

# ENGINEERS NEWS LOCAL 234



VOLUME 54, NUMBER 1  
MARCH 2020

# HEALTH & WELFARE FUND

Members are encouraged to call Health & Welfare anytime to verify reported hours for insurance eligibility to avoid a lapse in coverage.

If you are thinking about retirement you may be entitled to continue your health coverage after retirement. Contact Health & Welfare for an estimated cost of your monthly insurance self-payment.

Anytime you work outside the state of Iowa, make sure to complete a reciprocity form with that home local to ensure your health and welfare funds are transferred back to your home local.

(515) 207-3875 EXTENSION 5600 OR 5601

CONTACT HEALTH AND WELFARE ANYTIME YOU HAVE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS;  
DROP OR ADD A DEPENDENT; GET MARRIED OR DIVORCED.

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2020 @ 11:00 A.M. 4880 HUBBELL AVENUE DES MOINES, IA



**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE [WWW.LOCAL234.COM](http://WWW.LOCAL234.COM) TO FIND OUT ELIGIBILITY AND RULES REGARDING:**

**THE CENTRAL IOWA BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION  
TRADES COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP FUND  
SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

Is your address, email address and phone number current with your Union?



If not, drop us a note or call us at 515-265-1657



### ASSESSMENTS

The annual assessments of defense fund (\$2 per year) and good standing fund (\$1 per year) are due each year on July 1st, which pays your assessments through June 30th of the following year.

# BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT



JASON COPPLE  
BUSINESS MANAGER  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

I'm writing this in the first week of March and the 10 day forecast has highs in the 50's and 60's and only one night below freezing. Hopefully work gets in full swing soon and our Membership can enjoy full employment again this year. I know the contractors are just as eager to get back to work as we all are.

years and now the insurance company is fighting us every step of the way on reimbursement. We have one building up for a temporary winter shop that will be used as a winter training building once the rest of the buildings are replaced. We also have some temporary classrooms and have been utilizing the new Des Moines Union Hall to get the classroom training done. We have had fairly decent weather this year during our training season which has helped a lot considering the circumstances.

If you've been to a meeting in the last few months you've probably heard me or one of the agents talk about the International's training site down in Texas. I encourage you to research the equipment available and sign up for any classes that you may be interested in. They have access to equipment that we do not have here in Iowa. The International will provide room and board as well as travel to and from the training site for any Member that is in good standing with their respective Local.

With all that being said, it looks like we will have another good season for 2020. We have had some wage requests from out-of-state contractors for some good work around the state and we will be setting up pre-jobs as soon as the projects are secured. Please remember to stay updated on the out-off-work list and to update your qualifications register if you've received any updated training.

During this year's State of Iowa legislative session, we haven't seen anything that has really hurt our Union or Members but we haven't really seen anything that helps us either. With the Legislature still being in session, we will continue to monitor the bills coming to committee and react accordingly.

The agents have been concentrating on stationary negotiations over the winter months and surprisingly we have seen some good contracts out there. If you remember the changes to the public sector bargaining a few years back, you must understand that we have been surprised that some of the municipalities have been willing to leave contracts as is and give some decent increases.

This Spring we have District 1 and District 3 building contracts open for negotiations and will be bringing proposals back to the respective meetings for ratification. We are hopeful that with work being as good as it has been, we can come back with some decent proposals from the contractors in both Districts.

As most of you know, our Apprenticeship & Training Site was hit by a tornado late last summer. We have been working with the insurance company and some local contractors to try and get moving forward on building a new facility. We have been paying our insurance premium for



District I Union Meeting held on  
February 27, 2020

# JURISDICTION WIDE



NICK NORTON  
EXECUTIVE BOARD  
DISTRICT II AND  
ASSISTANT BUSINESS  
MANAGER

With winter hopefully coming to an end and the spring construction season right around the corner, we are optimistic for another busy year for Local 234 Members.

Representatives of the local have been busy finishing up negotiations for several of our stationary groups around the state and have been taking proposals for the District 1 and District 3 Building Agreements that expire at

the end of April. We will be setting up negotiations as soon as we have proposals. The Energy Agreement is also open for wages only.

