



# LOCAL 15 UNITY NEWSLETTER

Dean Apple  
President/Business Manager

May 1, 2012

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## CONTACTS:

- Union Office: 630-515-0381
- Union Fax: 630-515-0835
- [www.ibewlocal15.org](http://www.ibewlocal15.org)
- [Safety@IBEWLocal15.org](mailto:Safety@IBEWLocal15.org)
- OSHA: 630-896-8700 or 800-321-OSHA (6742) or [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)
- ComEd/Exelon Job Posting Hotline: 877-739-3566
- OHS (for Exelon/ComEd/BSC) 800-558-0039
- OHS Fax 815-458-7699
- Sedgewick (for Midwest Generation) 866-925-6789
- "IBEW Local 15" is on Facebook

## DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE ON FOSSIL STATION CLOSURES

Local 15 and MWGen have held four meetings to discuss the reduction in force (RIF) that will be associated with the closures of the Fisk and Crawford stations. MWGen also announced to management employees last week that it has begun a review of all management positions at all the Illinois stations and among office support staff

To date, we have discussed the process for a RIF, the recall process and have worked to finalize the seniority list. We have also spent quite a bit of time discussing the use of contractors and the future MWGen workforce. There has also been broad discussion about severance and how other companies are handling unit shutdowns and RIFs, but the company has made no offer at this time.

The company has told us that as a result of the Fisk and Crawford closures, there is a need to evaluate the entire fleet from a staffing perspective and that work is happening right now -- for both Represented and non-Represented workers. There was some benchmarking done recently that is being evaluated, and the stations are all looking for ways to help the company get through the next couple of years, which are expected to be even tougher financially given that power prices have continued to drop since the Feb. 29 announcement of the Fisk and Crawford shutdowns.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 14. Both parties want to wrap up these discussions as soon as possible. The company has not given official notification to the

Union as required by the WARN Act. They must give 60 days notice of a plant shutdown that results in a RIF of at least 50 people to comply with this Act. We will continue to communicate with the membership as information becomes available.



# INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT ED HILL DISCUSSES IMPORTANCE OF THE NUCLEAR ACCESS LAWSUIT RULING

On April 26, 2012, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers President Ed Hill sent out a letter to all Local Unions who represent nuclear workers in the United States. The topic of the letter was the lawsuit between Exelon Generation and I.B.E.W Local 15 regarding nuclear access decisions, and the recent court decision in favor of Local 15 by the U.S. Seventh District Court of Appeals. In his letter Mr. Hill described the decision as “an important legal victory that will benefit all organized employees working in the nuclear power industry and help to strengthen our internal and external organizing.” Below is a copy of Mr. Hill’s letter:



**INTERNATIONAL  
BROTHERHOOD  
OF ELECTRICAL  
WORKERS.**

900 Seventh Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202.833.7000  
www.ibew.org

**EDWIN D. HILL**  
International President

**SAM J. CHILIA**  
International  
Secretary-Treasurer

April 26, 2012

## VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

**To: All U.S. Local Unions with Nuclear Jurisdiction**

**Dear Sisters and Brothers:**

This letter is to advise about the case between **IBEW Local Union 15** and **Exelon Generation Company**. This is an important legal victory that will benefit all organized employees working in the nuclear power industry and help to strengthen our internal and external organizing.

In *Exelon Generation Co. v. IBEW Local 15*, No. 11-2423 (7<sup>th</sup> Cir. March 29, 2012), the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit held that Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regulations permit arbitrators to review employer decisions denying union-represented employees unescorted access to nuclear power facilities. The court concluded that employers cannot rely on NRC regulations to avoid their contractual obligation to arbitrate.

The three judge panel unanimously ruled in favor of IBEW Local 15, overturning the previous court decision.

I urge you to seize this opportunity to reach out to unorganized workers inside and outside your respective workplaces. Let them know that true justice on the job can only be achieved by winning the right to bargain as well as the right to arbitrate over access denials, and that union membership will ensure a better future for all working class people.

