

# Newsletter

4th Quarter 2022

Brother and Sisters of Local 354,

I hope all enjoyed your summer! As we look forward to the fall and winter months, we should all be interested in what is happening in the National and World political arena and how it directly affects the construction industry. In the last newsletter I mentioned the issues with the supply chain, although we see that it might be getting a bit better there is still problems obtaining equipment and materials in a timely fashion. The price of building material spiked during Covid, these prices have leveled out but still are above the price before the spike. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia still continues and as long as this war goes on we can expect volatility in the markets. Here in the US, we are experiencing challenges with inflation and large amounts of debt, then you throw in the political conflicts between Democrats and Republicans, it is frankly creating a perfect storm.

The Federal Reserve will have to try to limit inflation by increasing rates and by doing so it will create a strain on the economy and the stock markets. No one can predict when we will bounce back from this turmoil, but it is evident we will overcome these obstacles, until that time comes, we must remain patient and hold the course.

I don't want you to think all is doom and gloom in fact there is some good news to report.

A recent Gallop Poll revealed that Labor Unions have reached the highest level of approval since 1965 which means that a lot of people are looking at the trades as a viable option for employment without spending tens of thousands of dollars for college education and they also see the value in building with Union Craft people.

The Biden administration has invested over \$50 Billion in funds to build semiconductor (chips) here in the US! Known as the CHIPS Act.

Passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, included in this act is \$70 Billion for Water Infrastructure, storage and resiliency.

- \$15 billion in lead lines replacement
- \$60 billion in New and emerging Energy Sources
- \$10 billion in Carbon Capture sequestration
- \$8 billion in Hydrogen Hubs
- \$500 million for clean hydrogen manufacturing
- \$11 billion in nuclear energy
- \$1 billion for Gas distribution projects

There will also be a tremendous amount of work on electric vehicle Plants, electric vehicle battery plants, pharmaceutical plants and data centers adding another 70 billion dollars of work for the UA. If we add in the work that will proceed on sprinkler systems, pipelines and plumbing and HVAC we are looking at over \$800 billion worth of work!!!

President Biden knows that the economy and the markets are taking a hit and what better way to vest in the US, than by funding projects that employ Building Trades members especially the UA. Over the next ten years, we are looking at millions of man-hours for the UA. Although much of this work is not within the jurisdiction of LU 354 and furthermore not a lot in the state of PA, I am hopeful that we might see a Hydrogen Hub or a Carbon Capture Project within the near future and quite possibly in our jurisdiction. The challenge that the UA sees with all of this work is that there is not enough manpower to fulfill the needs of the companies that are building these projects. The UA predicts that we will need an additional 40,000 members to satisfy the manpower requirements on all of these projects!

## **LOCAL NEWS –**

Local 354 held its officers election on June 4, 2022 at the Ligonier Town Hall. The results are as follows:

**Business Manager/Financial Secretary Treasurer** – Tim Custer – Unopposed 182 votes

**President** – Melvin Deneen – 104 votes  
Eric Maglas – 87 votes

**Vice President** – Jamie Byron – Unopposed – 182 votes

**Recoding Secretary** – Chad Morrison – Unopposed – 184 votes

**Executive Board** – Bill Cononie – 165 votes  
Paul “Skinny” FitzGerald – 160 votes  
Dave Singer – 136 votes  
Bryan “Bam Bam” Hotz – 100 votes  
Bobby Eritano – 135 votes

**Finance Committee** – All Unopposed  
Steve Fearer – 173 votes  
Seth Pollacci – 158 votes  
Bob Lovis – 164 votes

**Examining Board** – All Unopposed  
Don Arena – 172 vote  
Owen Markle – 172 votes  
Emerson Nicklow – 166 votes

**Health & Welfare Trustees** – All Unopposed  
Darryl Ray – 172 votes  
Ed Andolina – 166 votes

**Inside Guard** – JD Cramer – Unopposed – 179 votes

I appreciate the members that ran for offices, and congratulate those who won, I feel that the team in place is the best team that the local has had in quite a while and I look forward to working with them to make the local stronger over the next three years! Some have asked what the cost to have an election is and this past election cost the local just shy of \$7,000.00 I would also like to thank the election committee that took time out of their busy schedules to man the polls. Terry Stefancin, Joe Basal, Adam Bucynski, Ron Michlena and Mike Delicandro.

