

# Brotherhood Broadcasts

## Local Union #112



April 2024

Travis E. Swayze

VOLUME 60, No. 4 #651

Bus. Mgr. / Fin. Secy.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

Brothers & Sisters:

This month I would like to talk about safety, injuries, and why we should report them.

The construction industry is inherently dangerous and hard on our bodies. A full career will typically produce a few injuries, with the majority of those preventable. While I am not sure that we can get that number of injuries down to zero, I do believe we can work on lowering our injury rates simply by paying close attention to what we do and being cognizant of how our decisions can lower the risk of accidents. Serious injuries sneak up on us, and we usually don't take it seriously until it is too late.

Asking for help is one of the best tools regarding injury prevention and another is taking the time to do it correctly and safely. Injury prevention should not only focus on better decision making on the job, but also taking care of our health by way of proper diet, exercise, and sleep regimen. I think most of us understand what we need to do, but not enough of us talk about it amongst each other to help us get motivated. The final step in prevention is post injury communication in order learn from others, share stories, and educate all of us so the same accident won't happen to someone else. Be sure to report all lost time injuries to the hall, whether it happens at work or home.

Why should we report injuries to the hall? There are several financial programs that a person could be eligible for if someone is unable to work. By tracking injuries throughout the Local, we can help come up with solutions and provide feedback to the contractors. The International also requires reporting of all recordable injuries, as these get tracked and used for discussions in producing national policies within the construction industry. If you get hurt, or hear of someone who is injured, it is important to notify the hall so we can help navigate through the proper channels.

We have an active Safety Committee made up of our Brothers and Sisters. If you would like to be a part of it, feel free to attend the meetings. The goal of the committee is to get the safety message out to through different means of communication from job box talks to newsletter articles. Come to the safety meetings and learn about the tools necessary to help prevent injuries. Participate in the safety programs at work, look out for your Brothers and Sisters, and become active in the safety culture. Do not take for granted that safety is just going to happen, it takes all of us to make a jobsite safe.

#### VETERANS & MINORITY CAUCUS COMMITTEES

Plans are underway to hold the first meetings of our new Veterans' Committee and the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Committee during the month of June. Watch the Local's website and Facebook page for future updates.

### ORGANIZING REPORT

The objects of the IBEW Constitution reads as follows:

***"To organize all workers in the entire electrical industry in the United States and Canada, including all those in public utilities and electrical manufacturing, into Local Unions."***

If you have been through Construction Organizing Membership Education Training or COMET, then you know the relationship between our market share/union density and our ability to negotiate higher wages and better working conditions. You also know that organizing those who aren't represented by the IBEW is the most effective way to increase both market share and union density. Since the disaster that was the 1980's for organized labor, the Pacific Northwest has led the way in trying to recapture that lost market share and the rest of the IBEW has followed suit. But old habits die hard and there may still be IBEW members who, for whatever reason, look down on some of our new Brothers and Sisters. As an organizer for Local 112, hearing from a newer member that disparaging remarks were made to them makes my blood boil. Because we are a highly travelled local, I would like to think that it isn't any of our members who are making these comments. I know that isn't always the case, but we all have a responsibility to call it out when we hear it. In COMET we talk about how our use of language can create a gap between us and our unrepresented counterparts. Calling them rats or worse widens that gap and makes the job of increasing our market share that much harder. Organizing isn't just one of the 11 objectives of the IBEW, it is the first. And I would argue that anyone who disparages a new member or one of our unrepresented counterparts isn't upholding the oath they took to the IBEW. Afterall, the IBEW is organized labor, and we are all organized into this institution.

**Rylan Grimes, Lead Organizer**

112

SISTERS IN SOLIDARITY

We had an amazing co-ed turnout for our Trap Shooting event at the Hermiston Gun Club. Thank you again to the Hamilton Family for reaching out and offering to put this together for us and to LU 112 for funding it. We all had a blast! Small reminder to everyone that our meetings and bonding events are for all those who support women in the trades, and not just for women. We have our next meeting on May 15th @ 6:30 pm at the hall. Zoom options are available and we have a "Sister's in Solidarity 112 (SIS 112)" Facebook page to help keep up with our updates and polls.

**Laura Leahy, Chairman**

COLUMBIA BASIN  
**ELECTRICAL  
TRAINING  
ALLIANCE**  
IBEW 112 + NECA

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE  
RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY  
AT OUR NEW

**ELECTRICAL TRAINING CENTER**

142 N. Edison Street, Kennewick, WA

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 2024 • 11:00 AM

Tours and Refreshments

#### MAY MEETINGS

Tri- Cities	May 2nd	7:00 pm
Hermiston	May 9th	7:00 pm
Yakima	May 16th	7:00 pm
Executive Board	May 23rd	5:30 pm
RENEW	May 8th	6:00 pm
PAC	May 14th	6:00 pm
Women's Committee	May 15th	6:30 pm
No Safety Committee meeting in May		

# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

~~Bringing The Power To You~~

114 N. Edison Street, Kennewick, WA 99336 ~ (509) 735-0512 Phone [www.ibewlu112.com](http://www.ibewlu112.com)



**APPRENTICESHIP & JOURNEYMAN TRAINING**

Apprentice Interviews went well. We interviewed 134 and will be starting 32 new apprentices. If someone missed the January application window, applications will be open again in the month of June.

