



THE BULLETIN

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MAY 15, 1939

LIGHTING TECHNICIANS IATSE Local 728
THE ONLY IATSE LOCAL DEDICATED TO SET LIGHTING
WWW.IATSE728.ORG

HOLLYWOOD,
CALIFORNIA
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2025

DEADLINE

Breaking Hollywood News Since 2006

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IATSE’s Michael Miller Calls On Studios To Bring Production Back To L.A. As City Rebuilds After Wildfires: “Workers Want To Stay Here” — Guest Column

Production levels were so low in Los Angeles that when the fires hit last month, it was just another weight added to the shoulders of our industry.



Michael F. Miller Jr., IATSE
Getty Images; IATSE

Michael Miller’s Guest Column was published in *Deadline* February 12, 2025

The devastating fires might be behind us but their impact — displacing thousands, destroying homes, neighborhoods and lives — will have a very long tail.

To read the full column, scan the QR code or visit www.deadline.com



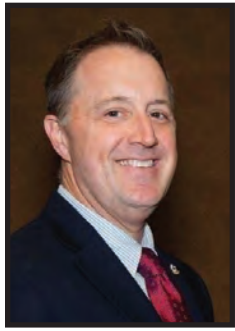
INSIDE YOUR LOCAL BULLETIN



Made by 728 for 728

Sam Beavers revolutionizes LED splitting with the launch of BirdBones

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Event showcases new gear, resources

Local Launches Tech Showcase

by Greg Reeves, Business Representative-Secretary

While we continue to recover and rebuild from the fires, the Local is doing all it can to get back to business. Part of that is launching an initiative that stemmed from a recent trip to LDI. For those who don't know, LDI (Live Design International) is a yearly lighting convention/showcase that brings together gear and knowledge experts in conversation about our craft. At the event, there were a number of seminars with IATSE Local 728 member speakers.

But why only have this event and CineGear in June in a whole year? The solution is the TechQuity Showcase which launched on February 22nd.

The idea is to get together to check in on new gear, resources you're interested in,

and have a beer and a slice of pizza with your Union Brothers, Sisters, and Kin. So far, we have Litegear, BB&S Lighting, and First Entertainment Credit Union committed to showcase. Others will be announced closer to the event date. And if you have a product to show off, give us a call.

The first event was a great jumpstart to what we believe will be the ideal space to showcase products and services and foster union solidarity.

I hope you will join us at the next event on April 26th, from 10am - 2pm. No RSVP required.

See you at the Local soon!

IATSE LOCAL 728 HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

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Techquity Showcase
2025

Save the Date

February 22 **Success! Thanks to all who participated!**

April 26

August 16

October 18

IATSE Local 728

UNION SPOTLIGHT

In Memoriam

BROTHER WILLIAM "BILL" RUSSELL, 63 YEARS OLD, A MEMBER SINCE JANUARY 12, 2002, PASSED AWAY ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2024.

BROTHER DAVID KAGEN, 56 YEARS OLD, A MEMBER SINCE JANUARY 13, 1996, PASSED AWAY ON FEBRUARY 8, 2025.

General Membership Meeting

The next Local 728
General Membership Meeting
will be held on

Saturday, March 8, 2025

The meeting will be held
at 9:00 a.m. and will also be
available via Zoom

Members, make sure you take a moment to check out the Local 728 Weekly Digest. Delivered via email, the weekly update is packed full of timely information and important services and resources available exclusively to members!

Important Information Regarding Hiring

Any Local 728 member representing an employer by filling calls or who is in need of assistance with such, must contact the Local office during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling 818-954-0728.

If you urgently need to fill a crew position outside of regular business hours, you must call the Call Steward at 818-438-0728.

Members seeking weekend work should notify the Call Steward on Friday during business hours.

Anyone who hires off roster or hires any member who is not current with their dues may have charges filed against them and are subject to assessment penalties.

CREDIT CARDS

Getting out of debt faster and improving your credit rating!

by Pascal Guillemard, Treasurer-Call Steward



There's little doubt that many of us who work in Hollywood have had to rely on our credit cards to get by in recent years. Our personal credit cards debts have risen significantly.

