

# NEWS EVENTS ENGINEERING



## LOCAL 234



VOLUME 57 NUMBER 1  
MARCH 2023



**HEY.....YOU.**  
**YEA.....YOU.**

Are you jeopardizing your right to make a self-pay for your Health & Welfare insurance?

Are you jeopardizing your unemployment benefits?

You could be if you don't know the out-of-work list rules.

Do you know the rules? Even if you think you do, please read them again!

- 1) You must have your name on the out-of-work list if you are laid off.....EVEN IF you believe you will be returning to work for your previous employer.
- 2) You must check in at least once every 30-days to remain on the list. Your name will be dropped on the 31<sup>st</sup> day.
- 3) In order to put your name on the out-of-work list you can:
  - Call the Des Moines office – 515-265-1657
  - Email the Des Moines office – office@Local234.com
  - Check-in at the Des Moines office in person
  - Call your Business Rep
  - Log-on to the website (Local234.com) and check-in through the 'Members Only' section
  - Mark 'yes' for the out-of-work list on the sign-in sheet at a Union meeting
- 4) You must be on the out-of-work list in order to make a self-pay for Health & Welfare.
- 5) You must be on the out-of-work list and be a Member in good standing for unemployment benefits. If the unemployment office does an audit on you, and you are not on the list or not in good standing, the office will not lie. This may lead to you having to pay back your unemployment benefits.



Front Cover: Top Left to Right:

Brother Mike Britton operates a forklift for DM Steel at a church addition project in Riverside

Sioux City Schools Meeting: Brother Members Ron Hummel, James Marksbury, George O'Gara and Sister Members Alisa O'Tool and Robyn Barricks

Brother Dillon Meier operates a John Deere backhoe for Q3 on a gas service in Cedar Rapids

Brother Members Dick Braun, Chad Peterson and Gage Sears working for Klinger at the Royal Canin Project in North Sioux City

Brother Shain Stone operates a mini excavator for Q3 in Urbandale

Sister Trisha Nielsen and Apprentice Katelyn Nielsen attend the Tradeswomen Build Nations Conference in Las Vegas

Brother Justin "Jud" Licht, a Wastewater Plant Operator for the City of Dubuque



# BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT



JASON COPPLE  
BUSINESS MANAGER  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

We have had a pretty easy winter this year with all things considered, although there were some less than ideal weather situations thrown at us later in the typical winter months. Hopefully, we luck out with an early spring and everyone can get back to work as soon as possible.

By this time, I am sure that most of you are aware of the changes that were made to the unemployment benefits during last year's legislative session. Even if it doesn't personally affect you this year, the cut from 26 weeks of benefits down to 16 weeks is sure to come into play at some point in your career. I believe that we can all agree that the unemployment system was being taken advantage of by a lot of people, but the Union construction people were NOT the problem. This session at the Capitol, there were a few bills that could affect us, and we will be reaching out to Members to contact their Legislators if help is needed to stop them.

Our Health & Welfare Fund continues to do well even with the rising costs of everything and the uncertainty in the stock markets during recent years. Starting on the first of January 2023, the company that we used for the yearly physicals, that some of you took advantage of, closed and we have not been able to find another affordable provider

– yet. I know I sound like a broken record sometimes, but with rising costs of healthcare, we all need to take advantage of the Doctor On Demand program when possible, and also ask for generic drugs whenever possible. It's important to remember that we do not buy insurance coverage from Wellmark, we pay them a yearly fee to use their discounts. We are a 100% self-funded health plan and every dollar spent directly affects our Plan. By no means am I saying to not use your insurance because that's the purpose of having insurance, but I am saying to be mindful of the Fund and to help cut its costs where possible.

Our Training Site is nearing the end of training season now, and it has been a great season. The facility that we have is something in which to be proud. Each Member is encouraged to utilize the Site in the off-season, or whenever possible. As always, the Apprenticeship & Training Board continues to analyze which equipment to upgrade and what training classes to add in order to benefit the Membership. We also have the International's Training Site in Crosby, Texas that our Members are encouraged to use as well. The International Training Site is able to offer some classes that we just don't have the resources for, and they will provide for travel, food and lodging for any Member in good standing.