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours

**Edwin D. Hill**  
International President

EDH:jez  
Copy to all U.S. International Vice Presidents



## DID HE REALLY SAY THAT?

### If elected President...

“On day **one**, I will end the government’s favoritism towards Unions and Union contracting on federal projects and end project labor agreements and I will fight to **repeal Davis-Bacon**.”

“I will fight **for right to work** laws”

“I’m going to **make sure** we have right to work and get rid of Davis-Bacon”

—Presidential candidate Mitt Romney in speech to the Associated Builders and Contractors in Phoenix

**YES, he really did make those quotes...**

See the videos for yourself on YouTube—*Mitt Romney speaks to the ABC*



## 2012 IBEW LOCAL 15 SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

(front, l to r) Christine Watkins (Local 15 Recording Secretary), Roberta (Bobby) Hibler (Customer Service Rep-Oakbrook) and back row (l to r) Mike Keating (Overhead Electrician-Pontiac), William (Bill) Genz (Will County— Instrument Maintenance) and Nery Fajardo (Equipment Operator-Dresden)

# CALL CENTER CONSOLIDATION FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

On April 4, 2012, the third focus group meeting between Company representatives and a team of Call Center employees was held. These ongoing meetings are being held with the employees who perform the day-to-day work in the Call Centers in order to obtain their input when determining the needs of employees at the new location when the Call Centers move to Lincoln Center 2 in Oakbrook later this year.

At this meeting employees were given further details of the new accommodations, which include adjustable workstations (with dual table top-mounted monitors) and ergonomic chairs for all bargaining unit employees. The group was also shown the floor plans for the new Call Center, which included seating and restroom arrangements as well as break room accommodations.

The current plan calls for the Call Center to occupy a portion of the 2nd floor (Resource Management) and the entire 3rd and 4th floors of Lincoln Center 2, with CC1s, CSRs, GC1s, OSSs and OSRs located on the 3rd and 4th floors. The floor plan includes break areas located on both ends of all occupied floors on each level - with each containing microwaves, a refrigerator, a sink, private computer/phone areas and numerous meeting rooms.

Employees participating in this focus group have had (and continue to provide) direct input into the design and accommodations of the new location. Call Center employees participating in this meeting were Scott Bobko (GCI – Oakbrook), Laura Hines (CSR – Oakbrook), Danielle Kolosh (CSR – Chicago North), Javier LaLuz (CSR – Chicago North), Lala McCarthy (CSR – Oakbrook), Addie Myles (CC1 – Chicago North), Kanika Ricks (CSR – Oakbrook), and Michael Freeman (Business Representative – Local 15).



## MEMBER SWORN IN AT THE APRIL UNIT MEETING



Elmhurst Unit Chairwoman Amy Allison swears in member Miranda Lee, CSR-Oak Brook Call Center

President/Business Manager Dean Apple presents a Local 15 watch to Mark Bolen at the Powerton Unit meeting. Brother Bolen retired as an Equipment Operator with over 34 years as a Union member



## WE ARE ONE RALLY

Local 15 members gather before a rally in Springfield “asking” Wisconsin’s Governor Walker to go back home, we don’t need his type of politics in Illinois. Shown (l to r) Greg Small (Kincaid), Brian Loomis (Retiree), Sam Studer (Bus Rep) and Bill Phillips (Bus Rep)



See page 10 for more info on the rally!





# FISK GENERATING STATION HISTORY

With the impending closure of Fisk Station it's a good time for a quick look back at the history of the station.

Thomas Alva Edison invented the light bulb in 1879 but realized that without an electrical system to readily supply power, the light bulb had little practical use. So by 1882 (in New York City) he installed the world's first central generating plant using reciprocating steam engines to run generators. This allowed electricity to become more versatile and valuable as entrepreneurs started building numerous small stations throughout cities.

Fisk Station has the impressive distinction of being the first steam turbine generating station in the United States. Ground was broken for the station by Sam Insull (ComEd founder and former secretary of Thomas Edison) in 1903. Mr. Insull had convinced GE to manufacture a 5 MW turbine-generator, which was 2 MW larger than GE's standard units. Mr. Insull was taking a major risk in a special order of this size but it paid off with the successful operation of Fisk Station.