Credit card bills are the main source of debt, more than twice the best source of debt which are car loans. It's highly likely that you already know that carrying credit card debt is a credit score killer and you're probably already familiar with all the advice heard since you were a kid about using your credit cards responsibly, paying off your balances every month, create a plan to pay off your debt in five years, and just stop using your cards altogether. But having had several years of off-and-on and off again work opportunities, sometimes resorting to paying for what is necessary with credit is unavoidable.

Even the most diligent among us may feel as though we are trapped in an endless cycle of making payments and charging new bills. The recent years of high interest rates and endless fees doesn't help the situation either.

But most of us trudge along paying those exorbitant rates and hanging on to those same credit cards because banks don't go out of their way to tell you how you can improve your chances of actually reducing your debt load.

Most of us don't realize that you can ask your credit card issuer if they are willing to change the terms of your credit card, so the terms work a little more in your favor.

If you are like most people, chances are that you haven't even tried.

Here are some issues that you can bring up with your credit card companies, as well as some ideas on how to help improve your chances of getting your request granted:

Late Fee

When things are tight, your chances of being assessed a late fee increases a lot.

Those fees can range from \$30 to \$40 and up.

Most people don't know this but about 90% of requests to waive late fees are granted if your payment record is good. Sometimes having a reasonable excuse will be the key to getting a fee waived.

Lower your APR

Most of us toss credit card mail flyers sent to us by credit card companies in the trash the moment we get them. But, you should be aware of what your annual percentage rate on each one of your credit cards and you should compare the rates being offered on any credit card ads that come your way as leverage to potentially get your credit card APR lowered.

Call your high interest credit card company and be prepared to tell them of the offers that you have in hand, by whom and at what rate. You may not get a match as this may depend on the benefits that your card gives you such as cash back or points, but you may get a better rate, nonetheless. If you have held your current card for a long time, start off by pointing this out. Sometimes the company employee that you are speaking to may not have the authority to give you better terms. If the card you are calling about is worth keeping for its side benefits, ask to speak to a department supervisor. Tell that person that you would rather not transfer your credit debt to another lender, but that you are strongly considering doing so. Seven out of ten people who ask for a more favorable rate are successful in getting some improvement.

Be aware that a few percentage points difference on just a few thousand dollars of debt can make a significant impact on the amount of time that it will take you to get rid of your debt. There are online debt calculators that you can use to figure this out. The numbers will motivate you to get on the phone, guaranteed!

Made by 728 for 728

Sam Beavers revolutionizes LED splitting with the launch of BirdBones

BIRD BONES inc.com

and he's keeping the company "in the house"

For a quarter of a century, Sam Beavers has dedicated his professional career to entertainment lighting. Like many members of the Local, he's spent countless hours on set working under tremendous pressure, but always thinking outside the box, looking at better ways to do something faster, stronger or more efficiently.

In 2019, Sam started working as a pusher on large LED crews and noticed there was a lot of crew time spent building the splitters. There was also a lot of human error, and once the rig was subjected to extreme weather conditions or even dust, more problems arose.

"I started thinking about different ideas and applications, and then I brought in member Josh Kubizne. He's brilliant, and together we started developing our products," Sam explained.

When COVID hit, the pair were still doing research and development. Focused and undeterred by the disruption in the industry, they got their first products completed and set-tested within two years. In July of 2022, the co-inventors incorporated, got a patent on their first design, then expanded out to five more products.

"BirdBones eliminates the time spent building LED controls and saves time on issues that come up. It's much cleaner and streamlined," he said.

While the global pandemic slowed their business plans, another setback was around the corner. "Right when we were really moving forward, the writers' strike happened. We were selling retail on our website and were getting ready to work with distributors. Once the strike hit, those conversations were put on hold."

Overcoming all the obstacles, industry professionals did discover BirdBones through word-of-mouth, social media and Instagram, and the company's participation at all three (L.A., New York and Atlanta) Cinegear shows.

"Technicians' eyes light up like it's Christmas, saying our products are brilliant and revolutionary," he said.

