

October 2016

Volume 24 Number 4

# KEEPING CURRENT

*With Local 292, International  
Brotherhood of Electrical Workers*



## UPCOMING HOLIDAY EVENTS

### DECEMBER 3

Children's Christmas Party  
9:00 a.m. Minneapolis  
Convention Center

### DECEMBER 9 — NEW LOCATION

Members ONLY Christmas Party  
11:00 a.m. Labor Centre

### DECEMBER 14

Retirees Christmas Party  
11:00 a.m. Church of St. Patrick

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Local 292, International  
Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
United Labor Centre  
312 Central Ave. SE, Suite 292  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Phone: (612) 379-1292

Fax: (612) 379-9326

Web: [www.ibew292.org](http://www.ibew292.org)

Email: [office@ibew292.org](mailto:office@ibew292.org)

FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE

By PETE LINDAHL



## MOVING INTO 2017

Dear Members:

Now that summer has turned to fall, winter is not too far behind. As we all know the first snow reminds us how driving can be a challenge. Please give yourself plenty of time to get to work safely and on time. Safety on the jobsite is also very important. Living in Minnesota through the winter can pose many safety concerns: ice, melting snow and other winter hazards can be present. Your family relies on you to make it home every day safely.

**CONTRACT UPDATES.** There have been several contracts completed since the last newsletter. The following contracts have been completed and have been sent to the International office for approval:

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Electrical motor Service in St. Cloud | 6. NECA Motor Shop              |
| 2. Electro - Mechanical Industries       | 7. FOX TV                       |
| 3. Hennepin County Traffic               | 8. 12 County Addendum Agreement |
| 4. MPLS Technicians (Radio Shop)         | 9. Norstan                      |
| 5. Star Tribune                          | 10. Integra                     |

All of the contracts went well and members voted overwhelming to ratify their contracts with the exception of one. The FOX TV contract was ratified by a vote of 18-17 even though the Union office along with the committee recommended that the members reject it. FOX management entered negotiations with a mission to break down the group. After 10 months of negotiations, the members felt too much pressure and accepted the Companies last, best and final offer. I would like to thank our committee for their hard work and dedication to their fellow workers.

**SOLAR.** As of this writing, there are approximately 350 IBEW members working on large solar projects in 110, 292 and 343. 2017 looks be as strong as 2016. We need to continue to fill the calls. The competition is fierce. If we want this work to be done by the IBEW, we need to protect it. There are many that would like to do it.

**VOTE ON NOVEMBER 8TH.** Please get out and vote. This election is extremely important. The best way to prevent Right to Work is to elect candidates that oppose it. Minnesota has one of the highest standards of living in the country, let's keep it that way.

*"If we work together, there isn't anything we can't do."*

*Pete*

## Profile *Business Rep Steve Ludwig*



**Business Representative  
Steve Ludwig**

Steve went to Tech College right after high school for two years, completing his studies in 1996. Steve worked non-union until joining the IBEW in 2000. He worked for a few metro shops until accepting employment at Augusta Electric where he was employed for 12 years and was the Shop Steward.

“The most interesting job I ever worked on was the UPS Building in Maple Grove in 2001, which was also the biggest” Steve said. “From there I worked on small and large jobs, hospitals, waste water treatment plants, commercial and industrial buildings.”

Steve then went to Parsons at the Sherco Power Plant for about a month when he was asked to come into the Office and work as a Business Representative.

Steve accepted the position with the hope of changing the St. Cloud Area. Having worked in the non-union sector and knowing many people in St. Cloud from growing up in the area, he felt he had a chance at making a change. Steve says “It has worked, but it’s not as easy as I thought it would be. There are some long days, it is not an eight hour a day job.”

Steve and his wife, Carrie, of 17 years, live in Richmond, MN with their five daughters: Makenna 15, Madelyn 12, Abigail 5, Anastyn 4 and Alizabeth 2. They live on a farm which keeps him busy when he is not at work. They raise Black Angus cattle and show them at seven to eight events in the summer. They also belong to the MN Angus Association and travel to national events. “That has been a big deal, it is very rewarding” Steve said. This year they placed eighth and ninth with the cattle they raised. “The hard part is, I can’t take the whole family, it is just too much work with the cattle. So at this point my wife Carrie, Makenna, Madelyn and I go” said Steve.



**Steve and his daughter Makenna with their prize winning heifer Elsa.**

The family also enjoys camping. They have a camper and usually camp with five to nine families which includes 25 – 40 kids!! “The meals are fun when we get together, we do buffets.” The group camps at Steve and Carrie’s place once a year. “There is a lake for the kids to swim and they enjoy riding the four wheelers on the trails” Steve said.

