

CONDUITS FOR CHANGE

IBEW Local 332 News | Spring 2024 | WWW.IBEW332.ORG



INSIDE: The Year of the Contract | Pfeiffer Electric | Local 332 Apprentice Contest | Services Corner



**Local 332 5th-Year Apprentice & Pfeiffer Employee
JOSE BATRES**

Photo by Brooke Anderson

IN MEMORIAM & PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Our Condolences

Local 332 honors our members who have recently passed away. We honor their lives and their years of service in the field. Our hearts go out to their loved ones.

- ◆ David Kamachi
D.O.D. 10/23/23
- ◆ Marian Polichnowski
D.O.D. 12/8/23
- ◆ Theodore Witrykus
D.O.D. 1/1/24
- ◆ Arthur D. Hill
D.O.D. 2/3/24

A Message from Pete Seaberg, Local 332 President

I'm often asked, "What's the difference between your members and the non-union guys? All of you do the same work, but you guys are so overpriced." **This is often followed up with some version of, "Unions just protect lazy workers."**

At this point, I usually chuckle, smile, and ask them if they actually know anything about construction unions. Of course they don't. Then I tell them a little about how our union works. Yes, we do get paid high wages and have great benefits. Yes, we fight for our members' rights every day.

All of this is part of our collective bargaining agreements.

I go on to explain how we get our high wages, full family health insurance and secure retirement plans. **That we have all made the CHOICE to fight together, as one massive team, for the betterment and benefit of everyone, not just ourselves.** That our strength comes from solidarity and unity. It comes from our everyday CHOICES to hold ourselves to higher standards of craftsmanship and safety. These principles that we choose to live and work by are what set us apart.

Our training, our craftsmanship, our solidarity, and our desire to lift all workers up is the foundation of who we are. I explain that being union creates opportunities for all hard-working, blue-collar Americans. We raise the standards of pay, benefits, and conditions for all workers, not just ourselves. At this point, they usually say they wish they had a union like that, and that they could only dream of benefits like ours.

Brothers and sisters, being union is much more than a choice: It's a privilege. It is an opportunity to change lives and families for generations to come. Don't ever take your union for granted. We must always continue building upon what our IBEW forefathers have built for us.

Always IBEW,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pete Seaberg".

Pete Seaberg
President



A MESSAGE FROM OUR BUSINESS MANAGER

Greetings Brothers & Sisters

I don't know about you, but I feel like the last few years have been a rollercoaster ride.

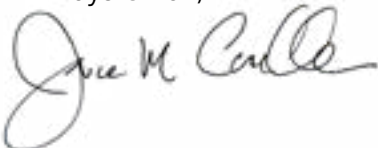
We went from years of consistent all-year-long work, into the alternate reality of the pandemic when we were declared essential workers and worked crazy hours. Then hyper-inflation set in like we haven't seen since the late 70s. At the same time, we were met with the slowdown of our industry after 11+ years of sustained work. Mind you, it wasn't as bad as the dot.com bubble crash or the housing crash slowdowns, but readily available work slowed to a crawl. Our members felt the crush of inflation at the same time that jobs ended without new ones beginning. Today, work is picking back up slowly, and we are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Our work has always been and will always be cyclical and what's happened is a screaming reminder for all of us to save for our future and unexpected events.

My message will always be the same: Get out ahead, prepare for the worst, and set yourself up for the best. Please look at the results of the past few years and consider learning how to run work; step up to run work; and as a 332 member, always remember that we are all part of the same health & welfare and pension plans. As 332 members, we must keep those plans strong. **We need to be driving the jobs and not be passengers in our own local. Only together as a union can we keep our future secure!**

I encourage you to come to the next general membership meeting, where we can discuss how to create the brightest work picture and keep our health & welfare and pension plans strong. Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month at 5:30 at the hall. **I also encourage you to attend all the contract negotiation meetings: bargaining information meeting to inform negotiations, ratification votes, and wage allocation votes.** Most of our contracts are up this year, making this the "Year of the Contract." I look forward to seeing you there!

