

NEWSLETTER

2nd Quarter 2023

Dear Brother & Sisters of Local 354,

Spring has sprung!!! I hope that all have enjoyed the winter season! Although the last quarter was not awful when it comes to the weather, it did take its toll on Manhours for the local. Supply chain continues to be an issue for the contractors, the cost of equipment and materials has leveled off but they have not been reduced to the prices we saw before Covid and the economy has owners thinking twice about spending money on capital improvements or expansion. Many of you have seen this before, we ride high for a few years with plenty of work opportunities and then we hit a low spell when work just isn't as good. We will come out of this dry spell but at this moment, I cannot project when!

In years past just when we thought the future looks bleak, something would pop up to help, just as the case of the project at Nemaquin Woodlands. In January Whitby Plumbing and Heating, Limbach and Lugaila Mechanical were awarded the plumbing and heating contracts for a renovation of 60 rooms at the hotel with Lugaila getting the HVAC and Whitby and Limbach doing the plumbing. Today we currently have 60 members working at the project from both regions.....just the shot in the arm we needed. This project is supposed to last through the summer and if we prove ourselves with our work ethic and our expertise we will have a good shot at getting the work on the next phase of work on renovating 150 guest rooms.

Along with the Nemaquin Project, we have seen work opportunities in the industrial sector with outages at Conemaugh, Seward and Hilltop power plants. We have seen an uptick in calls that are short-term calls and I thank the membership for taking these calls to man our work.

The local contractors have been managing to maintain manhours for the time being but currently there doesn't look like a lot of projects to bid, this too can change at a drop of the hat. Out of town work has been somewhat busy due to the Nuke outages and outage at the refinery.

Currently the only sizeable projects that are on our radar is the Hempfield High School, which should bid early summer, and the DNA Lab in Westmoreland County, which was bid, but the bidders have not been notified.

I wish all the members and their families a happy spring and summer season!

LOCAL NEWS-

It was recently announced that Homer City Power Plant will be decommissioned and plan to be offline by June of this year. Homer City was a staple for LU 354 and all the building trades for decades! Construction of the plant began in the mid-sixties and in 1969 Units 1 and 2 went online, Unit 3 was placed into operation in 1977. Brothers and sisters of Local 354 enjoyed going to Homer City for the spring and fall outages. Early on, these outages provided a great living for our members. Back in the day, the outages could be as long as 16 weeks in the spring, members would take the next few months off, and then hit the fall outage for another 16 weeks. Over the past decade, the outage schedule grew shorter and shorter, and recently a six-week outage was a long one. There is more than one determining factor resulting in the shutting of Homer City, warmer than usual winters, low prices per KW, the rising cost of coal, but the one factor that is most prevalent is the excessive Federal Emission Limits that have been placed on the Plant. The emissions that Homer City was allowed to emit was unachievable even with installing state of the art equipment to reduce emissions. I am hopeful there will be someone who might take the chance to turn this plant into a natural gas burning facility in the future.

LU 354 Organizer Donnie Arena was selected to head up the PA State Pipe Trades as the Lead Organizer for the state. Brother Arena was selected at the end of 2022 and started his new position January 1, 2023. During the first few months of the year, he was busy interviewing and hiring 6 organizers from around the state and Delaware. He will directly oversee the day-to-day operations of these organizers and organize blitzes and continue to organize throughout the state. **Congratulations** to Donnie for his new position!!

On February 18th the local held its annual apprenticeship contest, the winners were Luke Foy-Pipefitter, Jared Ott-Plumber and the welders Scott Reedy and Adam Bales were tied at the end of the event, so it came down to a weld off and in the end Scott Reedy was named the winner. Just before the state competition was held in Scranton in March, Brother Reedy broke his hand so Adam filled the welder spot at the states. The competition was a strenuous event, and I am pleased to announce that Brother Foy won 1st place as the Pipefitter and Brother Ott won 1st place in the Plumbing Competition, the welder again came down to the wire with Brother Bales just missing out on the 1st place prize. I am not 100% positive, but I am pretty sure that LU 354 has never sent two apprentices to the regional competition before, and we were damn close on sending three!!! I am extremely proud of these three guys, and I look forward to the regional competition that will be held in Pittsburgh in June. Good Luck to Jared and Luke, and I hope we will be sending both to the National Competition to Ann Harbor in the fall.

For the past 4 months, I have been telling everyone that the Latrobe School has been waiting for the electrical equipment to be delivered and installed. I am pleased to announce that this work has been completed and Eddie Andolina and Chad Morrison are coordinating the installation of the mechanical training equipment and associated piping, if everything goes to plan, we should be able to have our first class in the next few months. We have started interviewing apprentices and it looks like we have some good candidates in both the Building Trades and the MES. I am eager and anxious to get the service training up and running and I want to thank all the members that have helped with the project and of course Chad and Eddie for the long hours and hard work that they have put into this new training. As always, we will keep you updated as things progress.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES-

The Retires Luncheons have been set for June, as always we look forward to seeing and breaking bread with the guys who laid the foundation so that the current active members can enjoy the benefits that we receive today. The invite and information will be sent out in the near future.

