

## Construction Members Salute Hillary Clinton

Some 300 members stayed after the closing of the IBEW Construction Conference in Washington, D.C., April 1 to attend an IBEW fund-raising reception for New York Senate candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton. International President J. J. Barry said her election “is the best way to ensure that the voices of the workingmen and -women of New York will be heard in the Senate.”

Barry noted the large turnout for the event—which members attended as individuals, not as COPE representatives—and said the attendance “proves that IBEW members are serious about electing dedicated candidates who will work with the trade union movement and not against it.” Her likely Republican opponent is New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani.

President Bill Clinton also spoke at the event—practicing for a future role as Senate spouse. ☼



**Hillary Rodham Clinton**

### NOTICE TO RAILROAD RETIREMENT BENEFICIARIES

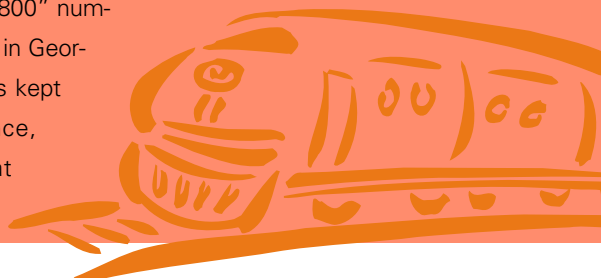
In the March 1999 issue of the *IBEW Journal*, we published information about Railroad Retirement Y2K compliance efforts, including an “800” number for beneficiaries to call to obtain information. The number was incorrect; it is the “800” number for a small business in Georgia. If any of our readers kept that issue for reference, please do not call that number. A correction

did appear in the April 1999 issue.

The correct number to obtain Railroad Retirement information is:

**(1-800-808-0772)**

Please keep this number for future reference. ☼



The Union of Hearts and Minds has once again responded to the call. Members of IBEW Locals 80, Norfolk, Virginia, and 1340, Newport News, Virginia, have joined forces in a volunteer program to assist the residents of nearby Franklin, Virginia, which was devastated in 1999 by one of the worst floods in state history as a result of hurricanes Dennis and Floyd.

International Paper, which employs a vast number of the local population, was shut down for several weeks. The local merchants were also out of business. Hundreds of residents were left homeless, their homes destroyed by the ravaging floodwaters.

The Virginia United Methodist Conference Disaster Relief Program stepped in to help coordinate the rebuilding of many of the homes that were destroyed. Dynalectric Company of Newport News began the rewiring process, and Locals 80 and 1340 recruited a volunteer group of electricians. A force of 20-25, working every other Saturday in March and April, has so far rewired and upgraded 16 homes and 2 businesses.

There are still some 100 homes that need to be renovated. Anyone who wants to volunteer their services in any way may contact Frank Jennings or Bobby Snead with the Disaster Relief Program at 757-569-7779. Members of Local 80 and 1340 may also contact their union halls for further information. ☼



**Members of Local 80, Norfolk, and 1340, Newport News, help rewire a flood-ravaged home in Franklin, Virginia.**

# Listen Up, Gannet

At a labor union rally outside KSDK-TV Channel 5 offices in downtown St. Louis, Missouri, some 100 marchers turned the protest volume up loud to support IBEW Local 4 broadcast technicians employed by the Gannett Company Inc. television station.

"Gannett-owned KSDK-TV is demanding that engineers and photographers work an additional 3 hours and 45 minutes each week for free," reported Local 4 Business Manager Michael J. Pendergast. "Our engineers and photographers' contract expired November 15, 1999. Gannett also refuses to bargain with us on behalf of the newly organized News Department Unit, in violation of the National Labor Relations Act."

Protesters at the February rally chanted, blew whistles, sounded bullhorns and marched around the station to protest the company's unfair demands and refusal to negotiate. "A bagpiper and a sign-wearing Siberian husky also gar-

nered favorable attention for us at the rally," said Business Manager Pendergast.

Local 4 members and supporters are succeeding in a campaign to inform the public of the situation at KSDK. "Through daily picketing, billboards, bus shelter posters, print advertising, hand-billing, rallies and radio interviews, we ask the public to support our union members by boycotting Channel 5," said Pendergast. "We have also asked local politicians and sports celebrities to refuse interviews with Channel 5, and many of them have pledged their support of Local 4."

"We will keep at it until we have signed agreements with KSDK-TV," Pendergast said.



**At a labor-wide rally outside KSDK-TV Channel 5 in St. Louis, Missouri, IBEW Local 4 broadcast technicians and their supporters march 100 strong. KSDK is owned by Gannett Company Inc.**

## Flying High in Dayton

As the hometown of the Wright Brothers, Dayton, Ohio, calls itself the "Birthplace of Aviation." Wilbur and Orville aren't Dayton's only soaring natives, however. Local 82 has achieved new heights with a recent organizing victory.

After a six-year campaign, Local 82 signed a contract with Prism Electric, Inc. effective March 1, 2000. Founded in 1993 with only four employees, Prism now brings 59 electricians and apprentices into the IBEW.

It wasn't easy. In 1994, Local 82 began to "strip" journeymen and apprentices from Prism, convincing them that the union offered a better future. The local offered to meet with Prism owner Greg Meece, but he declined saying he didn't do "union-type" work. After six years of IBEW leafletting at his job sites and the union's monitoring projects for compliance with prevailing wage laws,

Meece in January 2000 accepted another offer from Local 82 to meet.

