

Saving Salmon And Jobs

“Every citizen in the Northwest supports efforts to bring back salmon runs.”
—Coalition for Responsible River Use.

National news coverage of declining salmon runs in the U.S. Pacific Northwest has focused on proposals to remove four hydroelectric dams in the lower Snake River as a means to restore the endangered fish. These four dams, owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, supply hydroelectric power through the Bonneville Power Administration to the Pacific Northwest.

The Coalition for Responsible River Use (CRRU) was formed in March 1999 by nine labor unions, including two IBEW locals, and other concerned groups to advocate a balanced approach to saving salmon that also takes into account the impact on jobs and the economic health of the region. The Coalition is “dedicated to ensuring that our jobs and the economic base are key considerations in the federal process of reviewing these Columbia/Snake River projects. We also seek to identify and support scientifically sound near-term solutions to fish recovery.”

Coalition members include: the Oregon Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO; IBEW Locals 48 and 125, Portland, Oregon; Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local 290; United Power Trades Organization (UPTO); Columbia River Pilots Association; Iron Workers Local 29; and others.

“Certainly, we all agree that we need to save fish, but destroying our dams in the Northwest isn’t the answer,” said Claud Leinbach, secretary of UPTO. “Science suggests that other factors, including predators, foreign over-fishing, habitat problems and dams are part of the problem.”


“Before we scuttle our economy and

threaten the jobs of thousands of Northwest workers,” said IBEW Local 48 Business Manger Gerald Bruce, “we ought to take a closer look at other factors affecting fish populations. That’s what our Coalition will do.”

CRRU cites a recent report issued by a panel of nine federal agencies called the “4-H Paper.” That report examines four major factors that determine salmon survival (harvest, commercial hatcheries, habitat and hydropower production) and suggests that dam removal is not the only way to save salmon. *The Sunday Oregonian* newspaper published an editorial, “Rethinking Dam-Breaching,” on November 7, 1999, stating that, “Removing portions of four Snake River dams may not be the best way to save imperiled salmon. That’s what the latest scientific data gathered from a fish-monitoring program is telling us.”

The CRRU policy statement notes that: “Advocates of breaching four lower Snake River and John Day dams argue that this action will restore fish runs and improve the environmental quality of the Pacific Northwest. Unfortunately, breaching dams does not guarantee that salmon runs will be restored. Such action may, in fact, cause more environmental damage than it ultimately cures.”

The IBEW has noted that hydropower is a clean and renewable energy source and that hydroelectric projects benefit communities by creating jobs and contributing to economic stability.

For more information, contact Doug Riggs at: CRRU, P.O. Box 23604, Portland, Oregon 97281; phone (503) 598-8806; or e-mail cleanriver@aol.com. 


AFL-CIO MODIFIES

LOCAL STRUCTURE

Throughout early 2000, state federations and local central labor councils of the AFL-CIO will convene drafting conferences to work on details for streamlining their operations under the New Alliance program. The New Alliance, adopted by delegates to the AFL-CIO’s convention in October 1999 in Los Angeles, is designed to foster closer cooperation among local unions of various national and international unions.

The AFL-CIO said that the lack of full affiliation with local and state AFL-CIOs has hurt those bodies. Many have taken on important new tasks in organizing and political action, but “they often don’t have the resources or staff to meet their new responsibilities,” according to the federation.

Throughout the 119-year history of a central U.S. federation, affiliation has been voluntary, including the decision on how many members on whom to pay per capita tax to the AFL-CIO. Even in national and international unions fully affiliated with the national AFL-CIO, local unions are free to make their own decision on joining a central labor council or state federation and how many members to declare. In addition to higher affiliation, a goal of the New Alliance is to consolidate the current AFL-CIO structure of 601 local central bodies.

The key to the New Alliance, the AFL-CIO said, is that the local unions in the jurisdiction of state and local bodies will make the decisions themselves, following the plan laid out in meetings in 1998 and 1999. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said the New Alliance “is about having a new expectation of what local union movements can accomplish and changing to reflect today’s social and economic realities.” 

Doctor, Doctor, Give Us the News

Chalk up three victorious representation elections for Local 1158, Clifton, New Jersey. On November 29, 1999, a physicians group of 19 doctors at Essex County Hospital Center, and 100 clerical workers in the Essex County Prosecutor's Office both won IBEW representation by a landslide vote. The doctors cast their mail-in ballots unanimously for Local 1158 representation, and the clerical workers voted 78-1 for a union voice.