Wednesday, June 21 – Youngwood Training Center

Thursday, June 22 – Ebensburg Training Center

Friday, June 23 – Luigis in Dubois

The Idlewild Picnic has been scheduled for July 15th. Idlewild has made some changes on how guest tickets will be handled. Starting this year members tickets will still be handled through the Union Hall, members in good standing and their dependents that are listed on the Healthcare database will receive Free tickets as usual. The guest tickets is where the major change is happening, guest tickets will have to be purchased online through the Idlewild portal, the cost will be \$29.99. Idlewild does not have the portal open at this time; they have stated that it should be available late May. As soon as the portal is open, we will get the information and instructions out to the membership. In addition, Idlewild is cash free meaning all purchases throughout the park are card only. We will still be selling 354 T-shirts, etc. and 50/50 drawings so don't forget all your cash. Children under the age of 3 are free admission.

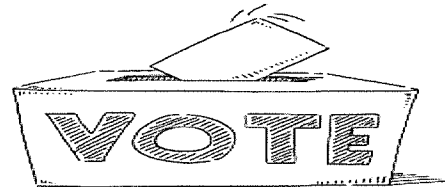
The free member's tickets should be easy to follow for the active members; there could be some issues with some of the retirees due to the fact that some have left our healthcare plan. In these instances, the retiree will receive 1 free ticket for themselves and 1 free ticket for a guest. All guest tickets (\$29.99) must be purchased through Idlewild.

HEALTH AND WELFARE-

The trustees have been extremely busy over the last few months, everyone knows that with downturn in the market and the rising cost of health care it has been a real challenge to the fund. We continue to look at ways to improve the benefits without spending a lot of money. One major change that the committee has agreed to has been the change in administration. Beacon Administrators formally known as Vacarro Associates has been our third party administrator for the last 10 years. To provide the membership an improved customer service program the trustees have made the decision to bring the administration of the funds in house, in doing so we have retained Nicki Sayles to work directly for the LU 354 Combined Funds as the administrator! Effective June 1st, Nicki will be full time employed by the 354 Funds working solely for our members and will be working from the Union Hall. There was some upfront costs associated with this decision but the value will be seen over the years as cost savings and work on multiple funds as in her current employment tenure. In addition to the benefit of having Nicki work for us, we have purchased a computer program that members will be able to utilize to see the amount in their banks, HRA accounts and will give them the opportunity to download forms without having to call the office. This part of the program will not be made available by June 1st but I am hopeful it will be ready for use by the end of the 3rd quarter. Until June 1 gets here Nicki is still employed by Beacon, we have recently been told there was a phone number change for the Beacon group, the number we have been given does not work! Effective immediately if you have a need to contact Nicki for any reason, please contact the Hall and we will have Nicki reach out to you.

In February, you all should have received information from John Hancock stating that an administrative charge that will be implemented on a quarterly basis to your retirement account. The fund was able to pay this fee for the membership for the six years while the market was strong, due to the downturn in the market the funding mechanism that paid this fee has diminished, hence the need to have the members pay this fee. As many of you will remember with past custodians this fee was always noticed on your statements, when the Trustees switched to Hancock they were able to implement this benefit at no cost to the participants. I am sure you will all agree that it is a small price to pay for the services John Hancock provides.

Remember to **VOTE** on May 16th!!!



SOFTBALL-

The Local 354 Softball team is gearing up for the annual PA Pipe Trades softball tournament, that will be held in September. In addition to the Pipe Trades Tournament, our team is looking to put together a team that would be competitive so that they might be able to attend the UA Softball Tournament in Cincinnati within the next year or two. If any member has experience playing softball or is currently on a team and would like to try out for the local's team please contact Jake Boyd at 724-600-5748.

Members Profile

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>EAST</u>	<u>WEST</u>
Bldg. Trades Journeyman	392	214	178
Bldg. Trades Apprentice	75	35	40
Probationary Apprentice	0	0	0
Spec. Hsg./Div. Housing	30	17	13
Contr./Superv. Members	02	00	02
Metal Trades	13	00	13
Retiree (MT, BT Disability)	192	112	80
Life Members	125		
<u>Total Membership</u>	<u>829</u>	<u>378</u>	<u>326</u>

Eastern Region

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

Triple H Mech.: -8- 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 Carbon work in fav shop and various small jobs in area.

