

## North Pole “Ice Dive” Expedition Sets World Record

History was made at the North Pole on April 24, 1999. On that date, world-renowned professional scuba diver and IBEW Local 25 member Robert R. Wass, together with Dr. Michael Safonov of Moscow State University, co-led an international team of nine divers in a record setting underwater exploration of the geographic North Pole.

Plans for the expedition began in 1996 when an American pilot and an Australian diver conceived the project. They sought the assistance of Brother Wass, an equipment expert who specializes in extreme environmental diving conditions. The frigid North Pole environment seemed insurmountable.

Water temperatures were an icy 28 degrees, air temperatures 40-50 degrees below zero, with a wind chill factor of 100 degrees below zero, and constantly shifting 2,000-kilometer ice caps. As the team made plans for the expedition, a group of Russian divers with whom they had been working decided to forge ahead on their own.

But something went tragically wrong, and the Russian team leader died during the first dive in 1998. As a result, that expedition was aborted.

“But I’m a total believer that anything can be done, as long as it’s done the right way,” said Brother Wass, who had previously trained Russian military deep-sea divers and was the dive operations director and safety supervisor for the North Pole project.

“As the only American [on the dive team], I am extremely proud to have participated in such an historic event,” said Wass. “As a result of this exploration, our proven methods will allow others, such as scientists, engineers, etc., to safely visit this hostile environment.”

Local 25 Business Manager William Lindsay, who praised Wass as an excellent electrician and a good IBEW member, said, “We salute Bob on this heroic world record.”



**Local 25, Long Island, New York, member Bob Wass, a renowned professional diving expert, was co-leader for an international team of scuba divers in a record setting underwater expedition at the geographic North Pole.**

The New York Power Authority selected an IBEW member with Local 2104 to receive the NYPA Volunteer of the Year 2000 award.

Brother David Lundy, a warehouse-person assigned to the Power Authority’s Niagara project, is the first union member at the Authority to receive this award. He and other corporate volunteers were honored by The Friends of RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) at a luncheon at the Russian Tea Room in Manhattan.

Brother Lundy dedicates much of his life to helping other people. “For the past several years, Lundy has volunteered at the United in Christ Kitchen, a soup kitchen and food pantry in Niagara Falls,” reported the NYPA Currents newsletter. “As the kitchen’s assistant director, Lundy is involved in every aspect of its work—from preparing and serving the day’s food to recording donations and organizing various food and clothing drives.” Lundy and two other people run the shelter and help serve more than 1,700 meals each month to those in need.

Lundy also serves as a liaison between the local union and the Employee Assistance Program, and he counsels recovering alcoholics and their families at Mount St. Mary’s Hospital in Niagara Falls. “As a recovered alcoholic, it was important for me to find a way to help others,” said Lundy, who encourages his coworkers to seek help if they need it. “I get so much from the [volunteer] work I do,” he added. “You can see the difference you’re making in someone else’s life right away.”

“Brother Lundy’s personal accomplishments and volunteer efforts for those in need truly reflect the IBEW membership’s long-standing commitment to community service,” said International President J. J. Barry.

# Union Plus Scholarship Winners

From a pool of 4,800 applicants for this year's Union Plus Scholarship program, 126 students representing 33 AFL-CIO unions were selected to receive more than \$200,000 in scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$4,000. Union Plus scholarships are presented annually to union members or members of their families who want to begin or continue their college education.

Ten of the winners this year are students whose parents are IBEW members. Two IBEW recipients will receive the program's top award of \$4,000. They are Andrew Rutan, son of Robert, Local 102, Paterson, New Jersey; and Spencer Stiles, whose father, Randy, is a member of Local 596, Clarksburg, West Virginia. \$1,500 scholarships will go to Stephen Cosenza, whose father, Stephen, is a member of Local 3, New York, New York; and to Cicely Garrett, whose father, Elson, is a member of Local 317, Huntington, West Virginia.

Scholarships for \$1,000 were awarded to: Christopher Lau (father, Gelon, Local 45, Hollywood, California); Nicole Loggans (father, Michael, Local 271, Wichita, Kansas); and Zachary Manuel (father, William, Local 465, San Diego, California). And \$500 awards will go to Katherine Romeo (father, Annunziato, Local 25, Long Island, New York); Christopher Wecklich (father, Brian, Local 441, Santa Ana, California); and Marlena Schmit (father, Frank, Local 48, Portland, Oregon).

Each of these students exemplified

academic achievement, character and social commitment. Applications were judged by representatives from the American Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, and the United Negro College Fund.

The scholarship program is funded and administered by Union Privilege and Household Credit Services. It is part of the union-endorsed Union Plus Credit Card Program. Applications for the 2001 awards became available in September 2000. To download the application from the Union Privilege web site, go to [www.unionprivilege.org](http://www.unionprivilege.org). Or print your name, return address, telephone number and international union affiliation on a postcard, and send it to: Union Plus Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 34800, Washington, DC 20043-4800. Application deadline is January 31, 2001. ■

## Labor Activism is Risky Business Worldwide

Workers around the world face arrest, torture and even death for trying to form unions to bargain for their collective rights, according to a recent report issued by the International Labor Organization (ILO).