I hope to see a large turn-out for the General Membership meeting at the Des Moines Union Hall on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Don't forget to stay up-to-date on the out of work list if you are not working.



## Please Note:

A discussion regarding possible by-law changes will be taking place at General Membership on March 25, 2023.  
We hope to see you there!!!

# JURISDICTION WIDE



NICK NORTON  
EXECUTIVE BOARD  
DISTRICT II AND  
ASSISTANT BUSINESS  
MANAGER

The 2023 season is just around the corner and all indications is that it will be another busy one for the Members of Local 234. We have had several signatory contractors reach out to Local 234 about increased manpower needs.

We will be negotiating wages for the Energy Agreement in March and will bring the proposed increase to the District meetings around the

state for vote and, if accepted, breakdown votes will be taken as well. The Members will also need to vote on the breakdown of the increases built into all three of the District Building Agreements in March. It is important for every Member to attend Membership meetings, but these ratification/breakdown meetings dictate your pay and fringe package – so please make them a priority.

Through the winter months we have continued to talk to and meet with non-union contractors around the state

about the benefits of becoming signatory with Local 234. We are also always looking to recruit new Members. If you know a good candidate, please get them in touch with a Business Representative so we can line them up with an evaluation at our Training Site.

If you travel out of Local 234's jurisdiction for work, always remember to clear-in with the Local with jurisdiction over the location you will be working in. We have had more issues recently with this and don't want Local 234 Members in a bad way with any of our sister Locals. If you don't know the Business Representative of the other Local in which you will be working, please call us and we will help you get in touch with the right people.

With the State of Iowa's new unemployment rules and the increase in state audits, make sure to stay on the out of work list when not working (you must call at least once every 30 days or your name will fall off the list) and stay current on your dues. Also, if you're not working take advantage of our Training Site to keep your certifications up to date and keep your skills sharp.



Q3 drillers from left to right: Brothers Joe Funaro, Darin Drake, Karl Andrews, Andy Brown, Bruce Tracy, Dave Baker, Cody Dennis, Bret Bauer and Todd Briggs

Brother Brett Libbert operates a 400 ton crane for Tri State setting a water tower

# MEETING SCHEDULE

General Membership Meeting:  
March 25, 2023 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

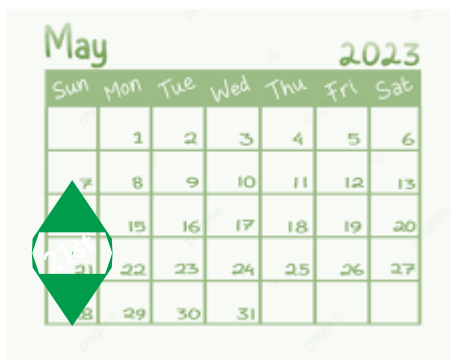
Area Meetings:  
(All Meetings Begin at 7:30 p.m.)  
Council Bluffs Area: 2nd Tuesday  
March, June, September, December

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



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW**  
**FAMILY FUN DAY**  
**MAY 21, 2023**

**MORE DETAILS TO COME...**



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



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.





# DISTRICT I & II



CHAD CARTER  
VICE PRESIDENT  
&  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE

We made it through another winter season. In my opinion, this was possibly one of the hardest winters of all time for many Members because of the new changes in the unemployment law, coupled with the fact that a lot of the work slowed down so much in comparison to years past.

The upcoming season is starting to look very busy with a lot of public work out for bid. We

are seeing a lot of road work, sewer separator projects and sewer treatment plant work. There is also a good amount of upgrades to railroad lines and airports on the horizon. Most of the money funding these projects is coming from the American Rescue Act.

The CO2 pipeline companies are still trying to purchase all the land needed for voluntary easements. Once the companies have their goals met for voluntary easements, they will ask the Iowa Utilities Board for

permits. Local 234 may be calling Members for support when the hearings start to show backing for these carbon capture lines.

Distribution work around the state looks to be busier this season than the 2022 season. Intren, Inc. was bought out by MasTec and will be operating under the name of Precision Infrastructure. They, along with Q3, have blanket work for MidAmerican gas. Q3 also has the blanket work for Alliant Energy. ECI has the Blanket work for Black Hill Energy and Infrasure has work for the City of Waukee.

