

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

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## **NEWSLETTER - 164TH EDITION**

**JULY/AUGUST 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

### **OFFICE STAFF**

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  
Kurt W. Zimmerman - 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:** August 1 & September 5, 2013  
7:30 p.m. - St. Anthony Union Hall  
2909 Anthony Lane
- Becker:** August 15 & September 19 2013  
7:30 p.m. - 12423 Pine St  
Becker Union Hall
- Mo Valley:** August 27, 2013 - 7:30 p.m.  
St. Anthony - Union Hall  
September 20, 2013 - 7:30 p.m.  
Sawmill Inn  
2301 S. Pokegama Ave, Gr. Rapids



### Local 160 Phone Ext.

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

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/Kurt Z. - (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 have a Retirement Plan?**

### **Here are some Questions and Concerns you may have...**

*What are my Retirement Pension Options?*

*What is the Process for me to Retire through the Local 160?*

*How could changes in my Pension affect my Retirement Plan?*

*What should I do for Health Care and Social Security during Retirement?*

We at Union Advisors are Retirement Planning experts that work together with you to answer these questions and many more like them. **Please contact Mark Reichow or Mike Dolezal today to set up your complimentary retirement consultation at (651) 447-2235.**

Union Advisors are proud partners with the IBEW Local 160. We look forward to helping you create a plan and working with you in the future.

## **Retirement Club**

The Retirement Club would like to welcome three new members - Nancy King, Fred Tuckner and Jim Brereton.

The retirees do not meet during the months of July and August, and in September is the Pig Roast.

The next meeting will be held on October 23, 2013.

## **Now Accepting Credit Cards**

Local Union 160 is pleased to announce that we are now accepting credit cards as a form of payment.

The credit cards that we will accept is Visa, Mastercard, and Discover Card.

When you use your card with Local 160 there is going to be a 2.18% fee added on to the amount that you are charging.

With this process, you may also make payments over the phone.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jenny or Rose at (612) 781-3126.

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

Summer finally arrived but so did the severe thunderstorms with winds reportedly up to 69 mph in some areas. These high winds took down numerous trees and power lines that it left approximately 600,000 people without power. This has left so many Local 160 members working long hard hours to get the power restored. We also have had crews from Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri and Wyoming helping out that have checked in and or cleared through the Hall. As of the time I am writing this, there has not been any accidents with injuries reported, which is excellent. I thank all of you for your hard work in restoring power to the customers.

Tom Arnold, Business Representative is retiring July 31, 2013. I have worked with Tom while we both worked in the power plants and now in the union office. Tom has been dedicated to the membership and I would like to take this time to congratulate him in his retirement and wish him a long and happy retirement.

Bill Ergen, Licensed Nuclear Operator at Xcel Energy, had agreed to come into the office as Tom's replacement. However, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has tightened the license requirements and as soon as Bill goes on the leave of absence his license will be null and void. And if Bill returned to the plant one day he would be required to go through the Initial License Training (ILT), which is a two year program, in order to get re-licensed. This is a recent change by the NRC and Bill simply doesn't want to have this concern in the back of his head while working for Local 160. Bill is very disappointed, but has committed to continue to support the local union business office as the Chief Steward at the Monticello Nuclear Plant.

Kurt Zimmerman has since agreed to become the Business Representative effective July 1, 2013. He comes from Xcel Energy Sherco Generating Plant in the Coal Yard. Kurt has been very active with the union. He has been a union steward for many years, was an Executive Board member from 2002 until 2008 when he was elected Vice President of Local Union 160, which is the office he still holds today. In the next month, Tom Arnold will be bringing Kurt around to all the areas he will be handling and introduce him to as many of you as possible.

The five local unions on Xcel Energy property have dates scheduled in August, September and October to renegotiate all the appropriate labor agreements. We have not exchanged amendments yet, but hope to reach a settlement offer in a timely manner.

There are a few other agreements open at this time, which we are trying to get favorable settlement offers ratified by the membership.

And finally, as a reminder, the Pig Roast will be on Thursday, September 26, 2013, so please mark your calendar to come and enjoy the food, door prizes and conversations with active and retired members.

Fraternally,

Thomas G. Koehler

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## **4B MS Power Project Falls Behind Schedule Using No-Union Labor, Turns to Union Labor to Meet Its Deadline.**

In Mississippi, a dying project is being given new life as developers turn to union halls for help.

