

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

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## **NEWSLETTER - 206TH EDITION**

**MAY/JUNE 2021**

### **OFFICERS**

Robert J. Boogren- Business Mgr/Financial Secretary  
Kevin J. Kaeter - President  
James A. Anderson- Vice President  
Mark A. Ring - Recording Secretary  
Travis J. Sullivan - Treasurer

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Kenneth R. Conrad  
Clayton E. Kaeter  
Scott E. Knight  
Randal L. Nass  
Jeffery R. Polson

### **OFFICE STAFF**

Daniel J. Kieffer - Assistant Business Manager  
Kurt W. Zimmerman - Business Representative  
Thomas D. Cassidy - Business Representative  
Eric W. Spielmann - Business Representative  
Michael J. Ringstad - Business Representative  
Nicholas J. Steckelberg - Business Representative  
Darrin L. Helget - Business Representative  
Andrew D. Kieffer - Membership Development  
Rose M. Eiden - Bookkeeper  
Stacy L. Helget - Office Manager  
Anna J. Wilson - Referral/Receptionist/Secretary

# General Membership Meetings

**DUE TO COVID-19 THE RETIREES CLUB MEETINGS WILL REMAIN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

## Our Next Union Meetings Will Be Held:

**Minneapolis:** June 3 & July 1, 2021  
6:30 p.m. - St. Anthony Union Hall  
2909 Anthony Lane

**Becker:** CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE - 12423 Pine St  
Becker Union Hall

**Mo Valley:** June 29, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.  
St. Anthony - Union Hall  
July 23, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.  
Grand Rapids Union Hall  
300 SE 17th St, Grand Rapids

**Please Note:** Due to Covid - Please make sure you check our website for meeting cancellations each month.

Welcome Brothers and Sisters, new and old!

In 1891 we, the IBEW, were founded from humble beginnings through the union of ten linemen who were looking for a better way.

Knowing full well that many of them would not live to see old age so long as they stayed in the trade; they strove to build a union for the betterment of their brothers/sisters and their families.

While our founder's dreams were modest the fruit of their efforts is the safety, fairness and prosperity we all share in the workplace. We are united in the unswerving values that workers should have a seat at the table and a voice in their futures.

**Together we are stronger!**

## Reps Cell Phone #'s



Bob Boogren - (612) 308-5520  
Dan Kieffer - (612) 309-8640  
Kurt Zimmerman - (612) 991-0022  
Tom Cassidy - (763) 213-3536  
Eric Spielmann - (612) 799-3997  
Mike Ringstad - (763) 355-7283  
Nick Steckelberg - (612) 655-5210  
Darrin Helget - (763) 276-8908  
Andy Kieffer - (612) 258-5833

**Minneapolis Tel #** (612) 781-3126

**Minneapolis Fax #** (612) 781-4225

**Grand Rapids Phone Number**

Tel. # (218) 326-0533

Fax # (218) 326-0534

**Becker Office Numbers**

Eric S.- (763) 262-1198

Kurt Z. - (763) 262-1189

Fax # (763) 262-1168

**Website - [www.ibew160.org](http://www.ibew160.org)**

**Email address - [160@ibew160.org](mailto:160@ibew160.org)**

**Facebook -**

Hi Brothers and Sisters,

Throughout the years I have learned how important it is for people to have a beneficiary listed for their pensions and their life/death benefit insurances.

It is also just as important to remember to update their beneficiary in the cases of death or divorce.

Having a beneficiary listed makes that very difficult time somewhat easier on your families when you pass away.

If you have Lineco, NEAP and/or I.B.E.W. and need to update or list a beneficiary please contact me at (612) 781-3126 or [rme@ibew160.org](mailto:rme@ibew160.org) for the forms.

Thanks,

Rose M Eiden

Bookkeeper

IBEW Local Union 160

From the Editor, Andrew D Kieffer

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.

## Hall Closures

**May 31 – Memorial Day**

**July 5 – Independence Day**

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



Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

The pandemic has claimed yet another IBEW gathering. The International Executive Committee has made the decision to move the International Convention from this year to May 9 – 13, 2022. It will still be held in Chicago.

The Outside Power/Commercial Agreement was recently ratified, the negotiating committee was able to secure a 4-year deal. As of this writing the Tree Trimming negotiation are still in progress.

Some of our employers have been improving their cyber security recently. The good news is it will result in better protection for our members information as well as company assets. The downside, some employers are sending out phishing emails. If you don't know what phishing is it's possible you will be captured by the email police (phishing is fraudulent emails that try to get you to reveal personal information).