I want to take this time to thank and congratulate long time member and Officer Charlie Romanow on his retirement. Charlie has had a profound impact; through his work in the trade, career as an instructor and a long tenure as an officer. Charlie had a way with words and was a big supporter of the local. We wish you the best of luck in retirement!

The electrical equipment that we have been waiting on for the last 6 months have finally arrived!!! We hope the electrical work will be done sometime in November at the Service Training Center. Ed Andolina has been hired as full time Service Training Instructor at the facility and has diligently been coordinating and working on the piping systems for the equipment that the apprentices will be trained on. I am hopeful that we will be set and ready to go to have an open house sometime in the spring. Chad Morrison projects a schedule to have the first class of apprentices in June. If any members know of a young man or woman that is interested in the service side of our industry, please direct them to the Local 354 website, [lu354.com](http://lu354.com) information for applying is available.

One other issue that members can help with is the fact that we need more service contractors....all of us know someone that has their own HVAC and Plumbing business. If you can talk to these owners and tell them of the benefits we can provide to them that can help their company grow and take them to the next level, it would benefit all of us. Of course it's that time of year that boilers and furnaces need to be serviced, please utilize the services of our signatory contractors for you heating systems maintenance. Our contractors that provide HVAC and plumbing service are SSM, Limbach, John Hall, Kircon Breco, Paul Bear Services and McCarls Preferred.

The issue with unemployment benefits has been getting better! Michelle Mills from the Labor and Industry gave a power point presentation to the membership back in August. She also stated that the Career Links have full time people working with them to provide help with unemployment claims. All information pertaining to Unemployment can be found on our website [LU354.com](http://LU354.com) under the tag benefits.

All of you should know that, Local 354 celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 24<sup>th</sup> at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. The event was well attended, key presentations were given by Senator Kim Ward, Administrative Assistant to General President McManus Brad Karbowsky, and the Local gave retired International Representative David Donato a plaque commemorating his service and dedication to Local 354 and the UA. I would like to thank the membership for all the hard work each and every one of you do to make Local 354 one of the best in North America and would also like to thank our sponsors that made the event a success. The United Association, Highmark, Laurel MCA, MCA of Western PA, LU 542, 420, 690, 692, SSM, Limbach, NAES Contractors, K&K Plumbing, McCarls Inc. and AndCo.

Local 354 had a gun raffle to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Chad Morrison was the lucky winner of the gun!

### **FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES-**

The Frat Committee had been especially busy helping with the Anniversary Celebration. They also have been instrumental getting ready for the apprentice graduation, which will be held November 12<sup>th</sup> at Seven Springs. Due to Covid we have not been able to formally have a graduation for the past 2 years, so this year we will be honoring the last three classes that graduated.

The Frat has also made a purchase of shirts that are quite unique to Local 354, they were made available at the Family Picnic at Idlewild but we still have quite a few left for sale, if anyone is interested in buying a few shirts please call the hall we will see that they are made available to you.

### **POLITICS-**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is gaining national attention due to the Governor's race and Senate Race. There is much being said and done by all the candidates that the decision isn't an easy one. Except the Governor's race, I feel that is an easy decision, Shapiro is an ally to Labor! He despises the antics of the open shops way of business; this is evident due to how he handled the Hawbaker crime. (If you have not heard about the case, look it up) Josh is the best candidate of the two. Doug Mastriano does not support labor!! In fact, he is so against labor that he has not asked for any contribution or endorsement! Repeated phone calls to his office to get information on his Energy policy have gone unanswered.

The Senate race between Dr. Oz and John Fetterman is much harder decision since both candidates have chosen to run a negative campaign, it's hard to make a decision when you don't know the platform the candidate is running on. It is my opinion the registered Republicans will vote for Oz and the registered Democrats will vote for Fetterman.

