



International Union of Operating Engineers

Local 25 Marine Division

THE DREDGEMAN NEWSLETTER



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PRESIDENT/BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we look back over this year so far, it's hard to imagine a way to cram any more in! It has been an eventful year so far and we are just getting started. Between contract negotiations, organizing new signatories, training classes, Officer elections, wage misclassification battles, the beginning of new mental health and addiction initiatives and more, we are making great progress in many areas for the

betterment of the membership.

With nominations and elections of Officers this summer, this administration was just sworn in for a 3 year term at Installation of Officers on September 10. It was a great night of Brotherhood and camaraderie. Thank you to everyone who attended, including International General President James Callahan and NE Regional Director Alan Pero.

As we will discuss in this newsletter, we are working on many important issues right now that effect the dredging industry as a whole and, most importantly, our members. While these issues require the dedication and commitment of your Local 25 Officers and Staff to fight, we cannot do it alone. We are asking for the help of our rank and file members on numerous fronts. We are committed to creating the opportunities for change that will allow our members to have a framework to get involved, but we must have members who are then willing and able to take on the necessary roles to implement lasting and effective change for us all. We only move forward when we all work together.

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## **PRESIDENT/BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT** *continued from page 1*

As you all know, work has been steady for quite a while now. We had a bit of a slowdown over the summer, but it has already started picking back up and it looks like 2020 will be another busy year. We encourage all members to remember that taking advantage of any opportunity to make yourself more versatile is what will make the difference as you move forward in your career. Obtaining your USCG Merchant Mariner Credential and the appropriate endorsements is a great start. Do you normally work on a bucket dredge, but the Hall calls to ask if you are interested in a spot on a cutter suction dredge? Don't turn down the opportunity because it is out of your comfort zone; use the opportunity to expand your skill set. The more versatile you are, the more valuable you are. As we continue to expand the opportunities available at our own NC Training Center and "on the road" throughout our jurisdiction, the most important lesson we are learning is the value of staying flexible in what works for our membership and what doesn't. Because we are building this Training Program from scratch and it is run and staffed internally, we can throw out what doesn't work and keep what does. I am proud of what we have created so far as we create the framework needed for a substantial and long-lasting Training Program that continues to grow in size and scope.

Last but not least, I want to take a moment to give thanks to our families at home. This line of work requires sacrifice and hard work, but the ones who make it possible for us are our families that tolerate our erratic schedules, long hours and sometimes dangerous conditions. Our spouses, children and other family members are the backbone of this industry and the toll it can take on them can be easily overlooked. To all of our Local 25 families, thank you.

Fraternally,

Jerry Abell

### **DENTAL COVERAGE INCREASE!**

**Effective January 1, 2020, your Delta Dental coverage will increase from \$900 to \$1350 per year! If you have any questions, call the Plans Office.**

### **IT'S TIME TO GET UNCOMFORTABLE**

Did you know that the construction industry has the 2nd highest suicide rate in the country? The numbers of untreated mental illness, addiction issues and lifestyle issues is staggering as well. These are topics that are uncomfortable to discuss, but guess what? IT'S TIME TO GET UNCOMFORTABLE. The administration and staff of Local 25 are actively engaged in training and education to give us the tools needed to create a more well-rounded approach in providing our members and their families the support and resources needed to handle these issues. This line of work and lifestyle isn't easy and can take a toll on marriages and family life as well, but how many of us talk about it? We must change the stigma around asking for help and we must be willing to ask our Brothers and Sisters if they are ok when it looks like they could use some help. It can be as simple as, "hey Brother, is everything ok? Do you want to talk about it? I'm here if you do." Are you willing to share your own story of recovery with your Brothers and Sisters? Are you willing to be a trusted peer on your jobsite, someone whom your Union Brothers and Sisters know they can turn to when they don't know where else to turn? This is the start of a CALL TO ACTION for Local 25 and we are asking our members to start thinking about what role they can play as we create an ongoing conversation about addiction, mental illness, family/lifestyle issues and how to address them successfully in this unique industry. We are going to be asking our members to assist us in this endeavor in multiple ways. If you are interested in learning how you might be able to help us get started, reach out to Scott Reeves, Heather Bawgus or Lindsay Abell. IF YOU ARE THINKING OF HARMING YOURSELF, the National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available 24/7 at (800) 273-8255. If you would rather text than talk, the Crisis Text Line is 741-741. And as always, if you or a spouse or child are in need of substance abuse help, mental health assistance or individual/family counseling, you can contact Allied Trades 24/7 at (800) 258-6376. Any contact with Allied Trades will stay anonymous if you wish and they will provide you with the appropriate resources, covered under Local 25's Medical Plan.