Our building contractors are staying busy with commercial projects and lots of precast projects around town. Neumann has started working on the south side of the State Capitol Building. We will see a slow down with Facebook this season compared to years past, although Microsoft 14 and 15 are coming along nicely. Please keep your name updated on the out of work list if you are out of work. I hope for a safe and busy season for everyone.



Brother Zabe Hatfield operates an 80 ton Grove Crane for Northwest Steel Erection in Altoona

Apprentice Luke Schneider operates a 35 ton RT Terex Crane for Blackford Foundations on the new Ruth's Chris Steak House in West Des Moines





Brother Chris Graham operates a 55 ton RT Grove Crane for Neumann at the Capitol in Des Moines



Brother Blaine Snyder operates an excavator for SM Hentges digging sewer pipe in West Des Moines



Brother Kyle Wahlert operates a 110 ton Kobelco for William Brothers at the Birdland Marina Pump Station

Brother Mark Hauser operates a loader for SM Hentges on a sewer project in West Des Moines





# DISTRICT II



**BRIAN VASKE**  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE

Work in District 2 has been on the slower side this winter due to the amount of snow and cold weather in the area. But the good news is, the 2023 construction season looks like it will be busy for the area.

Contractors that I've spoken with are hoping to get crews called back as soon as the weather cooperates. Ames Construction will be starting the dirt work at the Lansing

Powerhouse soon and it will take until fall to complete this part of the project. Mortenson will have 2 windmill repowers starting later this year.

As for solar farm work, the Coggon Solar project legal issues have settled, but the contractor said they will not start until 2024 due to supply issues of the solar panels. The Palo Solar Farm is still having legal issues and the

courts haven't ruled in the legal case. Waldinger will be finishing work at their solar project in late spring.

Portzen and Tschiggfrie are working on pipe projects at the Field of Dreams project near Dyersville. There has been mention that a lot more work will be added to this project.

Building work in the area will be steady with the University of Iowa in Iowa City. With spring right around the corner, please remember to keep yourself on the out of work list so you can be dispatched to work as quickly as possible. Local 234 will be looking to add Operators due to the amount of the upcoming work. If you have friends or family interested in joining, please have them contact the hall for more information.



Brother Dustin Helmrichs and Brother Dalton Jackson working in the shop for Ace Material Placing



Brother Brody Kerner and Tri State Crane manager Marty Recker. Brother Kerner was presented with the Labor Management Excellence Award thru Tri State Crane and Dubuque Area Labor Management Council





Brother Mitch Mundorf operates a Caterpillar Forklift for Northwest Steel at the new Altofer Caterpillar dealership building in Cedar Rapids



Brother Kyle Jones operates a Kobelco CK1100G crane for Barnhart Crane and Rigging at a school project in Waverly

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



**Terrance Jackson**

**September 5, 2022**

**51 year Member**

**John Westercamp**

**September 9, 2022**

**8 year Member**

**Karl Adams**

**September 23, 2022**

**23 year Member**



**Chris Nemmers**

**September 25, 2022**

**3 year Member**

**Stacy King**

**October 14, 2022**

**3 year Member**

**Doug Neubaum**

**November 15, 2022**

**27 year Member**

**Klint Johnston**

**November 23, 2022**

**3 year Member**

**Vernon Wells**

**December 17, 2022**

**18 year Member**



**John Matz**

**December 22, 2022**

**60 year Member**

**Bert Ashburn**

**December 28, 2022**

**32 year Member**

**Frank Miller, Jr.**

**January 10, 2023**

**28 year Member**

**Vearl Thompson**

**January 30, 2023**

**26 year Member**



**Earl McClure**

**February 5, 2023**

**53 year Member**

**Billy Lundgren**

**February 15, 2023**

**50 year Member**

# DISTRICT III



SPENCER YOCKEY  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE

Klinger remains busy with the Royal Canin expansion amongst several smaller projects, including renovations in downtown Sioux City and a school in Storm Lake. DM Steel has teamed up with Klinger on the Cargill addition, the Royal Canin expansion, as well as a church addition and a project in Fort Dodge. Barnhart Crane has been picking up work and hiring more Operators. Patriot Crane remains steady at the powerhouse and other projects in the area. Wells Concrete is currently

setting precast at the new IDOT facility in Sioux City. Q3 has a project in the area as well. Mortenson's pre-job will take place in April for upcoming projects in the state, and JF Brennan will be finishing up the dredging project on Black Hawk Lake this spring.

