

THE INFO CHANNEL

RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCAST ENGINEERS NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, LOCAL 1220

MAY 2008

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Sisters and Brothers:

May 3rd was a successful day here at the Union office. We held our Open House (first in a long time) from 3-7 pm on a Saturday and welcomed several new members. From 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm we had an Orientation meeting for new applicants. For those of you who joined Local 1220 years ago, we now hold a mandatory information meeting covering topics that range from the purpose of organized labor to the mechanics of paying your dues. All new applicants who live within 50 miles are required to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to have questions answered and problems related to your application solved.

At 4:00 pm we convened the regular monthly Union meeting. Again, several members who don't usually attend were present. This is your Union and your opportunity to hear how the Local operates and what's happening in your Local's world. Reports from Shop Stewards help all of us to know what's happened outside of our specific work site.

When the Union meeting adjourned, we held a WTTW Shop meeting (the second one) to discuss the negotiated proposal presented to the members there. That meeting continued until just before 8 pm and we can say one thing for sure—The Union office was well used on that day! Thanks to all who came out to conduct the business of our Local Union.

We have so many open contracts, open grievances, pending cases and items of business that we can't list them all here. Why not come to a Union meeting and hear about the rest of your Union world? We would love to have you attend.

Our Local is financially stable, and the work opportunities are good for our freelance members this summer, with the WBBM construction using extra people as well as the summer sports events. Our staff is working hard to keep up with the volumes of paperwork that comes through its hands. Please remember that we have an excellent way to communicate with each of you though email. If the office does not have your personal email address, (if you got this newsletter in the mail, we don't have your email address), we would like to have it. Please email us at info@ibew1220.org, and give us your preferred email contact information.

In Solidarity,

Madeleine Monaco,
Business Manager

NEXT MEETING DATE Wednesday, June 4, 7:00 PM

At the Union office

8605 W Bryn Mawr Ave #309, Chicago

You are the Union!

Join in conducting the business of your Local. Your input is valuable.



INFO CHANNEL MAY 2008

This Newsletter is published monthly by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 1220, Radio and Television Broadcast Engineers, of Chicago, Illinois.

Anything you might expect to read in a business letter or see in a telegram that pertains to this Local and your part in it will be communicated to you through this channel of information. Consider this your dues invoice, your by-laws update, your meeting notice, and your call to participate.

Any article submitted for publication should be sent by mail, Fax or email to:

Jim Sterne, Editor Info Channel
Radio + TV Broadcast Engineers
8605 W Bryn Mawr Suite 309
Chicago, IL 60631
FAX 773-693-0009
EMAIL jim@ibew1220.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Any member wishing to bring an issue of concern to the attention of the Executive Board of this Local Union may submit a request in writing to the Board at any time, **stating the reason for the request.**



**REMEMBER TO NOTIFY
YOUR UNION OF ANY
CHANGE OF ADDRESS,
PHONE OR EMAIL**

NAME _____
STREET _____
CITY, ST, ZIP _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

COPIES OF ANY IBEW 1220 AGREEMENT MAY BE OBTAINED UPON REQUEST AT THE UNION OFFICE

Our contractors are listed on the web site—www.ibew1220.org

YOU-NION NEWS

SHIRTS AVAILABLE:

IBEW 1220 SHIRTS—Henley style, in either white or navy, are available at the Union office for \$20.00.

NEW SIZES ARE COMING IN

Contact the office to order—we take credit cards—call 773-714-1220 or email info@ibew1220.org.



EMMY AWARDS

It's time for the annual Emmy Award submissions. The only way to enter is at www.chicagoemmyonline.org. There will be no call for entries booklet mailed this year. All the information, entry sheets, categories, addresses, you name it, is available online only. The eligibility period is from 6/01/07 to 5/31/08. All entries have to be on DVD

FIRST READINGS:

WILLIE WHITE—WCIU
NED ENGLEHART—CBS
ROD STANBECK—AVOne

NEW MEMBERS:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jeffrey Asell – CBS(MN) | Jay Deignan – Event Eng |
| Danielle Denning – WGN TV | Kevin Donohoo Program |
| Jeffrey Evans – WBBM TV | Gregory Joyner – WCIU |
| Andrew King – WTVO | Michael Kranicke Visions |
| Michael Maher – CBS (IN) | Kenneth Schrey –WBBM |
| Michael E Smith – Fox Sports | Craig Stein – Fox Sports |
| Don Winter – CBS/Fox Sports | Thomas Wolf – WGN TV |

MEETING INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Members can view meeting agenda, bills and correspondence 30 minutes prior to the meeting by appointment.