As many people know, Thomas Edison was a visitor to Fisk station and signed their visitor log-book back in the early 1900's. His signature has been on display at the station for many years.

Fisk was "state of the art" for its time, reducing emissions and lowering the cost of electricity. It has been regularly maintained and updated throughout the years. The station's last big upgrade was in the late 1950s when they installed the current turbine generator which is Unit 19. This Unit runs regularly and its capacity is 326 MW, not a big unit by today's standards but huge compared with the Units constructed when it was initially built.



ComEd Founder  
Sam Insull

# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE EXELON UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN'S 1% SKY BOX WINNERS!

William Allen  
Edward Avants  
Steven Case  
Antonio Guzman  
Steve Gonzalez  
Andrew Banicki  
Rebecca Oswald  
Kenneth Thorns  
Raul Charo  
Thomas Finchum  
Howard Gallois  
Richardo Gutierrez  
Ralph Heft  
Brian Welty  
Gordon Nordmark  
Dale Reoch  
Irene Flanagan  
Dave Lindemayer



These lucky Exelon West Employees were randomly chosen to receive 2 tickets for a fun filled day at the ballpark in the Exelon Skybox. Six of our lucky winners attended Wrigley Field on April 22nd to watch the Cincinnati Reds defeat the Cubs with a score of 4 to 3. The rest of the winners will attend U. S. Cellular Field on July 7th the Sox vs. Toronto or September 8th the Sox vs. Kansas City. Thank you to these employees and everyone that give their support, time, dedication, and talent to the Exelon United Way Campaign.



Mark your calendars and set your canned food out, May 12 is the 20th anniversary of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Stamp Out Hunger annual food drive.

It is the largest one day food collection event in the nation and the need is huge with 16% of Americans including 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 and 4 million senior citizens that are forced every day to choose between buying food or paying a utility bill.

In 2011, letter carriers picked up over 70.2 million pounds of food, raising the total amount collected over the history of the drive to more than 1.1 billion pounds of food.



**BE WATCHING! THE 2012 IBEW LOCAL 15 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION AND RULES WILL BE COMING OUT THE FIRST WEEK OF MAY. WATCH FOR THE SPECIAL UNITY !**





## SUBSTATION CONSTRUCTION APPRENTICES COMPLETE 'B' MECHANIC TRAINING *Helpers Learning High-Skilled Craft*

Twenty-four members have successfully completed four weeks of 'B' Mechanic training at two training facilities; Joliet and Melrose Park after six months of learning the basics in the field as SSC Helpers. They are in an automatic progression from Helper to 'A' Mechanic. The two and one half year training program includes actual field experience and classroom and laboratory training and successful completion of prescribed examinations. The Trainers for this class were Brian White and Joseph Maly. The Demonstrators were Mike Hammer, Rich Furmanek and Omar Maldonado.

Pictured above is the class and demonstrators on graduation day, April 20, 2012. The 'B' Mechanics, listed alphabetically, are Michol J. Bailey, Pablo C. Bonilla,

Eberaldo Campos, Robert W. Dabbert, Juan J. Fonseca, Joshua C. Grayling, Herbert W. Grossich, Justin D. Hayward, Javier Jimenez, Joel S. Kriete, Thomas J. Kurucar, David Lopez, Jimmy Mancera, Jeremy P. McNelis, Francisco M. Paredes, Joseph B. Pastirik, Peter M. Rebeles, Jay M. Schmidt, David Lee Smith, Michael M. Torres, Mark A. Wagner, Sheldon D. Williams, and Samuel L. Wimberly.

They will return to the field to continue their on-the-job training under the tutelage of their highly experienced co-workers, learning the intricate skills and safety precautions needed to build, maintain and repair ComEd's increasingly automated substations linking the transmission system to the distribution system.



