

Weakley Remembers **Tales from the Early Days** **of IBEW Local 1245**

LEAVING LAS VEGAS

Editor's note: Local 1245 founder Ron Weakley, who died in October, loved to tell stories—from the early tumultuous days when the union was being organized, to the sometimes bizarre situations he found himself in during 20 years as the union's business manager. He asked that these stories not be published until after his death.

Some years ago a man named Grant Sawyer became governor of Nevada. We were very strong supporters of his candidacy. In fact, our local union gave him \$1500 to use the night before the election. He got on the radio with that money. We think that helped him over the top and he became governor.

He served for two terms in Nevada. He asked me if he could be of any assistance to anything we needed or wanted. I told him we didn't want anything for having supported him.

He said, "I have a vacancy on the Nevada Gaming Commission. Do you know anyone you might suggest, I'm looking over candidates."

I said, "Yes, there is. There's a man I know in San Francisco who's the retiring chief agent for the FBI. He's retiring, and I'll ask him if he's interested and he'll let me know and I'll let you know."

So the (ex-FBI) guy said he was interested. So I said, "You'll have to move to Nevada, you have to be a Nevada resident." The guy said, "OK." He did move, and he did get on the commission.

Well, you can imagine an FBI guy getting on the Nevada Gaming Commission—the reaction among the gamblers and the gangsters and the rest of them! So I got associated with that happening and I became somewhat unpopular in certain circles.

I was sitting in the Riviera Hotel having a beer and a young man came up. He looked like a college student, with short cropped hair, probably in his early 20s. He asked if he could sit down. I said, "Sure." He simply told me if I wanted to remain alive it would be a good idea to get on a plane and get out of Las Vegas. So I thanked him and I left Las Vegas.



Ron Weakley in 2003