



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 234

# IBEW Local 234 Newsletter

The Electrical Worker's Union for Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties

May 2020

## Local 234 Officers:



Lamont Adams  
**Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary**

Mike Ihnot  
**President**

Al Randall  
**Vice President**

Nick Prelgovisk  
**Treasurer**

Stephen Slovacek  
**Recording Secretary**

John Agra  
Andy Gattis  
Trudi Teller  
Ryan Porter  
**Executive Board**

## Business Manager's Report by Lamont Adams

Sisters and Brothers,

On the Inside out-of-work list we have 10 on Book 1, 65 on Book 2, 13 on Book 3, and 8 on Book 4. There are 2 on Book 1 for Sound & Comm, 0 on Book 2, 4 on Book 3, and 0 on book 4. There are 2 on CW Book 1 and 6 on CW Book 2. There are no Inside apprentices on the out-of-work list.

From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic our members have continued to show leadership and practice the Code of Excellence. Social distancing safe work practices are in place at

jobsites considered essential and some of our at risk members are staying at home. No matter the situation the brother- and sisterhood of Local 234 remains strong.

With a flattening of the curve of infections, Governor Newsom has laid out a phase reopening plan for the State. This and more information can be found at [www.covid19.ca.gov](http://www.covid19.ca.gov). We will continue to follow the advice of our health authorities and the Governor of our State as we move forward.

Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties Health Offices are now requiring residents to wear face coverings when going out into the public to perform essential activities. Social distancing, sheltering in place, facial coverings, and frequent hand washing have all been shown to help slow the transmission of COVID-19.

In our Tri-County area there have been 366 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 9 deaths. With all of our efforts we can help keep those numbers low and assist with the continued decrease in cases.

International Vice-President John O'Rourke has approved my request to cancel the **May 13, 2020** General Body meeting. We do not feel the shelter in place requirements will be lifted before that date and I refuse to put our membership at risk unnecessarily.

Your Executive Board will continue to meet regularly online. The Executive Board and I continue to take care of the business of our Local. If you have any questions, concerns, or business that would be addressed during our regular scheduled General Body meetings, please email them directly to me at [lamont@ibew234.org](mailto:lamont@ibew234.org). I will bring them to the attention of your Executive Board.

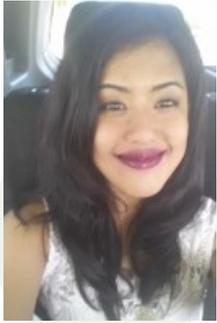
The Hall and JATC will continue to remain **CLOSED** to the public until such time it is deemed safe to reopen. Our apprentices are continuing their studies online and we will be preparing Journeyman upgrade classes online also. Services are still available for members by telephone for questions. Our website is also available for dues payments, monthly re-sign, and COVID-19 updates. Our website is: [www.ibew234.org](http://www.ibew234.org)

Some members of our community have been hit hard by this pandemic. The number of new unemployment claims for the Tri-county increased by 4000% in March before coming down to 1400% above normal in April. Our food banks and community outreach groups are in need of assistance. Food Bank for Monterey County and Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz are a few of the organizations that could use our help.

This crisis has hit home for me personally. The state of Georgia is opening their businesses back up, against the advice of their health professionals. The Governor of Georgia is not being as cautious as our own Governor here in California. My sister, Lawanda, is a Nurse at a hospital in Augusta, Georgia which happens to be the second largest city in the state. I am grateful and concerned for the thousands of first responders manning the front lines everyday.

On a lighter note, we have received some new tee-shirts with Local 234's charter on the back and are selling them at a special rate of \$15.00. We also received a new pin commemorating our 50th anniversary. I look forward to the day when we are able to open the Hall to the public and share these items with everyone.

Please continue to follow the advise of our health professionals to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.



## Prevention With Little Steps by Rasha Aniag

After 30 days of adherence to “slow the spread,” the United States finds itself on the other side of the first wave of the overall coronavirus peak as of April 10th. While this is true for a large proportion of the states, some states with “flatter curves” will not peak until late this month or early May.

Thanks to our national social distancing and stay-at-home efforts, the new infection rates are flattening and the initial death projections have been revised to a much lower 68,000 people through the beginning of June.