Stationary contract negotiations are underway and so far wage increases have been very good. WDC contracts negotiations have been a significant undertaking this year, but our aim is to have it completed soon.



Brother Jackson Lambert operates a 110 ton Link-belt Truck Crane for Barnhart Crane & Rigging at the Howard Johnson Renovation project in Sioux City



Brother Gage Sears operates a forklift for Klinger at the Royal Canin project in North Sioux City



Brother Dick Braun operates a carry deck for Klinger at the Royal Canin project in North Sioux City





### District 3 Meeting in Sioux City

Back Row: From L to R: Brother Members Todd McDonald, Dick Braun, Chuck Jordan, Pat Pinney, Jay Choate, Ryan Hollinrake, Mike Branham and Danny French

Front Row: From L to R: Brother Members Rory McGinnis, Nick Demara, Dean Ball, Jake Knutson and Jason French



Brother Joey Richters operates a 275 ton AT Grove Crane for Barnhart Crane on the Benson Building remodel project in Sioux City



Brother Kyle O'Mara operates a dozer for Ames Construction at the power house borrow pit in Council Bluffs



Brother Manny Rodriguez operates a forklift for Michels Construction in Council Bluffs

## HEALTH & WELFARE FUND

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

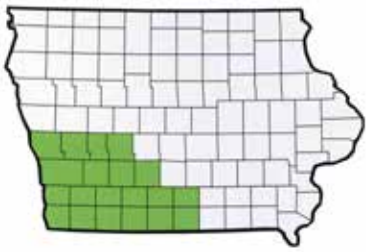
If you are thinking about retirement, you may be entitled to continue your health coverage after retirement. Contact Health & Welfare for an estimated cost of your monthly insurance self-payment.

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

**(515) 207-3875 EXTENSION 5600**

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





# DISTRICT I & III

The 2023 season looks to be another strong season with the amount of work projected throughout the state. It's important for anyone out of work to stay on the out of work list and to remember to update your qualifications register.

We have Ames Construction still working on Council Bluffs Power Plant project and the 480/I29 interstate project. The power plant is set to wrap up soon, but the 480/I29 project has a lot of work yet to be completed.

We will have Operators working for JE Dunn on a large project south of Council Bluffs that is under a Project Agreement. This should be a multiyear project and keep several IUOE members busy in the upcoming years.

There is a 40 tower Wind Turbine project scheduled to be constructed near Shenandoah this summer. This project is all new construction and will be built with Union labor.

We recently organized a stationary group that represents the maintenance workers at the Federal Courthouse and Neal Smith Federal Building in Des Moines.

This is a service contract agreement, which is a new type of agreement for Local 234. With some help from surrounding Locals and the International organizing representatives, we were able to reach a one year agreement, which we feel is a good starting point. At this time, Business Rep Yockey and I continue to work on getting the WDC Acquisitions contract to the ratification stage, as well as having ongoing negotiations with Iowa Western Community College.

There is not much to report on with the International campaign that we have talked about for the last two years. There are still biweekly meetings, but there has not been much progress in the last few months. We all continue to meet with contractors and Operators – working to organize and grow our market share.



**TREVOR BINDEL**  
BUSINESS  
REPRESENTATIVE /  
ORGANIZER



Brother Levi Schroeder operates a rubber tire loader for Michels Construction in Council Bluffs



Brother Pat Palmerton operates a rubber tire loader for Michels Construction dumping rock for aggregate piers in Council Bluffs

# OFFICE & FINANCE



TRACY PETERSEN  
TREASURER & OFFICE  
MANAGER

This spring is going to bring with it some good things. Besides warmer weather and what sounds to be a good workload, another thing to look forward to is the Family Fun Day which will be held on Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Training Site. Each of these picnic days have been a little different, but the one thing in common is that they've all been a good time. There will

be a flyer mailed to all Members with details, please remember to RSVP so a count for ordering food is accurate.

