Looking For A Few Good Linemen

By Dave George - Business Manager

IBEW Local 204 is looking for a few good Linemen to represent Local 204 at this year’s 2014 31st Annual International Lineman’s Rodeo.

At Local 204’s July Executive Board Meeting, the Board approved sending three Journeymen Linemen and one Lineman Apprentice to the 2014 Lineman’s Rodeo in Bonner Springs and Overland Park, Kansas on Friday, October 18th and Saturday, October 19th.

The rodeo will be held in Bonner Springs, Kansas and the awards banquet will be held in Overland Park, Kansas.

Local 204 will pick up all the expenses for this event for the participants. This event is open to all Local 204 members in good standing who are Journeymen Linemen or Linemen Apprentices.

The 2014 Team and Apprentice Events will be as follows:

**Team Events**
- Hurtman Rescue
- Pole Climb
- (2) Mystery Events

**Apprentice Events**
- Apprentice Written Test
- Hurtman Rescue and Pole Climb
- CPR w/AED and a Mystery Event

All qualified members wishing to participate must call into the Local 204 office at (319) 366-3434 by September 4th. The places on the Local 204 team will be filled on a first come, first served basis. If there are not enough qualified volunteers for the rodeo team, Local 204 reserves the right to cancel all participation.

If you are interested in representing Local 204 at this year’s Lineman’s Rodeo, please call our office ASAP so that we can reserve hotel rooms and make other accommodations.

You can get further information at the official Lineman’s Rodeo web site at www.linemansrodeo.com.
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Greetings,

It is hard to believe as I write this, that summer is almost over and fall will soon be upon us. I hope everyone had a safe summer.

I have had the pleasure of being a union steward for local IBEW 204 for the last ten plus years. I feel I have grown as a person and learned a tremendous amount by working with those that I have helped navigate some sticky situations. Union Stewards are called upon for many different situations, and we wear many different hats.

**WHAT IS A UNION STEWARD?**

A union representative, union steward, or shop steward is an employee of an organization or company who represents and defends the interests of her/his fellow employees, but who is also a labor union official.

**WE ARE ORGANIZERS.** It doesn't just mean signing up new members, although it means that too. It means stewards are responsible for organizing the whole workplace to deal with problems as a united group, which is, when you think about it, what labor unions are all about.

**WE ARE PROBLEM SOLVERS.** We are the person workers turn to with their problems. It might be a work-site hazard, a firing, or perhaps layoffs are threatened. It might be just a new employee with a question. The problem may be solved with a friendly word, or maybe it will require organizing a worksite action or filing a grievance. Problems don't go with your territory--they are our territory.

**WE ARE EDUCATORS.** The contract? The Benefits plan? Why did they do that? The workplace is a complicated road to navigate, and members are counting on stewards to help them make sense of it. Equally important, union officers are counting on us to help them keep in touch with their co-workers.

**WE ARE WORKPLACE LEADERS.** We are the one who keeps the workplace moving. Stewards are the one who's not afraid to speak up to management. **OUR NUMBER 1** job is to make sure you never forget there's a union at your worksite.

If you have a problem, please feel free to contact me or your local steward with any questions or concerns you may have. We are here to help.

In Solidarity,

Chad HIIsabeck
E-Board Area 6
New Training for Working Energized Voltage of 24.9 Kv

By Terry Shannon - IPL Energy Delivery Blue Hat

Over the past couple of years, we have put language in our contracts to allow for working energized 24.9 Kv, much the same as 12.5 Kv or 13.2 Kv. Although it is limited as to where you will find this voltage, we are starting to see more of it and new substations are being built with feeder circuits at this voltage. The contract says that we must have work rules in place and training before we are allowed to work this voltage. I just want to bring you up to speed on where we are at with this process.

A committee was put together to look at the work rules and work practice issues some time ago. This committee consisted of line mechanics from Locals 204, large and small group, and 949. When this committee was put together, Local 1439 had not yet passed this in their contract. It also consisted of management personnel, safety personnel, training personnel and the Blue Hat. This committee went on several crew visits to discuss work rules with companies that are already working this voltage. They went to Wisconsin Public Service in Green Bay and WE Energy in Milwaukee. This was very helpful in finding best practices and common work practices.

The decision was made that we really didn’t need to make any changes to our Safety Rules: that “hot work” is “hot work”. We did need to make some word changes in the Safety Rule Book to allow us to work this voltage “hot”, so you will be seeing those changes coming soon. There is also a change to the MAD for this voltage. Phase to phase and phase to ground MAD will now both be 3 feet. We do have some “work practice” changes that need to be made, most notably better use of cover-up. This is something we should probably be doing better on a daily basis, regardless of voltage. Otherwise, you won’t see much difference in the 24.9 Kv work.

We have started the training, and it has gone pretty well. The first training was held in Lamberton, Minnesota on a section of energized 24.9 Kv line. We have since also held several training sessions at the Training Center in Marshalltown. We have the ability to energize a section of line at the Training Center to 24.9 Kv, so much of our training will be held there. The training consists of classroom time, as well as hands on training. The classroom basically is review of some of our Safety Rules and EOP’s, as well as some of the things you can expect to be different when working energized 24.9 Kv. This has brought up quite a few good questions, and we expect that to continue. This is a work in progress for all of us. The hands-on sessions consists of going out and actually doing some “hot” work on the voltage. One difference is the option to use class 2 or class 3 gloves to work this voltage. At the hands-on part of the training you will be given the opportunity to try both classes of gloves and make a decision which one you are comfortable with. We have been told by those that have worked the voltage that under certain conditions, your body will hold a charge and discharge on tools, wire, etc.

The key to being able to work 24.9 Kv with class 2 gloves is cover-up. You must eliminate phase to phase exposure so that you only have phase to ground exposure. Phase to ground voltage is 14.4 Kv so that is why you can work this in class 2 gloves with proper cover-up.

The training will eventually be available to everyone. Working this voltage is voluntary by the contract, so you will not be forced to work it if you chose not to. If you chose to attend a training session, you will not make a decision if you want to work it until after the training. Those areas that have, or will have this voltage will be the first to be trained. If you have the opportunity to attend a training session, take advantage of it so you can decide if this is something you are interested in working energized. If you have questions on this, contact the training department, safety department or your ED Blue Hat.
WANTED! Active COPE Members!

We are looking for IBEW Local 204 members who possess Union values and strive to promote the issues of working families and the middle class, to be a part of our COPE Committee.

COPE stands for Committee On Political Education. This committee educates members on political issues that effect our members and their families as it relates to economics, legislation, retirement, working conditions, etc. The COPE Committee meets every other month, on the odd numbered months, on the second Wednesday at 5:30 PM via teleconference.

Our COPE Committee also decides how the voluntary donations of our members are spent to promote candidates and issues that are important to our members and their families. No Union dues are used to support any political candidates, only voluntary COPE donations may be used for these purposes.

If you want more information, or are interested in being on the COPE Committee, please call the office at (319) 366-3434 and speak to Business Manager, Dave George.