Besides camping with his family, Steve also enjoys hunting and fishing. What Steve enjoys now, is being a Business Representative and working hard to make a difference in the St. Cloud Area.

# Golf Tournament



## Holiday Parties

### NEW LOCATION

#### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2016 9:00 AM  
TO 1:00 PM**

Minneapolis Convention Center  
Room 200  
1301 2nd Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

\*\*The Children's Christmas Party is for  
Members children and grandchildren  
only.\*\*

**A MONETARY DONATION TO THE FOOD SHELF IS ENCOURAGED.**

#### RETIRES CHRISTMAS PARTY

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2016  
6:00 PM TO 11:30 PM**

Church of St. Patrick—Edina  
Mahon Center  
6820 St. Patrick's Lane  
Edina, MN 55439

#### MEMBERS ONLY CHRISTMAS PARTY

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2016  
6:00 PM TO 11:30 PM**

Labor Centre  
Rooms 216, 217 & 218  
312 Central Avenue SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

#### 2017 SNOWBALL DINNER AND DANCE

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2017  
6:00 PM TO 11:30 PM**

Church of St. Patrick—Edina  
Mahon Center  
6820 St. Patrick's Lane  
Edina, MN 55439

### Local 292 Phone Directory

#### Minneapolis

612-379-1292 or 1-800-337-8310

#### Hiring Hall / Jobline

612-378-2860

#### St. Cloud

320-253-1292

#### Inside Agreement JATC—St. Michael

763-497-0072 or 1-888-244-3146

#### Statewide LEA JATC

763-571-5922

#### Benefit Office

763-493-8830 or 1-800-368-9045

#### TEAM Employee Assistance Program

651-642-0182 or 1-800-634-7710

#### Building Trades Credit Union

763-315-3888 or 1-800-496-2460

#### Electrus Federal Credit Union

763-569-4000 or 1-800-252-4239

#### Direct Dial & Voice Mail

612-617-4 \_ \_ \_

#### Business Manager

Peter Lindahl 237

#### Metro Business Representatives

Kent Blachowiak 242

Dan Ferguson 239

Jennifer Gaspersich 225

Chris Kohn 240

John Kripotos 244

John Lutz, Organizer 249

Eric Peterson, Hiring Hall 224

Ted Swenson 233

Ray Zerán, Political Coordinator 238

#### St. Cloud Business Representatives

Steve Ludwig 254

Jason Carlson 243

#### Office Staff

Joan (Office Manager) 221

Gayle (Bookkeeping) 227

Jeana (Admin) 223

Yolanna (Admin) 222

Julie (Admin) 236

#### President

Dan Ferguson 239

#### Financial Secretary

Ted Swenson 233

#### Executive Board

John Hall, Chairman 241

Dan McConnell xxx

Kurt Tulp xxx

Jeff Orth xxx

Marc Anderson xxx

Myles Lembke xxx

Rick Ramberg xxx

#### Brotherhood Committee

Message Line 247



# News from the Minneapolis Electrical JATC

## Charles "Chuck" Lindberg Training Center

Once again the quality and expert Code® knowledge of our instructors was on national display at the 2016 NEC® Challenge, a contest started three years ago to find the top Code expert in the country. Since its inception, the only winners of this contest have been instructors from the Minneapolis JATC! Previous winners were Derek Vigstol in 2014 and Paul Holum in 2015. Each of them received an expense paid trip to the National Fire Protection Association headquarters in Boston for a final competition. An article in the March/April 2015 NFPA Journal contained a picture (below) of Holum and Vigstol with their prize heavyweight belts and also said that this may be the beginning of a Minnesota "Dynasty". This year I'm proud to report that indeed the dynasty continues, as instructor Jeremy Weed (one of three nationwide finalists) went to the final completion, held this time at the NFPA convention in Las Vegas, and took home the prize belt and \$5000.00! Congratulations Jeremy!



©NFPA

*Jeremy Weed – winner of the "NEC Challenge"*

©NFPA

*NEC Challenge - winners 2014-15-16*

## Class Offerings at the JATC

We currently have a number of specialty classes available to members. If you are considering taking a class, sign up now to ensure the class will run. We have been forced to cancel a few classes due to low registration numbers. The best time to upgrade your skills is now, not later!

Topics include: Building Automation, Cable Splicing, Code of Excellence, Code Calculations, Load Calculations, Fire Alarm, Grounding & Bonding, Hazardous Locations, Leadership, Master Code, NFPA70E, OSHA 10 & OSHA 30, PLC, 1st Aid/CPR, Health Care Article 517, Pipe Bending, Solar, VFD, Transformers & Motors and Welding.

