

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1288



4000 Clearpool Circle * Memphis, Tennessee 38118 PH: (901) 363-1563 FX: (901) 363-3289

Newsletter

October 2009

IBEW-Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation



Rick Thompson
Business Manager

The question was presented to IBEW Local 1288 Union in the past and presently from different union members about starting some kind of charitable foundation donation to give back to the community. We all know that the late Assistant Business Manager, Jonnie Dawson was very passionate about donating and helping others less fortunate in the community in any way possible. For years she spearheaded a number of donations out of her own pockets to help others and organizations such as the Abused Women Shelter and she encouraged others to do the same.

IBEW Local 1288's Executive Board voted unanimously on Monday, September 28, 2009, to start a non—profit charitable foundation donation through the local union and to name it in honor of the late Assistant Business Manager, Jonnie Dawson. On Thursday, October 1, 2009, a motion was made and second; and the motion passed unanimously by the membership to start the **IBEW-Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation** through the local union. The membership will also vote at a later date on how the funds will be dispersed and what organizations, etc. the funds will be distributed to. It was also voted on by the membership to form an **IBEW-Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation Committee**. Once the charitable foundation has been formed, the committee members will be responsible for developing guidelines that will govern the charitable foundation. There are processes and requirements being completed to make sure we meet all the proper guidelines needed.

With everything in place, we anticipate being able to start this charitable foundation donation within the next forty five (45) days. **We are looking for full participation from all bargaining unit employees.** Non-bargaining unit and management employees are welcomed to participate in this charitable foundation donation also. Because this charity foundation belongs to all bargaining unit employees, we are asking that they make the **IBEW-Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation** their **primary** benevolent organization/institution. If the charitable foundation gets full participation of all bargaining unit employees, we estimate collecting approximately **five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)** a year to help the people in the community. **You will be able to give a donation on a bi-weekly basis, out of your check by payroll deduction.** We will have **IBEW-Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation** payroll deduction cards for you to sign up.

IBEW recognize that there is a need for it's membership to take an active roll in our communities as an organization. Members are being encouraged to participate and to get involved in our communities to show that we care, especially in these economic times. IBEW's Executive Board members discussed and it was presented to the membership about expanding a **separate** IBEW's involvement and participation in other organizations to include but not limited to the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) March of Dimes | e) Habitat Projects |
| b) Breast Cancer Awareness | f) Walk-A-Thon |
| c) Bowl-A-Thon | g) Fishing Tournaments |
| d) Food Drives | h) Basketball Tournaments |

IBEW Union and it's membership believes it is high time that they be recognized, respected and given credit for the work and support they give in the community.

Officers

Rick Thompson
Business Manager

Trent Ward
Assistant Business Manager

Bill Hawkins
Assistant Business Manager

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Marie Shotwell
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Greg Vailes
John Jones

Water:

Corey Hester
Phillip Richmond

General Services:

Tammy Brown
Michael Jones

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The membership recognizes that it is time to stop management from using them to make themselves look good, **then show the Union and its members little or no respect after they have gotten what they wanted.**

In the very near future, a meeting will be held with other unions in the city and county to encourage them to start a charitable fund donation in an effort to help other people in the community who are in need and less fortunate than they are. All across the country, other

unions have started some type of charitable fund donations with their local membership to give back to their community. Their non-profit charitable organization's donations have been very successful and recognized as being a great humanitarian act. With the support of our members, we know IBEW Local 1288's non-profit charitable foundation donation will be a great success with our membership and to the community.

Contract Negotiation Update

By Rick Thompson, Business Manager

The first two months of negotiating across the table between IBEW and MLGW has resulted in very little progress towards a contract agreement for bargaining unit employees, effective January 1, 2010.

In fact, only Article 25 (Military Services) has been mutually agreed on between IBEW and MLGW. If this article had not been agreed on, the law would have given military employees the same rights. Based on the negotiations that occurred in August and September, it appears we are still miles apart and somewhat at a stalemate in agreeing on all the articles that have been discussed, which include the non-economic articles. The economic articles (dealing with money factors) will be discussed in negotiations beginning after October 13, 2009. In past negotiations, it was the economic articles that presented the biggest challenges in reaching a mutual agreement. There is an impression that MLGW is setting the stage to not reach a mutual agreement, so they can take the contract negotiation to an impasse on November 1, 2009. Another fact is that President, Jerry Collins has informed his management team, who shared this information with the IBEW that he *was not* going to give the bargaining unit employees a raise. This fact has been confirmed in the 2010 MLGW Budget presented to the Board of Commissioners on Thursday, October 1, 2009.

You have to question MLGW management's intent to negotiate in good faith, when they have already decided on a particular article that has been proposed by IBEW, but not yet been discussed or resolved at the negotiation table.

