



Congratulations to Heather Decker, the winner of our "Name the IBEW Local 1613 Newsletter" contest. Heather sent in the winning suggestion of "WATT'S UP?" For her efforts Heather wins a \$50.00 gift card to Quik Trip. Thanks to those that submitted entries. The Executive Board had several good names to choose from. Thanks again for your participation.

Its official.....

As most of you know being a Customer Care Representative is a very challenging job. Our members work hard at the Raytown Call Center taking approximately 800,000 calls per year. They answer questions regarding the customer's bill, connect and disconnect orders, payment arrangements, and transfers of service and so on. Many of you have worked in the Call Center at some point and know the challenges that they face there.

When KCPL purchased Aquila, KCPL was charged with meeting some rather lofty expectations over a three year period by the Kansas Public Service Commission. Meeting these requirements was an absolute must. Failure to meet these expectations or "metrics" would result in the company (KCPL) being fined in excess of several million dollars.

Through the hard work and dedication of our IBEW Local 1613 members, they met and exceeded the requirements set forth and Call Center can now operate without the threat of fines and the constant scrutiny of the Kansas Public Service Commission.

The representatives at the call center will always be held to a high standard of meeting our customer's needs both by the company and the Missouri and Kansas Commissions respectively. But the membership continues to strive to provide the best



customer service of any utility in the country. The pressure they put on themselves to perform at a high level is much greater than anyone else can place on their shoulders. Our call center has been recognized by JD Power and Associates for the excellent service that they provide and our representatives will continue to strive for excellence in a challenging economy where more and more customers utilize our call center for assistance.

Congratulations to each and every one of you! You all deserve a big pat on the back!



New Meter Readers Off and Running.....

As a result of Local 1613 being able to negotiate bringing the meter reading work back in house and on KCPL property, 30+ new meter readers have been hired and started working in Raytown, Belton, Northland, and Warrensburg. Some are experienced meter readers having worked previously for CorEx, the non union contractor that had been doing the meter reading work on the former Aquila side since the merger. The others are new to the business and are "learning the ropes". We would like to welcome all of the new meter readers to Local 1613 and wish all of you the best of luck in your new jobs. Work smart and work safe and take it one meter at a time.





You're Vote Counts!

Michael Smith

Registrar, IBEW Local 1613

When most people think of voting, they only seem to only concentrate on the big election years. 2012 is one of those years. In November we, as Americans, will execute one of our greatest rights and cast of votes for the president of the United States. 2012 will also see those of us in Missouri voting for Governor, a U.S. Senate Seat, no less than eight Congressional Seats as well as other state offices while our Kansas brothers and sisters will be concentrating on four Congressional Seats.

But voting is not just something to do every four years. There are "off-year" elections. A majority of Kansas Offices will be up for grabs in 2014. There are even more local elections, be it your town's mayor or members of your children's school board. Heck, in a few months our local will hold its own elections to choose our leaders for the next three years.

Our founding fathers ensured that we all have a vote, more importantly a voice. Whether you raise it when choosing our nation's next President or the next members of our local's Executive Board, make sure it will be heard. **VOTE!**

IBEW Local 1613 Member Spotlight.

Michael Smith, who serves on the Executive Board of Local 1613 and serves the Local as its Registrar.

Many are not aware that Mike also is an avid movie buff and trivia expert. Mike also writes movie reviews for various publications both in print and on the World Wide Web. Mike and his business partner have a great website that has interviews with some of your favorite actors and other folks in the entertainment business. I encourage you to visit www.mediamikes.com to stay up to date with what is going on in the world of entertainment.

Mike is also an avid Jaw's fan and attends as many "Jaw's" events throughout the country as he can. This year he will once again visit the island of Martha's Vineyard off Massachusetts to attend the official "Jaw's" reunion and fan fest.

Thanks for serving our Local, Mike. We appreciate your contributions and your vast knowledge of just about anything movie or trivia related.

Would you like to be "spotlighted" and featured in our newsletter? Send us information on yourself or your co-worker and we will do the rest. Send the information to local1613@earthlink.net.

The Union Steward

*Who are these of lowly pay, with haggard look and hair of gray? They get no rest by day or night. They're always wrong. They're never right. They do not have a law degree, but go to bat for you and me. Though seldom have they been to college, They must possess the widest knowledge, of labor grades and when to grieve, Vacation pay and sickness leave, Of overtime and who's to do it, of coffee time and who's to brew it. The how and which and why and when, And all the problems of women and men. If, with forepersons they agree, then they're rats who've got weak knees. If, to the workers they try to cater, they're branded as agitators. Those who have to take this slop are called the **STEWARDS** of your shop.*



Being a steward is often a thankless and tireless job. Our stewards are vital to our locals overall effectiveness. If you possess the ability to be a great communicator, if you are passionate and care about unionism and your fellow brothers and sisters and are interested in representing those in your workplace, please contact me, Jerry Archer at the hall or local1613@earthlink.net. We have many great stewards in this local, we could always use more.

