

### Dates to Remember:

05/12/16: Union Meeting, Owatonna Eagle's Club (NOMINATIONS)  
05/30/16: LU 343 Offices CLOSED (Memorial Day)  
06/09/16: Union Meeting, Owatonna Eagle's Club (\*Election Results\*, Allocation of Wages and New Member Swear-In)  
06/11/16: Sparky Fishing Opener  
06/16/16: Deadline for Newsletter Article Items  
07/1/16: 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Union Dues DUE  
07/04/16: LU 343 Offices CLOSED (Independence Day)  
07/14/16: Union Meeting, Owatonna Eagle's Club

### Wanted:

Volunteers are needed to help plan the Summer Picnic. This year it will be in Red Wing. Contact the Hall if you are interested in helping!



March 10, 2016 Union Meeting  
Swear-In of 7 New Members

### Military Leave

Benjamin R. Bunnell, JIW - Returned 2/23/16

Payton P. Lee, APP – Deployed 4/7/16

~THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE~

### Save the Date

**Summer Picnic is being held Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at Colvill Park in Red Wing**



IBEW Local 343  
9 80<sup>th</sup> Street SE  
Rochester, MN 55904

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Business Manager's, Rep's, Organizer & Compliance Officer Reports  
Apr. 2016 SCMNJATC Newsletter (grey insert)

Retirements

Condolences

Birth Announcement

Awards Banquet Pictures

**Official Notice of Nominations and Elections (Goldenrod Insert)**

Upcoming Work (white insert)

Upcoming Dates to Remember (back page)

Sparky Fishing Opener Information (orange insert)

**REMINDER → DUES INCREASE for 2016**



IBEW LOCAL 343 UNION

Second Quarter Newsletter 2016  
April, May, June (July)

# Groundwire

## Business Manager...Derek Mensink Making It Count

Spring is in the air and there is a lot going on in Local 343. Just like the industry itself, there is never ending movement in our jurisdiction.

There seems to be a lot of hope and excitement in construction again this year. The market seems to be moving forward at a steady pace. I think most of us would agree that steady is good. Yet, the unknown is something that excites and concerns most of us in the construction trade(s).

Construction unknowns this year seem greater than ever. Some of the talk regarding DMC (Destination Medical Center) is both exciting and troubling. It seems that there is this hurry up and wait mentality going on with the futuristic model of what Rochester will become. There is no doubt that we have seen some of the early benefits DMC and hopefully things will start to even become more prevalent in the near future.

There is also a lot of excitement regarding the solar industry. We have been dealing with two separate contractors that have secured a massive amount of solar in Minnesota. Both of these projects will be done



with IBEW manpower. If all the projects happen as projected in the next couple of years, there will be a manpower need between 600 – 800 electricians. This does not include all of the other solar projects being bid throughout the state of Minnesota. It is vitally important that we man this work. IBEW Local 343 and Local 292 have worked hard to make sure that Project Labor Agreements have been signed on these projects. It is now our duty to man the work and finish these projects IBEW Proud.

In closing, also keep in mind the political year. Do your duty and research your candidates both locally and nationally. Find the ones that support us and that benefit your livelihood. Don't be afraid to volunteer if called upon. It will assure that we continue to grow this local with fair and

honest wages and, just as important, is our collective bargaining agreement. There are too many politicians out there that believe by eliminating unions, it is better for America. That Brothers and Sisters could not be farther from the truth!  
Have a great spring and summer. Work hard and more importantly – Work Safe!

In solidarity,

Derek Mensink

## MEETING NOTICE:

The June 9, 2016  
General Membership  
Meeting will be held in  
**OWATONNA** at the  
Eagle's Club at 7 p.m.  
Election Results,  
Allocation of Wages  
and  
New Member Swear In



## Rochester Rep Report >>>Chad Katzung

I'm proud to report that the work projection going forward is very positive. There are some good opportunities as we start out our 2016 construction season. We're working hard to maintain and grow market share wherever possible. Solar farms will be a large portion of our work picture this year. We are working closely with our contractors to secure most of that solar work. Eagan/Neitz, Hunt & Mortenson construction will be taking on a large portion of the solar work in the area. We're waiting to hear on some of the details and we'll let you know as things start to fall into place.