Always Union,



Javier M. Casillas
Business Manager



Javier M. Casillas
332 Business Manager

Year of the Contract

Inside, Residential, & Material Handlers bargaining units are all up for negotiation this year!

"What do we want?" was the key question members answered at the Inside informational meeting as well as in the bargaining survey. 47% of members participated, which is a 332 record. The results are clear to inform our negotiations.

During the pandemic, we adjusted and had online voting. **Now all contract ratification and allocation votes will be in person for all units.**

Your vote is your voice. So when you receive notification for the in-person votes, let's set a participation record for all of our units!

SHOP FEATURE: PFEIFFER ELECTRIC

Pat Pfeiffer, 3rd Generation Pfeiffer Electric Owner

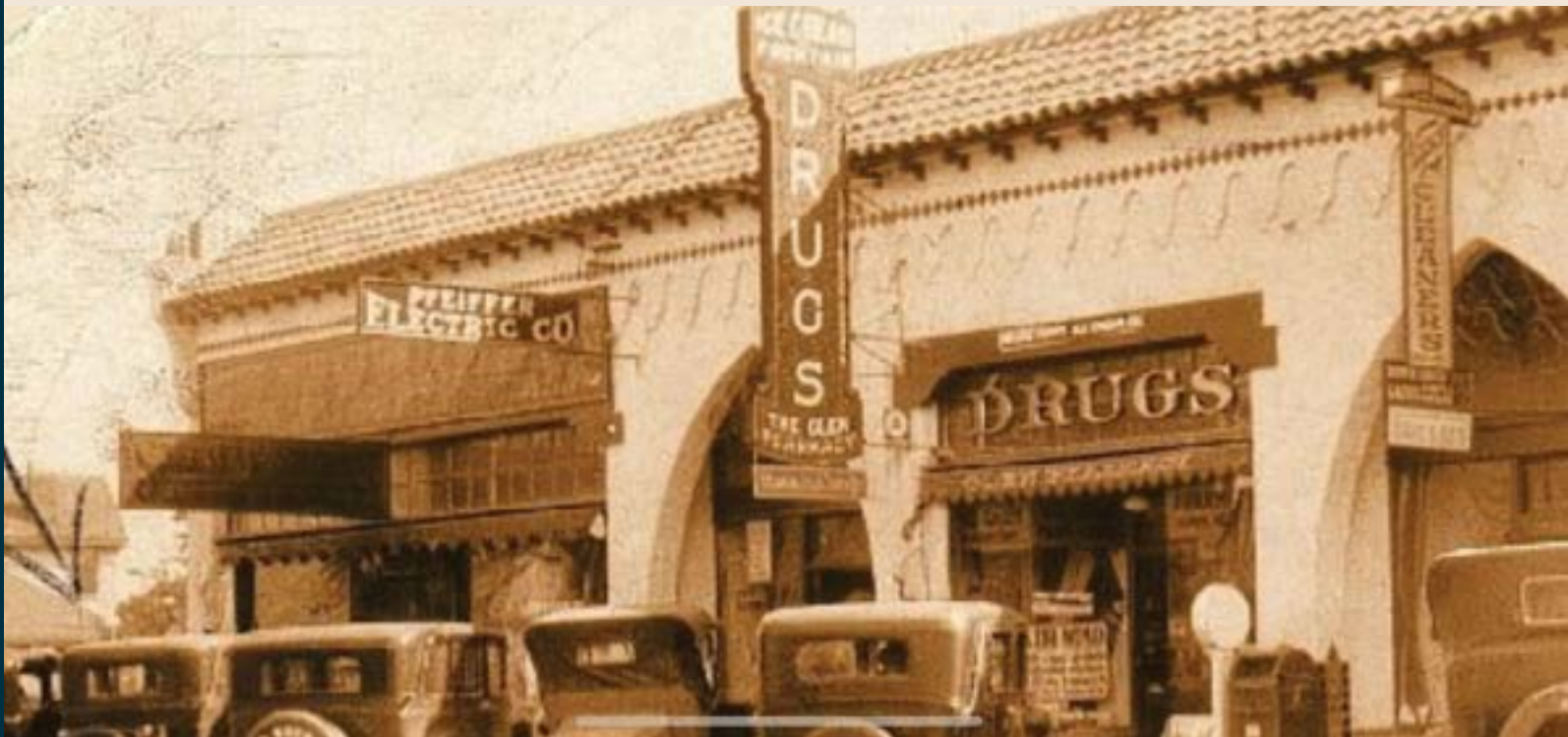
Pat Pfeiffer is the third generation of his family to lead Pfeiffer Electric (PE). He's worn almost every hat during his 38 years at the company. "I'm a product of IBEW Local 332 and joined in 1979 as a material handler."

