



IBEW 483

Newsletter of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 483

September 2005

Representing:

- Light • CFS • Clerical • Water • Water Pollution Control • Building Maintenance • Supervisors • Click! Network •
- Elmhurst • Fircrest • Lakeview • Milton • Ohop • Parkland • Peninsula Light • Sumner • Eatonville •
- Pierce County Traffic Signal • Asplundh Tree • Trees Inc. • Henkels & McCoy • RCE Flagging •
- Omnicore • Northwest Line Construction •

Tacoma Health Care Goes to Arbitration

On August 1, 2005, the Joint Labor Committee and the City of Tacoma filed a joint request for an arbitrator from the Public Employment Relations Commission (**PERC**) to decide the outcome of our health care negotiations. We have received notice from **PERC** that our request has been accepted, and we have been issued Case No. 19718-A-05-01422.

The arbitrator, who has yet to be named, will choose one package, in its entirety, as opposed to mixing or selectively editing either or both packages. Both sides have agreed to abide by the arbitrator's decision and implement the selected package.

Summaries of each of the proposals sent to the arbitrator for review are as follows:

Management Proposal

- A. Change Prescription Drug Plan through **Regence**®:
- 20% Co-Pay (includes mail order with 100-day supply and retail with 34-day supply) to a maximum of:
 - Generic\$5 maximum
 - Name Brand Formulary\$50 maximum
 - Name Brand Non-Formulary.....\$100 maximum
 - * *Maintain the ability to change to a different prescription drug carrier if savings exist.*
- B. Voluntary wellness incentives furnished by **Bratrud** Middleton for the calendar year 2006 to become mandatory at some future point in time.
- C. Change "Coordination of Benefits" to "Maintenance of Benefits."
- D. Monthly charge for employee of \$40.00. (Can be paid through pretax 125 Flexible Spending Account).
- E. Monthly charge for any and all dependents (including spouse and child or children) of \$40.00. (Can also be paid through pretax 125 Flexible Spending account).

Whatever amount the parties agree that the City will contribute for the **PPO** plan will also be the maximum amount the City will contribute to the Selections and Group Health plans. Employees who have these plans and wish to remain with them will contribute the above amounts, as well as any additional difference there may be in cost.

(continued on page 2)

Welcome to the New Apprentices .. .

Meter Apprentices

Brett Copeland, ~~LaTosha~~ Jackson, Jeff ~~Shoeh~~, and John Williams

Wire Apprentices

Rebecca Daub, James Davis, Jeremy Dunn, Mike Flowers, Wing ~~Yeung~~, George ~~Nordhaug~~, Gregory Reed, Alexander Smith, and David West

Line Apprentices

Fred ~~Bolar~~, Jane Jones, Carson Leasure, Justin Lybrand, Willie ~~Moncrease~~, Mike ~~Rossy~~, Jon Backman, Dustin Benham, Stephen ~~Raynolds~~, and Craig Williams.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of **IBEW** members at Tacoma Power, the apprenticeship program is up and running again.

The individuals listed above have either successfully completed the Electrical Trainee Course or are new hires who have been placed in positions in the Line, Wire or Meter apprenticeship programs. They officially became indentured apprentices when the Civil Service Board approved their appointments on August 15th.

Be sure to welcome these new members when you see them around the Utilities buildings.

Congratulations!

RHS Accounts for Tacoma Power Employees Still in Limbo

After more than one year of meetings, phone calls, and letters, the money owed to our members in the Tacoma Power Unit has not been credited to their Retirement Health Savings (RHS) accounts. The 2004 money collected by the City of Tacoma is still in the hands of the City. Local 483 filed a grievance but agreed to put it on hold while we try to work through this issue.

Alice has been meeting on a regular basis with Woodrow Jones, the Human Resources Director for the City of Tacoma. Right now, the main problem seems to be SAP. The City says there is a problem transferring the funds. On Friday, August 19, Mr. Jones informed Alice that the money was on the way and that the last issue would be the interest calculation.

This has been, and continues to be, a very difficult process. This Local will accept nothing less than a settlement that results in no loss to the members of this bargaining unit.

