



Bowling Party

We are hosting a 149 Bowling Party on August 8th from 11am-3pm at Old Orchard Lanes and Links! We will have open bowling and open putt putt and food will also be provided. Each adult attendee will receive (2) drink tickets for the bar. We hope to see you there!



This Month's Fun Pipe-Fitting Fact

More than 28 billion feet (about 5.3 million miles) of copper piping has been installed in buildings in the U.S. since 1963. To put it in perspective, imagine a single long copper tube going around the earth 200 times

SUMMER PROGRAM INTRODUCES AREA STUDENTS TO TRADES

High school students from across East Central Illinois learned a little of what goes into plumbing, pipefitting and HVAC repair, among other trades, during a series of visits to the UA Local 149 training facility. The students were selected as part of the Education For Employment System #330's summer school program. Through hands-on interactions with union leaders, the students gained invaluable experience as they begin making career decisions after high school.

"This program is an incredible opportunity for us to introduce students to a career path that could be a great fit for their skills and interests," said Local 149 Business Manager Matt Kelly. "Whether their future involves college or not, we want them to understand they have choices, we're ensuring all students have an opportunity to succeed."



Over multiple weeks this summer, EFE students are paid to attend classes and learn about careers in the trades. This year, more than 80 students signed up, but only 36 slots were available in two full-time programs.

At Local 149, the students met with Kelly and Training Director Derek Reedy and Journeyman Justin McMullin (orange shirt), who took time off work to work with the students. In addition to visiting the Local 149 training facility, the students also spent time at the University of Illinois' Facility & Services plant, as well as fabrication shops and offices at A&R Mechanical.



From The Business Manager



With our fiscal year beginning July 1, I thought it was important to present a “State of the Union” for members.

We’ve seen many changes in recent years - with even more ahead - but I’ve never been more confident in the future of Local 149. We are operating in a strong financial position with close to \$2 million in our General Fund, thanks to our decisions to be fiscally responsible and to make smart investments in our future. Those are steps we have taken due to the support of our members and for that, I want to say thank you.

Today our membership is larger than it has ever been - we have 75 more members than we did just four years ago. Even with this increase in members, nearly all of our members are working. Many of our new members joined Local 149 from non-union shops. This is increasing pressure on those contractors to increase hourly rates for their employees. While those companies still can’t offer their employees the kind of health benefits, pension plans and guaranteed work conditions that we provide, the effort to keep up is certainly driving up their costs. That, in turn, levels the playing field for the Union contractors who employ our members. On top of that, our contractor base is growing, as is our available work, which means more hours for members and even more funds going into our Trust Fund accounts. With COVID restrictions lifting, we plan to again ramp up our efforts to educate not just non-union workers, but area high school and college students, as well as those between opportunities, about the many reasons to join Local 149 so that growth continues.

Thanks to the votes cast by members to move forward with donating our office space to the JAC, which will allow the training facility to expand, all the years of planning have paid off. We’re proud of the improved training being provided by Derek and his team and know it will only continue to advance in that new space. Our decision to invest in our training means we will also be investing in a modern Union Hall to serve our members for generations to come and allowing us to operate even more efficiently. And those generations of members will be enjoying retirement even earlier, thanks again to our members, who voted to invest more in our pension fund in order to lower our retirement age to 60. And we will all be able to enjoy retirement even longer, and healthier, thanks to the decision by our members to invest more into our Health & Welfare Fund to create a new health clinic specifically for our members and their families.

All of that is happening as our contract wages outpace other trades, and other UA locals in Central Illinois. And we STILL have an additional strong raise left on this contract in 2022. There is a reason UA Local 149 is where it is today - it’s our members. Even during the most challenging fiscal years, we have always been recognized for our high standards and incredible work ethic. While our financial situation has changed, dramatically, we continue to be the workhorse of unionized trades in Central Illinois and I couldn’t be more proud to be your Business Manager.

Fraternally yours,
Matt Kelly



From The Business Agent



Having spent considerable time fighting for our members and negotiating a 5-year contract in 2018, we are now 1 month into working under the new 2021-2022 wages of that agreement. The wage increase from \$66.38 to \$68.54 will help all of our members and their families. Thanks to member support, the Trustees of the Health & Welfare Fund have the resources to plan for a new health facility exclusively for 149 families to be opened in the Champaign-Urbana area, and the Pension Fund now allows Local 149 members to retire with full benefits at 60. I'd like to thank Matt Kelly and Jeff Langendorf for their hard work as Trustees to the Fund for identifying what it would take to allow our members to enjoy their hard-earned pensions even earlier.

Of course, with longtime members retiring, that means we are also welcoming new members and we were all proud to support the JAC graduates at their recent ceremony. Derek and the JAC team do a tremendous job of preparing our members to become high-quality journeymen and we're grateful for that work. Separately, there have been several activities in Springfield that will help support trade unions for many years to come.

The Legislature voted to approve HB 3739, the Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act, which requires all water utilities across the state to replace any lead service lines still in use. That work to replace up to 1.4 million lead pipes is expected to create more than 11,000 jobs over the next 20 years and \$1 billion in economic activity - much of which will benefit our members. We thank the Illinois Pipe Trades Association, Sen. Scott Bennett and Sen. Chapin Rose and many others for joining us in the fight to get this bill sent to Gov. J.B. Pritzker for approval.