The utility locals have been working with a lobbyist to promote our "Just Transition Bill" to help our members who will be affected by the retirement of coal fired power plants. The bill in part calls for retraining and retention of our Union members. The surprising thing is that there are other unions (not IBEW) that are actually opposed to parts of this bill, suggesting that their own members should be given equal access to future gas plant jobs with Xcel.

Finally, I would like to ask all of you to contact your elected politicians and ask them to support the "PRO Act". "The PRO Act" will outlaw "Right-to-Work" laws and update many legal protections for workers, mostly while they try to organize. Thankfully we now have a president who will sign it if it eventually hits his desk.

In Solidarity,  
Robert J. Boogren

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## *A Message From Your President*

Brothers and Sisters of Local 160,

I come to you in this newsletter with some topics which are considered taboo in society today....addiction, depression, and suicide.

As a recovering addict/alcoholic myself, I have had to deal with these three topics at a personal level during times in my life. I chose this topic after finding out at last month's general meeting that we recently lost another union member to suicide, the second member in the past 18 months. I would like to say these incidents could have been prevented; but in the same breath, some would ask me, "Why couldn't you prevent your alcohol relapse" or "Why didn't you call me before you drank?". Those are questions that I had NO answers to soon after my relapse. If you would like those honest answers, I'm happy to talk about them in a personal setting because my words here today are not about me. Our discussion here is going to be about our membership, our family away from our blood family.

We spend a lot of time with our work families. Union-ship is called a brotherhood/sisterhood because of the fact that we spend a lot of work time together. Sometimes our work family knows us better than our home families. For that reason, it is okay to keep an eye out for each other. Keeping each other in check and giving support when needed should be encouraged. By no means is anyone perfect and there are very trying times that everyone often goes through. Whether it is addiction, depression, or just personal things that you cannot find a solution too.

So, here is my point. Asking a trusted family member or friend for advice surely can help, but there are also situations where professional help is needed. That is where shame and guilt can overrun a person and that choice to

# *A Message From Your President Continued,*

find help diminishes. I got a chance to speak about this today because I once said, "Screw shame and guilt, I need to ask for help, I can't do this alone and I'm willing to better myself for it".

Sometimes it seems we are the only ones who have ever gone through what we are experiencing in our lives. Let me tell you this, none of you are alone. There is someone out there who has gone through what you are experiencing, someone with the expertise to navigate you through the rough waters. In the end you will see that rough ride was well worth it and your loved ones will agree. In this journey, if you find yourself in a group setting, you make real friends that relate to you and your situation. Those friends, at least in my life experience, stick with you for a lifetime.

Including some of my story, though very brief, in this letter definitely makes me vulnerable for criticism and judgement; I understand this. I also understand due to the fact that I've stood alone at the crossroads, in the dark, while the rain was falling at my feet. If I didn't show the courage or vulnerability, those that are really struggling in today's world might not find the strength to reach out and find the help they need. If this helps even one person, this letter was a success. My heart goes out to the families of members that have lost loved ones. It's time to remove the taboo from addiction, depression and suicide. For that reason, we will post the phone numbers for some self-help programs in the newsletter from here on out.

In Solidarity,	Greater MN Intergroup Alcoholics Anonymous	952-922-0880
Kevin Kaeter	Employee Assistance Program (Xcel Energy)	866-248-4096
	Member Assistance Program (Mo Valley Unit)	800-332-2191
	National Suicide Hotline	800-273-8255

## *A Message From An Executive Board Member*

I have been a member since 1980 and my father was a member before me. I grew up seeing how important it is to be involved in my local union. When things return to normal we will have a lot of options for everyone to attend membership meetings. Make sure to bring your coworkers, we need to get more members involved. We have a lot new members and we all need to be mentors to these brothers/sisters so they have someone they can ask questions to. We have a union for our safety, wage, benefits and retirement. We should take pride in our union but our local is only as strong as our members want to be. Sometimes people do not agree with everything that happens but we all learn from what happens to be a stronger union. Things have changed a lot in my years in the union, that is why now is the time to step it up and learn about the rights that your union protects.

Over the last few months we have had at least two roadside accidents on the job. Thankfully the two brothers who were involved were not permanently injured but sadly they're not back to work yet. It's been a few years since Kellen Schmidt and I worked on the "Move Over Law" and sadly drivers are still not following the law. Kellen and I are still working hard to get this right for all of us because working along the roadside is still too dangerous. If any of you have any ideas to make this better please contact us.

I also want to thank everyone for working safe every day, making sure we all go home in the same condition we arrive to work in. I was recently appointed as the person who submits articles to the Electrical Worker. If you have any pictures showing the great work that our local is doing out there, please send them my way.

