated management is no longer performing the work.

16CEN-007 – Operation Support Clerk vacancy not filled (Logistics SFC) – in abeyance pending negotiations for a revised Logistics Progression line at the SFC.

16CEN-008 – Contractor used for storm assistance before calling out BU (Logistics SFC)– settled employee to be paid 4 hours of double time.

16CEN-009 – Management performing BU work (System Shops) – settled work has been returned to the appropriate bargaining unit job classification.

16CEN-010 – Steno vacancy not filled (Rubber Goods) – withdrawn clerical duties have been distributed to remaining Bargaining Unit.

16CEN-011 – Contractor doing BU work (Rubber Goods) – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

16LEH-031 – Retirement Benefit – BU member laid off due to displacements around 1995 are questioning pension accrual time period - currently being reviewed by staff.

16NE-039 – Customer Contact Representative vacancy not filled – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

17GO-008 – Management performing BU work (Records Center) – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information – Union also proposed settlement to return work to BU we are waiting on the Company response.

17LEH-001 – Violation of MA 99-6500 (CCC Training Assistant agreement) resulting in missed overtime opportunities – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

17LEH-002 – Denial of vacation (Lehigh CCC) – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

17LEH-004 - Denial of vacation (Lehigh CCC) – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

17LEH-005 - Denial of vacation (Lehigh CCC) – time limits are on hold pending receipt of information.

17LEH-010 – Unsatisfactory Performance Evaluation – employee currently rated marginal –

(Continued on page 6)

REPORT FROM BUSINESS REP. DAN ZERBE



As the summer is winding down, I hope everyone has had a safe and enjoyable time during this really beautiful time of year....!

PPL Electric Utilities: Transportation

With all the recent retirements in our Transportation Department, many of our service center garages have been reduced to minimal staffing or in some locations; no PPL folks are working in our transportation garage. This reduction in our Local 1600 staffing numbers will and has put a strain on all of our transportation folks. As the company moves down the path of contracting much of our transportation work, we can't help but wonder what the future will

look like several years from now.

Local 1600 has reached out to PPL Transportations management with some ideas to address this continuing reliance on contractors. We feel we can competitively keep this work in house and be successful well into the future. We will continue to pursue a different path with the company away from the continued reliance on outside contractors for our Transportation work. We all truly know the quality of work is best when performed in house!

Comcast:

After discussions between Local 1600 and Comcast, we will be holding regularly scheduled meetings with Harrisburg Management and HR representatives. This is an effort to discuss any open items or issues before they become major problems. We feel these regular meetings will greatly help eliminate issues and concerns from being prolonged unnecessarily. Open and pending grievances can also be discussed to help move the process forward. I am also hopeful many issues can be discussed at these meeting so we don't have many of these local issues bogging down future contract negotiation as has been the case many times in the past.

Brookfield Renewable:

As I write this month's newsletter article, the parties have come to a tentative agreement for a new 5 year collective bargaining agreement. Copies of the new tentative agreement will be available for all Holtwood and Lake Wallenpaupack Local 1600 members. Contract explanations meetings will be scheduled for our 1600 folks to attend in the near future...location and times for these meeting will be announced shortly. Please go to ibew1600.org for dates and times. In accordance with our ratification process, individual ballots will be sent and returned through US mail.

Please stay SAFE.....

Zerb

(Continued from Pres. Report Page 1)

I don't know about you but I have mixed feelings this time of year. Grass cutting will end but the leaves will be falling. The hot and humid weather goes away but I'll have to start wearing jeans and sweatshirts. Football season starts but the golf clubs will get less use. Air conditioning can be shut down but I'll have to prepare for the wood burning season. Fishing will be dying down but the hunting seasons will begin. No matter if you have to deal with these changes or changes of a different kind, make sure you are prepared physically to take on the tasks. It is a great time to get that physical checkup you have been putting off.