### NEW STEWARD

Local 15 welcomes the  
following new Steward:

**Kathryn Sugrue— University  
Park**



## OSHA A Quick Look

### Section 1 "Introduction"

*To assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women; by authorizing enforcement of the standards developed under the Act; by assisting and encouraging the States in their efforts to assure safe and healthful working conditions; by providing for research, information, education, and training in the field of occupational safety and health; and for other purposes.*

### Section 5 "General Duty Clause"

(a) (a) Each employer --

*(1) shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm To his employees;*

*(2) shall comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated under this Act.*

*(b) Each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued pursuant to this Act which are applicable to his own actions and conduct.*

**OSHA®** The regulations in standard 269 address specific hazards faced by workers in the electric utility industry.

*1910.269 This section covers the operation and maintenance of electric power generation, control, transformation, transmission, and distribution lines and equipment. These provisions apply to:*

*Power generation, transmission, and distribution installations, including related equipment for the purpose of communication or metering, which are accessible only to qualified employees; Note: The types of installations covered by this paragraph include the generation, transmission, and distribution installations of electric utilities, as well as equivalent installations of industrial establishments. ...*

As workers in an extremely hazardous industry, Local 15 members are encouraged to go to [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) or click the link on Local 15's homepage to learn more about specific regulations, their legal rights to a safe work place and protection from retaliation for reporting injuries and hazards. OSHA's site is set up for easy searches on specific topics.

## 2012 WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

*"Making a living shouldn't include dying."*

Workers' Memorial Day was commemorated across the nation on Saturday April 28, 2012. The Rockford United Labor Council's ceremony took place at the E.J. 'Zeke' Giorgi State of Illinois Building in downtown Rockford. In Illinois, events occurred in Bloomington, Decatur, Joliet, Peoria, Quad Cities, Springfield and Spring Valley. Though the weather was fittingly dreary, many attended the Rockford ceremony including various labor organizations and officials. Retired Local 15 Business Representative Ron Welte welcomed the guests, including Frances Mijares, widow of IBEW Local 15 Jorge Mijares (December 27, 2002) and Linda Skiles, widow of IBEW Local 15 member Kelly Skiles (March 29, 2011).

Welte also introduced the speakers including Illinois Department of Labor Director Joe Costigan and OSHA Region V Assistant Administrator John Newquist, who reminded the guests of the progress in workplace safety made since the Occupational Safety & Health Act went into effect April 28, 1971. Forty-one years ago, nearly forty workers died on an average day. Much has been accomplished. In 2011, an average of twelve people were killed at work every day in the United States among a work force twice the size of 1970.

Much more needs to be done. Tim Drea, Secretary/Treasurer of the Illinois AFL-CIO, warned about the false claim that safety regulations are job-killers, pointing out the reality that reductions in hard won safe guards are worker killers. Eight years of neglect by the Bush Administration decreased safety protection. Many workers are still in serious danger, as shown by recent disasters at Massey Energy's coal mine (29 killed), the Tesoro Refinery explosion (7 killed) and the BP-Transocean Gulf oil rig explosion (11 killed).

A wreath was placed at the enduring stone Worker's Memorial (see pic below) on the west bank of the Rock River. A Representative from AFSCME 1275 placed flowers to honor fallen IBEW Local 196 Brother



Business Rep Terry Sheridan and Ron Welte placing the wreath

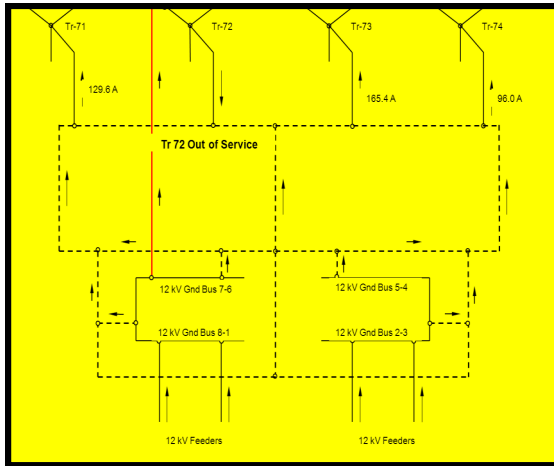
Jeffrey Kissack and Brother Daniel Green. Fifty-seven year old Jeffrey Kissack was electrocuted on April 10, 2011 while restoring power in Rochelle, Illinois. Daniel Green was killed when a turning semi-trailer ran over him while he was working in Elmhurst, on September 12, 2011. He was thirty-eight years old.