MLGW has released only 55% - 60% of the requested information needed to be able to adequately negotiate. It appears that MLGW's intent was not to release ALL the requested information to IBEW at any point; which was the first act of not negotiating in good faith. Management claims they do not have some of the information we requested, even for proposals they made. This is unprecedented in the history of negotiation between IBEW and MLGW.

Hopefully, the month of October will result in successful negotiations between IBEW and MLGW and going to an impasse will not occur. MLGW only agreed to meet twelve (12) days in the month of October. IBEW is willing to meet more days, weekends and after hours if necessary to reach a contract agreement, which will void going to an impasse.

We need every member to attend the monthly meetings (first Thursday-General Membership and third Thursday-Stewards Meeting) at 5:30pm and all other Special Meetings that are called until our contract is settled.

Drug/Alcohol Testing of Employees

By Trent Ward, Assistant Business Manager

There is a growing concern by IBEW's leadership that bargaining unit employees understand that they cannot take illegal drugs or someone else prescription drugs. Employees also need to be reminded of the consequences of testing positive for alcohol use as well as illegal drugs.

The use of any illegal drugs by employees is prohibited by MLGW's policies. Any employee testing positive for an illegal drug substance, can be suspended and/or terminated. If you are involved in any kind of accident that require you to make an accident report; you will be tested for drugs and/or alcohol use. You do not have to be responsible for the accident to be drug and alcohol tested. **There is an automatic**

termination of an employee who drives a company vehicle and is involved in an accident and tests positive for drugs or alcohol. There is no exception to this policy.

Drinking alcohol the night before can result in a positive drug test the next work day. It still lingers in the body depending on how much you drink, your body weight and how many hours it's been since the consumption of the alcohol. It would be advisable for employees not to drink alcohol the night before reporting to work. If you must and need to drink, it would be advisable to do it on weekends or on your day off work.

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The use of someone else prescription medication is not only against company policy, but it is against the law. If you test positive for prescription drugs that belong to someone else or that was not prescribed for you, you will be suspended and possibly terminated. There is no exception for anyone who cannot provide proof that it is their prescription. Illegal prescription drug use is prohibited by the company's policy and the law. If an employee test positive for an illegal prescription drug use at work, they will be suspended and/or terminated.

The use of any adulterant specimen to cover up and/or hide the use of drugs will show up on a DOT drug test and will be considered the same as having used drugs, per the Department of Transportation (DOT).

When an employee is tested for drug use, they will also be tested for the use of an adulterant specimen at the same time in the same test.

IBEW recognizes the need for MLGW's policies regarding drug and alcohol use in the work place to protect employees, the public and the company. However, after talking to our attorney because of numerous complaints from employees who were drug tested for being hurt by a bee sting, parked company vehicles that were hit at no fault of theirs, etc.; **it is clear that MLGW's drug policy in current practice is being over exaggerated and unreasonably being enforced upon employees which amount to harassment of employees for lack of judgment by management.**

Automated Meter Reading/Smart Grid (AMR/AMI)

By Bill Hawkins, Assistant Business Manager

MLGW's budget for 2010 was presented to the Board of Commissioners on Thursday, October 1, 2009. This budget includes funds being allocated for Automated Meter Reading (Smart Grid) first phase implementation in 2010.

The first phase of the Automated Meter Reading (Smart Grid) has been targeted for six (6) zip codes that are in Black or majority Minority neighborhoods. The six zip codes targeted are **38104, 38106, 38108, 38111, 38114** and **38122**. Why were these six zip codes chosen only? What make Jerry Collins think that the customers (including businesses) in these zip codes want to or can afford to pay more for their utilities than the other forty (40) zip codes in the Tri-State area? The economic facts will show that these six (6) zip codes involve some of MLGW's poorest customers. Jerry Collins has been secretly soliciting the support of the City Council Members and it appears that some City Council Members may be in support of this move to automate some of MLGW's customers. This will cause an even greater divide in the poorest sections of Memphis from the richest sections of Memphis and Shelby County.

In order to automate these six (6) zip codes, Jerry Collins informed IBEW's leadership that it would only cost seventy million dollars (\$70,000,000). When in fact, MLGW's management claims it does not have money for contract negotiation.

The actual "scheme" of Automated Meter Reading will allow MLGW to use "**Time of Use Metering**" and charge the customers within these zip codes for higher rates during peak time hours. For example, if you use your electricity at a certain time on a hot summer day or a cold winter day, it will be considered peak usage and you will have to pay a higher rate (premium) for services. The same process will be applied to gas and water services.

Who will be making the money off this "scheme"? Who will be making the decisions to implement this system, when it has not worked correctly at other utility companies in other cities in the United States. Mr. Collins also told the Union Leadership in a meeting that the bargaining unit employees would install and

maintain the new meter reading system; yet when I read the proposal for this "scheme", it clearly show that MLGW will hire contractors to install it.