Mississippi Power's new 582-Megawatt project in Kemper County faced serious logistical struggles when non-union contractors fell behind on the \$4 billion utility build. In order to meet the original deadline of December 2013, Mississippi Power affiliate Southern Co. Services turned to union pipefitters, welders, ironworkers, electricians and millwrights. Burns & Roe, monitors of the project for Mississippi Public Utilities, still doubts the project can be completed on time because of how deep a hole the non-union contractors dug:

Burns & Rose "is very concerned that the project cannot find the appropriate number of craft," the consultant said in its most recent report. It said Mississippi Power and SCS initially underestimated by half the 10.6 million man-hours of skilled labor needed to build the project and that the pace of monthly progress through March had been only three-fifths what is needed to finish the job on time.

Pipefitting—the "No. 1 concern," the consultant said—is falling "further and further behind the project schedule." SCS has added three new piping fabricators, asked the local union pipefitters to provide up to 300 welders and boosted craft pay, Burns & Roe said.

SCS also has received a union commitment of 300 electricians, if needed, the consultant said.

The biggest hurdle facing the new workers is a lack of room to work.

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The multiple schedule items that continue to be delayed...will cause a tremendous 'stacking of trades' effect. Even though the site is "large and spread out, the area work spaces are limited, making it difficult to perform work tasks effectively."

Currently, 600 union workers are on the job site with unions pledging to provide more men and women when needed. Anti-union advocates are wielding public relations mojo to deflect blame for the failure of the project:

"I don't think Southern turned to union labor to get the project back on track," says C.J. "Buddy" Edens, president and CEO of the Mississippi chapter of the Associated Builders & Contractors (ABC). Edens says the project has suffered from poor planning, not poor performance by non-union contractors or workers.

Mr. Edens and his ABC-affiliated workers can call it what they want. They just won't be able to use the house phone on the Kemper County power project job site anymore.

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### **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM ON-LINE BANKING FRAUD**

With recent rises in on-line bank fraud, I thought it would be beneficial to write about my recent experience and the valuable lessons I learned. Never, did I ever think this could happen to me but honestly it happens every single day and the unfortunate thing is that the victims are left with spending hours proving their innocence. In most of these cases, cyber criminals don't want to steal your identity, they simply want your money and then they move on to the next victim. These thieves somehow were able to tap into our online banking account and they managed to withdraw thousands of dollars from our savings account, yes I did say savings account. For the first couple of days they made VERY small deposits into our savings, usually less than 10¢. As soon as the thieves knew those deposits were accepted, it was like playing dominoes in our account. We spent hours on the phone freezing our bank accounts and hours in the branch bank office closing our accounts and opening new ones. Most customers do not know that they can have a limit or freeze to online withdrawals from a savings account; we certainly didn't know any of this until after the fact. We were reassured however; that there would be an investigation and that if we were not involved in the theft, our money would be returned to us. In these cases, you are guilty until proven innocent. We did eventually get our money back but no letter of explanation of why this happened to us. We did file a police report but we were told that in most of these cases the thief is never caught and it's very difficult to investigate. While nothing is foolproof, and with new viruses and scams being developed every day, I thought a few reminder tips would help minimize the risk of you being a victim of fraud:

- ◆ Change your passwords often even if your financial institution doesn't require it and do not store your ID and Password information where others could gain access to it.
- ◆ Install and update Antivirus Software and Firewalls.
- ◆ Beware of accessing account information when using an unsecured wireless network, doing so simply leaves the door wide open for criminals.
- ◆ Never click on a link from a business requesting that you provide personal information.
- ◆ If your financial institution uses watermarks or personal images, do not log in unless you see the correct image on the screen.
- ◆ Close your online sessions completely to safeguard your personal and financial information.
- ◆ If you notice any small transactions, deposits or withdrawals in your accounts from unknown sources, ACT IMMEDIATELY and call your bank.
- ◆ If you have a savings account, check with your bank to see what their online limitations are.
- ◆ Remember to contact your local Police Department if you are a victim of bank fraud.