The developer's favorite product so far is the Channel 24 Controller. "It takes a skilled technician 15 hours on set to build. With BirdBones, it's plug-and-play. It saves so much time and hassle."



Sam Beavers

Additionally, crew times can be allocated more efficiently. "I had someone say to me 'I used to put my best guy on building them. Now I can put anyone on them.'"

Sam is proud to note that everything is manufactured in the U.S., and everyone within the company – co-Inventor and Technical Advisor Josh Kubizne, trainer Jonathan Cushing and even "our T-Shirt guy" Anthony Jefferson (Big Time Hollywood Prints) – are all Local 728 members. "We're keeping it in-house."

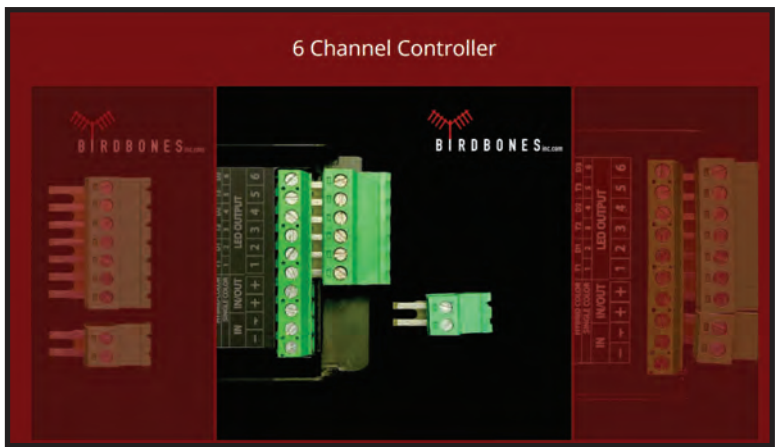


While there is nothing else like BirdBones on the market, with the industry’s ever-changing technology, Sam’s not resting. “I have more products in mind. Once you know something is achievable, it makes it easier to come up with the next great idea.”

Born and raised in Georgia, Sam moved to Southern California in 1999 with a degree in Video Film in-hand. He joined the Local the next year and soon discovered a union packed with innovators.

“I love how in our Local there are so many smart people ... they come up with great ideas,” he pointed out, then offering some sage advice: “Trust yourself. Trust what you’re creating and don’t give up. People will say this or that ... people were negative about our first BirdBones and didn’t think it was a good idea. It’s better to push what you’re creating and fail, rather than listen to the naysayers and fail. Don’t give up. People can’t see your vision ... you can, so stick to it.”

Through all the ups and downs of launching his business, Sam says that while having a patent is very cool, the most rewarding thing is knowing he came up with something that makes Local 728 members’ jobs easier.



“Whenever I retire, I know what I developed will still be around helping our Brothers and Sisters,” he said, gratefully adding, “Thank you to all 728 crew, past and present, that have helped me develop. Your invaluable contributions help us all soar.”

Josh Kubizne





In these moments, the true essence of Local 728 shines through Strength through Solidarity

by Martin Weeks, Local 728 President

The strength of any organization is defined not by its financial resources but by the dedication, resilience, and unity of its members. Nowhere is this truer than in IATSE Local 728, where the collective efforts of our members have demonstrated that solidarity is our most powerful asset. Through mutual aid, financial contributions, and emotional support, we have proven that we are more than just a union—we are a family that stands together in times of hardship.

Recent wildfires have tested our resilience, yet they have also revealed the unwavering strength of our union. In the face of devastation, members of IATSE Local 728 stepped up to assist those displaced by the fires. Whether by providing direct financial support, organizing resources, or volunteering their time, our members showed that we are more than coworkers—we are a support system. The generosity and compassion displayed during this crisis reaffirm the core values of our union: solidarity, compassion, and mutual aid.

Beyond financial and logistical support,

members have extended a helping hand to their colleagues in other ways. Many have worked to ensure that their fellow union members can maintain the necessary hours for healthcare coverage, recognizing that access to medical care is a fundamental necessity. By bringing fellow members onto jobs and ensuring that they stay employed, these efforts reflect the deep-seated commitment to protecting one another.