The physicians group reflects a growing national trend among doctors who are increasingly seeking union representation as a means to regain a voice and improve the quality of medical care for patients. Local 1158 Business Manager Joseph P. Calabro said he believes this unit of physicians is the first in the IBEW.

In an earlier election at Essex County Hospital, 42 supervisors and unit managers also gained union representation when they voted unanimously in September for Local 1158. ■



Above, some of the doctors at Essex County Hospital Center who recently gained representation by IBEW Local 1158, Clifton, New Jersey, gather for a group photo with: (standing, back row) Local 1158 representative Lou Graziano (left), Assistant Business Manager Gene Sette (third from left), Business Manager Joseph P. Calabro (center) and Third District International Representative Joseph J. Penna (second from right).



New Local 1158 members Joanne Barone (third from left) and Angela Rivera (right), two of the 100 clerical workers at the Essex County Prosecutor's Office who won IBEW representation in a November 1999 election, are pictured with: from left, Local 1158 Assistant Business Manager Gene Sette, International Representative Dominick Macchia, International Representative Joseph J. Penna and Business Manager Joseph P. Calabro.

Lighting Up A Promise

The spirit of promise and giving shone bright in a brilliant outdoor Christmas light display on view last December at the Belleville, Illinois, home of IBEW member Ed McCormick. Some 500,000 bulbs illuminated the display, with lights in the shapes of trees and stars, reindeer frolicking on the lawn, Santa and Elvis—all topped by an angel watching from above.

McCormick, 56, began his union career as a construction lineman, and is

now assistant business manager of Local 309, Collinsville, Illinois. He said he initially had decided not to put up the annual display after his wife, Carol, died in June 1999. But he changed his mind when he remembered a promise she made to their 8-year-old grandson about the lights. "She promised Joey," McCormick said, "and Carol never broke a promise." He added that "Christmas was her favorite time of year because she loved giving—she was an angel."

McCormick and five IBEW friends worked through the cold and rain, 300

hours in all, to install the lights. Among those who helped were Bill Price, 72, a still-active IBEW traveler out of Local 1547, Anchorage, and McCormick's son-in-law Steven Waligorski, also a Local 309 member. With the help of his friends, McCormick added a "200-amp electrical service panel for the outside lights... ran a conduit up a light pole, wired the lights to an outside service and installed the meter," according to an article in the *Belleville News-Democrat*. McCormick added the angel for the first time last year, placing it atop a 42-foot tree in front of the house in Carol's memory. ■

Helping March of Dimes Keep in Touch



On December 15, 1999, IBEW and CWA members volunteered to install telephones donated by Lucent Technologies Inc. to the March of Dimes National Capital Area Chapter. IBEW International Representative Michael Quinlan of the Manufacturing Department was instrumental in arranging for Lucent's donation of the Merlin Telephone System. In the above photo, IBEW Director of Personnel Peter Keenan (right) and March of Dimes Executive Director Beth Jocelyn look on as CWA Customer Systems Engineer Kenny Jameson (left) explains the various functions of the newly installed phones.



The IBEW's
Award Winner.

ILCA Honors IBEW Journal

Continuing its string of successful entries in the annual Journalism Contest held by the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA), the *IBEW Journal* received three awards in 1999 for its presentation of labor issues.

The *Journal* received the prestigious Saul Miller Award of Excellence for Best Use of Graphics in the international union category for its July/August 1998 story on the results of the successful fight against California's Proposition 226, the infamous "paycheck deception" initiative. The judges noted the "ingenious use of graphs to depict polling data, opinion changes and trends." They added that the art "illuminates and augments the essay without getting in the way of the words." The winning design was executed by Evans Design of Bethesda, Maryland.