Throughout the winter months, we have met with several non-union contractors and explained how being a signatory contractor would benefit them and their employees. We have also been talking to non-union operators about the benefits of joining Local 234.

With what looks to be another busy year, I urge Members to take advantage of our training site to hone their skills and keep certifications updated. Please remember to keep your name updated on the out-of-work list so the agents know you are available for work.



Brother Duane Hermsen operates a new Linkbelt 218 at the waste water plant in Charles City



Brother Seth Rosen and Brother Mike Kessler working for Subsurface on a windfarm in Victor



Brother Brandon Spicer operates a 240 ton GMK and Brother John Mathis hauls a 130,000 lb transformer for Coonrod in Centerville

## MEETING SCHEDULE

General Membership Meeting:  
March 28, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.  
4880 Hubbell Avenue, Des Moines

District Meetings:  
(All Meetings Begin at 7:30 p.m.)

District I: Des Moines  
4th Thursday of Each Month

District II: Cedar Rapids  
3rd Thursday of Each Month

District III: Sioux City  
2nd Thursday of Each Month

Area Meetings:  
(All Meetings Begin at 7:30 p.m.)  
Council Bluffs Area: 1st Wednesday  
March, June, September, December

Dubuque Area: 3rd Wednesday  
March, June, September, December

Waterloo Area: 2nd Thursday  
March, June, September, December

Stationary Meetings:  
Sioux City Schools: 3rd Tuesday of  
Each Month September through May

All Others: As Scheduled

# DISTRICT I



CHAD CARTER  
VICE PRESIDENT  
&  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE

Work has remained steady this fall and winter. There are still several operators working at the BlueBird project (Amazon) in Bondurant. This project is due to wrap up around the first of November 2020. Work at Facebook and Microsoft has continued, with new phases of the projects being added yearly.

Dirt work is a little slower this winter season than in the past few years. Current projects include a housing development in Grimes, a new quarry south of Booneville and Hallett starting a new quarry in Pleasant Hill.

Building work has been very good. There has been an increase in warehouses and new commercial buildings being built. Facebook has also been great for the building side. Microsoft has been very good for our mechanical contractors and crane barns. Rebuilding work on Vermeer has begun and continued work at Jack Trice Stadium has allowed a good home to a few of our Members. Precast and miscellaneous steel package work will begin soon at project Bluebird.

Pipeline has been slower than normal this winter. Negotiations took place for the distribution side and we secured a three-year Agreement. We also negotiated a great contract with the city of Madrid. Negotiations with Global Spectrum will begin in the next few months.

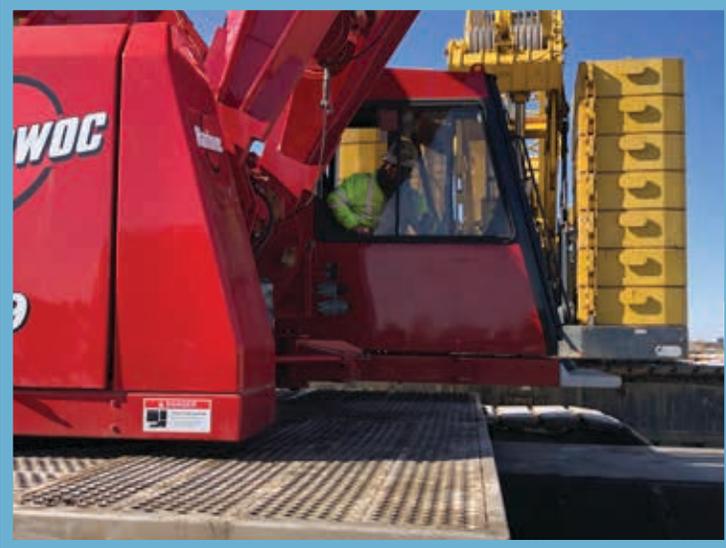
Elections are in November. It is very important for our Members to get out and vote for the candidates that support our careers and the Union! Please have a safe season.