Thank you for your patience.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Officers and Staff

Business Manager/
Financial SecretaryAlice Phillips
President..... Larry ~~DeFarrisi~~
Vice President..... Mark Hallman
Recording SecretaryJanet Davis
Treasurer, Pro TernKen Severe

Executive Board Members:

Frank Merritt Kenneth Scudder
Michael Shook Kirk Sloan
Mike Snider

Asst. Bus. Mgr..... ~~Guyleen Wedemquist~~
Asst. Bus. Mgr Gordon Caudill
Office ManagerJulie-Ann Corbin
Secretary ~~Rianne~~ Cornelison
SecretaryJudy Shames
Building MaintEugene ~~Nollan~~

4421 South Orchard Street
Tacoma, WA 98466
Telephone: (253) 565-3232

Health Care (continued from page 1)

Labor Proposal:

1. Change Prescription Drug Plan through **Regence**:
 - 20% Co-Pay (includes mail order with 100-day supply and retail with 34-day supply) to a maximum of:
 - Generic.....\$5 maximum
 - Name Brand Formulary.....\$50 maximum
 - Name Brand Non-Formulary.....\$100 maximum
 - * *Maintain the ability to change to a different prescription drug carrier if savings exist.*
2. Voluntary wellness incentives furnished by **Brainud** Middleton for the calendar year 2006 to become mandatory at some future point in time.
3. Discontinue the \$30.00 per month Choices (pretax 125 Flexible Spending Account) contribution by the City, but retain the Section 125 accounts for those employees wishing to contribute to the account.
4. Change "Coordination of Benefits " to "Maintenance of Benefits. "
5. Spousal Surcharge of \$100 per month if the spouse has access to employer-provided healthcare but declines the coverage of which a minimum of 70 percent of the spouse's premium is paid by the employer.
6. Add Domestic Partner Coverage to the plan.

The Local will keep you updated as significant events occur as the arbitration process is taking place. If you have questions regarding the health care issue, please contact the Union Office or attend the General meetings. General meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Local Union Office.

Remember Your Weingarten Rights

"Weingarten Rights" are Union Member protections handed down by the United States Supreme Court.

If you are called into a meeting with management and you think the meeting could in any way lead to your being disciplined or terminated or affect your personal working conditions, inform management that you request that your Union Representative or Steward be present at the meeting. Until your representative arrives, explain that you choose not to participate in their discussion.

THE EMPLOYEE MUST CLEARLY ASK FOR UNION REPRESENTATION BEFORE OR DURING THE MEETING.

"I request to have a union representative present on my behalf during this meeting because I believe it may lead to disciplinary action being taken against me. If I am denied my right to have a union representative present, I will refuse to answer ~~accusational~~ questions and any I believe may lead to discipline."

The employee cannot be punished for making this request. If the employer denies this request and continues to question, the employer will commit an unfair labor practice, a violation of the National Labor Relations Act, and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. Further, the employer may not discipline employees for such a refusal.

International Convention Delegates Needed

The International Convention of the IBEW will be held in Cleveland, Ohio, next year and Local 483 has only one duly elected delegate due to the resignations or retirements of Rick Hite, Jerry Hatch, and Judy Shames.

Article 2, Section 10 of our International Constitution governs the process for qualifying delegates. Although the Executive Board can appoint a member to fill a vacant position, it cannot appoint replacement delegates to the International Convention. Convention delegates must be elected by the membership. This information has been verified through the International Office.

Article 2 also states that to be nominated as a delegate or an alternate, a member must be present at the meeting during which nominations are taken or have signified in writing his or her willingness to be nominated. The nominee must also have been a member in continuous good standing for 24 months immediately prior to nomination.

To comply with the provisions of the Constitution, we will accept nominations from the floor for two replacement delegates at our October 11, General Meeting. A mail-in ballot, listing Alice 's name as delegate in the Business Manager 's position and the names of all nominees will then be sent to all members. The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be declared the replacement delegates. The person receiving the next highest number of votes will become the alternate. Ballots will be counted on October 26, 2005.

Good & Welfare

In Memory

Our condolences to the families and friends of:

- o Joseph D. Cockrell, retired Light
- o Jake Colter, retired CFS
- o Sharon McDuff, retired Clerical
- o Harry Pozorniki, retired Light
- o Richard Sinclair, retired Light

Get Well Wishes to:

- o Kim Callaway, Elmhurst
- o Steve Douel, Tacoma Water *
- o Keith Holland, Tacoma Power *
- o Anita James, CFS
- o Melissa Johnson, CFS *
- o Julie LaVergne, Water Dist.*
- o Amy Middleton, CFS *
- o Tad Onda, Tacoma Power
- o Rebecca Rex, Clerical

* approved for sick leave donations

Federal Highway Bill Provides Relief for Utility Workers

The IBEW supported recent amendments to Department of Transportation rules concerning how long a driver could operate a vehicle without a mandatory break. The original regulations were intended for long-haul trucking operators; however, utility workers were swept in under this language, which would have restricted our members' ability to restore electric service during emergencies.