The report, titled "Your Voice at Work," says that the ILO's 175 member nations fail to honor their commitment to protect workers' basic rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. The ILO, based



in Geneva, Switzerland, urges governments around the world to live up to the principles of a worker's right to organize and bargain collectively. The ILO has no enforcement authority of its own.

Middle Eastern countries such as Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are strongly condemned for their steadfast refusal to allow workers the right to organize unions, according to the report. Nearby, the governments of

Bahrain and Qatar restrict workers or labor councils from establishing independent workers' organizations.

In other countries, workers and labor-rights activists have faced intimidation and violence for exercising their basic rights to join or form unions.

The ILO accuses China, El Salvador, Morocco and Pakistan of arresting and detaining labor activists, while those in countries such as Columbia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Lebanon, Sudan and Zimbabwe have been beaten and even murdered.

The report also takes aim at North  
*(Continued on next page)*

## COPE Awards Presented to Local 269

**IBEW Local 269, Trenton, New Jersey, received a first-place COPE award for highest per member contributions and a second-place award for total contributions. Pictured from left, Third District International Vice President Lawrence E. Rossa, Local 269 Assistant Business Manager James Kraemer, Local 269 Assistant Business Manager/Organizer-Teledata Wayne DeAngelo, International Secretary-Treasurer Edwin D. Hill, and Local 269 Organizer Dennis Doyle.** ■



America, accusing the United States and Canada of discriminating against agricultural, domestic, and migrant workers because of the type of work they do and their legal status. India and Honduras fail to legally protect agricultural workers exercising their right to organize. Women domestic workers in Brazil and Jordan do not have the right to organize.

According to a survey included in the report, women make up the majority of workers in subcontracted, temporary or casual work, part-time work and informal occupations. The result is that more women than men are in unorganized and unprotected jobs with no security, continuing a level of family

poverty from one generation to the next.

The report urges workers, employers and governments of the world to work together in removing the barriers that prevent men and women from organizing unions and having a say in their working environments.

The ILO issued the report as part of its *Declaration on Fundamental Principles of and Rights at Work*, adopted in 1998. It is the first in a series of annual reports that examines the global labor picture and analyzes the basic labor standards. Follow-up reports will focus on forced labor in 2001, child labor in 2002, and discrimination in employment in 2003. ■

## Health Care Costs Back on the Rise

A recent report by the National Coalition on Health Care (NCHC) warns that after several years of restrained increases, health insurance premiums are rising at four times the rate of inflation. The coalition, of which the IBEW is a member, says that these rates of increase are expected to continue over the next three years, resulting in as many as 750,000 people being added to the one million who already lose their health insurance coverage each year.

Dr. Henry Simmons, president of the coalition, said that health care costs had received less attention than other problems with the system because policy makers assumed that managed care had successfully addressed the issue. "As this report points out," he said, "premiums are rising at rates greater than ever before, and the resulting increases in health care costs will exacerbate the already serious, and interrelated, problems of coverage and quality."

The report is titled *Deja vu All Over Again—The Soaring Cost of Private Health Insurance and Its Impact on Consumers and Employers*. It notes

that new factors have come into play to drive up costs in addition to traditional factors like new technology, an aging population, and the overuse and misuse of medical services. The new items include pressure on health plans to raise premiums in order to show profits and remain solvent, tougher provider negotiations with health plans, pharmaceutical costs and the medical needs and demands related to the aging of 77 million "baby boomers." The groups most affected by these rapidly escalating costs are low- and middle-income working families, young adults ages 18 to 24, minority and immigrant populations and those who are self-employed or working for small firms.

The NCHC is a non-profit, non-partisan alliance working to improve America's health care systems. Its nearly 100 members include large and small businesses, unions, consumer groups, health care organizations and religious groups. A full copy of the report is available on the NCHC web site at [www.nchc.org](http://www.nchc.org) or by calling (202) 638-7151. ■

## TRANSITIONS

### RETIRED

After a dedicated union career of more than 38 years, Henry M. Bineham, director of the I.O. Purchasing/Inventory Department, announces his retirement effective November 1, 2000.



Henry M. Bineham

Brother Bineham has served the Brotherhood diligently and with distinction since his initiation into IBEW Local 278, Corpus Christi, Texas, in May 1962. On June 1, 1977, he was appointed as an International Representative and assigned to the I.O. Research and Education Department, where he served until his appointment on June 1, 1994, as director of the Purchasing/ Inventory Department. In that position his responsibilities included oversight of five I.O. departments: purchasing, inventory control, reprographic services, mail services and supply services. He also served on the Council on Industrial Relations.