In any case please exercise your right to vote on November 8<sup>th</sup>!!!



### **HEALTH & WELFARE –**

On the front page, I spoke of the negative changes to the markets. Our Pensions and Health Care Fund just like our personal investments will see a downturn as well. When you study your 354 Pension statement you will see the negative impact this last year has had on your returns, but keep in mind the losses you see are just on paper, you will not actually incur these unless you take money out of your accounts or make trades to other investments within the portfolio. I like to think that right now we continue to purchase shares at a discounted price, as we increase the total number of shares we own we reap the benefits when the market rebounds.

The Health Care Fund is a little different animal, as we are taking money from investments every month to pay our premiums. We continue to invest with money from the man-hours we work every month, we see a shortfall from money coming in, to money going out, which is not uncommon but the last few years profits from the market made up the difference from the shortfalls. Fortunately, the Health Care Fund is very healthy and can absorb this hit and when the market rebounds, we will shore up the fund so that we are prepared for the next time we have to endure an economic downturn such as this one.

Did you know that the membership can access their HRA accounts online and/or download an app for their Smartphone? (UA 354 HRA) If you have not already established an online account, please contact Nicki Sayles at the Benefit Fund's Office at 412-481-1641 or by e-mail [nsayles@beaconadmin.com](mailto:nsayles@beaconadmin.com) and ask how to access your HRA information. By establishing your online access, you will be able to check your HRA balance at any time, upload paper claims for payment and view your usage.



## Members Profile

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>WEST</u>
Bldg. Trades Journeyman	400	218	182
Bldg. Trades Apprentice	76	35	41
Probationary Apprentice	0	0	0
Spec. Hsg./Div. Housing	29	17	12
Contr./Superv. Members	02	00	02
Metal Trades	14	00	14
Retiree (MT, BT Disability)	194	113	81
Life Members	128		
<b><u>Total Membership</u></b>	<b><u>843</u></b>	<b><u>383</u></b>	<b><u>332</u></b>



## **Deceased Members**

Thomas E. Hirst

Randy N. Koslosky

Charles Field

Charles H. Bates

Charles Vasbinder

Ethan J. Nicastro



## **Recently Retired**

Dennis J. Lukatch

Robert A. Short

Henry W. Smith, Jr.

Robert M. Snyder

Charles S. Romanow

## Eastern Region

**Miller & Son:** -3- Members – Niagara Cutter, SGL Carbon and few Maintenance projects in the area.

**Triple H Mech.:** -10- Members – Working at SGL Carbon, GKN Sinter Metals, Mersen Carbon, Air Gas in Ridgeway, Mathison in St. Mary's, Brockway Glass, Grafftech in St. Marys and Johnsonburg waste water treatment plant.

**K & K Plumbing:** -3- Members- At Glendale School and a few small projects around area.

**Baer Mechanical:** -15- Members –Working at North American Hoganas on various projects, Johnstown High, PNG Jefferson, Westin House Electric and Indiana Food Bank.

**S.P. McCarls:** -13- Members – Work in the Fab Shop, VA Hospital Audiology and Pharmacy, Delgrosso in Tipton, Altoona Verixon, and a few projects out of town.

**OSMI Mech:** -4- Members – Penn Highlands in Dubois, Penn Highlands Elk, Penn Highlands Brookville, and a few small projects in the local.

**Darr Construction:** -6- Members – UPMC Twin Lakes, Bedford County Court House, and misc. work at Somerset Hospital.

**Somerset Steel:** -5- Members –various projects around local.

**Plant Service Group:** -4- Members- At Conemaugh Station.

**Renick Brothers** -12- Members- Penn Highlands West ER, CJ Johnson School, Ridgeway School and Conemaugh Hospital in Johnstown.

**Johnston Mechanical:** -13- Members. Maintenance work at Conemaugh Hospital, Association for the Blind, VA Hospital, Altoona Hospital Chiller, Occupational Therapy and Connor Fine Arts Building at St. Francis College and Arby's Restaurant in Roaring Springs.