Visit the Local 15 website Safety page to see our on-line Memorial.



# SAFETY

## SAFETY COUNCILS *Neutral Disconnect Missing*



The T&S Cross Regional Safety Council has expended much thoughtful effort to resolve a serious concern; new modular "Concept" substations were not designed with a neutral disconnect. The disconnect separates a neutral connected to a transformer in a substation from the system. It is opened when workers are working near grounded equipment that is normally at earth potential. In the cause of a fault on other equipment connected to the station, high voltages and currents could be pressed onto that equipment and cause serious injury to workers. Return currents seeking the shortest path to earth may also cause the neutral to become unexpectedly energized.

The Safety Council worked with engineers and manufacturers to include the neutral disconnects on future equipment. Retrofitting newer equipment with disconnects has been priced and is being planned for stations not so equipped.

## IBEW INTERNATIONAL SAFETY CAUCUS

### *Local Unions Share Best Practices*

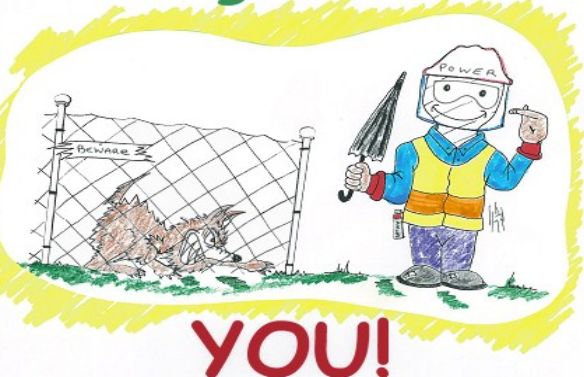
Local 15 members attended the IBEW International Safety Caucus in Madison, Wisconsin on April 18 and 19. Mark Shaulis (Underground), Paul Hussey (Overhead), Ken Franz (Field and Meter Services), Tim Pierce (Overhead), President Dean Apple, Vice-President Terry McGoldrick and Business Representative Terry Sheridan, took part in sessions on fire prevention, Union safety experts (Blue Hats) and other electrical industry safety issues and trends.

International Representative Jim Tomaseski reported on regulations on fall arrest and crane-derrick qualifications. OSHA representatives gave a step-by-step walk through of filing a hazard complaint.

Personal protective equipment misuse and disuse was discussed. Many utilities have seen marked improvement by using Blue Hats. A Blue Hat is an experienced worker, respected by others, knowledgeable about the work and how safe practices are interwoven through a well executed job. They are teachers and demonstrators of safe work practices. Other Unions reported that workplaces using strictly punitive corrections may see an initial drop in reported injuries but there is inevitably a rebound because some workers hide injuries and hazards are not reported.

A representative from the FireA-way Company presented their fire suppressant 'Stat-X'. The item is packed in a 5-1/2" tall by 3" diameter can that weighs less than 3 pounds. The product has significant fire "knockdown" and rapid suppression capabilities for enclosed spaces. It is safe for fire fighters and any occupants trapped by fire. There is no oxygen depletion, it stops the chemical reaction of a fire — "suppresses at very low concentrations by interference with free radicals". PECO, among other utilities, has satisfactorily tested the product on man-hole fires. ComEd Safety and Methods have promised to investigate using it on our system.

*In Spring, a young  
dog's thoughts turn  
to thoughts of ...*



**YOU!**

*... when there's no fence:*

**We'd better be ready with  
dog PPE that works!**

**WE HAVE THE POWER TO BE SAFE!**

*Let's check our PPE and share what we know! WE ARE ALL OBSERVERS!*





# LOCAL 15 JOINS RALLY IN SPRINGFIELD

On April 17, 2012, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker was in Springfield to speak to a group of corporate lobbyists and CEOs, invited by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Instead of paying their fair share in taxes, their top priority is slashing the modest pensions earned by teachers and police, firefighters and caregivers and other public employees. Several Local 15 Business Representatives and members joined other workers and supporters to let Walker and Illinois politicians know that his tactics are not welcome here.