The challenges we face extend beyond financial hardship and job security. The recent tragedies and losses within our community have left many grieving. However, the response from our union members has been a testament to the power of standing together. Offering emotional support, attending memorials, and simply being there for one another in times of sorrow are just as crucial as any financial assistance.

In these moments, the true essence of IATSE Local 728 shines through. We do not just work together—we support each other in ways that extend far beyond the workplace. The ability to grieve together, to provide comfort in moments of pain, and

to remind one another that we are not alone exemplifies the unparalleled strength of our union.

The road to recovery after any crisis is challenging, but through the determination and unity of our members, we will rebuild stronger than before. Past events may have tested us, but they have also reinforced the undeniable truth that together, we can overcome any challenge. Mutual aid and organizational support are not just temporary relief measures; they are the foundation upon which we will continue to grow and strengthen our community.

The strength of our Union is not measured by its treasury but in the membership.

As we look ahead, let us remember that our greatest asset is each other. The spirit of solidarity that defines IATSE Local 728 is a powerful force, one that will continue to guide us through any adversity. We are not just colleagues or industry professionals—we are a community bound by a shared commitment to support, uplift, and protect one another.

Martin Weeks
President, IATSE Local 728

Treasurer's Column *Continued from Page 3*

Due dates

When you applied for your credit card, you did not get to pick your due by date. Sometimes these dates come at a most inopportune time such as when rent, mortgage or insurance is due. Ask your credit card company to change your due date to a time when you are not already certain of having big bills to pay. This will make it more likely that you will pay more than the minimum on your credit card debt and get rid of that debt more quickly.

If you think you would be more likely to pay your balance off in full during a certain time of the month, consider asking your provider to change your due date to a

day that is more convenient for you. For example, if you get paid once a month on the first of the month, you may find it easier to have the payment due earlier in the month, rather than later, when you may have already spent your money on other things. You have to be careful when you do this, because credit card companies will often push your due date forward which means that any debt will incur that much more interest owed and if you charge during the extra time allotted for the due date change, you will get a nasty surprise for that first adjusted date payment amount. Be prepared!

Don't max out your credit card!

It is better to have several credit cards where each card has 30% or less of its limit charged. Having more than 30% of a card's limit charged has an adverse effect on your credit rating. Credit ratings directly impact your interest rates. Be aware of the credit limit of every credit card that you have and charge it up to less than 30% of the card's limit before you move on to another card.

I hope that this information helps you get out of debt more quickly and improves your credit scores!

Cheers,

Pascal

Important Information and Safety & Training Updates

Classes, ETCP & Changes to Vectorworks Training

Alan M. Rowe, Local 728 Safety & Training Director



February 6 marks the date of the most tragic event in the living history of the Local. It was one year ago when through no fault of his own, the catwalk on which Brother J.C. "Spike" Osorio was standing collapsed and he fell to his death. Much has happened in the ensuing year, and we have all our own journeys of trauma, grief, and healing. The industry has been irrevocably changed, hopefully for the better, but the change will never be worth the price we paid. We must, and we will, change the attitude of "reactive safety" and move to position where we recognize potential hazards and force their correction before we succumb to another tragedy. That terrible day is behind us, but the trauma remains for many of us whether we realize it or not.

Between December 14 and January 28, we scheduled 22 classes including our Ethernet Rigging Bootcamp, DMX Networking 101, Ethernet Protocols, Ethernet Protocols Lab, Streaming ACN/ArtNET, a three day course on Entertainment Electrics with Richard Cadena, Balloon Lighting Technician 201, Soldering Lab, Electrical Calculations, IBL: Plug and Play Workshop with Assimilate Live FX, Working with Assimilate Live FX and Lighting Consoles, Astera Certified 8-Hour Training (x4), Introduction to Luminex Networking (x2), Electricity 101 (x2), Electrical Power Lab (x2), and 480 Power Systems. Due to popular demand and the flexibility of our Training Program we were able to add two classes to the schedule when the opportunity presented itself. Unfortunately, four of our classes were canceled due to the fires.