Elder employees moving dirt at the new Legacy Materials Quarry south of Booneville



Brother Chris Manues operates a forklift for Northwest Steel at the new Sammons Financial Group building in West Des Moines



Brother Chase Deemer and Brother Ned McKenna prepare a Manitowoc 999 for precast work in Bondurant



Brother Kendel Laughman setting roof trusses for Champion Crane on an apartment building in West Des Moines

# DISTRICT II



**BRIAN VASKE**  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE

Work in District II for the 2020 construction season looks to be busy with all types of projects. Contractors are indicating they have a good amount of work on the books with lots of projects to be bid.

Windfarm work will remain busy with White Construction doing restoration and clean up for two projects from last year. They will also be starting the Kossuth County windfarm project.

Mortenson will have multiple projects: Diamond Trail near Victor will start up around April 1, 2020 a windfarm near Clear Lake/Ventura, and a return to Emmetsburg this summer to finish a project with 45 turbines, plus clean up.

Borneke will have the dirt for a wind project near Northwood. This will be a joint project between Local 234 and Local 49. Kissick and Berkel are starting a project at Cargill in Cedar Rapids and Kramer North America will be starting two bridges in rural Johnson County.

We have settled all stationary negotiations in the area. The Dubuque Area Labor Management Council is offering a \$1000 grant or scholarship. You may contact me for information or visit the website for information at [www.DALMC.com](http://www.DALMC.com).

Remember to update your name on the out of work list as work will be picking up soon. Also, if you have updated any certifications this winter remember to update them on your qualifications register.



Brother Steve Heathman operates a Hitachi excavator for Bowker at a sewer repair project in Coralville





Brother Members who recently took a forklift class in Cedar Rapids: From Left to Right: Business Representative Brian Vaske, Bridger Wolcott, Apprenticeship Coordinator Ryan Hollinrake, Russell Werner, Lester Kane, Jason Otto, Jed Baskerville and Ray Sexton

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Brother Joe Hudspeth operates the Manitowoc 18000 crane, Brother John Picray operates the Linkbelt 218 crane and Sister Callie Faulkner is an oiler for Mortenson at the Emmetsburg windfarm project

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# DISTRICT III



SPENCER YOCKEY  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE

It's has been busy this fall, winter and early spring with recertification elections, opening proposal meetings and contract negotiations for the Local 234 Stationary Members. Wage openers for multi-year agreements are also being negotiated.

On the hoisting and portable side, it looks like another busy season. The crane barns

in the area are busy and looking for more Operators. The building contractors remain steady with more work starting when the weather breaks. Ames Construction has picked up a 14-million-yard heavy highway project near Council Bluffs along with finishing up the bridges and levee relocation on Hwy 2 in southwest Iowa.

White Construction is back on site in Marcus replacing blades on the new erection site from last season. These blades are being replaced now because they were found to have a manufacturing defect. White Construction and Barnhart Crane are on site near Odebolt doing the off load for the new erection starting later this spring. Mortenson has a couple of new erection wind turbine sites to finish up this year also.



City of Emmetsburg Local 234 Members at a contract ratification meeting

The gas distribution contractors are anticipating another good season with the start of new services and the updating of older ones. JF Brennan will be back at Lake Manawa near Council Bluffs with another 500,000-yard dredging project, similar to the one they did in 2016.

Remember to keep yourself updated on the out of work list and utilize the training site for upgrade training or new certifications. If you have not filled out a qualification register, make sure you do so at [Local234.com](http://Local234.com).