Thousands of workers from several states gathered in the streets of Springfield Illinois outside the Abraham Lincoln Hotel to listen to various speakers and let their voices be heard. The spirited crowd demonstrated against the extreme agenda and failed record of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. A strong message was sent that Illinois rejects Walker's attacks on collective bargaining rights, pensions and health care as well as his corporate tax giveaways and budget cuts to schools and Medicaid.

The rally was sponsored by "We Are One", a labor coalition working on behalf of over 1 million statewide members to protect public employee pensions. The following is a fact sheet used by the coalition to explain the facts about why we all need to help protect public employee pensions:

## **THE TRUTH ABOUT PUBLIC PENSIONS—WE ARE ONE ILLINOIS**

### **ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES**

**Firefighters and police, teachers and nurses, child protection workers and disability caregivers** are just some of the public employees that Illinois residents rely on every day, in every community, in every part of the state.

### **POLITICIANS CAUSED PENSION DEBT**

**For decades, Illinois politicians shorted or skipped the employer contributions required by law, creating the nation's largest pension debt.** All that time, public employees paid their fair share. It's wrong to punish public employees for the actions—or inaction—of irresponsible politicians.

### **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES PAY**

**A public employee's pension is his or her own life savings—they typically contribute 8 percent, 9 percent or more from each paycheck to their pension fund.** Illinois public employees have always paid their share, faithfully and in full.

### **NO SOCIAL SECURITY**

**Most Illinois public employees are ineligible for Social Security.** Unlike every private-sector worker in America, police and firefighters, teachers and university employees, city of Chicago and Cook County employees **don't** qualify for Social Security. Reducing the pension they earn would leave many public employees with little to fall back on in retirement.

### **PENSIONS ARE MODEST**

**Illinois public employees retire on very modest pensions**—on average, just \$32,000 a year after a career dedicated to public service. Many receive much less than this average amount.

### **PROTECTED BY THE CONSTITUTION**

**The Illinois Constitution states that membership in a public pension system is an enforceable contractual relationship, "the benefits of which may not be diminished or impaired."** That plain language means it is unconstitutional to reduce pension benefits or increase contributions of current public employees. Legislation violating this constitutional protection will cause a costly and wasteful court challenge.



## Local 15

6330 Belmont Road  
Suite 1  
Downers Grove, IL 60516

Phone: 630-515-0381  
Fax: 630-515-0835

We're on the WEB!  
<http://IBEWLocal15.org>

### MONTHLY UNIT MEETING SCHEDULE

**First Tuesday**  
Gurnee

**First Wednesday**  
Joliet and Pekin

**First Thursday**  
Dixon and Elmhurst

**Second Tuesday**  
Romeoville

**Second Wednesday**  
Chicago and Kincaid

**Second Thursday**  
Rockford

# IBEW

\*\*\***ATTENTION** \*\*\***ATTENTION**\*\*\*

## MAY 2012 UNIT MEETING SCHEDULE FOR

**PRESIDENT/BUSINESS MANAGER DEAN APPLE**  
&  
**VICE-PRESIDENT TERRY McGOLDRICK**

**Dixon Physical/Clerical/Nuclear Generating Unit Meeting**  
Dixon American Legion  
1120 W. First Street  
Dixon, IL.  
6:30 p.m.  
May 3, 2012

**Chicago/Joliet Fossil Generating Unit Meeting**  
Leo's Bar & Grill  
201 E. Romeo Road  
Romeoville, IL.  
6:30 p.m.  
May 8, 2012

**Chicago Physical/Clerical Unit Meeting**  
Fraternal Order of Police  
1412 W. Washington  
Chicago, IL.  
6:30 p.m.  
May 9, 2012

**ATTEND YOUR LOCAL UNIT MEETINGS**  
**GET THE FACTS NOT THE RUMORS**