One more thing: if you have been a victim of any kind of fraud be sure to notify the top 3 credit reporting agencies, TransUnion, Experian and Equifax. Usually if you notify one of the agencies they will notify the other 2. You are entitled to a free 90-day Security Alert on your account. The alert will protect you if the thieves have gotten any other personal information.

Keep in mind that most financial institutions provide adequate, secure online protection for their customers but it's important that you protect yourself as well.

In Solidarity,

Barb Oakes  
Recording Secretary

**2013 David C. Ring College/University Scholarship**

**Winners**

**Student**

Mitchell Boogren  
Rachelle Vadnais  
Daniel Muench  
Matthew Boogren

**Parent/Member**

Robert Boogren  
Timothy Vadnais  
Mark Muench  
Robert Boogren

**Alternates**

Brianna Curtis  
Alexis Mollner

Steve Curtis  
Kent Mollner

**2013 David C. Ring Vocational, Technical or Trade School**

**Winners**

Paige Kloskowski  
Jordan Bos  
Gunnar McConnell

Matthew Kloskowski  
Donald Bos  
Jeff McConnell

**Alternates**

Austin Sable  
Mitchell Bitzen

Charles Sable  
Douglas Bitzen

**2013 Amy O'Sullivan Ongoing College/University**

**Winners**

William Muench  
Eric Dahl  
Austen Bryan

Mark Muench  
James Dahl  
Doug Bryan

**Alternates**

Nicoli Bettin  
Taylor Curtis

Sue Bettin  
Steve Curtis

**2013 Amy O'Sullivan Ongoing Vocational, Technical or Trade School**

**Winners**

Taylor Bryan  
Kara Peterson  
Tyler Bauer

Doug Bryan  
Jeffery Peterson  
Mark Bauer

**Alternates**

Lane Kloskowski  
Bryan Haider

Matthew Kloskowski  
Mark Haider

**Congratulations to all the winners, alternates and their parents.**

## **The National Sisterhood United for Journeymen Linemen: Supporting Utility Linemen and Their Families**

Rae Johnson's entrance into the life of the Brotherhood of Journeymen Linemen can only be described as one of sweet serendipity - good fortune discovered when you're not searching for it. And from that happy coincidence, her life has fallen together in ways that have allowed her to take her luck and pay it forward to help other families in need of their own serendipitous events.

The journey started when Johnson was just 18 years old and was in need of a job to help support both her and her mother, who had cancer. She answered an ad in the local paper and got a traffic flagger position with her IBEW Local 126 in Pennsylvania in 1997.

"It was a fluke" said Johnson

She decided to apply for an open tree trimming position next and then moved up to an outside construction opening in 2000. Unfortunately, her mom did pass away and her dad was living out of the country, so Johnson had to learn to survive on her own. Little did she know her first union job would come attached to an entirely new family. Both a brotherhood and sisterhood in a literal sense that would be able to take care of more than just her paycheck, it would help protect and provide for her the rest of her life.

"I was young and naïve but the job was good and had a good salary." she said.

In 2002, she continued to push herself and got her traffic tech license which is when she met her husband, Tom, while both were working for a contractor in Philadelphia. Johnson decided to fix her sights on her next goal with a 4 year training program to become an Apprentice Lineman. It takes a special type of woman to dedicate herself to the line trade due to the rough physical requirements and long hours away from home but Johnson found it to be a welcoming challenge.

In order to practice her climbing skills her and her future husband would go climbing for fun together, which is when she realized his 6'4" stature allowed him to climb a pole in about 10 steps. He was a natural climber and had no fear of heights, which were excellent skills to become a lineman. Johnson convinced him to join her trade and start the apprentice lineman program as well.

As fate would have it in 2004 Johnson fell about 40 feet while coming down off a pole and damaged her right wrist, elbow and shoulder. After 2 years of physical therapy her doctor told her she wasn't able to work anymore in the career she had found so fulfilling. In the meantime, her husband had started his path to becoming a lineman, which allowed his wife to take care of her health when it was time to hang up her hooks and focus on raising their two daughters, Amber and Alexis.

Her time at home allowed her to join some lineman support communities on Facebook so she could communicate with fellow line wives across the country. While in an IBEW chat room discussion, she read about a lineman from the Northeast who died from falling 90 feet off a pole. The discussion group talked about fundraising for his family but couldn't find any organization to easily donate their efforts to. This event is what sparked Johnson on her path to create the National Sisterhood United for Journeymen Linemen, NSUJL, a 501c3 non-profit organization specifically for fallen/injured Linemen.

