

Brotherhood Broadcasts

Local Union #112

May 2023

Travis E. Swayze

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

SAFETY IS ALWAYS OUR 1st PRIORITY

I hope this month's newsletter finds everyone in good mental and physical health. I continue to highlight the importance only because we need to keep both at the forefront with hopes that everyone will eventually find their motivation and continually maintain strong health. After all, both physical and mental health not only affects us, but our loved ones as well.

As we go into the month of June, I would like to highlight National Safety month. The importance of safety ties into the importance of our physical and mental well-being. The whole principle of safety on the job is to go home to our families in the same shape that we showed up to work. Safety is one of the main pillars, if not the main foundation, of why unions were formed in the late 1800's. Early on, it was a push to get companies to recognize the importance of safety and to make policies to help keep us safe. Educating companies about skilled craftsmen as being the company's number one commodity was the driver. Because this benefit was fought for long and hard, we want to make sure to take advantage of it and stay informed of new opportunities to do our job safely. Cutting corners only benefits the company in the way of time savings and financial gain and at the cost of your personal health. Please do your part and take the time to do it safely, your family will appreciate you for doing that.

Members of Local 112 have a history of performing in heavy industrial and nuclear work environments, and we continue to have a strong hold on those markets. These are especially dangerous environments that have the potential to change without notice. We need to always be aware of our surroundings, especially when working with our apprentices, newly signed on commissioning techs, material handlers, or Brothers and Sisters new on the jobsite. They are in a new environment and need to be taught or reminded of this value with constant reinforcement to improve safety within our industry and in our Brotherhood.

Working with our industry partners, we now have great policies in place and we as workers need to make sure that we follow them. In many cases the 'accidents' could have been prevented because 'we knew better', which simply means we should have taken the time to do it correctly. While it is the company's responsibility to have safety programs in place, it is our responsibility to adhere to those policies.

This leaves me with a great opportunity to talk about our Local 112 Safety Committee. Being part of this committee is a great way to become involved and become a safety champion. As a part of this committee, you will have opportunities to attend national safety conferences and receive up to date information to pass along to other members. You will have input into the progression of our local safety caucus and ways to distribute information to our members. Being involved in this committee will inherently keep you and those around you safer.

Let's all keep in mind that safety not only affects ourselves, but our family. In many cases we are the sole wage earner for our families, which makes it vitally important to take care of our ability to provide. Safety doesn't stop at the end of the workday, and it is imperative that we continue to practice safety in our personal lives.

ORGANIZING REPORT

Before I got in the trade, I occasionally would work construction and on occasion, I would work on a public job and I remember thinking that \$25/hr prevailing wage at laborer scale, which was a whole lot more than I had ever made at the time, was a premium wage. And ever since then I associated the idea of prevailing wage as a premium wage. But the truth is that the prevailing wage is simply the most common wage paid to workers in a geographical location doing similar work. So, some might call it the standard wage. That standard wage is so often associated with the union wage that Washington State tied it directly to our wage and Oregon is working on or has currently done the same. If our wage is the standard wage that means that anyone paying less than our wage is paying substandard wages. But let's not forget, that for decades if you wanted to do electrical work you did it under the protections of an IBEW collective bargaining agreement so there was only one wage, the union wage. It's only been the last 30-40 years since we lost control of the market and allowed the rise of an alternative, cheaper workforce. And make no mistake about it, those contractors who are paying substandard wages are exploiting their workers and their exploitation is a threat to our livelihoods. Every time we overlook an opportunity to make a connection with an unrepresented electrician is a failed opportunity to neutralize that threat. Every time we walk right past an unrepresented electrician in a parts house without handing out the organizers card is a missed opportunity.

Every year around the wage allocation time, it always seems to come up whether we are pricing ourselves out of the market. Well, I will tell you one big part of my job is making sure every unrepresented electrician knows what our wage is going to be so hopefully they will ask for a raise or inquire about joining. This will drive up the cost of business for the non-union contractors, making our contractors more competitive. One of our biggest advantages is that we aren't in competition with each other. We know that the IBEW is a brand, and we are only as strong as our weakest link. So instead of withholding information and training from each other no matter if you were organized through apprenticeship or as a journeyman, we are going to make each other better and the job is going to be better constructed in a timelier manner with higher quality and less re-work which in turn, will save the customer money despite our higher wage. But despite that the end goal is to get back to where we were 30-40 years ago where that cheaper workforce is either eliminated or irrelevant, because if we can do that, it will be impossible to price ourselves out of the market because we won't have any competition. But it will take all our members to do it. By the time you will have read this we will have already had our organizing blitz for the year. If you participated in it, from the bottom of my heart thank you. If you have yet to participate, give us a hand spreading the word about the great wages and benefits that we all enjoy. I hope you will consider joining us next year. *Rylan Grimes, Organizer*

JUNE MEETINGS

Tri- Cities	June 1st	7:00 pm
Hermiston	June 8th	7:00 pm
Yakima	June 15th	7:00 pm
Executive Board	June 22nd	5:30 pm
RENEW	June 7th	6:00 pm
PAC Committee	June 13th	6:00 pm
Women's Committee	June 21st	6:30 pm

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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APPRENTICESHIP & JOURNEYMAN TRAINING

All available apprentices are currently working. We took on another ten new apprentices this last month and there was work to assign them to immediately. There are 280 apprentices in the JATC but with graduation coming that number will be dropping.