Source: <https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america>

Although there has been a nationwide increased submission of bills for COVID-19 testing as well as the first few COVID-related hospitalizations; fortunately, for our members, there have not have been any hospitalizations reported related to COVID19

As we wind down from the first wave of COVID-19 infection, testing again becomes a primary focus. As the mitigation strategy reverts back towards a containment strategy, how well each state handles the easing of public health measures will be paramount to avoid reigniting a second wave of infection.

So what is a containment strategy, exactly? Containment strategies are not new and were successfully used in other recent corona virus outbreaks, like SARS and MERS.

## Congress Legislation regarding Covid-19

Congress has passed two major pieces of legislation to deal with the coronavirus crisis, the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) and the Coronavirus Aid, relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Both include important protections for workers affected by the current crisis.

FFCRA:

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA\\_Poster\\_WH1422\\_Federal.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH1422_Federal.pdf)

CARES:

<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/top-priorities/cares-act>

## From International President Lonnie Stephenson:

Does the NDERA protect an employee's right to refuse to be present and/or request a layoff/furlough if he/she has a reasonable belief that being present would place them in imminent danger of contracting coronavirus?

**\*\* Yes.** The NDERA is designed to facilitate a return to work of employees who are out due to coronavirus, or who stay home because they have a genuine belief that being present would place them in imminent danger of contracting coronavirus. If the absence is for those reasons, then the recall rights, protections against adverse action, and unemployment protections in the NDERA apply. However, the employee must inform the employer that he/she is staying home due to coronavirus or because being present would place them in imminent danger of contracting coronavirus. Employees cannot be asked to go into any details about whether the employee has an underlying health condition or other concern. If the employee refuses to be present or is absent for other reasons, then the recall rights and protections under the NDERA do not apply.

Can the employer deny an unemployment claim if an employee stays home because of a genuine belief that being present would place them in imminent danger of contracting coronavirus?

**\*\*No.** The Agreement provides that in such situations, unemployment shall not be contested. However, the employee must inform the employer as set forth above.

Does having an imminent danger of contracting coronavirus take into account an individual's own health and/or family situation?

**\*\*Yes.** If an employee's own underlying health conditions or family situation (having an elderly relative at home, etc.) is such that the employee has a genuine belief that reporting to the job site would place him/her in imminent danger of contracting coronavirus, the recall rights, protection against adverse actions, and unemployment protections in the NDERA would apply. The employee must inform the employer as set forth above.

Is there a difference between furlough and layoff? Is an employer required to furlough if a jobsite is restricted/denied access or may the employer issue a lay-off? Is there a difference under the NDERA?

**\*\* No.** There is no difference. We have seen questions asking if a layoff is somehow more severe or permanent than a furlough, and the answer is no. For purposes of the NDERA, the employer has the option to furlough/layoff under appropriate circumstances and use the recall process described in the Agreement. The employee is protected against adverse action as described in the NDERA.

Do furloughed employees get sick or FMLA benefits under the newly passed Federal legislation?

**\*\* This and similar questions are not within the purview of the NDERA. The law and regulations of the legislation will guide these responses.**

Does the language of the NDERA that specifies that the employer shall not "contest" unemployment benefits require the employer to fraudulently fill out the state unemployment paperwork?

**\*\*No.** The employer is not required or encouraged to violate federal, state or local law when responding to unemployment inquiries from the government. While forms vary, if leave is taken consistent with this Agreement, where possible the employer should note that separation of employment is due to "the COVID-19 Crisis" or similar language. The state at issue will make the unemployment determination.

More guidance is available from the EEOC with respect to allowable screening procedures, and can be accessed here: [https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/wysk\\_ada\\_rehabilitaion\\_act\\_coronavirus.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/wysk_ada_rehabilitaion_act_coronavirus.cfm)

North America's Building Trades has also published guidance, available here: NABTU Guidance <https://nabtu.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Contractor-Screening-of-Construction-Workers-March-20-2020.pdf>

# Tri-County Electrical JATC Training News

(831) 633-3063

## CPR/First Aid Certification Class

CPR / First Aid class has been postponed until further notice.



## Foreman Development Series Class

Foreman Development class has been postponed until further notice.

## 2017 NEC Significant Changes Class

Significant Changes has been postponed until further notice.



## Donate To The JATC When You Shop Amazon

Shop at **AmazonSmile** when you shop at Amazon. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the **Tri-County Electrical JATC**. Start your shopping at [smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7114317](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7114317)

The Tri-County Electrical JATC is a non-profit 501(c)3. Donations are tax-deductible.