Don't forget your Safety Day.

Kathy Hibdon, President Local 1613

Every employee and member of our local receives a Safety Day each year should you work the entire preceding year without having an accident or injury. For many years if you had a job classification that required you to work in the field and not in an office setting you would get one day per year. Through the help of the local's Safety Recognition Committee a few years ago, all employees were given the opportunity to earn a Safety Day each year, regardless of their classification. So, whether you worked in the call center or Field Services, if your work record reflected no accidents or injuries, you would be eligible for a Safety Day. By earning a Safety Day, you can schedule the day off as you choose with pay as a reward and incentive to work in the safest manner that you possibly can.

It's up to you to keep track of your points earned and when you earn a day to use. REMEMBER, the points do expire so you must "use it or lose it". So make certain that you use the day, you earned it! You can see your point totals and all information regarding the

Safety Day by visiting the KCPL Intranet and visiting the Safety section. If you have any questions and if we can help you understand the process let us know or contact your HR Representative. Generally, your steward or a co-worker can also help you understand the process as well.

"If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, want crops without plowing the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and never will"

Frederick Douglas

IBEW Local 1613 Officers and Staff:

Business Manager/Financial Secretary – Jerry Archer, President- Kathy Hibdon, Vice President – Russ Wiley, Recording Secretary- Fran Poe, Treasurer – Michelle Love . Executive Board: Chairman Mike Smith, Earl Baker, Carlos Diaz, Heather Decker, Dave Pinon, Becky Rule, Cheryl Rose and Jodi Scheier. Office Administrator- Missy Lineaweaver

Local Attends IBEW Organizer Boot Camp

Jerry Archer and Kathy Hibdon recently attended The IBEW Organizer Boot Camp January 23rd thru the 27th, 2012 in Madison, Wisconsin at the University of Wisconsin School For Workers. This was an intensive training class that takes place over a 4 1/2 day period. There were over 40 participants from IBEW locals



throughout the Midwest and Canada. The instruction focused on the basics of organizing non union workers in the Construction and Professional and Industrial jurisdictions. The IBEW is committed to growing the brotherhood and all IBEW Locals are being asked and expected to do their part. In order to maintain a strong union and local we must look at anyone, workers or groups of workers that would benefit from organizing and forming a union. As you know, there is strength in numbers. We currently have one unit that is not within KCPL. Our brothers and sisters at Edison Credit Union are represented by IBEW Local 1613. We can represent workers from just about anywhere and we are looking at potential targets as we speak so that we can grow our local. If you are interested in helping us organize those that currently don't benefit from being in a union, please contact Jerry Archer, Tim Fleener or Kathy Hibdon. We are trying to form a team that is willing to get to work in helping us with this cause that benefits all of us. Anyone can help. If you provide the will, we will provide the skill. How successful we are is up to you. This is your union. Be involved.

Martin Luther King on "Right to Work".

"In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as "right to work". It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions for EVERYONE. Wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer and there are no civil rights. We do not intend to let them do this to us. We demand this fraud be stopped. Our weapon is our vote"



These were Martin Luther King's words speaking about Right-to-Work laws in 1961. As many of us know, when MLK was assassinated he was speaking in support of the Sanitation Workers. Point being, MLK was a supporter of the American worker, the middle class and the American Dream. Here we are some 50+ years later and we as the American worker are watching our rights to collectively bargain slip away. We are under attack, you, me and all of us. We must fight back and not let the politicians who support corporate greed and corporate welfare beat us and strip away what's left of the American Dream.

Indiana in the last week has passed Right to Work for Less legislation. Wisconsin did so last year, by overnight stripping away the rights of public workers across their state. Now, right here in the state of Missouri we will again face off with those in government that want to do the same to us as well. We fought this hard last year, although I am certain most of us had no idea that there was a fight going on and being fought in Jefferson City. Right to Work is not a good thing for any of us reading this newsletter. It only benefits those that are wealthy, those that can't and won't ever be able to relate to the issues that you and I experience everyday in the workplace and in life.

Governor Scott Walker, starring in "Total Recall".