Gov. Pritzker is also set to sign a prevailing wage bill after it was passed by both the House and Senate. Under this new law, any contractor that wins a job subject to prevailing wages is obligated to send notice to the Illinois Department of Labor each month showing they are, in fact, providing proper and full payment to our workers. That information will be made publicly available and contractors failing to provide that information face sanctions up to de-barring them from future public works contracts. This accountability will ensure our members are actually receiving what we have fought hard for you to receive.

Finally, our national convention is set for August and I will be reporting back on any changes to our bylaws or constitution. At the convention, Bill Meyers will be retiring as the Illinois International Representative and replaced by Evan Wooding, who many of us know from Steamfitters Local 353 in Peoria. We'd like to thank Bill for his many years of work and congratulate Evan.

Fraternally,
Kevin Sage



From The Training Director



We've wrapped up another successful year at the JAC and have an amazing class of Apprentices who are now on the job working as Journeymen. Seven students were recognized at our graduation ceremony after completing five years of classroom learning and hands-on experience.

The Class of 2021 are:

Nicholas Banda: A&R Mechanical
Chris Brown: Awaiting assignment
Bill Cornwell: A&R Mechanical
Andy Currie: A&R Mechanical
Geoff Hayes: University of Illinois
Jonah Johnson: A&R Mechanical
Joshua Timm: United Mechanical



Each year, we award one Apprentice with the Richard B. Meislahn Award, as the most outstanding plumber or pipefitter in the class. This year's award went to Jonah Johnson, who demonstrated the skills, aptitude and interest that will make him a strong co-worker and Union member for decades to come. The award is named after Richard Meislahn, who led Reliable Mechanical - which his family founded in 1902 and which continues to employ many of our members today. Richard Meislahn supported organized labor and was dedicated to the success of the Joint Apprenticeship Training Program. We are looking forward to our next group of Apprentices beginning their work with us in a few months and I look forward to telling you more about them in our next issue.

Sincerely,
Derek Reedy

Eric "Deaner" Dean Retiring

Many of us have enjoyed working with Eric "Deaner" Dean over the years and even more of us have enjoyed hearing his many stories and "Deanerisms." But now our longtime friend, talented pipefitter and strong union supporter will be retiring at the end of July after 39 years! There is a reception planned at A&R Mechanical, where he's worked for the last decade, and an open house at Rigg's Brewing on July 16th.

Deaner joined Local 149 in 1982 and after learning to weld and fit as a second-year Apprentice, he knew he'd found his calling. "I worked with a lot of good, older fitters who showed me neat little things," he said. "I like to use my hands and as a pipefitter, you get to play with fire and I liked that too. But I really liked the challenge of things. No day is the same." One of his most memorable projects was the remodeling of Assembly Hall, now the State Farm Center. "We bent the piping in a circle for the radius of the building, instead of using different joints. It's a 20-degree fitting and it looked weird, but then to see it in the air it looked pretty slick," he said.

The trades have been popular in his family, as his father, son, nephew, father-in-law and wife's grandpa have all been union members. His father, who some of our members also worked with, worked on steam and diesel engines before joining Local 149. "The benefits are good, the pension is great, but most of all I've enjoyed the challenge of the job," he said. "There's a lot of different and interesting things that happen on the job. Every time you build or remodel something, there are unique challenges with math, layouts and tie-ins, you have to think of everything." Deaner planned to retire last year but the COVID pandemic and losing both his parents kept him around another year. Which means he now benefits from the lower retirement age the Union negotiated, meaning he won't be penalized for retiring early.

He and his wife Lisa will tackle a few projects left on their 10-year renovation plan at their home in St. Joe, built by Ray Dickerson who built the original Assembly Hall, but not before traveling to Florida for their granddaughter's dance competition and a trip to Lookout Mountain in Georgia. He owns land outside of town and anticipates spending time out there. "It's really peaceful, there's not another house around for a mile and a half." Congrats, Deaner! We hope you enjoy your hard-earned pension and don't work too hard in retirement!

Retirees! We Want To Hear From You!

How are you enjoying your retirement? What are you up to? Where are you living now? Let us know! We love hearing updates from our retirees and want to include you in the next newsletter. Please send your updates to mkelly@ualocal149.com



Eric with his late father, Bill Dean

NATIONAL PIPEFITTING NEWS



The International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH) is excited to launch the Wash Station Challenge, 2021: a new collaboration with the DigDeep Navajo Water Project, the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing, Pipefitting and Sprinkler Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada (UA). Wash station assembly projects will be hosted at ten participating UA Locals across the United States through June, 2021.

Once completed, the wash stations will be shipped to designated DigDeep staging points on the Navajo Nation. DigDeep teams will then deliver, install and maintain the wash stations at sites which will initially include community health service facilities, chapter houses, and farms. COVID-19 has hit the Navajo Nation particularly hard, registering some of the highest infection rates in the United States.

"Our UA locals are proud to utilize our trained men and women to assist the Navajo Nation with this critical need," said UA Assistant Director of Education and Training Raymond Boyd. "These wash stations are going to have an immediate impact, providing non-potable water for hygiene, which will ultimately cut down on the spread of disease and virus."



UA LOCAL 149
Plumbers and Pipefitters

UA Local 149

PO Box 725

Savoy, IL 61874