**John Hall:** -7- Members – At IUP Steam Line, Cambria County Court House and Glendale School

**Reno Brothers:** -2- Clearfield County Prison.

**Huckenstein Mechanical:** -5- Members - Johnstown High School and Huntington Prison.

**Wheels Mechanical:** -7- IUP Science Building.

**Hayes Mechanical:** - 9- Members- At Homer City Station.

**McClure:** -2- Members- At Southern Huntington School and various jobs.

**Selinsky Force:** -5- Members- At Graf Tech in St. Mary's.

**Currently** – There are 76 Journeyman off. 16 are out of town and 6 Apprentices are off.

**Good Luck to all the Hunters and Happy Holidays!**

Business Agent  
**Bill Cononie**



## West Region



**Fazio Mech:** -5 - Members – Employed throughout Local 354.

**Hranec:** -3 – Member- in shop and other small projects.

**John Hall:** -5- Members- Working service and some small projects.

**Keystone Fabrication:** -10- Members-Employed at shop.

**Limbach:** -12- Members – On various projects and service such as Jeannette Manor, Excelsa Health at Latrobe, DNP, St. Vincent College and Aqua Source.

**Lugaila Inc.:** -8- Members- Working EWCT in Latrobe, Pitt of Greensburg and Somerset Prison.

**Mechanical Contractors:** -7- Members- Working on projects outside the local in West Virginia LU 152 and Med-Grow facility in Smithfield, Gallatin Bank and Uniontown Hospital.

**Sentry Mechanical:** – 2- Members – Working at this time, one on service and one on a project outside our area.

**SSM:** -18- Members – Working at ATI in Vandergrift, SCI Fayette, Westmoreland Courthouse, Hiller Readiness Center and Service.

**W. G. Tomko:** -39– Members – 31 working Building Trades and 8 working Metal Trades.

**Wayne Crouse:** -5- Members – At SCI Fayette.

**Whitby:** -5- Members- Employed at this time at Nemacolin Woodlands.

**First American Industries:** -3- Members – Working at Ringold High School and outside of the Local.

**McCarls:** -21- Members- Working at this time at ATI Vandergrift.

**Powell Mechanical:** -2- Members - Working at various Verizon buildings.

**Chapman:** - 12- Members – Working at Flexsys.

**Definis:** -1- Member – Working at Mon Valley Hospital.

**Keystone Fabrication:** - 10- Members – 9 Building Trades and 1 Metal Trades employed at the shop.

**Manion Plumbing:** -1- Member – Working Westmoreland Courthouse parking garage.

**Somerset Steel:** - 1- Member- Working at Arconic.

**Woods Refrigeration:** -1- Member – Working on various service projects.

There are 11 members working out of town and 39 Journeymen and 2 Apprentices currently laid off at this time.

### **Work in the future:**

Work coming up in the near future will be large project at the Hempfield School, which should be starting in the spring of 2023 and the new SCI DNA lab in Greensburg, which is being re-bid and will be a 2-story 50,000 sq. ft. building.

**Happy Holidays!**

Business Agent  
**Steven Fearer**



## Organizing Report

Since the last Newsletter Local #354 has brought the following members in to the local through organizing.

**Speculative Housing** – Eric Ciliberti, Jesse Coburn, Oneil Marballie

**Metal Trades** – Robert Nickel, Austin Boardley

**Building Trades Apprentice** – Tylor Krause

**MES Apprentice** – Cody Simmons

Welcome all to Local Union 354!

Over the past few months, I have been speaking with non-union contractors in our territory to increase our contractor base. It is difficult to persuade contractors to see the benefit of organized labor. With that said, over the next few months, I would like to target a few contractors and start an organizing campaign. This involves gathering information, talking to their workers and getting authorization cards signed so we can go to these contractors and tell them that their employees want represented by Local 354.

Last spring, we did COMET classes (Construction Organizing Membership Education Training) for the 4th and 5th year apprentices. In the next few months or possibly after the 1st of the year, I would like to do COMET classes for Journeyman. I think it is important for the membership to understand why we need to organize. We need the help of the membership to increase market share and taking COMET and COMET II would be a good start. If anyone is interested in taking a class, please text or call me. I would like to have an idea how many before we schedule a class.