With the help of labor friendly elected officials and union activists, the IBEW was able to get an exemption for utility workers in the recently signed highway legislation.

To help support other IBEW advocacy campaigns, log on to www.ibew.org/IBEWAlerts.

Negotiations Update

<i>Contract</i>	<i>Expires</i>
Asplundh Tree	12/31/07
Building Maintenance	12/31/06
CFS *	12/31/05
Clerical *	12/31/05
Click! Network	09/15/06
Eastonville	12/31/07
Elmhurst	03/31/08
Fincrest	Mediation
Henkels & McCoy	01/31/07
Joint Labor	12/31/06
Lakeview	03/31/07
Light	03/31/07

<i>Contract</i>	<i>Expires</i>
Milton	<i>Negotiating</i>
NW Line Construction	01/31/07
Ohop	04/30/09
Ontonio	<i>Negotiating</i>
Parkland	03/31/07
Peninsula Light	Strike Authorization
PC Traffic Signal	<i>Negotiating</i>
Sumner	12/31/05
Supervisors *	12/31/05
Trees Inc.	12/31/07
Water	12/31/05
Water Pollution Control	12/31/06

**Opening Letter Going Out in September.*

*IBEW Washington Digest
August 19, 2005*

Visit our web site at: www.ibew483.org

Peninsula Light Ballot Fails -- Strike Authorization Approved!

On Thursday, August 25, Peninsula Light ~~revoted~~ an offer from management that had been rejected in July. With this ~~revote~~ the members not only considered the contract, they also voted on strike authorization. A "No" vote on the contract, by default, gave a "Yes" vote for a strike authorization. By voting "Yes" on the contract, the members were saying "No" to a strike authorization.

The ballot failed by a margin of 43 votes to reject and 15 votes to accept.

In order to understand why our members at Peninsula Light are not in favor of this offer, you need to know the history. Over the last 4 to 5 years, IBEW members at Peninsula Light have adjusted their health care insurance to help the company save money. At times, it did help the company; at other times, it did not. But our members stepped up and did what they could to help Peninsula Light and Water deal with the rising costs of health care.

Now the company has come knocking again; and this time they not only wanted increases in the shared cost of retirement and health care, they also wanted to take away a 180-day on-the-job injury (CJI) supplement.

Members who work at Peninsula Light already pay part of their retirement. Peninsula Light management wanted them to pay more. Members at Peninsula Light are already are paying more out-of-pocket for their health care than in the past. Now they are being asked to change plans again with no guarantees that their doctors will remain in the network. The CJI supplement had ensured that injured workers would receive the same wages that they would receive if they had not been hurt on the job.

After a frustrating negotiation period, the final Management proposal is this:

- NO COLA in 2005,
- 85 percent COLA in 2006; and
- 85 percent COLA in 2007.

Management also proposed a new health care plan with a limited guarantee of benefit levels and no assurance that physicians will participate in the new network. Management's final proposal involved new language outlining hours of work.

The Union's proposals included new discipline language and new language defining overtime and use of sick leave by field crews.

This is not the entire offer — only the key points that are of concern to our members. I have discussed this offer with our Peninsula Light members, and they tell me that they could have accepted this offer if there had been a COLA in the first year.

This is the time to show your support. If you know any of our members at Peninsula Light, pass the word that they are not alone.

**Reward Work —
Respect Workers!"**

Solidarity Day Raffle Winners

Congratulations to Jerry ~~Hymier~~, from Tacoma Power, who won one of the \$500 cash prizes in the Solidarity Day ~~XXV~~ Raffle held during the Solidarity Day baseball game between the Tacoma ~~Rainiers~~ and the Fresno Grizzlies on August 21, 2005.

Other lucky \$500 winners were:

- Mona Clemson, the wife of a Lathers Local 1144 member
- Chris ~~Winters~~, Painters District Council 5
- Chuck Whitt, Steelworkers Local 8-0237.

Barbara Matz, whose ~~husband~~ is a member of IBEW Local 76, won the ~~infer~~ season tickets.

The Pierce County Central Labor Council, the sponsors of the event, noted that this was the first time in almost 20 years that all winners were Union members or members of Union families.

Building Update

In the last newsletter, we talked about making an offer on a building on the corner of 112nd and Park. After having the building inspected and learning of issues and costs associated with the clean up of the area, not to mention the repairs that were needed on the building, we withdrew our offer. This building did not appear to meet the needs of our members or be a good value for the money.