K & K Plumbing: -6- Members- Johnstown senior center, Juniata College, Willow Brook Dental and Westmoreland Intermediate Board Room. Upcoming work Miller Hollow Water Treatment, Renovation at VA Home, Locker rooms at Rockwood School and Laurel Hill State Park.

Baer Mechanical: -13- Members – Working at North American Hoganas on various projects, Indiana Food Bank, Plumbing at Cambria County Domestic Relations, Bishop McCort High School, Bath and Body in Indiana and various other small jobs.

S.P. McCarls: -7- Members – Work in the Fab Shop, VA Hospital Audiology and Pharmacy, Altoona Verizon, and a few projects out of town.

OSMI Mech: -3- Members – Penn Highlands in Dubois, Penn Highlands Elk, Penn Highlands Brookville, and a few small projects in the local.

Darr Construction: -4- Members – UPMC Twin Lakes and misc. work at Somerset Hospital. Upcoming work roof top units at Winder, North Star and Conemaugh Township Schools. Plumbing at Johnstown Airport Hanger.

Somerset Steel: -3- Members –various projects around local.

Renick Brothers -11- Members- At ATI Dubois, Clearfield Readiness Center and Conemaugh Hospital in Johnstown. Upcoming Dubois Treatment Plant.

Johnston Mechanical: -12- Members. Maintenance work at Conemaugh Hospital, Johnstown Association for the Blind, Altoona Hospital Chiller, Occupational Therapy and Connor Fine Arts Building at St. Francis College, UPMC Altoona CT Scan Project, Bedford UPMC Med Gas, and Arby's Restaurant in Roaring Springs. Upcoming New Community Living Center at VA Home and Northern Cambria School Roof Top Units.

Reno Brothers: -3- At Punxsutawney School.

Huckenstein Mechanical: -4- Members – At Huntingdon Prison.

Wheels Mechanical: -3- IUP Science Building.

Currently – There are 60 Journeyman off. 19 are out of town and 6 Apprentices are off.

Have a Great Summer!!

Business Agent

Bill Cononie



West Region

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

Hranec: -4 – Members- at Fayette County Prison, Fort Necessity, and other small projects.

John Hall: -3- Members- Working service and some small projects.

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

Limbach: -47- Members – On various projects and service such as Mon Valley Hospital, Excelsa Health at Latrobe, Aqua Source, and Nemacolin Woodlands.

Lugaila Inc.: -19- Members- Working at Somerset Prison and Nemacolin Woodlands.

Mechanical Contractors: -6- Members- Working on projects outside the local in (West Virginia LU 152)and Med-Grow facility in Smithfield, Berlington Coats in Uniontown and South Union Recreation Center.

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

SSM: -13- Members – Working at ATI in Vandergrift, SCI Fayette, Hiller Readiness Center and Service.

W. G. Tomko: -23– Members – Working Building Trades working at shop.

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

Whitby: -14- Members- Employed at this time at Nemacolin Woodlands and Somerset Trust in Greensburg.

First American Industries: -1- Member – Working outside of the Local.

McCarls: -1- Member- Working at this time at a Carpenter Technology in Latrobe.

Powell Mechanical: -1- Member - Working at various Verizon buildings.

Chapman: - 4- Members – Working at Flexsys and 1 member out of town.

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

Summit Refrigeration: -5-Members-Working at UNFI in New Stanton.

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

McClure: -3- Members- Working at City Brewing at RIDC Park.

There are 12 members working out of town and 19 Journeymen and 2 Apprentices currently laid off at this time.

Enjoy your summer!

Business Agent
Steven Fearer



Deceased Members

Timothy Cavill

John Koricich

James M. Smith

Jack Stradofsky

Gene Yatchyshyn



Recently Retired

Troy Anderson

Charles F. Bloom, Jr.

Brian J. Calderone

Michael S. Ceccarelli

Raymond R. Jastrzab

Craig R. Smith

David L. Snell



2023 Year of Service Pins & Certificates

We will be distributing by mail to those
awarded their 25-65 years of service

“CONGRATULATIONS!”

A **“Special Congratulations”** to our members who are receiving their

“Life Time Membership!”

Jack Cardone
Gary L. Eicher
Paul Hershberger
Curtis McCarthy
John R. Myers
Allen Nihart
Howard J. Oakley
Marlin Ott
Terry L. Porterfield
Joel G. Reed
David T. Sexton
Robert F. Shoaf
Ronnie L. Smith
William Tunney
Vincent Wolpink

Dues must be paid up until the month before your original initiation month date and you will be set to go on your **NO DUES, Life Member** chapter of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local Union 354!! **Congratulations!!**

**Plumbers & Pipefitters
Local Union 354**

**Annual Family
Picnic**

At

Idlewild & Soak Zone

Saturday, July 15, 2023