The calls have been coming in steady for manpower all spring and the number of calls for manpower is expected to rise dramatically as we head into summer. It is very important for our members to man the work in the area. Our contractors have worked hard to secure the work, now it's



up to us to man the work. The work has to get done, and if we don't man it, someone else will. You can expect additional details about work opportunities and numerous other important updates at our regular union meetings. It's important to attend as often as possible.

In solidarity  
Chad Katzung

## Our Condolences:

Retired Bro. **Larry B. Klingsporn** – Rochester, MN – Passed away 12/28/15. Larry had been a member since March 1970.

Retired Bro. **Charles H. Johnson** – Olivia, MN – Passed away 12/12/15. Charles had been a member since January 1959.

Retired Bro. **John L. Williams** – Owatonna, MN – Passed away 1/9/16. John had been a member since April 1952.

Retired Bro. **Douglas E. Ovens** - Stevensville, MN - Passed away 2/15/16. Douglas had been a member since February 1958.

Retired Bro. **Ronald C. Ginapp** - Frontenac, MN - Passed away 2/15/16. Ronald had been a member since September 1969.

Brother **Dennis M. Doherty** - Rochester, MN - Passed away 3/3/16. Dennis had been a member since September 1969.

## Retirements/Disability:

John T. Parker – 12/31/15  
Richard B. Sandeno – 1/17/16

## Mankato Rep Report...Shane Meier

Owatonna/  
Mankato/  
Western  
Minnesota:

I hope everyone had a good time at the Awards Banquet held in Mankato. I would like to say congratulations to all of the members who received awards and walked away with a prize (I thought the food was better this year also). In the Owatonna Area we do have some projects that will be coming up for bid real soon and we also have a couple projects that have already started with IBEW contractors landing these projects. It is nice to see some contractors bidding in Owatonna again as it is a tough area, but we are making some progress. Mankato has some decent projects going on right now with some more that have just recently bid and we are waiting to hear on. I have not heard anything on Calpine in the last month, but I will keep you updated if anything new comes out. There are a bunch of solar projects coming to southern Minnesota and we are just waiting for permitting and the contractors to let us know when they will be starting. St. Peter has work going on at the State Hospital and Gustavus College with the rumor that they will also be doing a Clinical Science Building soon. In the New Ulm Area there have been a couple of School Projects that have bid recently and we are waiting to hear who got these projects. At Kraft, one of our contractors did give preliminary budget numbers and we are waiting to hear on that project too. Out in western Minnesota there have been a couple of projects bid and Dewar will be having some calls coming in for various projects along with Master Electric, once the Processing Plant in Windom gets some final approvals. Again, if you hear of a project going on or have someone interested in the IBEW please have them get in contact with one of us. I look forward to another GREAT YEAR of work and some good organizing opportunities. Hopefully we will have seen some of you at the Midwest Electrical Trade Show in April. In Solidarity,  
Shane Meier

## REMINDER: Keep Us Informed

Please remember to notify us if any of your contact information changes. (i.e., mailing address, home phone number, cell phone number, email address)

If you keep us updated, we can keep YOU updated!



## Contact Us:

Derek Mensink, Business Manager:  
507-282-7081 x114

Chad Katzung, Business Rep (Eastern):  
507-282-7081 x115

Andy Kuisle, Membership/Marketing:  
507-282-7081 x113

Shane Meier, Business Rep (Western):  
507-345-2133

Jim Backus, Membership/Compliance:  
507-951-8267

Andy Toft, JATC / Apprentice Office:  
507-282-7081 x118

Bonnie Hinkle, Pensions/Financials:  
507-282-7081 x112

Colleen Marks, Membership/Referral:  
507-282-7081 x 222

## Organizing Department Report... by Andy Kuisle

Since the last newsletter the organizing efforts have been rewarded at local 343 with two new signatory contractors.