We have recently signed a three-year lease on the building we are currently occupying. The length of the lease will provide the best investment of our funds with the least amount of risk. This lease also guarantees an affordable rate for the next three years.

The lease affords us a sense of security while we continue to pursue other opportunities and properties as they become available. We will keep you informed as the Board pursues new options and/or properties that come on the market.

Business Manager's Report

A Look at the Positive Side

I am determined to tell you about the good things that are



happening every day in this Local, in spite of the fact that lately it seems like everything is just bad news. Now, let's look at

some of the more positive things that are happening.

The IBEW & Utilities People picnic raised over \$800 that was donated to Charlie Smith, the son of Leon Smith from Tacoma Power, who was injured in an ATV accident in May. The money will be used to offset the portion of his medical expenses not covered by insurance.

Judy Shames retired from the City of Tacoma and is now a member of the office staff here at 483. Yes, we lost a strong 483 member, but OPEIU has gained a great new member. And we have an outstanding addition to our support staff.

I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to Mike Shook for his dedicated service to this Local as Chair of the Exam Committee for the last three years. Mike is not leaving the committee; he has only turned the leadership over to the capable hands of John Parker, who will continue the high standards of excellence Mike established during his time on the committee.

Gayleen and Gordon have jumped in with both feet and have not looked back. From taking the lead in handling grievances and disciplines to managing the day-to-day membership requests, they have been invaluable to me and the members of this Local.

Julie, Rianne, and Judy have been right on top of all the behind-the-scenes efforts that most of us don't even realize are required of our Local.

All of this has enabled me to attend study sessions and to meet with managers and elected officials to make our voice heard. Like a finely tuned machine, when all the parts are working together -- membership support, staff and political activity -- we cannot be stopped.

I believe our membership is more unified than in past years. There is one thing about being attacked and threatened -- it brings people together. Harm one, you harm us all.

I would also like to thank you, the membership. I have been in my new position for 8 months now, and the support you have shown me has not gone unnoticed. No matter how good you are (or think you are) when it comes to working in this office, you are only as good as the members and staff who support you.

Last, but not least, our Shop Stewards. Thank you. You are the eyes, ears, and voice of this local. Without shop stewards we would not be aware of most of the workplace issues that need to be addressed. Speaking of Shop Stewards, check out the information on the Shop Steward training coming up in October. This Local can always use more Shop Stewards. If you have already attended a Shop Steward training class, you may want to attend again. Periodic review of this information and the changing attitude toward unions in general make this type of training very important.

There are other articles about the status of the Joint Labor negotiations for our medical benefits, the Peninsula Light strike authorization vote, and the Retiree Health Savings accounts fiasco for Tacoma Power members on other pages of this newsletter. That news isn't as great so I've kept it out of my report, but there is important information in these articles. Please take a minute to read them.

IBEW Local 483 Shop Steward Training

Date: *October 22, 2005*
Time: *9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.*
Location: *Local 483 Union Hall
 4421 South Orchard Street
 Tacoma, WA 98466*



Rick Hite, our 9th District International Representative, will present this training for Local 483 members who are active Shop Stewards and want to brush up on their skills, as well as for any member who is interested in learning more about what a Shop Steward does.

There is no fee for this class and lunch will be provided.

To register, contact the Union Office, at (253) 565-3232 by October 19 so that we can have your lunch and class materials ready.

October Meeting Schedule

Executive Board	Tues	Oct	11	5:00 p.m.	Union Hall
General Meeting	Tues	Oct	11	6:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Water	Wed	Oct	12	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
CFS	Thurs	Oct	13	6:15 p.m.	Union Hall
Clerical	Wed	Oct	26	5:15 p.m.	Union Hall

November Meeting Schedule

Executive Board	Tues	Nov	8	5:00 p.m.	Union Hall
General Meeting	Tues	Nov	8	6:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Water	Wed	Nov	9	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
CFS	Thurs	Nov	10	6:15 p.m.	Union Hall
Clerical	** To Be Announced **				

December Meeting Schedule

Executive Board	Tues	Dec	13	5:00 p.m.	Union Hall
General Meeting	Tues	Dec	13	6:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Water	Wed	Dec	14	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
CFS	Thurs	Dec	15	6:15 p.m.	Union Hall
Clerical	** To Be Announced **				

*We encourage all members to attend the Union meetings.
If you have a special need that makes it difficult for you to participate, please contact the Local Union Office at (253) 565-3232 so that we may arrange necessary accommodations.*

**International Brotherhood of
Electrical Workers, Local 483
4421 South Orchard Street
Tacoma, WA 98466**

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