Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Certainly, many things have changed over the last couple of weeks and since our last newsletter. As we watch the grasp of a global pandemic run its course on our economy, healthcare system and society, I can't help but wonder how long these uncertain times will last. Although none of us can answer that question with any accuracy, I can however update you on what we are doing as a Brotherhood to navigate through these troubled times as good as possible.

I believe good communication is the best way to help our large membership through these tough times. Our new App is our best means to deliver fast, accurate, and updated information to the membership through push notifications. Important information essential to our members regarding Federal Legislation such as the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (“FFCRA”) and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“Cares Act”) as well as State adoption of these measures will be posted on as many IBEW sources as possible. Information is changing almost by the hour, such as extended unemployment benefits as well as IBEW correspondence from the International and local levels regarding agreements like the National Disease Emergency Relief Agreement (NDERA), adjusted referral procedures (Local 354), as well as electronic book signings to comply with recommended COVID-19 protocols. We have been contacting members who are on the out of work list to help them with any issues that may arise to make life a little bit easier during these times. Please remember to contact us if you are on the out of work list and are called back to work off of a furlough. Under the NDERA agreement members are allowed to take short calls or sign other books while on furlough. Only losing a furlough position if you take a regular call. I would also like to mention that there are some work opportunities within the Eighth District. If you are interested in traveling, please call dispatch for more info. Next, we will be contacting retirees as well as working members to make sure they know we are here to help or answer any questions they may have to the best of our ability.

Also, to comply with government recommendations and efforts to minimize exposure and minimize the spread of this horrible virus, I have closed the Hall to walk in foot traffic as well encouraged my staff to work remotely and stagger shifts as much as possible to reduce risk to all members and staff. This has also occurred in many other locals throughout the Eighth District. The Hall is still fully operational with at least one person always there and continues to operate during our normal hours. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused anyone and appreciate your patience and understanding.

Although the timing of an administration change during these unprecedented times has been less than ideal. The official switch from Compusys to Benesys became effective on April 1st. All members should have should have received three documents in one mailer approximately two weeks ago addressing Pension, Annuity, and Health information as well as new contact information for the new administrator. This important information is on our APP and Website if you did not receive it. New PCA cards and prescription cards should mail out this week. Also, the new 8th District website should become available this week with new login information coming in the mail within the next couple of weeks. Please remember that if you had any purchases that would have been PCA qualified during the transition blackout period from March 23rd until you receive your new card, please keep your receipts for reimbursement from the PCA. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns as we continue to navigate through this transition period.

Finally, I would like to thank all members for your patience and understanding though these difficult times. Our members have stepped up and continue to work safely when other members cannot. Many members have chosen to stay home when they were sick just to be sure and out of care for their Brothers and Sisters. Many members have extenuating circumstances, whether it be from underlying health conditions, taking care of elderly loved ones, or taking care of their own children when daycare or schools were shut down. Nevertheless, no matter what the reason IBEW 354 will continue to weather the storm while working as smart and as safe as we possibly can as long as electrical construction have been considered an essential service to society by our government. We need to contribute to our Pension and Health plans to keep them healthy as possible. Contribution hours are critical to the health of these plans and contribution increases and benefit cuts are likely if our contribution hours drop significantly through this crisis. Nobody has any idea how long this will go on. All we can do is work as safely as we can by working smart and following social distancing and healthy practices to the best of our ability. We will accomplish this by not criticizing those who can’t but appreciating those who can and staying united as a Brotherhood.

Brotherhood is displayed best when times are tough and the IBEW is no stranger to tough times over the last 128 years. We have survived world wars, devastating diseases, both economic and natural disasters, and we will come through this crisis, better and stronger than ever before.

Stay Safe and Healthy.

In Solidarity,

Steve Woodman
IBEW 354 Event Reminders

All Unit Meetings have been Canceled for April and May 2020

The Annual Easter Egg Hunt
Has been canceled for this year 2020.

Northern Steak Fry
Has been postponed until October 9, 2020

We are currently on Death Assessment #170

From the Local 354 Staff. We wish you and your families a wonderful Easter!

Brook and Susie Christensen
Welcomes baby
Anaya
2-29-2020
7 lb 20” long

Check out the Covid-19 tab now on the IBEW 354 Application and Website for the newest updates and important information.

Dohn Campbell
January 17, 1975 - March 28, 2020
You can view his Obituary here.
https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/12594324/Dohn-L-Campbell

HAPPY EASTER!

The New app is here! Search "IBEW 354" in your Apple or Android store.

WELCOME NEWBORN!