HONORARY WITHDRAWAL

The following members have met the requirements to receive this status upon proper payment of dues:

DAVID FOX—moved to Louisiana—University work

OUR SYMPATHY TO:

JERRY SKORA (Freelance) and his family on the loss of his mother at the end of March.

USING YOUR EMPLOYER'S EMAIL SYSTEM

As certain as death and taxes is the principle that when workers figure out a good way to organize and communicate with each other, the bosses will make it illegal. This truism was illustrated in the United States in December 2007, when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) finally issued its decision on a hotly contested case involving a newspaper in Eugene, Oregon.

The case focused on the rights of workers to use company “property”—in this case, the newspaper’s e-mail system—to conduct union activities.

Locked in tough contract negotiations with the publisher of *The Register-Guard*, Suzi Prozanski, president of The Newspaper Guild/CWA local, sent out three e-mail messages regarding union activities in the summer of 2000. One of them was sent from her desk while she was on break, the other two were sent from the union office—but all were sent to union members at their company e-mail addresses.

The company wrote up Prozanski for violating a “Computer Systems Policy,” issued in October 1996, stating that “communications systems are not to be used to solicit or proselytize for . . . outside organizations.”

Since the NLRB had historically allowed employees to use company premises during nonwork time — to pass out union leaflets, for example — and made it clear that a company could not set up a special set of rules just for union activity, it seemed that a decision should support Prozanski and her local.

Wrong. Using convoluted logic, and dumping a long-standing NLRB precedent, the board ruled 3 to 2 that the company could, in fact, prohibit “union activi-

ty” on the company e-mail system, even if other personal uses were permitted. The two NLRB members who disagreed with the decision published a vigorous dissent, but the decision stands. What’s a good steward to do now?

☐ In the first place, a steward should keep a positive attitude and look at this NLRB decision as just another obstacle to be overcome. After all, unions and employers have always fought back and forth over what is “legal” and what is not. If you

visualize a long road, with the boss rolling logs onto it to trip up the union, and visualize a steward hopping over the logs, you’ll get the picture.

☐ It would be helpful for the union to negotiate with any employer a consistent policy regarding the use of the company e-mail system. After all, we negotiate—sometimes at excruciating length—over bulletin boards. They, like e-mail, are on company property and a way of communicating with union mem-

bers. The refusal of the NLRB to specifically protect some union activities does not prevent a union from negotiating for them.

☐ Without such an agreement, a steward can act like an organizer — after all, in a new organizing campaign, the workers do not have access to the company e-mail system, so the organizer works around this obstacle.

☐ A steward should rearrange the e-mail distribution lists to include members’ home addresses, explaining that it is The Big Bad Boss who is shutting off the use of the company system, which is usually more convenient. Statistics show an enormous increase in computer usage and e-mail access across North America, so a steward can be sure most members (or at

least their kids) have a home e-mail address.

☐ Sometimes, the old ways still work even in the electronic age. If there is information to be distributed, call a break time meeting or set up a lunch-and-learn — preferably on company property, which is still “legal,” even under this NLRB decision. If you schedule enough of these, and clog up the company routines, the boss may become more lenient about letting a steward use the e-mail system.

☐ A steward may have to go back to old fashioned leaflets, which can also be distributed on employer property in nonwork areas, like employee mail boxes or lunch rooms, and on nonwork time. It may be a hassle to prepare and print the leaflets but

nothing in the steward’s job description is classified “easy.” Such a distribution has the advantage of building up the union’s visibility, as e-mail does not, and getting help from your members really increases their participation in the union.

☐ The steward can set up (or again have their kids show them how) a department website or blog to post the information and comments that previously sped along the e-mail system. In most cases, a company will not block access of workers to outside websites — after all, the boss needs to make travel plans, doesn’t she? — so workers can peek into the union site from their work stations.

The most important thing is attitude: a steward determined to communicate with members will find a way and may even be a better steward for the effort.

— Bill Barry. The writer is director of labor studies at the Community College of Baltimore County.

One of many options: back to old-fashioned leaflets.

Keep a positive attitude: it’s just another obstacle to overcome.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO REACH US BY EMAIL???

INFO@IBEW1220.ORG

THE NEXT REGULAR UNION MEETING WILL BE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4 AT 4:00 PM
AT THE UNION OFFICE
8605 W BRYN MAWR AVE #309 CHICAGO

PHONE (773) 714-1220

FAX (773) 693-0009

www.ibew1220.org

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