Founded in 1926 by Pat's grandfather, PE will celebrate its 100th anniversary in just a couple of years. It started out as a GE appliance distributor.

Pat's grandmother helped with the appliance store part, and his grandfather ran the contracting part. Pat's dad started working at PE in 1947, and Pat started in 1986 when he graduated from the apprenticeship. Numerous family members have been a part of the operation along the way.

Pfeiffer has a strong connection to 332. Pat's brother Gerald was business manager for six years and president for 12 years. "Local 332 is an important partner for us," said Pat. "I like the direction the IBEW is going. They seem to be thinking industry-wide and not just what's good for them personally, which is refreshing.

"We've stayed small – we average around 40-50 employees. We value their opinions and expertise. In the world of all these big shops, PE knows each of them as a person, not just an employee number. We've got a lot of long-term employees – which is a good indication of how we treat people and how they treat us. We're family. At the end of the day, that's what makes us different."



The original Pfeiffer Electric storefront where they sold appliances.

SHOP FEATURE: PFEIFFER ELECTRIC

Garth Lewis | Foreman

"I've been an electrician for 24 years if you count my apprenticeship. I've worked for Pfeiffer Electric for 15 of those. I'm also second generation IBEW. My dad was an electrician for 40 years and worked for Pfeiffer for probably 32 of those.

"As an apprentice, I worked for Pfeiffer. Then I worked for a few other companies and turned out with SASCO. It was one of those things where I wasn't trying to ride my father's coattails.

"I've known the Pfeiffer family pretty much my entire life. It's such a small company that Pat knows everybody from our apprentices to our superintendents by name. To be able to work for a company like that in this industry is special; I think the employees all really enjoy that part of it. There are a lot of people who have retired in the last five years, so we're trying to get a younger group in to follow in our footsteps.

"As long as I've been here, it's always seemed like the people who worked for PE are just good people all around. Everyone gets along well; everyone is hardworking; they all are good electricians. That makes it even more special. It says a lot for a company when you have employees who enjoy coming to work every day."



Frank Roark | Journeyman

"I've been at Pfeiffer Electric for eight years, and in the electrical trade for 30. More than half was nonunion. I just got into the union about 10 years ago, which was probably the best move I've made in my entire life.

"Before going into the trades, I was in the Navy as an aircraft mechanic. My brother-in-law was an electrician and asked if I'd be interested. It was a nonunion shop. I started catching on, learning, and paying attention to what I was being taught.

"I started in residential. Then I graduated to commercial about 15 years ago. The nonunion shops would not tell you the truth about the union, so they could keep you. I was always kind of fearful; I didn't do my homework, just took their word for it – they're the bosses.

"Then, after some time, I said, 'This isn't working for me.' In 2008, work got really bad for us, so I took a little time off. My brother in law got into the union and asked why I didn't. I said they said I wouldn't have work, which is a total lie. I went in, had all the hours I needed, and found wonderful people at the IBEW willing to embrace me.

"My favorite part about working here is that it's never the same every day. I like getting involved with new people and things I wouldn't have otherwise – and the camaraderie."



SHOP FEATURE: PFEIFFER ELECTRIC



SHOP FEATURE: PFEIFFER ELECTRIC

Benjamin Morrison | Apprentice

"I spent nine years in the Air Force. After I got out, I wasn't quite sure what to do. I worked in law enforcement, and my coworker's husband, who worked as a foreman, asked if I'd considered electrical work. He said I should apply.