Check our website at [www.mplsjatc.org](http://www.mplsjatc.org) for class dates and availability.

Contact Karen at the JATC at 763-307-8576 with any questions.

## 2017 NEC Books Available

If you are a member who is eligible for tool replacement per our current Inside Agreement, you are eligible to receive one (1) free copy of the 2017 NEC book.

**You will need to present your 2014 NEC (turning in a "broken tool") in order to receive the 2017 NEC.** We will stamp your 2014 book and give it back to you unless you wish to leave it with us.

Books are available either to pick up at the JATC in St. Michael during our office hours Monday – Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM or can be picked up when you come to a CE class.





# "SENIOR SPARKIES NOTES"

## Happy Autumn

By Paul Klesmit, Retirees Club President

Happy autumn to all our Senior Sparkies and retiree widowers. After a Hot, Humid and damp summer we can now enjoy the cool nights and pleasant days. Our summer boat ride on the Hiawatha on Lake Minnetonka just happened to be on the hottest day of the year. In spite of tropical conditions we had a good turnout (64) and an enjoyable day.

We are now putting plans together for our Christmas Luncheon which will be held at the Mahon Center in Edina on Dec. 14th. Watch your mail in the coming months for your invitation. It will again be \$20.00 a person. Make sure you get your RSVP and deposit in early.

We continue to have our retiree meetings at noon on the second Tuesday of every month at the Labor Center. Please join us for refreshments and a light snack. We are again asking for retirees to please fill out the voluntary retiree directory form in this Keeping Current issue. We only have about 50 signed up so far.

We plan on handing these out at the Xmas Luncheon. If you would like to maintain contact with your fellow retiree this is a great way to have that information. As we put our gardens to rest for the winter and dig out our snow shovels.

*I wish you a happy fall and hope to see you at the  
Christmas luncheon.*

*Stay Safe and Stay Healthy.*



### LOCAL 292 "SENIOR SPARKIES" VOLUNTARY DIRECTORY

I would like to be part of the Local 292 "Senior Sparkies" Voluntary Directory. I understand this is only to be used to keep retirees in contact with one another. I am only willing to share the information I have shared below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

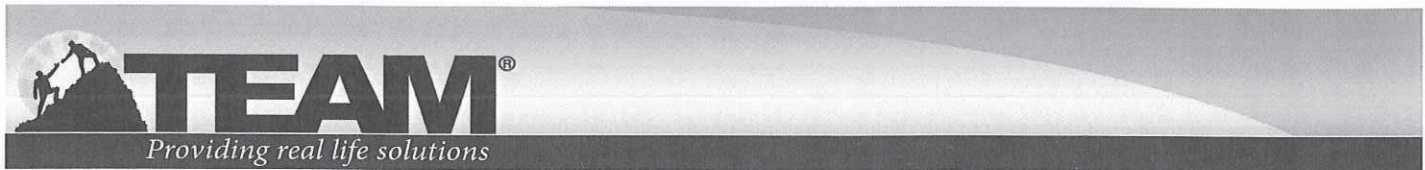
Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Retiree Boat Trip







## Home Sweet Home To Buy or Not to Buy?

Perhaps you've found a house, or maybe you've just started the house hunt, but regardless of where you are in the home-buying process, you need to consider some key questions before you even think about making an offer. Buying a home is a big commitment - financial and otherwise - so take the time to weigh pros and cons. Here are five questions every home buyer should ask themselves:

**Will I own it for at least five years?** The first and most important item you should ask yourself before you consider buying any property is whether you will own it for a long time. People buy property in hopes of increasing wealth and five years is about the break-even point for earning appreciation in value above the buying and selling transaction costs. Therefore, if you don't plan on holding the property for longer than five years, skip it! Renting a home is NOT necessarily throwing money away. Buying and selling quickly will usually leave you worse off financially than if you just held off on becoming a homeowner.

**Do I love the home I want to buy?** One of the second most important items is do you love the property? Real estate should be held for the long term, and loving a property should perpetuate a happy enduring ownership. So don't buy a property if you don't love it or at least really like or want that particular property. And don't buy just "to buy" or if someone tells you it is a good idea. Buy what you want, when you are ready, and buy a home that you will proudly boast about to your friends over the years and years.

**Can I afford it?** It is more expensive to own a home than anyone anticipates. Even if the mortgage lender qualifies you for a certain loan amount and property price, you need to make sure YOU can afford it. Lenders don't generally take into account child care expenses, health care expenses, expensive lifestyles and habits, etc. So make sure that you can comfortably afford your housing payment, still pay your other bills, and still save at least a little more for retirement.