## DAVIS BACON & TUGS

One of the most frustrating sights on a job is seeing a non-union tug working on our projects and we need your help to combat this problem. Davis Bacon (prevailing wage) covers most workers on all federal dredging projects and Local 25 wages and benefits sets those rates for almost all classifications throughout our jurisdiction. There is a “loophole” that non-union tug companies have taken advantage of to get away with not paying these rates, making them more attractive subcontractors for dredging companies. Here’s the Davis Bacon wording: “In general, tugboat personnel are engaged in navigational transportation and are not considered to be covered. However, for example, if a crewmember on a dredging project is performing work directly related to the covered construction project, the individual would be entitled to the prevailing wage rate.” It seems clear to Local 25 that all of the work the tugs engage in while tending the dredges and auxiliary equipment is covered. While this seems like a no-brainer to us and should be an “easy fix”, nothing is quite that easy when dealing with federal governmental agencies. We are aggressively fighting misclassification issues on multiple projects and for multiple classifications, including tug crews, drag barge crews and dump crews. We are working directly with the Corps and the Department of Labor and are making headway. In regards to the tugs, we need pictures and video (with date and times clearly on the picture) of these non-union tugs doing dredging work, meaning anything related to the dredging project other than towing. **We are asking our members to assist us in gathering the evidence needed to hopefully deal with this issue once and for all and to finally level the playing field in the tug business.** It is not fair to our signatory tug companies or even non-union tug companies that want to play by the rules. They are put at a distinct disadvantage because of the companies that are violating the law and exploiting their workers. If you are able to safely get pictures and/or video of any non-union boat doing work on dredging projects, please email them to [AStewart@iuoe25.org](mailto:AStewart@iuoe25.org) or [LAbell@iuoe25.org](mailto:LAbell@iuoe25.org). Please make sure the date and time is visible on the picture (taking a screenshot of the picture on your phone might be the easiest way to capture that information) and include the jobsite location that the picture/video is from in your email. It is imperative that our members DO NOT VIOLATE THEIR EMPLOYER’S CELL PHONE POLICY. The identity of the picture taker will not be shared. The information we gather will be used in our case with the USACE and DOL.



## SPEAKING OF TUGS...

The Holden Marine tug Bayou Brave and its’ crew is known to many of us and we are happy to welcome her and the rest of the Holden Marine family to the Local 25 Brotherhood as one our newest signatory contractors! We have worked closely with the Holden Brothers over the last several months to make sure this is a successful and mutually beneficial relationship for all parties involved. Welcome Aboard, Holden Marine!

## AND SPEAKING OF NEW SIGNATORY CONTRACTORS...

We are excited to announce SumCo Eco-Contracting and J.F. Brennan to the Local 25 family as well. SumCo is a heavy civil construction firm based in Massachusetts that is expanding their dredging operations. J.F. Brennan is a construction company from Wisconsin that focuses on environmental services and harbor management. As our members start the first project with SumCo, the Fairless Turning Basin on the Delaware River, and the first project with J.F. Brennan, on the Indian River in DE, we are confident the skills and professionalism of the crews will show these new signatories what it means to be a part of the best of the best. Welcome to the Brotherhood!

We have also been successful in signing multiple Project Labor Agreements and specialized contracts with various contractors lately, including Northstar Marine, Charter Marine, Tide Runner Marine, Millers Launch and XCell Management, Inc. We are eager to continue to move forward in expanding the opportunities for our current members as well as growing the membership as a whole.



## TRAINING CENTER REPORT

We are coming up on our 2 year anniversary of “in-house” training and we are steadily making significant strides in our Training Program. You, the membership, are the backbone of our success and we must work hand in hand to maintain and exceed our industry’s skillset standards. Multiple classes have been offered and taken advantage of this year, including: Lifeboatman (and AB), OSHA 30, Rigging, Signalperson and First Aid/CPR. We are continually adding to the list of classes offered.