Enjoy your holiday and when I crack open that Budweiser I'll hold it up and give a toast to all of you, "For all you do, this Bud's for you". Thank you and continue to work in a safe and productive manner.

Fraternally Steve Knoebel

New AFL-CIO Labor Day Report Finds Americans' Freedom to Spend Time with Family Eroding

Majority Think Unions Key to More Benefits on the Job

A new Labor Day report unveiled today by the AFL-CIO shows that working people are working more and taking fewer vacation days. The report is based on findings from a national survey conducted for the AFL-CIO by the polling firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, and was produced in collaboration with the Economic Policy Institute and the Labor Project for Working Families.

While 78% of workers say they have the day off on Labor Day, more than a quarter of those people expect to do some work, and more than half of those working will not receive overtime benefits. More than half of Americans surveyed said they were working more holidays and weekends than ever, and 43% said they brought work home at least one night a week.

Union members are more likely to receive Labor Day off and overtime pay compared with their nonunion counterparts. Sixty-six percent of union members receive overtime pay on Labor Day, compared with 38% of nonunion members. Women, often the primary caregivers in their families, are less likely than men to report access to paid time off—68% vs. 74%.

The majority of American workers credit labor unions for many of the benefits they receive.

“Union workers empowered by the freedom to negotiate with employers do better on every single economic benchmark,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. “Union workers earn substantially more money, union contracts help achieve equal pay and protection from discrimination, union workplaces are safer, and union workers have better access to health care and a pension.”

Additionally, 72% of those surveyed said they thought unions were either very or somewhat responsible for working people having paid time off on Labor Day and other holidays.

Fifty-four percent of workers would join a union tomorrow if given the option. This includes 41% of Republicans surveyed. Respondents also expressed major concern that weakening unions could hurt workers' benefits in the future.

Americans overwhelmingly report wanting to spend their Labor Day off with their families and friends.

(Continued from Graboski Page 2)

The result is crews will start at 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM January 1, 2018.

- **G17-MON-004 – Overtime**

B.U. trainer was utilized instead of offering O.T. to operator or doing a call out. 3rd step scheduled September 5, 2017

BRUNNER ISLAND:

- **G17-BRU-018 – Vacancy**

A General Utility man (GUM) was assigned to a special project leaving a vacant GUM position on “C” shift in operations. The GUM returned to shift therefore the grievance has been withdrawn.

- **G17-BRU-033 – Sender-Receiver**

Two displaced employees accepted jobs at another location in a different progression line while contractors are on site. The sender-receiver language only applies to individuals who have roster rights therefore the grievance is withdrawn. The contractor working on site while these employees have been displaced is addressed in another grievance along with an unjust displacement grievance.

Be a proud UNION Worker and promote Safety, Quality and Productivity.

In Solidarity
Frank E. G.

AFL-CIO Announces \$5 Million in Cash Aid and \$500 Million in Long-Term Investment to Help Communities Devastated by Hurricane Harvey



AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler traveled to Austin, Texas to announce a significant investment by the labor movement to support Hurricane Harvey's victims and to help rebuild areas destroyed by the

historic storm. Specifically, she committed to raising \$5 million in cash aid, and to marshalling labor's investment and member benefits programs.

"This catastrophe has taken valuable lives. It has destroyed homes, leaving working people with nothing, but it will not take away our solidarity, or our strength and determination to stand together and get back on our feet," said Shuler in Austin, addressing affected residents. "We are all in this together. Electricians, nurses, teachers and construction workers are on the front lines risking their lives to save lives. Working people here in Texas are at our best when we look after each other."

While in Austin, Shuler also donated \$100,000 from the national AFL-CIO to the Texas AFL-CIO's Texas Workers Relief Fund.

"The AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust is putting together a program for investing \$500 million over five years in affordable housing in the areas affected by Harvey," she said. "We will be working together with the city of Houston, the Houston Housing Authority and community leaders to ensure these investments address both repair and new construction, in both owner-occupied housing and rental housing."