Prior to his appointment as an International Representative, he served as assistant business manager for Local 278 in the 1960s. He was a member of Local 278's Negotiating Committee and Storm Relief Committee, and he served on the Rio Grande Valley Farm Worker Relief Committee. Earlier, he was a secondary school principal and worked with the tools of the trade in the summer.

Brother Bineham's other labor-related activities have included membership on the Labor Research Advisory Council (LRAC), and he served on the AFL-CIO Federal Credit Union's Board of Directors. He graduated from Texas A&I University in 1969 and holds a master's degree in Administration from the University of Texas. Very active in his church and community, he welcomes retirement and looks forward to more time with his wife, B.K., and their three children, Douglas, Michael and Marcie. The IBEW extends its congratulations to Brother Bineham and his family, with best wishes for a long, healthy and well-deserved retirement. ■



Following 27 years of dedicated service within the IBEW, International Representative Richard P. Crawshaw announced his retirement effective September 1, 2000.

Brother Crawshaw was appointed as an International Representative on September 1, 1980, and assigned to the I.O. Organizing Department and later to the I.O. Special Projects Department. Over the years he played a vital role in countless IBEW organizing drives.

Prior to his appointment as an International Representative, he served as business manager-financial secretary of IBEW Local 1400, Indianapolis, Indiana. Initiated into Local 1400 in 1973, he served as a member of the Bylaws Committee and chaired other local union committees including the Negotiating Committee.

**RETIRED**



**Richard P. Crawshaw**

Brother Crawshaw's many other labor related activities have included membership on the Indiana IBEW State Conference Executive Board, the Indianapolis Mayor's Advisory Committee, and the Indiana University Labor Advisory Board. He also served as an

Indiana State AFL-CIO lobbyist. Before beginning his union career, he served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps from 1957-1958 and 1961-1962. He attended Purdue University.

Having relocated to Greenwood, Indiana, Brother Crawshaw welcomes retirement and looks forward to spending more time with his family and enjoying his favorite hobbies such as golf and swimming. The officers and staff of IBEW extend congratulations to Brother Crawshaw and his family, along with best wishes for a long, happy, healthy and highly deserved retirement. ☛

Brother Potenza as he takes over his new position. ☛

The IBEW congratulates Brother Potenza as he takes over his new position. ☛

The IBEW is pleased to announce the appointment of International Representative Peter R. Potenza as director of the I.O. Purchasing/Inventory Department effective November 1, 2000. Brother Potenza has been an International Representative at the International Office since 1987. He served on the I.O. Manufacturing Department staff from June 1987 to December 1998. On January 1, 1999, he was assigned to the I.O. Broadcast-

**APPOINTED**



**Peter R. Potenza**

ing and Recording Department, where he served until his recent appointment. As director of Purchasing/Inventory, he fills the position vacated by former department director Henry M. Bineman, who is retiring.

In 1957 Brother Potenza was initiated into Local 1499, Chelsea, Massachusetts, and remains a member of that local. He served Local 1499 as business manager from 1978 to 1987, and served earlier as local union president, financial secretary, treasurer and Execu-

The IBEW is saddened to announce the death of retired Second District International Representative Richard N. Pray on August 31, 2000. Brother Pray was appointed as an International Representative on July 1, 1973, and served the IBEW

**DECEASED**



**Richard N. Pray**

on the Second District staff until his retirement on February 1, 1988. As an International Representative, he assisted IBEW utility, paper mill, and radio and television units with their negotiations, grievances and arbitrations, among other duties.

Brother Pray was initiated into Local 1837 on April 13,

1953. (Then based in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Local 1837 is now based in Manchester, Maine.) A lifelong dedicated trade unionist, he served his local as business manager, president and Executive Board member. He also chaired the New England Utility Council and the New Hampshire State Association of IBEW.

He was a veteran of World War II and the Korean War and a member of the American Legion. Brother Pray was born on January 9, 1921, in Boston, Massachusetts. The IBEW extends sincere condolences to his wife, Margaret, family and friends. ☛

With sadness the IBEW announces the death of retired Ninth District International Representative Joseph R. Ferrito on August 19, 2000. Appointed to the Ninth District staff on January 1, 1967, Brother Ferrito served the IBEW with dedication throughout his career. As an International Representative he was involved with organizing and in later years serviced Ninth District manufacturing locals. He retired on December 1, 1982.

**DECEASED**



**Joseph R. Ferrito**

Brother Ferrito was initiated into then-Local 892, Oakland, California, in October

1947. His membership later transferred to then-Local 786, Sunnyvale, California. Prior to his appointment as International Representative, he served as president of then-Local 786 from 1965 to 1967. In the late 1940s, he served as vice chairman of the Westinghouse Unit with then-Local 892.

Born on November 13, 1917, in New York City, New York, Brother Ferrito served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1942 to 1945.

The Brotherhood extends deepest condolences to his wife, Josephine, family and friends. ☛