## New T-Shirts



## Valley Fever Training Required by May 1, 2020

A new California law, AB 203 signed in October 2019, aims to protect construction workers in counties with high rates of Valley fever. AB 203 requires construction employers to train their employees on minimizing the risk of Valley fever by May 1, 2020. The law describes eight topics that must be covered by the training.

For 2020, the 11 counties where this training is required include Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Monterey, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura. Other counties may be added in the future depending on their rates of Valley fever illness.

The California Department of Public Health's Occupational Health Branch (CDPH-OHB) created a Valley Fever Training Guide, VALLEY FEVER: Tailgate Training Guide for California Construction Workers to assist employers to comply with the new requirement. The guide covers the training topics required by the new law and is an interactive, easy-to-use tool that supervisors, trainers, and health and safety staff can use to train employees. In 2019 the SBCTC hosted two occupational health interns who interviewed union workers infected with Valley fever and worked on developing this tailgate training.

### More Information About Valley fever

Valley fever is an infection caused by exposure to a microscopic fungus (*Coccidioides immitis*) which lives in the top 2 to 12 inches of soil. Valley fever is a serious illness that can cause disability or even death if untreated. Workers are exposed when soil is disturbed by work activities such as excavation, digging, grading, driving vehicles, or environmental conditions such as high winds, that cause the fungal spores to become airborne and potentially inhaled by workers. Construction workers in California's Central Valley, Central Coast, and other locations, who perform this work, or work at job sites where this work is active, are at risk for exposure to the airborne spores.

**Resources** Visit the CDPH OHB work-related Valley fever web page for updates on required training and other Valley fever resources.

CDPH-OHB's March 2020 Occupational Health Watch newsletter article has information about AB203 and links to resources.

## Download the Union Plus App

The **new and improved Union Plus app** gives you faster on-the-go access to all your favorites on the Union Plus website. Get it for your Apple & Android devices for:

- Discounts and savings including AT&T Wireless, Goodyear tires, rental cars and more
- Popular shopping lists for union-made products such as appliances, cars, candy, pet products, and beer
- Hardship financial assistance grants
- Fun games and new contests
- Rosie's Reminder Service ... plus, plenty more

Personalize your favorites with just one click. Add them faster from your home screen. Manage your profile and preferences, too. It's all easier than ever.

Get the FREE app at [unionplus.org/gomobile](http://unionplus.org/gomobile).

## Are You Registered to Vote? Go to [goo.gl/XF1FBd](http://goo.gl/XF1FBd)

**Are you registered to vote in California? Or have you moved recently and need to update your address?**

To register to vote in California, you must be:

- A United States citizen,
- A resident of California,
- 18 years of age or older on Election Day,
- Not currently imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony (for more information on the rights of people who have been incarcerated, please see the Secretary of State's Voting Rights for Californians with Criminal Convictions or Detained in Jail or Prison), and
- Not found by a court to be mentally incompetent.

The deadline to register to vote for any election is 15 days before Election Day, so be certain to register early! Register to vote online with the California Secretary of State Alex Padilla at [goo.gl/XF1FBd](http://goo.gl/XF1FBd)