A team from the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust will be traveling to the area next week to begin the planning work, Shuler said.

In addition, the AFL-CIO Building Investment Trust, a bank collective trust that provides risk-adjusted returns for union pension plans through investment in commercial real estate, and Ullico, a labor movement-affiliated financial service company, are working with the AFL-CIO on job-creating commercial real estate and infrastructure investment.

"Working people and our unions all across America are giving—our cash donations, our investment capital and our solidarity," she concluded.

(Continued from Biever page 3)

grievance in abeyance pending interim review in November/December.

17LEH-011 – Unsatisfactory Performance Evaluation – employee currently rated satisfactory – grievance is withdrawn.

17NE-011 – Invalid Temporary Work Assignment – Company has temporarily assigned a Distribution Service Representative from another work location to the Scranton work location – Union proposed to create vacancy in Scranton – Company owes a response.

In addition to the above, discussions have been continuing regarding the Company proposal to revise the existing Logistics progression line at the SFC. There is no agreement at this time. We are currently waiting for the Company revised proposal to review with staff before meeting with the Company again.

I do want to provide a piece of information that was mentioned at one of the above 3rd steps for unsatisfactory performance. A Dispatch management representative stated that he keeps a 'behavior file' on every employee in his work group. I don't know if this is system wide. However, be advised that each employee has the right to ask for a copy of any and all files that references his/her name, employee number and/or social security number.

One final note, for PPL employees considering retirement, the lump sum distribution is now viewable on the fidelity website. Again, this is just a distribution option. Should a bargaining unit member elect this distribution option they retain access to retiree medical.

Labor and the United Way

A basic principle of the AFL-CIO Community Services Program is that the union member is, first and foremost, a citizen of the community who cooperates with other citizens in making the community a good place in which to live, to work, to raise children and to retire. The union member is concerned about the availability of adequate health and human-care services for the entire community.

From this basic principle, organized labor developed a working relationship with United Way of America that has lasted for more than 50 years. A Cooperative Memorandum of Understanding, reaffirmed on April 4, 1979, characterizes that relationship with the following words:



Both the AFL-CIO and United Way of America believe that voluntarism is the essence of a democratic society; Both believe that the government's fundamental responsibility in meeting the basic health and welfare needs of the American people can best be discharged in cooperation with voluntary agencies; Both believe that United Way of America provides an opportunity for all citizens, regardless of race, color, age, sex, national origin, and economic condition, to come together for the common good; and both believe that voluntary association of free men and women must pioneer in new directions to meet the changing needs of our changing times.

Unions

Unions and their memberships give back to their community every day, all year long.

They work to help the elderly by fixing furnaces and installing smoke detectors; they run food drives several times a year for the most vulnerable among us; they print service directories for kids; and they donate time to help human service programs in hands-on ways throughout the year.

AFL-CIO Community Services Program:

The partnership between United Way and the AFL-CIO began in the 1946. The AFL & CIO were two separate organizations with active community service components complete with full time staffing. These were in active competition with the Community Chest, Red Cross and the War Relief Fund within the workplace. In order to consolidate efforts and become more efficient, the business community along with the Community Chest (and to a smaller degree the Red Cross) established a partnership with both the AFL & the CIO (later to become the AFL-CIO). In this agreement, the Community Chest (later United Way) agreed to absorb the AFL & CIO community services staff and resources and further agreed to continue these programs. This partnership has withstood the test of time.

Today the program has over 270 labor liaison staff in 45 states and Canada. The basic program includes:

- Education such as the Basic Union Counselor course. This is an education program designed to teach rank & file union members about the resources that are available in the community to help families in need.
- Mobilizing union members to respond to community needs. These range in scope from natural disasters such as tornadoes and hurricanes to assisting in food drives such as the Letter Carriers Food Drive.
- Working as a facilitator between the non-profit community and organized labor to promote working relationships between the two groups as well as greater understanding and communications to help establish a better community.
- Establish coalitions between community organizations to address social needs.
- In general, promote and increase the presence of organized labor in community service activities.