"I didn't know anything about unions, but they pulled me in. I've been here two years and just finishing up my second year of the apprenticeship. It's the best job I've ever had.

"I really enjoy how the company is close-knit. The owner knows all of our names and asks about our wives and kids. Pfeiffer also works more in electrical service rather than big construction, so the work is always something different. I don't know if there's anything I haven't touched yet.

"There are a lot of good things about being a 332 member. What I really like about our local is that the leadership is constantly looking for ways to make us competitive with nonunion and other unions, whether through certifications or broadening our spectrum of knowledge. There are all these labs everywhere in the new ETASV. Our members are always getting trained to be competitive in the marketplace. I really appreciate that."



Cody Castro | Journeyman/Foreman

"I was born and raised in San Jose. I've been in the trades for 10 years. I was a janitor for seven years before becoming an electrician. That was right before my daughter was born, and it wasn't going to pay the bills. I've always worked with my hands at home.

"I found an ad to become an electrician and started down the path. I went to a trade school before and couldn't find a job nonunion that would pay me as much as I made as a janitor. So I signed up for the union, and about a year later I was accepted.

"I've been with Pfeiffer Electric since 2018. I'm a working foreman. Since we're smaller, we jump around; we'll be a journeyman one day, the next day a foreman. You're never stuck doing the same thing over and over for months. There's so much stuff to do; it's always different. I'm at Stanford right now, but I jump to whatever they have available for me. I don't say no. We're a close group because it's a smaller shop. It has a family feel.

"Local 332 has a great family feel, too. There's this camaraderie. It feels good to be part of something that has a tradition in this area for 100+ years and to carry that on and be part of that."



ETASV ELECTRICAL SKILLS TOURNAMENT WINNERS



1st Overall: Jesus Gomez-Garcia



2nd Overall: Jacob Honesto



3rd Overall: Adolfo Tinoco



**Written Exam:
Jason Hershfield**



**Residential Wiring:
Adolfo Tinoco**



**Motor Controls, Written:
Jesus Gomez-Garcia**



**Motor Controls, Hands-On:
Jacob Honesto**



**Material Identification:
Adolfo Tinoco**



**1/2" Pipe Bending
Roderick Anda**



**3/4" Pipe Bending
Nina Guerrero**

TOURNAMENT WINNER: JESUS GOMEZ-GARCIA

The ETASV and IBEW Local 332 held the very first electrical skills tournament on March 9. Like the regional contest, this spring's tournament at the ETASV included events in residential wiring, written exam, motor controls written, motor control hands-on material identification, 1/2" pipe bending, and 3/4" pipe bending.

Fifth-year inside wireman apprentice Jesus Gomez-Garcia scored the highest overall at the competition and will represent Local 332 at the Western States Regional Apprentice Contest in the fall.

"I signed up for the contest because it was a good challenge," he said. "I saw a couple of guys in my class volunteer, it got me interested, so I signed up."

To prepare for the tournament, the training center had instructors available to work one-on-one with contestants instead of or in addition to going to regular classes.

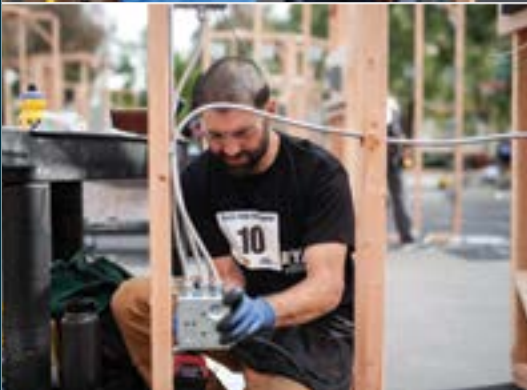
"The first week I only dropped in one day; then I noticed how big a challenge it was, so I was going in three or four days a week. They had an instructor there every day, but we were also giving each other tips and passing along knowledge among apprentices. It was fun seeing how everyone has their own method.