The new Training Center is nearly complete. The move in date has been moved back a couple of weeks. We were hoping for an earlier date, but we will make do. Another reminder is that graduation will be May 10<sup>th</sup> and mark your calendar for May 31<sup>st</sup>, as we will be having the grand opening of the new Training Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony. The Western States Competition will be held at Salt Lake's Local 354 Training Center this September and we will be bringing Traven Cooley to represent our program.

Each year our instructors go to NTI, the National Training Institute hosted at Ann Arbor Michigan. The Electrical Training Alliance puts on classes training JATC members across the nation. NTI also has an outstanding apprentice training and graduation. Our JATC approved bringing an apprentice this year and Avery Thompson has been selected to attend this year.

The Milwaukee Apprentice of the Month is 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Hafiz Naziri. Hafiz has shown a great attitude in the class and on the Job.

*Geoff Arends, Training Director*



*In Memory Of*

**Gregorio Valdez  
1938—2024**

Brother Gregorio Valdez passed away in his sleep on Monday, April 1st at the age of 86. Brother Valdez was a 42 year member of the IBEW, having been initiated by Local 77 in 1982. His Travel Card was accepted by Local 112 in September 1989.

Brother Valdez worked for a variety of contractors on several projects in Local 112's jurisdiction before his retirement in 1997.

**Retirees' Breakfast**

**FRIDAY, MAY 3rd @ the hall - 9:00 am**

**COMMISSIONING TECH CORNER**  
**VITRIFICATION PLANT**

Hello my fellow union Brother and Sisters. I hope you have been able to get out and enjoy the small spurs of good weather! At the Vit Plant, we now have two heated melters with non-radioactive glass pools. It's pretty cool to be apart of the history we are making out here at the plant. We have fully ramped up the Melter 2 power supply! We took our lessons from Melter 1 and ramped up Melter 2 without a hitch. Currently working to the install of the bubblers (for agitation) in Melter 2, and then will start working on work packages for the system that supports the pouring of glass from the Melter 2 called LPH or Law Pour Handling. Well that's all the news for now but stay tuned for exciting achievements as we continue to progress through Cold Commissioning.

*Jason Allen, Steward*



**SAFETY SPOT**

**Embracing Ergonomics in the Electrical Trade**

The importance of workplace safety cannot be overstated, particularly for those of us in electrical trade, a field inherently associated with a variety of physical and health risks. Thanks to the support of our union membership, I had the privilege to attend the recent IBEW safety conference in Providence, Rhode Island. A key highlight was a session by Milwaukee focusing on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and crucially, ergonomics—an area often overlooked yet critical to our long-term health and efficiency on the job.

Ergonomic injuries, as discussed, rank third among the most common hazards faced by electricians. This statistic is a stark reminder of the 'wear and tear' our bodies endure over a career spanning 30+ years. The session underscored a simple yet profound principle: the need to tailor our work environment to fit us, rather than forcing ourselves to adapt to it. This approach not only minimizes risk but also enhances productivity and job satisfaction.

A crucial aspect of ergonomics in our field is maintaining an optimal work zone—ideally between the shoulders and waist. This minimizes overreaching and the consequent risk of shoulder injuries. Additionally, the choice of tools, particularly the size of the battery in cordless devices, can significantly affect the tool's weight and, by extension, our risk of strain and injury. Furthermore, the session highlighted the dangers of excessive vibration from tools, which can lead to conditions like white finger syndrome and carpal tunnel syndrome.

Implementing ergonomic practices is not merely about avoiding injury; it's about fostering a work environment that promotes longevity and wellness in a profession we're passionate about. This entails selecting the right tools, adjusting workspaces to our physical requirements, and being mindful of our body's signals to prevent overexertion.

As we move forward, let's commit to prioritizing ergonomics in our daily routines. By doing so, we not only protect ourselves but also ensure that we can continue to work effectively and safely for years to come. Let's make our jobs fit us, ensuring a healthier future in the electrical trade.

*Jason Brady, Committee Member*



U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #94  
Kennewick, WA  
Non-Profit Organization

**BROTHERHOOD BROADCASTS**  
**I.B.E.W. LOCAL UNION NO. 112**  
**114 N. Edison Street**  
**Kennewick, WA 99336**  
*Return Service Requested*