Organizers with United Wisconsin turned in over 1 million signatures to the Government Accountability Board (GAB) to recall anti-worker crusader and Governor Scott Walker. The package weighed more than 3,000 pounds. The signatures represent the largest recall effort in the history of the United States and 185% of the signatures needed to trigger a recall





of Walker. Kathy and I were fortunate to be in Wisconsin the week that Walker gave his State of the State Address at the Wisconsin Capitol in Madison. Before and during his speech folks occupied the halls and floors of the state capitol chanting anti Walker messages and singing anti Walker songs, written especially for him. As we stood there with nearly every class participant and hundreds of other pro union brothers and sisters, it was truly gratifying and inspiring to see a group of individuals come together and unite for a common cause. Many of these people were part of the protest last year where 150,000 people gathered at the State Capitol in Wisconsin in protest of Scott Walker and his desire to dismantle unions and collective bargaining in Wisconsin. They lived in the halls of the capitol for weeks sending a message of unity and of equality. I think we may have our opportunity right here in the state of Missouri sooner or later. Stay tuned and do everything that you can to educate yourselves on the Right to Work for less legislation being considered in Jefferson City.

Newt's Right For Once

Newt Gingrich has said some pretty outlandish things over the years—the most recent was his proposal to **put poor kids to work** cleaning inner-city schools.

But as a friend of mine was fond of saying—
“sometimes even a blind squirrel can find an acorn.”
Newt has an acorn.

During the New Hampshire primary when Gingrich was talking to voters about Mitt Romney's days as a Venture “**vulture**” Capitalist—shortly after Romney said he “likes being able to fire people”—Gingrich said Romney “looted” companies and left behind “broken families and broken neighborhoods.” Then he added something that could have been uttered by any progressive or Occupier.



You have to ask the question: Is capitalism really about the ability of a handful of rich people to manipulate the lives of thousands of people and walk off with the money, or is that in fact a little bit of a flawed system?

Courtesy of the AFL/CIO website

Makes Me Think.....

[Workers At Chinese Plant Making Apple And Microsoft Products Threaten Mass Suicide-](#)

Workers at a Foxconn plant in Wuhan, China have threatened mass suicide after the company announced they would be denied a pay increase. Foxconn builds electronic products for numerous worldwide corporations, such as Apple and Microsoft, and this plant specifically produces the popular gaming console Xbox 360. The employees were given the option of keeping their jobs without a pay raise or resigning from their jobs and receive compensation in exchange.

Products built in China and shipped back to the United States is not as cheap as it once was. Labor cost is on the rise and fuel costs have cut into corporations' bottom lines in recent years. Hopefully, we will see more work and jobs come back to the United States in the years to come. There were also statistics released that the average American worker in manufacturing produces more than a Chinese worker overseas. Working conditions in some overseas plants and factories are deplorable. I know it's hard to buy everything US made, but every time we buy products made here in America, we create and keep jobs right here on American soil. Again, it's difficult to do, but a conscious effort to buy American products will make a big difference in getting our economy turned around and getting folks back to work.



Attend Your Union Meeting!

Union Meetings are held the third Thursday of Each month commencing at 5pm at the IBEW Local 1613 Union Hall. We are located at 6900 Executive Dr., Suite 180, Kansas City, Mo. 64120. Our office is located in the First Federal Bank Building near I-435 and Front St., next to the Ramada Inn and Smugglers Inn Restaurant.

Be involved, it's your Union and your voice. If you can't attend, maybe you can designate someone from your area to attend and communicate the information back to the folks in your area? We look forward to seeing you then. If you have any questions or need directions, give us a call at 816-241-1613.



Watt's Up is published by Local 1613 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers for the benefit of it's members, their families and retirees.

All inquiries should be addressed to: IBEW Local 1613, 6900 Executive Dr., Ste. 180, Kansas City, Mo. 64120 / 816-241-1613 / Fax. 816-241-1303 / local1613@earthlink.net

Who You Gonna call?

From time to time folks don't always get along with one another in the work place. But how you handle your "issue" or dispute is very, very important.

Hopefully, each party is able to rationally discuss their differences and can work through them where each person can perform their duties safely and effectively throughout their day until tensions subside. What happens when two people can't work through their problems? Simply, ask for the union's help in resolving the issue. We are more than happy to assist anyone that is experiencing any type of problem, be it with a co-worker or supervisor or any other issue that could be affecting one's life.

Life is tough sometimes and relationships get strained. But the important thing to remember is to do everything that you can to resolve the issue with the other person without getting HR involved. When HR is involved, generally the outcome is not good and what could have been addressed and corrected without their "help", now turns quickly into a situation where discipline is handed down to one or both parties and often times others that weren't directly involved in the incident to begin with. These "investigations" often times turn terribly wrong and people's lives are negatively affected. Our jobs are watch each other's back's, in the good times and in the bad times. Never help your brother or sisters lose their livelihood. If their actions are putting you or themselves in danger, do what you have to do to keep yourself and them safe. But if you had a spat over something trivial and the situation got temporarily out of hand, step back and take a deep breath and let us help you work the problem out. It's the proper thing to do. Brothers and Sisters should not be in the business of policing one another. We all should be in the business of helping and working with one another.

IBEW LOCAL 1613

WATT'S UP?

NEWSLETTER