Have a safe day and appreciate your time off with your friends/families,

Scott E Knight, 612-554-2531, Skn1994@aol.com

# The Reps' Reports

Dan Kieffer

Here it is, the first week of May. Construction is in full swing again. Don't get caught up in the hustle of work, we are our Brother's keepers. Stay observant, watch each other's backs. With summer comes storms, which exposes you guys to all the hazards of storm damage, plus lighting and then add the factor of working in darkness. Endless "traps" are waiting. If that isn't enough don't forget the ever-present danger of vehicular traffic. Your plate is more than full when comes to getting the job done and getting home safely. If its not grounded it's not dead!

By the time this has arrived at your homes the Minnesota Fishing Opener will be history so please keep your life jackets close by or better yet on your body. Local 160 has lost members to drowning, one is too many!

Stay Safe At Work, Stay Safe At Home, Stay Safe At Play

Enjoy The Summer,  
Dan Kieffer

Nick Steckelberg

It's spring! Busy season is officially here and so is the nice weather after such a long winter. Work is and has been busy with lots of job call outs so make sure you answer your phone. I've been getting to book 4 quite often. Also if you don't have your CDL with Airbrakes try to get it, Class A leasing is one of the companies that offers the class if you are interested. Most if not all of the job calls have been requiring a CDL.

Outside power agreement was ratified with a 4 year agreement and the Underground Operator (URD) agreement is now in effect. Some of our contractors have placed bids on work in Minnesota so we are hoping that will pick up anyone interested in URD work. Once they get the work, we will start calling people to see if they are interested. The new contracts along with the URD agreement should be printed soon as well.

LCTT agreement was voted down and negotiations have resumed. We will be headed to mediation and will be fighting for a better outcome. The LCTT contractors are running short handed and are still hiring over scale. If anyone knows someone who may be

Interested in the work they should contact me for more info. We need to all be on the lookout for other contractors besides the ones we normally see in our area bidding work out on the ROW, anyone can stop and ticket check to make sure our work is being done by our union brothers and sisters. It's been a real difficult time for our trimmers and contractors with the huge layoff last year and everyone is trying to get back on their feet from all of that. We need solidarity during this negotiation process and others moving in to bid.

In solidarity,  
Nicholas Steckelberg

Andy Kieffer

In the last few months, we have been saddened by the loss of three more brothers well before their time. I shall not write at length since others have done so but we must remember that "You are your brother's keeper". If a brother/sister's actions are worrisome, make sure they're ok. We all go through difficult periods of our lives but sometimes it could take a brotherly act of kindness to help a person through.

Recently a few issues have arisen which I feel everyone would benefit with a reminder. Keep track of your hours (Especially if you're working a lot of overtime). Sometimes genuine payroll mistakes happen and sometimes an employer may deny hours. Many times, these issues are only addressed if the brother/sister catches it. Also, as a union member we all have "Weingarten Rights"; the right to have representation during a disciplinary meeting. If you feel a meeting is or is turning into a disciplinary meeting request representation!

## ***"Request for Union Representation"***

***If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or cause an effect on my person working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation present, I choose not to participate in this discussion"***

This can be found on the back of every Representative's business card.



# The Reps' Reports Continued,

With the weather finally getting nice I hope you all find the time and persistence to get caught up on those spring projects so you can enjoy summer when it comes.

In Solidarity,  
Andy Kieffer

## Gone But Not Forgotten



**Jim Dahl**

10/21/61-  
4/17/21



**Nick Dennison**

6/17/82-  
3/31/21



**Nick Hunt**

9/28/82-  
4/15/21

## Prevailing wage/Davis-Bacon Act

### What is it? Why it's important!

In the last fifteen years Prevailing Wage has become a political issue though many Americans may not even know what it is. So why was this law passed? Is this old law still doing good?

In the 1920's a new issue arose in the construction industry, out-of-state contractors doing local work. Because of new transportation technologies many contractors found themselves competing against contractors based in regions with much lower wages than where the work was being performed. With lower labor costs these out-of-state shops could more easily out bid local contractors who hired local workers. After years of lobbying, the Davis-Bacon Act was passed into law creating "prevailing wage". If the government pays for a project, they require workers be paid the established "prevailing wage"

to help ensure local workers perform this work.

Every May, wage information is collected and submitted to state/federal Departments of Labor. These departments break up each state into different regions then analyze wages submitted to figure out the most common wages for specific construction jobs. Wage+benefits=Prevailing wage. Prevailing wages are typically union wages because labor unions often collect and submit the most wage data; therefore helping to make government funded projects union projects.

Though Prevailing Wage has been a resounding success in ensuring government construction is performed by local workers, typically paid good union wages, it has lately come under attack. Anti-union politicians in states such as Michigan and Wisconsin have successfully eliminated their Prevailing Wage laws to weaken their state's labor unions.

