

The Connector



Iron Workers Local 498 - 5640 Sockness Dr., Rockford, IL 61109 – 815/873-9180

January 2021

From the Business Manager:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,



I hope this letter find you and your family safe and healthy and you all had a great Holiday in spite of the Covid going on. What a year 2020 was, I do not know about you, but I am glad *that* one is in the books and behind us. Who would have thought after the year we just had we would have American protesters breach our nation's capital to stop the ceremonial counting of the electoral votes by Congress on January 6th at the long encouragement of our President due to unproven and litigated questions of a fraudulent election with zero evidence? The capital has not dealt with an insurrection since the War of 1812 by the British. Let us hope the rest of 2021 is a much better year.

In my conversations with the contractors, it sounds like they are anticipating a rather good year. Currently we have only been seeing short jobs go out in the weeks up through the holiday. If we can get Covid under some sort of control that will likely help the work picture. So far, the Casinos are still a go although delayed, Nelson Energy Project is scheduled for spring start, the rods for the fly over in Beloit will likely start in March. Chrysler is rumored to have a substantial project in 2021 and Rock county is looking to have work as well. Please let me know if you see Kujo out and around so I can keep track of where they are working. Also, if you see Aldridge Electric or any activity at the substations around our jurisdiction please let me know. We just had a grievance against Aldridge Electric for having linesman do our security fence installs. I do really appreciate all your help when you are out and about, it helps us keep a handle on everything and ensuring iron worker hours go to iron workers.

Reminder, if you are married and/or have dependents you should have received a letter from Group Administrators/Tri State Health and Welfare for 2021 to do your yearly Coordination of Benefits (COB) update. You need to fill that out and send it in. This will ensure your spouse or children will be covered and the plan will pay. If you do not fill this out the plan will not pay on their claims until it is. They are making sure that your spouse (or ex) does not have coverage for your children or themselves (if you are still married). You can also do this online at www.groupadministrators.com. I know it is a pain, but it helps to keep cost down for the plan. Also, another reminder when using your HRA Card (Benefit Card) and paying bills over \$500 you will need to submit a copy of the receipt and bill to the fund office. You will get a letter reminding you that this needs to be done or you will receive a 1099 for the medical expense as income from the fund because you are using tax deferred money to pay for the medical bill. The receipt and bill can be mailed in or emailed. If you need assistance, we can help get it done here at the office. I am trying to get this process to end but I must convince other trustees to get on board with the change.

Regarding the Annual Drug Screens, monthly Dee will generate the drug screens for those that will be expiring and email them to you. It will come as an email (also check junk/spam) from "Formfox Authorization" with a bar code. You can either print it and bring it to Any Lab Test Now or you can bring it up on your phone and show them the bar code and number. This last time we just sent out and email to the membership and I sent a text through the text service to remind you to check your email for the drug screen paper if you think you were due. I know it was confusing whether you were due or not, I apologize for that, but we are trying to get everyone current. If you know about when your last annual was that will be when it is every year unless you have received a random from a contractor in which case that will be your new annual date. I will say this was the most response we have had.

We will continue to send out a reminder email and/or text when we send out the next batch of annuals.

The Slick Text service is making a change. Currently you are sent a message from us from 31996 it will be changing to 779-243-5150. You can program that into your phone and save it as Local 498 Text or whatever name you want to give it, so you know it is not a random text. If you have any questions let me know.

Try and hang on, I know it is slow, but it will get better. Try and stay warm and be safe out there.

In solidarity,

Mark



From the Organizer/Recording Secy.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everyone had a good holiday and was able to spend some time with family and friends. What a year 2020 was with covid-19 and all of the restrictions and changes that came with it, also called the new norm. I am optimistic that hopefully by the 2nd quarter that covid-19 cases are way down with the mitigation rules and the introduction of the vaccines. Work continues to be slow but hopefully things start to pick up soon. As far as nonunion goes they are slow too. Recently a member called about a PEMB going up at route 64 and Illinois 251. I stopped and talked with the owner and he said he was going to build it himself. They got the structure up and that's where the progressed stopped. Now the owner has hired some home remodelers from Rochelle and Beloit, but they are not making very good progress and the quality of what they are doing is real bad. Precision Building Solutions is up in Clinton putting up a building for a seed company. I know they are not happy that we organized a couple of guys from them. Onto B&C Enterprises, they started Johnson Tractor in Rochelle at the beginning of August and are still working on the first building. The rumors I hear are that the owner of Johnson Tractor is not at all happy with them. Hopefully, we can get the other building and show what a good union contractor can do. B&C Enterprises also has a building going up in Woodstock, although they are making progress it is nowhere near the speed and quality that we do. As always if you are out and about and see something don't hesitate to give me a call at 815-721-3058 and I will look into it.

In Solidarity,
Keith Gahl

Apprenticeship Coordinator



Dear Brothers, and Sisters

I hope everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season.

I had hopes that 2021 would be a better year than 2020, but so far that has eluded us.

The Winter/Spring semester will be starting on January 18th. Hopefully, we can get through this semester without any COVID shutdowns, but the Apprenticeship will move forward if it does happen just like we did last spring.

Masks will be mandatory while in the building for class just like last semester so come prepared.

The weld test dates for 2021 are as follows:

Feb. 20th

April 10th

May 29th

Aug. 28th

Oct. 2

Nov. 6th

Dec. 18th

I will keep everyone informed as to when we might have another OSHA 30 class, Lift Training, Etc., just in-case there are any Journeymen that would like to upgrade their training.

In Solidarity,
Paul Kauffman



Local 498 Calendar

Jan. 19th – Regular Membership Meeting

Feb. 16th – Regular Membership Meeting

Feb. 20th – Weld Test

March 16th – Regular Membership Meeting

Reminder, the Executive Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month. The retirees' meeting is the second Tuesday of each month at 8:00 a.m. at the Alpine View Restaurant (Charles St. and Alpine) in Rockford. Contact Ralph Peterson – 815/234-8163.