The punch list for the 3-year old Des Moines Hall is finally complete. The final payment to the general contractor was made and the building is wholly owned by the Local. It seems like it was a very long time ago when the idea of building a new building was being kicked around. We hear a lot of nice compliments from visitors about the building, and I am sure that the Membership made the right decision when voting to build it. It is the face of the Operating Engineers to the public. In my opinion, it shows pride.

The International Union unveiled a new database recently. They, without a doubt, did upgrade with this new program. The new database is so much more user friendly than the last, and it has reduced the time it takes to do our monthly Per Capita report by a couple of hours. This summer the Local will dive head first in looking for a new database for the Local. The current one is written within Access which is a database management system by Microsoft. Access was initially released in November 1992, and although it has limitations, it's been good for the Local. We have, however, been hearing rumblings that it will be fully supported through 2026, and after that its up in the air. Because we are completely submersed in the computer age, getting caught with a database management system that is no longer supported could be a very scary place to be.

The Central Pension Fund semi-annual Participant's Statements should be mailed sometime toward the end of March or beginning of April time-period. These statements are a good financial barometer of your potential pension benefit when you make it to retirement age.

Look your statement over, make sure that the hours reported are correct. If you do not understand something, need more details or something doesn't look right, please call me and let's look into it.

## CONGRATULATIONS RETIREES



Daniel Eicher	3-1-22
Jeff Gardemann	8-1-22
Jonathon Garrison	8-1-22
Robert Lynn	8-1-22
Drexel Kramme	9-1-22
Dennis Swanson	10-1-22
Raymond Timmerman	10-1-22
Joel Macken	11-1-22
Gary Kleitsch	1-1-23





# APPRENTICESHIP & TRAINING

Well, I hate to jinx things by saying it, but the weather this training season has been better than expected despite the bitter cold temperatures we had in December. It has really helped with field training for Apprentices and Journeypersons alike. Hopefully, the weather continues to cooperate, not only to help field training, but so that Members can get back to work early this spring.

Training classes this winter seem just as busy as in the past. It's wonderful to see Members keeping their certifications current and obtaining new ones. There are still a few certification classes on the schedule, so I encourage Members to double check their certification cards and make sure everything is current.

The Training Fund will continue to offer CCO written and practical tests for Members, but CCO is updating how their written tests will be administered. Members now must register with CCO to schedule tests. Each Member will need to use CCO's website, not the MyCCO app, to create an account to schedule testing. The MyCCO app has very limited features and is being phased out. March 12, 2023 will be the last

pencil/paper test. All written exams after that time must be taken on a computer. Testing groups will be limited to 14 Members per test day. In order to accommodate all Members needing to test, additional test dates will be added in both the spring and fall each year. One thing that won't be changing is the Training Fund continuing to offer the study day before each test day. CCO is also offering Members the option to take the written tests on a computer at home, or scheduling an individual time to test at the Training Site. If you have any questions on the new CCO requirements please contact the Training Site.

One thing to remember as the scheduled training courses are winding down, is that the Site is open year-round for Members. It is your Site and Program to use. Contact us and schedule any training that you need or want on an individual basis. The time you spend training on new machines is an investment in yourself and will expand the opportunities you have every season going forward. I look forward to seeing Members on jobsites this season as I am checking on Apprentices and at the Family Picnic.



**RYAN HOLLINRAKE**  
APPRENTICESHIP  
COORDINATOR



Apprentice dirt equipment training



Crane signal person training



Crane training

Published by Local 234 of the  
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Operating Engineers

92 Counties—State of Iowa

Jason Copple—Business Manager—  
Financial Secretary—515-265-1657

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

Portable & Hoisting:

District I & II—

Chad Carter, Business  
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  
Representative—Sioux City,  
Ft. Dodge  
Sioux City—712-255-1374

District I & III—

Trevor Bindel, Business  
Representative / Organizer —  
Council Bluffs / Jurisdiction  
Wide  
Des Moines—515-265-1657

Main Office—

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Apprenticeship & Training

Ryan Hollinrake—Coordinator  
Indianola—641-942-7112

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Jessica Wardyn—Office Manager  
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Members only section:

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