We recently had a “work week” at the NC Training Center, where many of our staff and volunteers dedicated the time needed to complete some important projects, including assembling and painting the equipment we have onsite. We now have a dozer, frontend loader and 2 cranes that we will start offering scheduled training/seat time on. We want to thank the members that volunteered their time to help in this effort, including James “Red” McDonnell, Roy Rogers, Patrick Moore, Art Fulton and Neal Connell.

We have had a few members take advantage of the IUOE Training Center in Texas this year and the feedback we have received has been nothing but positive. If you are interested in the opportunities provided to our members through the IUOE, you can check out their training schedule at [www.iuoe.org](http://www.iuoe.org). You can then contact Training Director Heather Bawgus to discuss the options.

One of the lessons we have learned this year is that we must stay flexible in order to meet the needs of our members. We are looking at different avenues to offer Labor History/Unionism training to our members in the future, in ways that will be beneficial and convenient. In order to strengthen the Union Brotherhood, the membership MUST be willing to strengthen themselves individually through education, training and commitment to the cause. Participating in your Union and educating yourself on these issues is a crucial component.

As we continue to expand the training we are offering, we are always interested in feedback and ideas from the membership. If you have an idea for the kind of training you feel is lacking in the field or topics you think need to be addressed, please reach out to Training Director Heather Bawgus or President/Business Manager Jerry Abell.





## INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

We were honored to have IUOE General President James Callahan preside over the swearing in of the Administration at the Installation of Officers on September 10, 2019. It was a great evening of fellowship, food and endless dredging stories. You don't see a group of dredgeboaters dressed up very often (at least not these dredgeboaters) and it's always enjoyable to see how uncomfortable we are when we do. The Officers and Executive Board would like to thank all of the members in attendance and those that have assisted us so far as we continue to move forward in solidarity and brotherhood. In addition to IUOE General President James Callahan presiding, NE Regional Director Alan Pero and International Representatives John Stevens and Albert Schutt were on hand to support our Local as we look to the future.





## PENSIONER LUNCHEON

Our annual Pensioner Luncheon was held on October 10 in East Windsor, NJ. We had a great turnout and the afternoon was full of catching up, laughter and a lot of old “war” stories. We say it all the time, but it is so true; these pensioners are the ones who laid the groundwork for everything we are accomplishing today. Thank you to all of the pensioners and their families who attended this great event on such a gloomy and rainy day. It is our honor to provide this day for you as a small token of our appreciation.



### WELCOME ASHORE

**Our Local 25 Brothers and Sisters who have retired so far in 2019...**

Davis Watler	David Wheat	William Ewing	Joseph O’Conner III
Robert Whiteley	Redden Koch	James Gore	William Hamilton
Dennis Wallace	Jack Truesdale	Percy Powell Sr	Joseph Hicks
Jim Morrison	Douglas Perryman	Robert Ebanks	William Brittingham
Albert Weaver	Guillermo Vallejo	Linton Beckford	Vernon Gnacyk
Ernest Cummings	Thomas Grace	Charles Creech	Henry Hinton
Joseph Saeger	Alfred Harris III	Rubeldo Maldonado	Dwight Kennan
Jerry Dundlow	Larry Holden	Robert Johns	John Hayes
Jose A Castillo	Claude Golden	Jan Bosch	



# SELFIE ALERT!

Our members are masters at “selfies” and photo ops, whether it’s while they are working hard or goofing off in their down time.



## IN MEMORIAM

Fair winds and following seas to those we have lost so far this year. May you rest in peace.

Kenneth Boucher	Herman Herring	Cecil Pace	Michael Williams
Frank Cahill	John Johnson	Edward Pearson	James Click
Wayne Cuthbert	Daniel Lewis	James Price	Frank Todaro
John Darby	James McLean	William Roberts	Mario Costa
Harry Ellis	Bernard Mincey	Jose Rojas	Charles Birchard
Irvin Ferebee	Raymond Montgomery	Tony Skura	
Giro Gallo	Norman Nadeau	Joseph Soares	
Liss Harper	Edward O'Connell	Henry Warner	



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