**Is the home in good shape?** . The cost of construction and property rehabilitation is outrageous, and unless you are a contractor, it almost undoubtedly will cost much more than you anticipate. You want to buy something in decent shape and livable condition so you don't get mired in rehab disaster.

**Do I know about the neighborhood?** If you just moved into town or if you don't know the area, rent for a while and search out the perfect community in which you would like to live within your financial means. As with any big investment, the better you educate yourself the lower your risk of something going wrong.

While there is no risk-free real estate, considering the questions above should increase your chances of having a great, long-term, property ownership experience. For more information, check out our on-line resources at [www.team-mn.com/eap](http://www.team-mn.com/eap) (Password = TEAMEAP).

**Total Employee Assistance Management®**

700 Transfer Road St. Paul, MN 55114 p 651-642-0182 f 651-642-1809 Toll Free 1-800-634-7710

Web Site: [www.team-mn.com](http://www.team-mn.com)



# Home Sweet Home



## TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY?

Owning your own home. It's a dream a lot of people share, but is it right for you? Buying a home may be your largest lifetime purchase, and there is a lot to consider. How much home can you afford? How long do you plan to stay? Are you handy around the house, or will you need to hire professionals? Your Employee Assistance Program can help you find the answers to decide what is right for you:

- Articles and tip sheets on mortgages, realtors, and buying vs. renting
- Financial calculators for home buying affordability and mortgage types
- Downloadable worksheets on home comparisons and daily expenses
- Information and resources on new communities

PHONE: **651-642-0182**

TOLL-FREE: **800-634-7710**

WEBSITE: **[www.team-mn.com](http://www.team-mn.com)**

PASSWORD: **TEAMEAP**

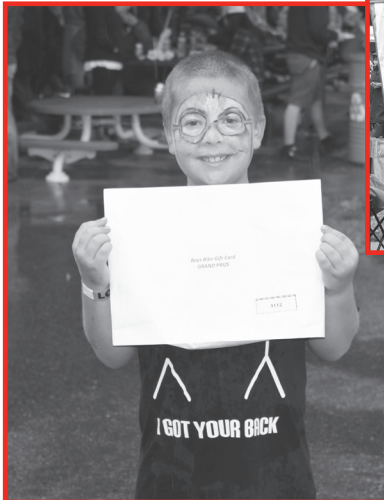
Available anytime, any day, your Employee Support Program is a free, confidential program to help you balance your work, family, and personal life.



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APR 2016



# Annual Picnic





## Safety Corner

### Can You Hear Me Now?

Let's talk about communication on the jobsite. The number one reason for mistakes, and I'd be willing to say accidents on the job, is communication errors. We don't really plan on being unsafe, but we are mentally conditioned to interpret what we see and hear with what we know about the world around us. A simple example might be hearing the foreman say "Go to the panel and disconnect the circuit we are working on and remove it from the panel." Past experience tells you that you have successfully removed wires from live panels before, so the boss must have meant to do the job in the panel while it is energized... But that's not quite what the foreman said. Is it what he meant? It's an excellent opportunity to get clarification before proceeding. A couple of quick questions could save you from looking foolish, or worse, becoming seriously injured. Most companies' owners/leaders want their employees to be safe, all the time, but somewhere in the middle the message gets lost. Often times we as electricians feel like the message is "Safety is for Appearances, Productivity is our main Priority." Let's not get caught up in seeing how short we can cut the corners. Start listening to what the company is asking for, and when it isn't in line with our own safety culture, ask questions.



## Political

## Solve the Partisan Divide

By Ray Zeran, Political Coordinator

In American politics we keep hearing that a divided Government is good, it allows for a compromise. Compromise is a good thing; each party taking a position then works to find a middle ground for both to exist. A fair-even proposition can't be made when one side continues to say no.

Take the Southwest LRT for example; the deal was struck at the end of the 2016 session that would fund the LRT, which the House Majority Leader, Senate Majority Leader and the Governor all mutually agreed upon. When the actual bill came out of the House and onto the Senate floor the bill was flawed, and it didn't contain all the provisions of the agreement. Thus the DFL controlled Senate made an amendment and sent it back to the House. The House Republicans did a masterful job of running out the clock and adjourning the session leaving the State's work undone. This was a result of some hard and rigid Republican Caucus members that couldn't stomach a fair and compromised deal. They wanted it their way and only their way, they are fully satisfied with no compromise. The end result is a divided Government that has failed to Govern; these negative results have fueled the anti-establishment sentiment in our country. Many have felt for quite a while that we should throw them all out, replace them all! It's easy to understand the frustration having lived it. If there is one thing that we have learned from Governor Jesse Ventura is that bringing in an outsider

candidate doesn't solve anything. It just creates more division and partisanship. The only answer to our political problem seems to be, to give Governor Dayton a DFL controlled House and Senate to solve the partisan divide. For years as a Building Trades lobbying group, we have tried repeatedly to talk with and have an open dialog with the Republican Caucus members and most have not listened to our labor concerns. When you go into the Voting Booth you have a chance at solving the partisan divide.