One highlight was that December's Electrical Power Lab had 4 ETCP Recognized Trainers: Richard Cadena, Bobby DeChellis, Mike Amorelli, and myself. It is my goal for the Local 728 Training Program to have the most ETCP Recognized Trainers anywhere in the world.

February and March are the months

when we regroup and plan for the upcoming year. This year, we are going deeper and looking at new ways to make our training more accessible and engaging. ETCP Certification is important to our future. This is what the Entertainment Industry has labeled as the pinnacle of expertise in the realm of portable power distribution and lighting control networks. This is our work, and no one does it better than us. We are the ones who set the standard for our craft, and this is how we differentiate ourselves from the casual users of our equipment.

Our joint ETCP Study Group with Local 52 was featured prominently at the recent meeting of the IATSE General Executive Board. The world is changing our industry, and we must adapt to hold our place as the leaders of the pack. Locals across the IATSE are considering ETCP and they are looking to us as the role models for the industry.

Congratulations to Brother Robert Auld-Wright who received his ETCP Entertainment Electrician Certification on January 29, 2025.

The ESTA Meetings were held in Anaheim on January 21-24. I am now the senior Co-Chair for the Technical Standards Council and sat in as the Chair for the Mental Health Working Group. One highlight from the Electrical Power Working Group is the issue of inconsistent wiring in socopex connectors which can result in energizing the equipment ground. The next ESTA Meetings will be in Columbus, OH on March 5 - 9. The July meetings may conflict with the IATSE Quadrennial and are likely going to be held in Minneapolis, MN. The fall meetings are probably going to be in Minneapolis as well.

The ETCP Council met remotely before the ESTA Meetings in Anaheim. We have been giving extensions to people re-certifying, due to COVID and the strikes. Those extension periods are coming to an end and the ETCP staff has

a sizable backlog. If anyone has submitted a recertification and hasn't heard back, let me know and I will confirm you are in the queue.

The Public Input for NFPA 140 is not due until January 2026 and we continue our work on our submission. On a related note, the Industry Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee has created a Working Group to address establishing our own standards on Stage Inspections and Communication around those inspections.

We must implement some changes with our use of Vectorworks Training Software to remain compliant with Microsoft. Members are now required to have a license to access the network. We have several licenses available for people to use on a short-term basis and I am working on a proposal to include licenses into the cost of our Vectorworks classes as well as other options for members who can't make it into one of the classes.

If you haven't read last month's article about Wildfire Smoke, please do so. There is a lot of misinformation floating around about the effects of the smoke and the presence of toxic chemicals.

Times are difficult and everyone is on their last nerve. Some are feeling emboldened to be their worst selves and others are in fear that the wrath of a political adversary will smite them. Regardless of political stripe, this chaos is affecting us all and how we interact with each other. We are now in the fifth year of this seemingly endless stream of tragedy and uncertainty, and it is up to us to bridge the divide that is splitting our communities, families, and crews. We can't create jobs or magically kick start the industry, but we can cut down on the noise, not contribute to the chaos, and focus on what we share rather than what divides us.

In Solidarity,

LIGHTING TECHNICIANS

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At the January General Membership Meeting, the Local initiated new members, and newly-elected Executive Board Members took their oath of office. Top photo pictured (L-R): Treasurer-Call Steward Pascal Guillemard, Brandon Hoeg, Tashion Williams, President Martin Weeks, Dieyan Zawi, Matthew T. Hall, Business Representative Greg Reeves and Vice President Malakhi Simmons. Bottom photo pictured (L-R) Jason Young, Janette Shugart, Malakhi Simmons, Martin Weeks, Jimmy Cornick, Iain O'Higgins and Greg Reeves.



Wildfire Resources

Navigating the aftermath of the devastating wildfires continues for so many in our community. Members affected are encouraged to reach out for assistance to these resources.

Call MPTF
<https://mptf.com/ways-to-give/wildfirerelief/>



File for FEMA
<https://www.disasterassistance.gov/>

File for SBA
<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance/california-wildfires>



**Your Local is always here for you!
If we can be of any assistance, please
do not hesitate to call the hall**

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