What negative effect will this have on the bargaining unit employees at MLGW and the community? There will be fewer jobs at the end of Automated Meter Reading implementation than there were before available for employees and the community. Jerry Collins claims that there will be no layoff of employees; but Automated Meter Reading will eliminate several hundred jobs. Anyone can do the math and come up with the same total of several hundred employees losing their jobs. The majority of the jobs that will be eliminated by Automated Meter Reading are currently held by Black and Minorities at MLGW.

The big question now is will the MLGW Board of Commissioners rubber stamp this "scheme" and send it to the City Council for approval; will the City Council vote to support this "scheme" and create hardship on employees and the rate payers (customers)?

In the Board Room at MLGW, there is a sign that reads, "to be the best utility for our customers". Does unperfected Automated Meter Reading that will end up costing Memphis and Shelby County utility customers hundreds of millions dollars sound like MLGW is being the best utility for their customers? Does this show that MLGW is concerned or want to move from the bottom of the JD Powers Survey? If MLGW was concerned, then it would never propose something as preposterous as Automated Meter Reading at this particular economic time and before it is perfected. This is the biggest scheme since Sidney Shlenker **in the name of so-called PROGRESS.**

IBEW ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN

By Trent Ward, Assistant Business Manager

The IBEW Local 1288 Semi-Annual Organizing Drive has been delayed due to contract negotiations. After contract negotiations, the Organizing Drive Campaign will get underway.

Every bargaining unit employee should make it their personal campaign to organize any non-bargaining unit employee in their department.

**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS**

LOCAL UNION 1288
4000 CLEARPOOL CIRCLE
MEMPHIS, TN 38118

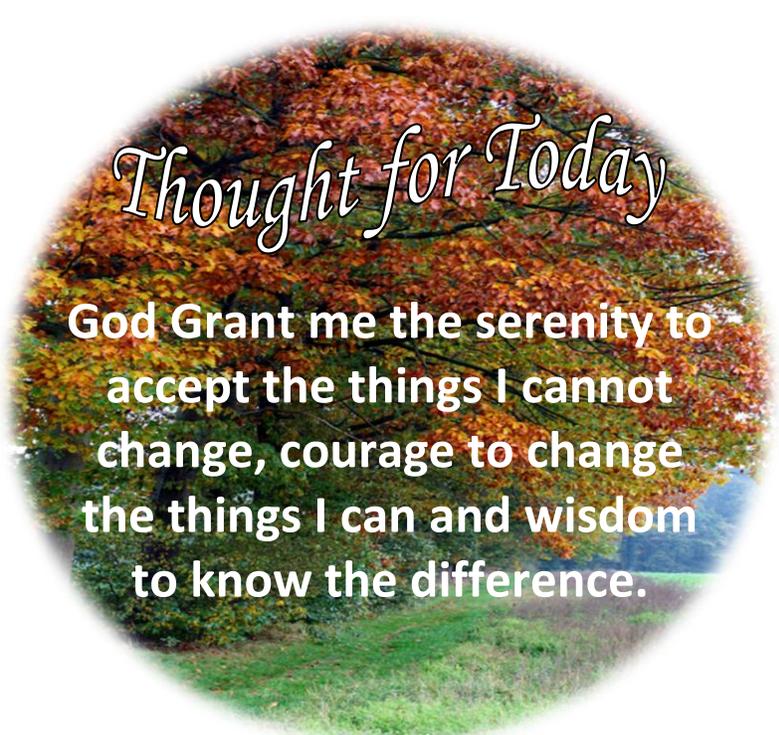
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Special Mayoral Election October 15, 2009

By Rick Thompson, Business Manager

The election of a new Mayor is extremely important to IBEW Local 1288 Union and its membership. The City Mayor is responsible for appointing the five positions that make up the MLGW Board of Commissioners. **The new elected Mayor will appoint four new members to the Board of Commissioners in 2010 and one Commissioner in early 2011.** The President of MLGW is appointed by the Mayor of Memphis. It is very important for Union Members to vote for a Mayor that will be labor and workers friendly. **Hopefully, the new Mayor will also appoint all Board of Commissioners members who will not continue the anti-union attitude being experienced by the majority of the current MLGW Board of Commissioners.**

The Mayor that is elected on October 15, 2009 will be in office until October 2011. IBEW and its members need to vote for a Mayor that will be active in correcting the **low morale** and **injustices** of the hard working and dedicated bargaining unit employees at MLGW. The new Mayor needs to be open and listen to the concerns of the employees in order to influence changing the low rating of MLGW on the JD Powers Survey.



IBEW LOCAL UNION 1288 BUSINESS MANAGERS

General Membership Meeting
1st Thursday of Each Month
5:30pm

Stewards Meeting
3rd Thursday of Each Month
5:30pm



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Please Note: Address Changes for Union Members MUST BE TURNED IN to the Union Office, BY THE MEMBER. MLGW DOES NOT provide us with Address Changes.