### When you speak with your elected officials make sure they know that...

**Prevailing wage keeps local workers employed!**

**Prevailing wage provides good jobs!**

**Prevailing wage strengthens your Union!**

**Prevailing Wage is off limits!**

## A Minute with Marty

- I just ordered a chicken and an egg from Amazon. I'll let you know.
- If you don't pay your exorcist.  
Do you get repossessed?
- One of my favorite memories as a kid was when my brothers used to put me inside a tire and roll me down a hill. Those were Goodyears.
- I was kidnapped by mimes once.  
They did unspeakable things to me.
- Last night I dreamt I was a muffler.  
I work up exhausted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marty Carey



If you went to a Ford dealership in 1991, the MSRP for an F150 ranged between \$10,398-\$15,857. Today, that range falls between \$28,940-\$74,250.

In March of 1991, a gallon of milk cost an average of \$1.37 compared to today's average of \$3.35.

The average US sales price of new houses sold in March of 1991 was \$156,400. As of March of 2021, that average reached \$397,800.

Inflation is real. These changes are all over the last 30yrs. How long do you plan to be retired?

We are happy to help you plan accordingly.



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Minneapolis, MN 55401



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\*IBEW Local Union 160 does not endorse any specific financial advisor\*

## **LOCAL 160 WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS**

Jakob Amundsen	Cody Korva
Blake Anderson	Nickolas Kraml
Bruce Avenson	Nile Lienau
Alondre Barry	John Lysen
Ryan Benson	Spencer Maas
Jaden Blomberg	Carl Magnusson
Joseph Bloxham	Daniel McClaine
Thea Boesch	Morgan McClellan
Andrew Bohrer	Kyle Meives
Caleb Braaten	Joseph Mercadante
Maxwell Bramstedt	Jill Monson
Joshua Brown	Michael Munnelly
Igor Burlakov	Tyler Ness
Dylan Carey	Michael Nielsen
Jeff Cozzi	Armin Olson
Chad Daniels	John Parks
Hector Dominguez Vazque	Cole Peckman
Neil Dwire	Carl Peterson
Steven Eastman	Austin Pohl
Brauc Eckman	Joel Ranson
Noah Finch	Brandon Reid
Anthony Flander	Caleb Roffman
Dustin Formanack	Ethan Roffman
Kanyon Gansy	Nathaniel Rozinka
Edison Gomez Ramon	Alex Scepaniak
Noah Halley	John Schnettler
Matthew Heinen	Jordan Schuettpehlz
Jonathan Hinrichs	Jonathan Tate
Amy Huber	John Thielman
Robert Huberty	Zachery Thoe
Joshua Jacobson	Levi Tollefson
Dylan Jude	James Valentine
Jayhden Justice	Lesla Vankeuren
Adam Kalahar	Louis Vea Vea
Caleb Kauffman	Darren Weber
David Klemzak	Jacob Wenthold
Jonathan Klemzak	Joshua Werner
Austin Knutson	Cory Williamson
	Harrison Worthman

**Membership Count = 3166**

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



James Brown - Connexus Energy  
Kevin Kaeter - Xcel Energy  
Craig King - Mo Valley  
Todd Klande - East Central Energy  
Michael D. Nolt - Xcel Energy  
Barbara Oakes - Madelia Light & Power  
Kellen Schmidt - Xcel Energy

## **IN MEMORIAN**

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

James Dahl - Active Xcel Energy - Died 4/17/21  
Nicholas Dennison – Active Mo Valley – Died 3/31/21  
Lee Fischer - Retired Xcel Energy - Died 4/12/21  
Dennis Hokenson - Retired NSP - Died 1/9/21  
Nicholas Hunt - Active Mo Valley - Died 4/15/21  
Lee Hustad - Retired Mo Valley - Died 3/4/21  
Fred Kleine - Retired Mo Valley - Died 3/21/21  
Kristopher Knudsen - Retired Xcel - Died 3/15/21

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING BROTHERS & SISTERS ON THEIR RETIREMENT.**

Jose Becerra - Mo Valley  
Jeffrey Dibble - Xcel Energy  
Greg Fischer - Xcel Energy  
Joseph Girard - Mo Valley  
Bruce Healy– Mo Valley  
John Hindy - Mo Valley  
Benjamin James - Xcel Energy  
Gary Kammerer - Mo Valley  
Randy Nordstrom - Xcel Energy  
Arnold Schmeling - Great River Energy  
Paul Silseth - Xcel Energy  
Roger Stenfors - Mo Valley  
Christopher Tietema - Great River Energy  
John Turpin - Xcel Energy  
Craig Wohlers - Xcel Energy  
Diane Zarembinski - Mo Valley