"Somebody had to do it!" she said.

Johnson took the lead to organize the group but said it took the dedication of 12-15 wives to keep it progressing forward in the beginning. The organization exceeded its own expectations for its startup year, which has motivated them to keep pushing forward for growth.

Being a lineman is a great career and the trade is very rewarding but it comes at a price. The more our county's electrical needs grow, so do the accidents in the operations behind maintaining the lines.

"You are safe if you follow the rules and regulations, use safety equipment and do what you are taught, but human error is normal and error in this line of work can be fatal," she said. "Linemen are the unsung heroes of our country and are deserving of all the same recognition as many other community based professionals."

Johnson was very disappointed when she searched for and couldn't find an organization to donate to. Families in need are left without income, without hope and often feel alone, confused and overwhelmed. "Pass the Hat" type of donations existed around the country for local accidents but nothing nationwide had been established. Many line wives, like Johnson, are fortunate to have their husbands career support the family so they can stay home and Johnson felt that it allowed her the opportunity to give back to her extended family.

"Everyone wanted to help but didn't know how," said Johnson.

She decided to lead the way to make donations as easy as possible. Monetary donations are important since the official funds from insurance take about six months but NSUJL gives an even more "handson" assistance to help families.

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“We help with household chores, home cooked meals, midnight phone calls and whatever else they might need,” Johnson said.

They also have scholarships available for the children of fallen linemen. The goal is to help the family regain stability and control for the future. The organization is a little over a year old and successfully applied for and received the 501c3 status and also just recently got the formal endorsement of the IBEW and many other local unions and corporate sponsors.

“It all happned so fast. We went from just a bunch of wives on a Facebook chat room to running a nationwide organization,” said Johnson.

For most, hitting those goals would be enough but not for Johnson who is the daughter of a US Marine. Her father has been an electrical engineer since 1978 so there is a family history in the electrical industry.

“You never settle, you meet goals and then you make new goals, you never stop!” she said.

Johnson said she felt like she was on the right path when the group met Donna, a line wife whose husband was killed in the line of duty. The NSUJL director for the Southeast and the Tennessee Rep showed up at their house and assisted where needed. Johnson was able to confirm that having a lineman’s wife talk to another wife in need was an instant bond and feeling of “family”. They all share an unspoken knowledge of the trade and have an immediate friendship and sisterhood relationship.

“At this point I knew we were going in the right direction and just needed to keep going.” said Johnson.

So far they have been able to directly help 17 families of linemen who were injured or have passed. NSUJL currently has over 140 members and is always accepting personal memberships, as well as, corporate sponsorships. The organization needs to continue to grow in order to keep helping more families. It is a group made up of all volunteers and has a presence in each of its six regions of the country. A basic framework has been established as to how the group reaches out to those in need. With growth comes the need for more volunteers from every state so they can answer any request when called.

“We need people willing to donate time and to be able to contribute to the Brotherhood when called. I want to see us help as many families as possible and continue to fundraise,” she said.

This year the group will attend 12 rodeos around the country to inform the industry about their mission and recruit new members. They are also hosting their own rodeo at the end of May in Pennsylvania to honor those who have fallen in the line of duty and to raise funds for their families. NSUJL has also started selling cookbooks with line wives favorite recipes, along with clothing and jewelry specifically for the trade.

This summer, Johnson is getting ready to give birth to her next big project, a baby boy due in July!

“We are growing our own little future lineman,” she said proudly.

Johnson’s husband currently works on a 500 Transmission line in Northeast Pennsylvania with T&D Power through IBEW Local 1319 and they both couldn’t be happier about their career choices and how life’s unexpected twists have set them up for success. And now that NSUJL is up and running smoothly, Johnson can look forward to focusing on having the baby who will travel with her and her husband to the International Lineman’s Rodeo in Kansas in the fall. Dad will compete while mom and son cheer him on and work the booth for NSUJL. For more information on NSUJL and to see how you can help please visit their website at [www.NSUJL.org](http://www.NSUJL.org).

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# PIG ROAST 2013

**When: September 26, 2013**

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

**Time: 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