American Energy LLC of Blooming Prairie and Dan W Olson Electric of Winona have chosen to become Union contractors. If you have the opportunity to go to work for one of these contractors or see them out and about, please make sure to thank them for joining the IBEW and taking advantage of the benefits that IBEW Local 343 provides.

We have had many top-down and bottom-up contacts so far in 2016 and we have been met with quite a bit of interest by the nonunion workers as the workload increases throughout our jurisdiction. As the workload continues to grow, we need to make sure we have enough workers to complete the work that is being bid. Contractors have put the faith in Local 343 to supply them with enough manpower and, if the current membership and travelers that come to help us out are not enough, then organizing is the only way to make sure the jobs get done.

As we have many times said, all of us know of someone working as a nonunion electrician. I would challenge each one of you to reach out to that individual that you may know and try your best to explain the benefits of working under a collective bargaining agreement to them so that maybe, one day, they will work side-by-side with us as a represented Union Electrician. Our future as a local depends on it.

In Solidarity,  
Andy Kuisle

**Congratulations to Brother Dustin Lennie  
and wife on the birth of Baby Boy Dean  
Allan! Born 12/29/15  
6# 14oz, 19.75"**



## Compliance Officer Report... Jim Backus

Brothers and Sisters,  
H-2B Visa

The H-2B Visa is a work visa that allows employers to bring foreign nationals into the United



States to fulfill jobs of a non-agricultural nature. This obviously could include open positions in any of the Building and Construction Trades areas. With the anticipated upcoming workload, this may possibly become an issue in our area. The Twin Cities have already experienced a problem regarding H-2B workers. These positions can only be filled as a temporary status and the employer must be able to prove certain criteria. The locations as to where these workers can work are specified by the Department of Labor (DOL). To be qualified under the H-2B Visa, the employer must attest to the DOL that:  
-the position is temporary (one time occurrence; seasonal need; peak load need; intermittent need. This is normally a maximum of one year)

-the employer is unable to locate current US workers to fulfill those positions

-the utilization of H-2B Visa workers will not adversely affect any wages, benefits or working conditions of current US workers performing like work

-the pay must equal the applicable federal or state minimum wage or prevailing wage, if applicable

-the employer must notify the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) if the H-2B worker does not report to work, if they are terminated or the temporary work is completed earlier than anticipated

As with anything, and as noted from the Cities, this program has the opportunity for abuse. A company based in the Dakota's was utilizing H-2B Visa workers in a construction trade. They were only allowed to employ these workers in a certain area of North Dakota. The contractor brought these workers into Minnesota, the Twin Cities area, violating the agreement, and taking jobs away from local people. The Fair Contracting Foundation (FCF) was able to get the H-2B Visa workers removed off of the job and a complaint filed against the contractor. It was then learned that this contractor had previous violations for abusing this program.

If anyone would happen to observe a contractor that may be utilizing H-2B Visa workers, please let me know. I will check into if they are legally allowed to be where they are and if the contractor is legitimate. As quoted by Harry Bridges, "*The most important word in the language of the working class is 'solidarity'.*"

In Solidarity,  
Jim Backus

**Reminder, if you would like to receive informational texts from the hall please send the text ibew343 to the number 44244. You will get a confirmation text back asking if you want to confirm. If you do then you type yes.**

**STANDARD TEXT RATES DO APPLY. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE UNLIMITED TEXTING THIS WILL COUNT TOWARD**

## Newsletter Info

**If you have news or information you'd like to see in your newsletter, please contact the Hall. Newsletters are typically mailed out every quarter. (this newsletter is late due to the Awards Banquet)**

## \*2016 UNION DUES\*

"A" Members \$108.00/Qtr  
"BA" Members \$60.00/Qtr

DUE the 1<sup>st</sup> of EVERY Quarter  
(Jan. 1, Apr. 1, Jul. 1, Oct. 1)

\$20.00 Late fee each month  
you are late

## 2015 UNION DUES

"A" Members \$105.00/Qtr  
"BA" Members \$57.00/Qtr