"My favorite event was the motor controls. It's something that's always interested me since I started in the trades. What I had the most difficulty in was the first pipe-bending event. I was trying to rush through it and didn't take time to properly measure out my 3-point saddle on a 1/2" conduit. When it came to the 3/4" inch conduit, I went slower and took my measurements."

Jesus plans to spend more time practicing over the summer ahead of the regional contest. "It was great fun. I enjoyed going in every day, getting different input from the instructors and other apprentices. I'd advise anyone that has even a little interest to do it. It's a great way to learn."



ETASV ELECTRICAL SKILLS TOURNAMENT



ETASV ELECTRICAL SKILLS TOURNAMENT



ETASV ELECTRICAL SKILLS TOURNAMENT



RESIDENTIAL COMPETITOR: MARTIN FERNANDEZ

One competitor in the tournament stood out, even though he didn't place. While all the other contestants were fifth-year inside apprentices, Martin Fernandez is a third-year residential apprentice – but he competed anyway.

"I thought it would be a good challenge to put myself out there. I feel like everybody in residential is planning on heading to inside, so I thought it would be good to see what I'm getting myself into," said Martin, who also plans to go for the inside apprenticeship after he turns out of residential.

"It was about a month of prep. The school gave us all the resources we needed. I was coming in five days a week, and they'd always let me get into a lab or get a one-on-one with an instructor. We had a pretty good idea of what we were going to do – not too specific, but enough to be able to study.

"I think I did pretty well on the residential wiring. I enjoyed the motor controls hands-on lab the most. I just like that kind of work; the process of it. It's pretty satisfying getting to understand it and translate what you see on paper onto the motor control board.

"The motors written test was probably the most challenging for me. I didn't really know where to start. After that would probably be the pipe bending, because in residential we don't get a chance to work with pipe bending at all."

Martin would encourage other residential apprentices to compete next time. "Take as much time as you can when it comes to practicing and studying. When it comes to the actual contest, don't worry about the time; just make sure you're doing everything correctly. It doesn't matter how fast you do it as long as you do it correctly."

As far as Martin's future plans, he's excited to keep learning. "The competition really opened my eyes that there's so many different avenues you can take on the inside program. It's exciting to know there's still a lot to learn, and the learning never stops."



LOCAL 332 SERVICES CORNER

Jo-Ann Rashid | UAS Representative (332's Benefits Administrator)

Jo-Ann is at the union hall to answer questions and help you fill out paperwork for your benefits on Monday–Friday from 1:30pm-5pm daily.

Jo-Ann Rashid reports that members have been starting to trickle into the union hall to get help on benefits. "Some people remember me from when I worked here before from 2000-2013, so it's been nice to catch up," she said.

Jo-Ann says the biggest thing members need help with has been the HRA cards and correct documentation. She said that it must include: the dollar amount, the name and address of the provider or service, a description of the service, and the date of service. You can upload it to the app, email it to hra@uastpa.com, or use good old fashioned snail mail at HRA reimbursement, PO Box 5057, San Jose, CA 95150-5057.

If you are unsure about HRA documentation, reach out to Jo-Ann for examples so you know what to do. Please stop by to get help on HRA cards, healthcare, retirement, and loans from your 401K. Jo-Ann will be ready!

You can also contact Jo-Ann at: jrashid@uastpa.com or 408-288-4493.



Kim Davis | IBEW Local 332's New Treasurer & Prime Electric Foreman

"I started the apprenticeship in 2012, turned out in 2017, and was one of only three women in a class of nearly 100 along with Jenn Martin-Fuller and Amanda Noland. I am now working as a foreman with Prime Electric.

"I love everything about my job: the people, the feeling after a productive day, and seeing a project from start to finish. I have a lot of love for my IBEW siblings; they are what makes our union great. This union and becoming an inside wireman have changed my life. When I started the apprenticeship I had never owned a car, and now I own my home. I'm proud to be an IBEW member.

"When I heard that there was an opening for 332 treasurer, I wanted to give back to the union. Now that my kids are older and more self-sufficient, I have more time to dedicate to the union and be more involved. I applied, interviewed, and have already started working as treasurer.