Corn Belt Power Local 234 Members at a contract proposal meeting



Brother Keith Moten operates a 90 ton Grove picker for White Construction on a new turbine site near Odebolt



Brothers Ian Schmidt, Matt Timmons and Gene Bird operate Barnhart's 500 ton Liebherr for White Construction on a new turbine site near Odebolt

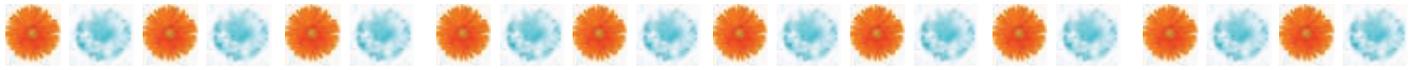
## CONGRATULATIONS RETIREES



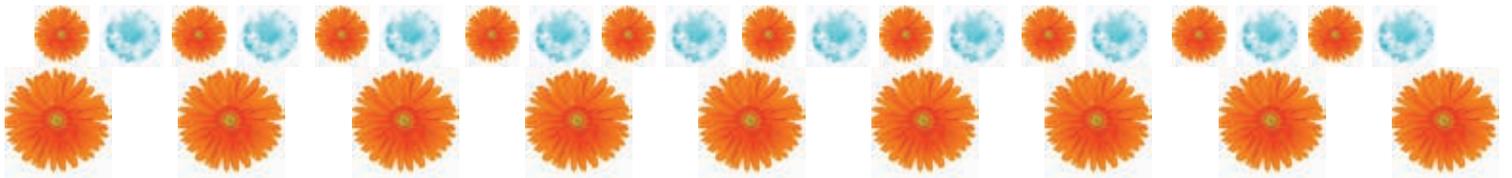
Charles Day	12-1-18
Richard Wentland	1-1-19
Rod Woodward	1-1-19
Jeff Blatchford	8-1-19
William Deal	9-1-19
Timothy Hancock	9-1-19
James Myers	9-1-19
Thomas Vigor	9-1-19
Gordon Schull	10-1-19
Patti Henry	12-1-19



SINCEREST SYMPATHIES GO TO THE FAMILIES OF THE BROTHER MEMBERS OF LOCAL 234 FOR THE LOSS OF THEIR LOVED ONES.



Robert Kness	September 20, 2019	68 year Member
Leroy Rummel	October 10, 2019	43 year Member
Joshua Germain	October 15, 2019	3 year Member
Larry Tague	October 30, 2019	53 year Member
Jeff Janssen	December 2, 2019	2 year Member
Robert Ahlberg	January 9, 2020	73 year Member
Myron Vanhorn	January 23, 2020	29 year Member
Gene Bagby	January 27, 2020	20 year Member
Kyle Wilson	February 10, 2020	2 year Member
Terry Ashby	February 11, 2020	40 year Member
Rodger Hansen	February 23, 2020	42 year Member



Brother Garrett Davis operates a Maniowoc 2250 crawler crane for Northwest at Jack Trice Stadium in Ames



Brothers Kenterrill Johnson, Derek Baker and Mike McFarlin working for CJ Mahan at the Saylorville pump station

# ORGANIZING

Throughout the winter months we have spent a lot of time making shop and office visits and meeting with contractors trying to build new relationships. This is the basis which will allow us to show them the many benefits that the Union has to offer. We have also continued to visit with Operators working for non-union contractors.

There are several people interested in becoming Members that are waiting to have evaluations done at the training site. These evaluations help to give the agents a better idea of an individual's skill levels, and make sure we know if they are Journey-person material, or if they would best benefit from starting as an Apprentice. Once the peak training season is over, these evaluations will be scheduled.

We are also preparing for a career fair. This will be held on April 4th from 10:00 to 2:00 p.m. at our Des

Moines Union Hall. Several Union contractors will be onsite for potential Members to talk with. This is a great opportunity for all involved to get to know each other. It is also a great way to grow our Membership.

Please remember, if you know someone that may be interested in joining our Membership, or of a jobsite that you think the Union should visit, feel free to give me a call. The Local is looking for qualified Operators to fill seats so our contractors can complete their work professionally and on time.



TREVOR BINDEL  
ORGANIZER



Brother Tommy Bell, Operator/Mechanic for the City of West Des Moines



Brother Members working for Evolution Contracting: From Left to Right: David Mueller, Josh Keefe, Apprentice Cody Cooper, Scott Finneman and Owner Matt Wormley at the new Saylorville pump station

# OFFICE & FINANCE



TRACY PETERSEN  
TREASURER & OFFICE  
MANAGER

Good News Flash for those Members whom participate in the Central Pension Fund! Effective April 1, 2020 the Benefit Accrual Rate will be increased!