Applications will be accepted through the entire month of June. Once the application is turned in the applicant has 30 days to get all the required information turned in. If you know someone who wants to apply, please refer them to the webpage. Jatc112.org Thank you to the Women's committee for volunteering and helping with the GRITT program at Tri Tech this year. Very successful event introducing young women to the electrical industry.

John Schweiger will be representing the JATC this summer at the Western States Competition in Silicon Valley, California. John has been at the top of his class and will continue to do well. The Milwaukee Apprentice of the Month is Michael Shannon. Michael is a 2nd year apprentice and is currently working in Oregon. Michael has shown success on the job and in the classroom.

Geoff Arends, Training Director

112 SISTERS IN SOLIDARITY

On May 10th, the Sisters of 112 called a special meeting to reallocate \$2,000 of our committee funds, to help our Sister Chantelle Meyers. Her eldest son Kennedy was in a horrific motorcycle accident on April 15th, and her family is dealing with rapid growing expenses to be near him at Sacred Heart Medical until he is stable enough to be moved back to Tri-Cities. All Stewards have more information for those that would like to contribute to our Sister.

At first, the 112 Sisters were simply getting together to have an opportunity to get to know each other. In 2018, we were encouraged to form a Women's Committee, and became the 112 Sisters In Solidarity (112 SIS). Since then, we have grown from friendships into a Sisterhood within the 112 Family. Our bonding activities help us step away from the chaotic, to grow and to laugh; and our meetings are for us to find ways to take care of our own and to give back to our community.

All IBEW members who support Women in the Trades, are greatly welcome to join us in both bonding activities and meetings. We will be planning further fundraisers to help re-establish our committee funds, so we can once again be ready to help another Sister in need. There will be a time in everyone's life when they need to step away from work to take care of themselves or their family, and it always comes unexpectedly. We have great respect and gratitude to be a Sisterhood within the Brotherhood of the IBEW of 112. Thank you to all who stand with us.

Laura Leahy, Chairman

Retirees Breakfast Friday, June 2nd @ the Hall - 9:00 am



In Memory of

**Brent Borup
1940-2023**

Brother Brent Borup passed away on April 4, 2023 at the age of 82. Brother Borup was initiated into Local 112 in 1968 after successfully passing the Journeyman Wireman Exam. He was a 55 year member of the IBEW.

Brent lived in the Yakima area and worked for a variety of shops in the Yakima area over the years. He went to work on the Hanford Site for a few years in the early 80's before opening his shop, A-C Electric in Yakima in 1985, which he ran until his retirement in 2008.

**Todd Linton
1964-2023**

Brother Todd Linton passed away on Monday, April 24th at the age of 58. Brother Linton was a 32 year member of Local 112, having been initiated into the Local in 1991. He completed the inside apprenticeship program and became a Journeyman Wireman in Mach 1995.

He worked construction until 2003 at which time he went to work in maintenance on the Hanford site and later into management.

**Ross Odell
1955-2023**

Brother Ross Odell passed away in May 2023 at the age of 67. Brother Odell was initiated into Local 112 as an apprentice wireman in March 1979 and completed the four year apprenticeship program, becoming a Journeyman Wireman in 1982. He was a 44 year member of the IBEW.

Ross preferred working for the shops on smaller jobs and worked for several contractors throughout his career, but also ventured to the Hanford site on occasion.

Brother Odell volunteered his time as Chairman of Local 112's golf tournament for many years before his retirement in 2018.

SAFETY SPOT



When working overhead, look above for electrical lines. In most work places, there is a potential for live electrical equipment and parts above the floor level, which are only accessible with ladders or elevated platforms. Be sure to use a portable ladder with non-conductive side rails and stay at least ten feet away from any exposed electrical lines while you are performing overhead work. Keep in mind some higher voltages require more than a ten foot safety clearance. If you are not sure, contact the local PUD for the proper safety clearance.. This also applies to projects at home—whether you are moving sprinkle lines on the farm or cleaning the pool—look out for what's overhead.

Ed Manthei, Committee Chairman



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