Local 82 showed Meece around the union hall and the apprenticeship curriculum and training units. A member of the education committee of the Associated Builders and Contractors (the non-union contractors' organization), Meece was impressed with the quality and cost effectiveness of the program. He was concerned that his workers have no lapse in their insurance coverage, and the local health and welfare trustees took the necessary steps to provide it. Following a meeting with the Prism employees, Meece signed a contract with Local 82.



**Local 82, Dayton, Ohio, Business Manager Jerry Sims (left) holds up the signed agreement while shaking hands with new signatory contractor Greg Meece of Prism Electric.**

Business Manager Jerry Sims and his organizers note that the lessons learned through the IBEW's COMET and SCORE programs were highly instrumental in gaining this long-sought success.

*(Currents continued on page 6)*

# MBTA Workers Hold the Line

In an effort to cut costs and break the rail unions, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is attempting to privatize maintenance work on its 424-car commuter line. MBTA is a public transit agency which provides bus, subway, commuter rail and other services in eastern Massachusetts. The real story, however, is the strong show of unity among all the rail union workers, who have refused to buckle under to pressures to apply for their old jobs with the new contractor.

In January 1999, the MBTA entertained requests for proposals for contractors to perform the mechanical work for the MBTA's commuter rail operations, seeking bids for the equipment maintenance, repair and overhaul work performed at the Boston Engine Terminal (BET) and other shop facilities staffed by Amtrak workers. In May of that same year, MBTA announced the winning bidder to be Bay State Transit (BST) even though they had no workers. BST is a joint venture of Herzog Transit Services, Inc. and Boise Locomotive, Inc. Newspaper reports indicated

that BST would reduce employment at MBTA shops by 300 to save money and that all laid off Amtrak workers would be first in line for jobs with the new contractor. The approximately 250 workers left would be given first priority for future openings and they would also "be allowed to affiliate" with another union. Bay State sent the Amtrak employees a packet, inviting them to apply for jobs—but with no guarantee of getting one. No rail workers applied.

Since the time BST was awarded the maintenance contract, the issue between MBTA and its unions has been section 13 (c) the Urban Mass Transit Act of 1964, which mandates that laid-off transit workers receive the difference between what they earned in their transit jobs and their current earnings for up to six years. MBTA has refused to negotiate with the union coalition made up of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE), the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS), the International Association of Machinists (IAM),

the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders, Blacksmiths, Forgers, and Helpers (IBB), the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers (NCFO), the Sheet Metal Workers International Association (SMWIA), the Transit Workers Union (TWU), the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU), the United Transportation Union (UTU) and the IBEW.

Both the Department of Labor and the Department of Transportation have told MBTA officials that their federal funding is in jeopardy if they fail to honor the rail labor protections in existing contracts. The Federal Transit Administration, a division of DOT, said they also expressed concern about Bay State's ability to perform the equipment maintenance without an experienced work force.

"This has been a tough year and a half," said Kevin Richmond, President of IBEW Local 674. "BST sent job applications to all our members three times and all 200 members sent them back with no response. Our members are showing enormous courage and solidarity. Our people are sticking together and are not succumbing to the threats from Bay State and the MBTA." ❏

## Follow the Puck, Raise a Buck For COPE at IBEW Hockey Night

A fun family outing to a big league hockey game raised \$14,658 for IBEW-COPE in a novel fund-raising event, a first of its kind in the Third District.

Third District International Vice President Lawrence E. Rossa said the IBEW Hockey Night promotion sold 2,400 tickets to the February 25 National Hockey League game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and New Jersey Devils. IBEW International Secretary-Treasurer Edwin D. Hill joined the festivities at Continental Airlines Arena in East Rutherford, New Jersey, home ice for the Devils.

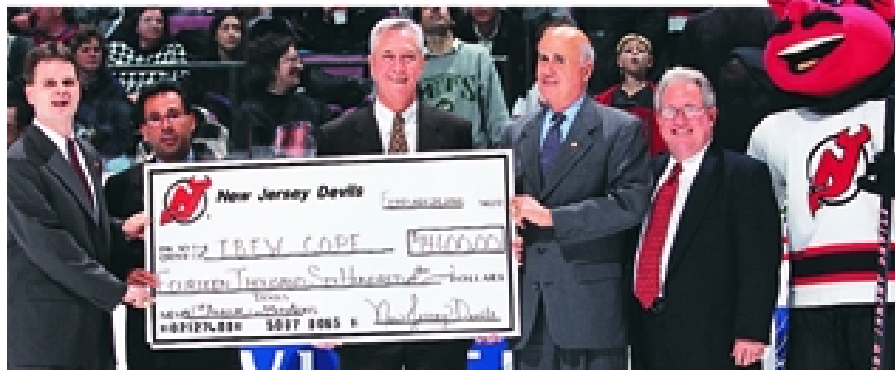
"Our success was totally dependent on the support of our local unions," Rossa said after 16 locals—seven from New York and Pennsylvania in addition to New Jersey—got behind the promotion. Rossa said the urgency of the 2000 elections for working families

prompted the unusual fund-raiser.

For a \$28 ticket, an IBEW member could get an upgrade to a \$44 seat and Devils players' involvement included

goalie Martin Brodeur posing for pictures. All the final numbers were great, except the score.

The Devils lost 3-1. ❏



**IBEW Hockey Night hits it big—\$14,658 for IBEW-COPE in check facsimile held by, from left, Devils Sales Official Neil Desormeaux, Local 1158 Business Manager Joseph P. Calabro, International Secretary-Treasurer Edwin D. Hill, Third District International Vice President Lawrence Rossa, IBEW Political/Legislative Affairs Director Rick Diegel and "The New Jersey Devil," team mascot.**