The Benefit Accrual Rate is the rate applied to the contributions made on your behalf for hours worked by your employer to calculate the amount of your monthly pension benefit at the time you

retire. I've often heard this rate being referred to as 'the multiplier'. Regardless of what you call it – it's a raise in benefits for all hours worked on or after April 1, 2020. The current accrual rate is 1.25% and it will become 1.75%.

Keep in mind, this does not increase any calculation for contributions for hours worked prior to April 1, 2020, nor does it affect the benefits currently being paid to Members or beneficiaries that are already drawing a monthly benefit.

The Central Pension Fund remains healthy in the "Green Zone" status under the Pension Protection Act,

and is also free of any potential withdrawal liability for its contributing employers. This is all great news to start off the 2020 work season!

For those of you that need to be on the out-of-work list – you need to check in with the office at least once every 30 days to maintain your name on the list. You can do this through the website (Local234.com) or call, email and/or visit the office in person. If you happen to think of it after office hours, you can also leave a message on the Local's voice mail. Your log-in for the 'Members Only' section of the website is your Register number, which can be found on your Union card. Your password will be your first initial and your entire last name – all lower case and no spaces.

Another bit of good news, the annual audit of the Local's books has been completed by the independent audit firm of LWBJ. Having this completed early in the year will allow us to file the necessary annual reports with the Department of Labor and Iowa Public Employment Relations Board by the end of March as required. The finances of the Local finished 2019 strong. A more complete report will be provided to Members at the March 28<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting.



Retired Business Representative Ed Crawford was inducted to the Dubuque Area Labor Hall of Fame

# APPRENTICESHIP & TRAINING

Due to the tornado damage that happened on August 20, 2019 at the Training Site, this winter training season has posed some unique challenges. I am proud to say the training staff and Membership has done a tremendous job being flexible with what seems like weekly changes to the training schedule due to class sizes. This is allowing Apprentices to fulfill their training requirements as well as allowing Journeymen to get the certifications and training they need for the upcoming season. The temporary facilities put in place last fall have worked well and the Membership has been understanding of the current situation, which is truly appreciated. Some of the larger classes have been held at the Des Moines Union office.

All machine repairs were completed last fall and Members have been utilizing them to upgrade their skills. Construction of the new winter building has been completed, which has allowed us to use it as a temporary shop and additional training space when needed. We continue to work with the architect on the design and bid package for the new office/classroom space and

shop. We hope to have the design and bid process completed quickly so construction can start as soon as the weather allows this spring.

There have been several Members attending the training courses offered by the International Training site in Crosby, Texas. They offer a wide variety of machine courses, some of which aren't available at our Program - like tower crane training. The list of available courses and online applications are available at [www.iuoe.org](http://www.iuoe.org).

There are currently 140 Apprentices in Local 234's Program. We hope to maintain or increase that number with the projected workload this season. It is important that Journeyman Members help to teach, train, and develop skills for any Member in the industry.



**RYAN HOLLINRAKE**  
APPRENTICESHIP  
COORDINATOR



Local 234 Members doing hands on Training



Construction on the new winter training building



International Union of Operating Engineers  
4880 Hubbell Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50317

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92 Counties—State of Iowa

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Financial Secretary—515-265-1657

Nick Norton—Assistant Business  
Manager—515-265-1657

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Representative—Ames, Des  
Moines, Mason City, Ottumwa,  
Des Moines—515-265-1657

District II—

Brian Vaske, Business  
Representative—Cedar Rapids,  
Iowa City, Dubuque, Waterloo  
Cedar Rapids—319-396-2050  
Dubuque—563-583-2521

District III—

Spencer Yockey, Business  
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Council Bluffs, Ft. Dodge  
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**WEBSITE: LOCAL234.COM**

Members only section:

- User Name = your register number
- Password = first initial of first name and entire last name  
all lower case, no spaces