Dear IBEW Local 1600 members,

United Way offers innovative solutions to build stronger individuals and communities, engaging people from all walks of life to become part of those solutions.

When you give to United Way, you're helping improve lives and strengthen societies by upholding education initiatives like [Born Learning](#), which helps families' aid kids' success in school. You're fueling efforts like [2-1-1](#), this connects people with resolutions, (everything from domestic violence prevention support to resources to secure affordable housing and utilities assistance).

Local 1600 members have always stepped up in their neighborhoods. We volunteer as coaches, mentors or in many other ways.

United Way with labor support makes the lives of the unfortunate a little easier in times of need.

Thank you,

Steve C. Knoebel
President, IBEW Local 1600



Get the facts First Hand

ATTEND YOUR UNION MEETING

I.B.E.W. LOCAL UNION 1600 SEPT. MONTHLY UNIT MEETING SCHEDULE

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
General Office Unit 1600-1	Sept. 14, 2017 6:00 p.m.	1259 Grange Road Allentown
Harrisburg Unit 1600-2	Sept 14, 2017 6:00 p.m.	New Cumberland VFW 109 3rd St. New Cumberland
Lancaster Unit 1600-3	Sept. 13, 2017 7:00 p.m.	AmVets Post 19 715 Fairview Ave. Lanc.
Lehigh Unit 1600-4	Sept. 14, 2017 6:00 p.m.	1259 Grange Road Allentown
Central Unit 1600-5	Sept. 14, 2017 6:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn 58 State Rd. Rt. 93, Hazleton
Northern Unit 1600-6	Sept. 13, 2017 6:00 p.m.	Sheraton 4 Points Hotel 300 Meadows Ave. Scranton
Susquehanna Unit 1600-7	Sept. 12, 2017 7:00 p.m.	Quality Inn & Suites 15 Valley West Rd, Danville
Ephrata Unit 1600-8	Sept. 12, 2017 7:00 p.m.	Ephrata VFW 141 S. State St. Ephrata
LOCAL UNION EXECUTIVE BOARD	Sept. 5, 2017 9:00 a.m.	1259 Grange Road Allentown

I.B.E.W. LOCAL UNION 1600 OCT. MONTHLY UNIT MEETING SCHEDULE

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
General Office Unit 1600-1	Oct. 12, 2017 6:00 p.m.	1259 Grange Road Allentown
Harrisburg Unit 1600-2	Oct. 12, 2017 6:00 p.m.	New Cumberland VFW 109 3rd St. New Cumberland
Lancaster Unit 1600-3	Oct. 11, 2017 7:00 p.m.	AmVets Post 19 715 Fairview Ave. Lanc.
Lehigh Unit 1600-4	Oct. 12, 2017 6:00 p.m.	1259 Grange Road Allentown
Central Unit 1600-5	Oct. 12, 2017 6:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn 58 State Rd. Rt. 93, Hazleton
Northern Unit 1600-6	Oct. 11, 2017 6:00 p.m.	Sheraton 4 Points Hotel 300 Meadows Ave. Scranton
Susquehanna Unit 1600-7	Oct. 10, 2017 7:00 p.m.	Quality Inn & Suites 15 Valley West Rd, Danville
Ephrata Unit 1600-8	Oct. 10, 2017 7:00 p.m.	Ephrata VFW 141 S. State St. Ephrata
LOCAL UNION EXECUTIVE BOARD	Oct. 12, 2017 9:00 a.m.	1259 Grange Road Allentown



**There are no problems we cannot solve together,
and very few that we can solve alone.**

—Lyndon Baines Johnson

I.B.E.W. LOCAL 1600 PO BOX 470, TREXLERTOWN, PA. 18087-0470