We have a few signatory contractors that need Service Techs, so if anyone knows a Service Tech who has at least 2 years of field experience and may be interested, please have them contact me. We are always interested in building the MES Service program.

Last May I was appointed to the position of Lead Organizer for the State of Pennsylvania. I still serve as organizer for our local union but have additional responsibilities. Some of the duties as the Lead Organizer are to work with other organizers across the state, schedule and chair the Pa state organizer meetings, and attend the annual Lead Organizer conference at the UA office.

This past week I attended the regional organizing blitz in New York City. This is an annual event that all organizers are required to attend. I worked with organizers from all over the northeast covering the five boroughs of New York City, visiting jobsites, and talking to workers. It was a real eye opener on how much work is being done non-union in New York. Hopefully we made a difference by being there.

I hope you and your family stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

**Don Arena**

Organizer



# *Congratulations*

## Graduated Apprentices of 2019 through 2022

These members of apprentice classes of the Local 354 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (J.A.T.C.) graduated to journeymen but were not properly recognized at the time because of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

### **Graduated 2021-2022**

Allen, Andrew W.  
Berry, Timothy W.  
Biancuzzo, Kyle E.  
Boyle, Nicolas E.  
Costabile, William A.  
Fagans, Zachary A.  
Hefner, Jacob A.  
Hruska, Jason D.  
Joy, Thomas L.  
Leib, Michael A.  
McLaren, Cameron S.  
Miller, Seth O.  
Perez, Brandon  
Pucci, Kenton C.  
Shuey, Steven D.  
Stoltzfus, Michael J.  
Styperk, Tyler W.  
Watters, Logan M.

### **Graduated 2019-2020**

Anderson, Garrett  
Carpinello, Zachary A.  
Dalicandro, Michael P.  
Enos, Justin M.  
Fearer, Eric L.  
Fillhart, Luke A.  
Gindlesperger, Luke N.  
Glessner, Brandon J.  
Hayes, Reed J.  
Hudson, Jacob R.  
Knisley, Ricky E.  
Leonard, Adam E.  
McKibbin, Thomas  
Melikant, Evan R.  
Muchler, Ryan J.  
Todd, Daniel R.  
Vought, Casey R.  
Willochell, Shane P.

### **Graduated 2021-2022**

Burgess, Ryan R.  
Dichello, Joshua D.  
Hoffman, William J.  
Morrison, Mark V.  
Orzehowski, Jason A.  
Shupe, Dylan R.  
Spina, Stephen M.  
Taylor, Daniel T.

# 2022 Year of Service Pins & Certificates

Were recently distributed by mail to those  
awarded their 25-65 years of service

**"CONGRATULATIONS!"**

A **"Special Congratulations"** to our 10 members who are receiving their  
**Life Time Membership!"**

Maurice Brea  
Richard E. Clark  
Michael A. Gordon  
Richard W. Pukl  
George A. Rattay  
Joseph A. Ricco, Jr.  
Michael K. Smor  
William T. Ulery  
Gene Yatchyshyn  
Donald R. Zawatski

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## **DUES INFORMATION:**

If you are a member of the LU 354 Federal Credit Union and on the Quarter Check Off, dues are taken March, June, September and December and paid 3 months in advance if funds are available.

If you are traveling out of the local's jurisdiction there is no savings coming into your savings account, therefore funds may not be available for Quarterly Check off. **You are then responsible to make sure your monthly dues are paid.**

### **Constitution of the United Association:**

According to SEC 157:

A member owing three (3) months' dues shall automatically be suspended from membership **without notice of any kind**. A suspended member is denied all rights and privileges and is not entitled to any monetary benefits.

Once a reinstatement fee of \$50.00 is owed, that fee plus all dues up to and including the current month must be paid for you to be put back in good standings.

According to SEC 159:

**Any member in arrears for dues for a period of six (6) months shall stand expelled, and must pay all money that he legally owed to the expelling Local Union and pay a new initiation fee to the Local Union in which he will be reinstated.**