## Our Condolences

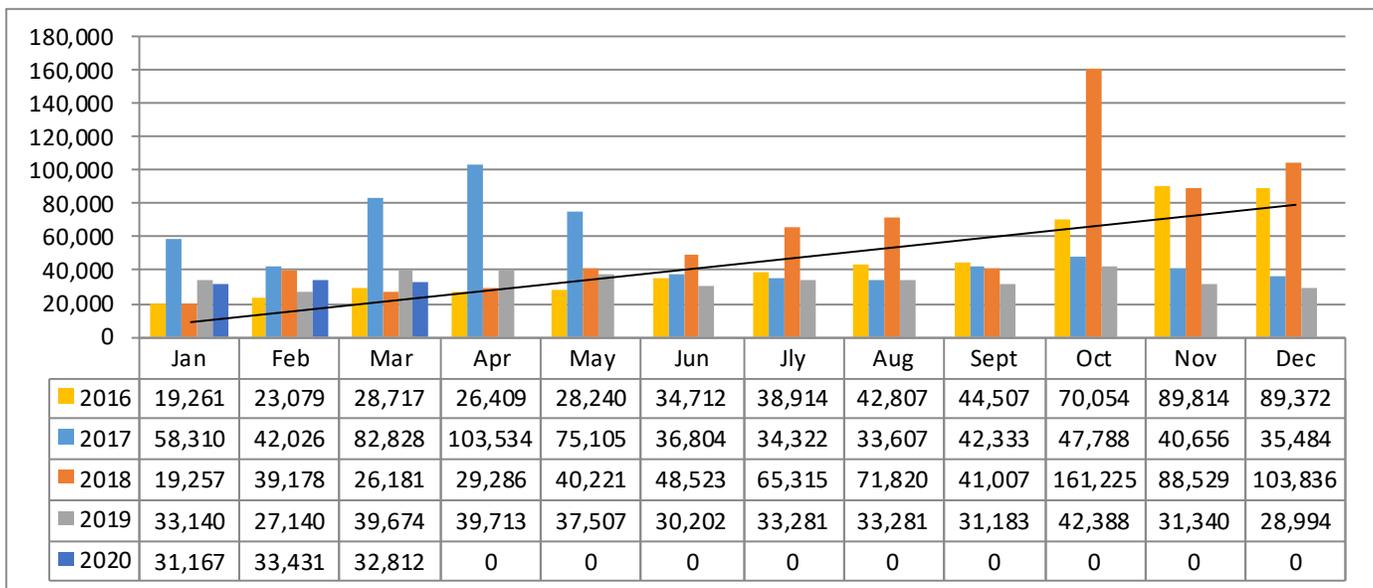
Leland Knisley passed away on April 7, 2020. He was an IBEW member for 72 years. He was 95 years old.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the family members.

## Go Green with Our e-Edition!

Sign up today to receive the newsletter in your email. Help reduce production costs and be "green" at the same time. Our homepage is located at [www.ibew234.org](http://www.ibew234.org). There is a link under Downloads, Newsletter to the subscribe form or call the Local 234.

## Monthly Hours Report



## Happy May Birthdays!

Francisco Aldape, Jr  
Jose Amezcua  
Justin Anderson  
Trinidad Avila  
Issac Azua, Sr  
Salvador Barajas  
Rigoberto Benavidez  
Clint Byrum  
Paul Chapin  
Laurie Clark  
Carolina Cruz  
Adam Cullers  
Terry Currence  
Michael Delgado  
Dupree Demery  
Alexander Elliott  
David Espinoza

Gary Fenn  
Guadalupe Ferrer  
Michael Freeman  
Jose Garcia, Jr  
Javier Gervacio  
Fount Hanson  
Glenn Hanson  
Manuel Ibarra  
Kasey Jeska  
Beau Kelly  
Tyler Kendall  
Robert Kirby  
Ronald Lance  
Leo Lotz  
Felix Mabelo  
Jonathon Marquez, Jr  
Aaron Maxwell

James McGee, II  
Jose Munoz  
David Novarina  
Federico Ortega  
Omar Padilla  
Alexander Palmer  
Charles Perkins  
Kevin Pitts  
Kevin Rategan  
Irlisis Rodriguez  
Darien Rosbach  
Joseph Sakoda  
Tom Sims  
Robert Tangonan  
Will Thompson  
Juan Vargas, Jr  
Bernie Wall  
Richard Zeman



# This Month's Local 234 Winners!

The **April** union meeting was postponed.  
**Voluntary PAC (Political Action Committee):**

## Apprentice Give-Away:

## Give-Away Winners:

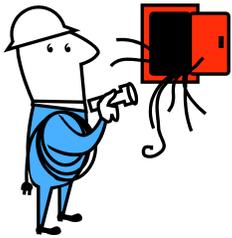
General membership meetings are the second Wednesday of each month. The next general membership meeting will be:

**Has been postponed due to Covid-19**

## Quote of the Month

“Try to be like the turtle - at ease in your own shell.”

— Bill Copeland



# May 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Mother's Day	11	12	13 Membership Meeting Postponed	14	15	16
17	18	19 JATC Meeting @ 4:00 pm	20	21	22 Floating Holiday	23
24 / 31	25 HOLIDAY Memorial Day	26	27 Executive Board Meeting	28	29	30



# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 234



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
IBEW LOCAL 234  
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CASTROVILLE, CA  
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[thehall@ibew234.org](mailto:thehall@ibew234.org)  
(831) 633-JOBS (5627)  
Job line

### Tri-County Electrical JATC

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