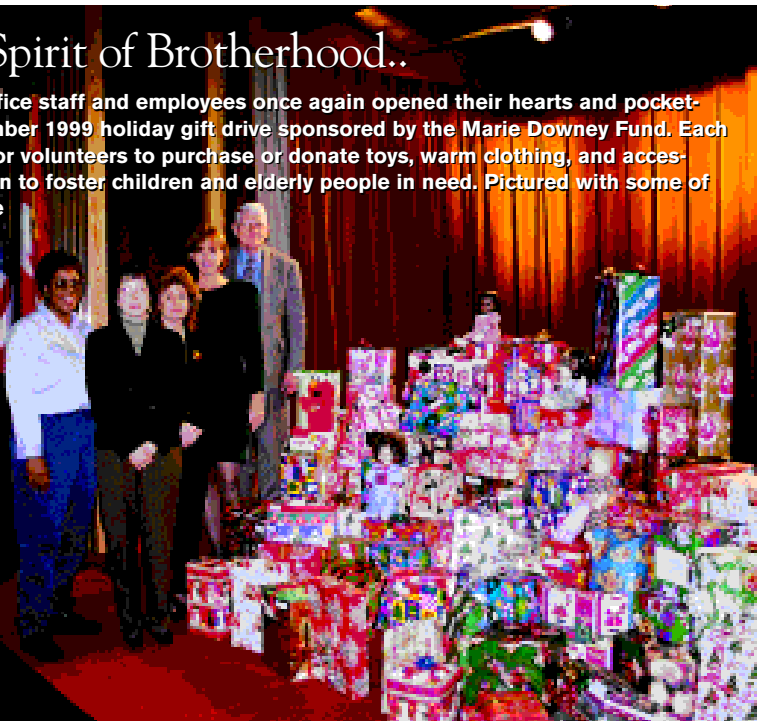
The *Journal* also received a first-place award for best use of graphics for the story, "Surviving the Great Ice Storm of '98," which appeared in the May 1998 issue, and a second-place award for unique performance for its two-part series on the importance of the fight against Proposition 226. Of the latter, the judges wrote, "This series should be disseminated for members of every trade union."

IBEW Local 1245, Walnut Creek, California, also received a Saul Miller Award of Excellence in the local union category for its special election issue in October 1998.

Generous Spirit of Brotherhood.

The International Office staff and employees once again opened their hearts and pocket-books for the December 1999 holiday gift drive sponsored by the Marie Downey Fund. Each year the fund asks for volunteers to purchase or donate toys, warm clothing, and accessories for distribution to foster children and elderly people in need. Pictured with some of the donated gifts are

Senior Executive Assistant to the International President Vincent A. O'Reilly and Marie Downey Committee members (from top) Gloria Baird, Kathie Yost, Janet Wong and Glenda Brahame. Not pictured is Maureen Emig.



TRANSITIONS

The IBEW is saddened to announce the death of retired Twelfth District International Vice President John Allen Hightower on January 31, 2000. He was 75.

DECEASED



John A. Hightower

Brother Hightower was appointed International Vice President on April 1, 1982, and

served in that position until his retirement on October 1, 1989. From 1974 to 1982 he served as an International Representative assigned to the Twelfth District staff.

He was business manager of former Local 846, Chattanooga, Tennessee, from

1963 to 1974 and served that local as Executive Board secretary and chairman. He was a five-time delegate to IBEW conventions. A dedicated trade unionist, he served on numerous labor committees and was a member of the Council on Industrial Relations, a delegate to the Chattanooga Area Labor Council and secretary of the TVA-IBEW wage data panel.

Born in Newport, Ten-

nessee, on April 9, 1924, Brother Hightower began his union career when he was initiated into Local 760, Knoxville, in 1949. A U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, he was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion and was a Mason and a Shriner.

The IBEW extends sincere sympathy to his wife, June, family and friends. ☞

The IBEW announces with regret the death of retired First District International Representative Louis G. Theriault on December 23, 1999. Brother Theriault was appointed to his position on the First District staff on July 20, 1964, and served there with distinction until his retirement on September 1, 1982.

DECEASED



Louis G. Theriault

Born in New Brunswick, Canada, on July 5, 1920, he was initiated into Local 568, Montreal, Quebec, on June 1, 1946. Prior to his appointment to the First District staff, he served his local as business

manager/ financial secretary, vice president, treasurer, and press secretary. He also served on the Executive Board and was manager of the Local 568 Electrical Credit Union.

From 1940 to 1945 he served in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He was a commissioner of the Superior Court of the District of Montreal, and his affiliations included the Canadian Legion and the RCAF Veterans Association.

The IBEW extends deepest condolences to Brother Theriault's family and friends. ☞

The IBEW is saddened to announce the death of retired Fourth District International Representative Lucian M. Bledsoe on December 31, 1999. Brother Bledsoe was appointed an International Representative

DECEASED



Lucian M. Bledsoe

on November 1, 1967, and served in that capacity until his retirement on August 1, 1984. Prior to his assignment to the Fourth District staff, his long and dedicated years of service to the IBEW included terms of office

at the local union level as business manager/ financial secretary, president and recording secretary.

Born in Exeter, Virginia, on April 26, 1921, he was initiated into former Local 1182, Lynchburg, Virginia, in November 1945. He later moved his card to former Richmond Local 1064 (which was amalgamated into Local 50, Richmond, in August 1999).

The IBEW extends sincere sympathy to Brother Bledsoe's family and friends. ☞