When voting, I consider my Grandfathers who both had good paying Union jobs in Northern Iowa before Right to Work (for less) then about how their pensions were robbed from them. Right to Work (for less) had a huge negative effect on my Mom and Dad's wages and benefits packages. Then I contemplate my children's heritage of a long line of honest hard working people, who are looking at starting from a deep hole of educational debt that could keep them indebted for a lifetime. I worry about the possibility of Minnesota becoming a Right to Work (for less) state and how it could haunt not just two generations of my family but four generations. It's time for Union Members to realize that taxes, gun control, religion or race, does not TRUMP the plight of the working class. It's time we ALL vote together to solve the political divide. Vote early. VOTE Labor Endorsed. In GOD we trust.

# KEEPING CURRENT

Local 292, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, publishes KEEPING CURRENT four times a year to open a communications channel between the local's leadership and its members.

Postmaster: send address corrections to Local 292, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, United Labor Centre, 312 Central Ave. SE, Suite 292, Minneapolis, MN 55414.

*IBEW Local 292 is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action for our members and employees.*

**Business Manager**/Peter Lindahl  
**President**/Dan Ferguson  
**Editor**/Michael Paul Weber

## KEEPING CURRENT

Local 292  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
United Labor Centre  
312 Central Ave. SE, Suite 292  
Minneapolis, MN 55414



PRESORTED FIRST CLASS MAIL

U. S. POSTAGE

PAID

Permit No. 92590

Twin Cities, MN

KEEPING CURRENT

12

OCTOBER 2016



## Calendar

### October 2016

- 6 **St. Cloud Informational** meeting.  
6 p.m.  
St. Cloud union hall, 2803 Clearwater Rd
- 11 **Retirees Club** meeting. 12:30 p.m.  
**Stewards** meeting. 6 p.m.  
**General Membership** meeting. 7 p.m.
- 19 **Brotherhood Committee** meeting.  
4:30 p.m.
- 20 **History Committee** movie night.  
6 p.m.
- 24 **Electrical Workers Minority Caucus**  
meeting. 6 p.m.
- 25 **Executive Board** meeting. 4 p.m.
- 27 **Sisters in Solidarity** meeting. 4 p.m.

### November 2016

- 3 **St. Cloud Informational** meeting.  
6 p.m.  
St. Cloud union hall, 2803 Clearwater Rd
- 6 **Daylight Saving Time Ends.**

- 8 **Election Day.**  
Polls Open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
**Retirees Club** meeting. 12:30 p.m.  
**Stewards** meeting. 6 p.m.  
**General Membership** meeting. 7 p.m.
- 11 **Veterans Day.**  
Provisional Holiday. Office closed.
- 16 **Brotherhood Committee** meeting.  
4:30 p.m.
- 17 **Sisters in Solidarity** meeting. 4 p.m.  
(Held one week earlier due to holiday)  
**History Committee** movie night. 6 p.m.
- 22 **Executive Board** meeting. 4 p.m.
- 24 **Thanksgiving Day.** Office closed.
- 25 Office closed.
- 26 **IBEW Founders' Day, 1891.**
- 28 **Electrical Workers Minority Caucus**  
meeting. 6 p.m.

### December 2016

- 1 **St. Cloud Info.** meeting. 6 p.m.  
St. Cloud union hall, 2803 Clearwater Rd

- 3 **Children's Christmas Party.** 9 a.m.
- 9 **Members only Christmas Party.**  
6 p.m.
- 13 **Retirees Club** meeting. 12:30 p.m.  
**Stewards** meeting. 6 p.m.  
**General Membership** meeting. 7 p.m.
- 14 **Retirees Christmas Party.** 12 p.m.
- 15 **History Committee** movie night.  
6 p.m.
- 21 **Brotherhood Committee** meeting.  
4:30 p.m.
- 22 **Sisters in Solidarity** (No meeting due  
to holiday)
- 23 **Christmas Eve Day.** (observed)  
Office Closed.
- 26 **Christmas Day.** (observed)  
Office Closed.
- 27 **Executive Board** meeting. 4 p.m.  
**Electrical Workers Minority Caucus**  
meeting. 6 p.m.
- 31 **New Years Eve**