"332 is really lucky to have Stella Chan, our accountant. Honestly, I don't know how other locals do it without a Stella. Once a week I go to the hall, and Stella has everything ready for review. I check for discrepancies, ask questions, and sign checks. Rest assured, I am keeping track of members' money and making sure things are square. At the membership meetings, I read the treasurer's report to keep you informed. Feel free to approach me if you have any questions at the meetings."



THE YEAR OF THE CONTRACT

2024 is shaping up to be the “The Year of the Contract,” with almost all of our bargaining units affected. Each bargaining unit will hold an in-person informational meeting and will then be sent an electronic survey so members can give input on your priorities. The inside and residential have already completed this part of the process, and there was record participation. As the other contracts come up, we hope to have record participation from all of our members.

After negotiations, when we have received the last, best, and final offers from the contractors, we will hold contract ratification votes, followed by wage allocation votes, so members can decide what portion of the packages goes towards wages, health & welfare, retirement, etc.

It’s going to be a busy year. Keep your eyes peeled for announcements and updates.

CONTRACT EXPIRATION DATES

- **Inside Wiremen: 5/31/24**
- **Residential: 5/31/24**
- **City of San Jose: 6/30/24**
- **Material Handlers: 7/31/24**
- **OPEIU (332’s admin staff): 8/30/24**

All members are invited to participate in bargaining surveys, informational meetings, contract ratification votes, and wage allocation votes. All meetings will be held in person.

So far the inside contract has had record participation, and our union is stronger when everyone participates. It’s your contract, your voice, and your vote!

MEET YOUR INSIDE CONTRACT BARGAINING TEAM



Javier M. Casillas
3rd Contract



Pete Seaberg
2nd Contract



Andrew Rogers
2nd Contract



Dan Sullivan
2nd Contract



Ryan Serene
2nd Contract

Under 332 bylaws, the business manager and president select the bargaining team. Led by Javier Casillas, our inside bargaining team members all have experience. In his role as president, Javier assembled the bargaining teams and chaired/co-chaired negotiations to win the largest and second largest inside contracts in 332 history, the largest residential, and the largest material handlers’ contracts. This year’s bargaining team will continue to focus on winning the biggest wage package possible for our members. Though work is slower than in previous years, we still have the power of a strong market share and our state-of-the-art apprenticeship and training center. The skill of our workforce is our biggest leverage at the bargaining table, so keep up the great work in the field!



IBEW Local 332
2125 Canoas Garden Ave #100
San Jose, CA 95125

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
San Jose, CA
Permit # 1133

Business Manager
Javier M. Casillas

Assistant Business Manager
James Williams

President
Pete Seaberg

Vice President
Alex Caraballo

Recording Secretary
Ryan Serene

Treasurer
Craig Tomasello

Powering Santa Clara County since 1912!

Connect with Local 332 Brothers and Sisters!

Join your union brothers and sisters, learn about the local, connect with old friends, and meet some new ones!

- **General Membership Meetings:** 1st Tuesday of the month, 5:30 @ the hall
- **Sporting Clays:** Fri 3/29 @ Coyote Valley Sporting Clays
- **332 Family Night @ San Jose Barracudas:** Friday 4/12
- **2nd Harvest Food Bank Volunteering:** Sat 4/20, 10:45-2:45
- **332 Classics & Coffee Car Show:** Sun 5/5 @ the hall
- **332 Family Night @ SJ Giants:** Fri 6/1
- **YWCA Walk A Mile Event:** Wed 6/12 @ Santana Row
- **ETASV Apprentice Graduation:** Fri 6/14
- **Annual 332 Family Picnic:** Sat 7/13 @ Coyote Ranch
- **website:** ibew332.org
- **facebook.com/Local332**
- **instagram.com/ibewlocalunion332**

**INSIDE:
THE YEAR
OF THE
CONTRACT**



**INSIDE WIREMEN
RESIDENTIAL
MATERIAL HANDLERS
CITY OF SAN JOSE**