

# Wisconsin News

SUMMER 2025

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 139

## THE SKILLFUL ART OF DEMOLITION





# Motivation and Teamwork

I have been around our union for over forty years, and I have always tried my best to represent our organization with the pride and dignity one should expect from a proud member of an organization like ours. During those years, and throughout different administrations, I have seen some good people come and go. People who have served our union and its membership very well. And giving due credit to those who have served in the past, I would like to dedicate this article to the men and women currently on staff for their dedication to our organization. At the risk of sounding like I'm bragging, and I guess I am, this union has never seen a better collection of representatives at the same time as the team we have on staff right now. This includes the staff that we have at our training center as well. Believe me when I say how well all these people work together for the common goal of representing our membership and displaying dignity and respect in the public eye. Whether they are jumping in to assist at a high school career day to answer questions or rolling up their sleeves to help move close to 1,500 curious students through our training center over the course of three days during the annual externship event. They are all in it to make us, you, look really good and something that anyone would be proud to be a part of. Dedication is when they get out to these data processing centers that are working multiple shifts to let the second and third shifts know that they are represented or going out in the middle of the night to one of our many heavy highway projects to let the hard-working highway crews know



**Terry McGowan**

President/Business Manager,  
IUOE General Vice President

that they are not forgotten while they are out there. Sometimes they find themselves sitting in a town hall late at night while they wait to testify in front of the Public Service Commission seeking approval for an energy-related project or in front of the city or town officials to get zoning approval for a large development being proposed. Many times, we have testified in front of various groups on behalf of proposed pipeline projects.

Then there are fundraising events that must be carefully planned and executed to be successful. At the time of this writing, we have just put another 139 golf outing and poker run behind us and I want to take this opportunity to thank all the members along with their family and friends that participated. Your attendance was the final component to making both events a huge success. These events have become the largest fundraisers to benefit our favorite charity, Hogs for Heroes. Last year, our events raised \$75,000 to purchase three Harley-Davidsons to put injured veterans who cannot otherwise afford a bike back on the road. If you were present at either or both events, you know what I'm talking about when it comes to pre-planning, execution and teamwork when it comes to our staff. Many of these staff members travel quite a distance to

## MEETING REMINDER

Plan to attend the General Membership Meeting at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, July 12, at the Pewaukee Union Hall, N27W23233 Roundy Dr.

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### Cover Photo

*A New Berlin Grading, Inc. crew demolishing the former YMCA building in Racine.*

—  
*Cover and additional photos by Business Agent Kele Schneller*



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assist with these events. They are all volunteers who give up their weekend to make sure the 139 brand is well represented and to give back to the veterans who sacrificed a lot out of their lives for us. These are all volunteers, and not only do these staff members give up these weekends, but many of their family members also show up to help as well. The poker run is also assisted by the American Legion Post 139. This all-union American Legion Post is comprised of rank-and-file members who also volunteer. The Commander, Brian Swearingen, works as an agent full time and still, somehow, finds time to run the Post. Two veterans were gifted bikes courtesy of Local 139 at this poker run and a third bike is scheduled to be given away at noon during our family picnic on July 19. If you have never seen a gifting by Hogs for Heroes, I would encourage you to be present for it. It truly changes the lives of these vets. Besides, if you come to the family picnic, you can be witness to what I have been bragging about! The union and school staff working in synchronized precision along with family and friends volunteering, and even some of our newer members, apprentices that also volunteer. All there on display to exemplify brother and sisterhood. I hope to see you there; this is going to be a special event! 🇺🇸

*Center, President/Business Manager Terry McGowan, Hogs for Heroes Founders Audra and Kevin Thompson with veteran recipients at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Local 139 Poker Run in Wonewoc.*

## IUOE Local 139 Officers

Terrance E. McGowan.....	President/ Business Manager
Dan Sperberg.....	Vice President
Shane Griesbach .....	Recording-Corresponding Secretary
Steve Buffalo.....	Financial Secretary
Aaron Raab.....	Treasurer
Mike Ervin.....	Trustee
Allan Fogel.....	Trustee
Shaun Mc Hugh.....	Trustee
Travis Martzahl.....	Auditor
Nicholas Michels.....	Auditor
Adam Nuthals.....	Auditor
John Oppeneer .....	Conductor
Casey Aronson .....	Guard
Jeremy Allen.....	Executive Board Member at Large
Joshua Comfort.....	Executive Board - District A
Cory Leist.....	Executive Board - District A
Curtis Smith, Jr.....	Executive Board - District A
Wendy Bloedow.....	Executive Board - District B
Craig Glover.....	Executive Board - District B
John Jankowski .....	Executive Board - District C
Joshua Szemraj.....	Executive Board - District C
Robert Schmitz.....	Executive Board - District D
Corey Vander Loop.....	Executive Board - District D



# Mental Health Matters on the Job Site

Our construction industry is built on strength, grit, and good old-fashioned hard work, but behind those hard hats, many of our co-workers, friends, family members, and loved ones face silent struggles with mental health. We need to focus on reducing the stigma, promoting open conversations, and making our mental health a key part of job site safety. Our industry has one of the highest suicide rates among most occupations. Long hours, job insecurity, and high physical demands contribute to anxiety, depression, and burnout. Many health challenges often go unspoken due to the stigma and the “tough it out” culture we grew up in. Prioritizing mental health wellness is just as important as our physical safety. Don’t be afraid to ask your co-worker, “Hey, how are you doing?” and mean it. Take time to listen and encourage them to seek professional help either through our own EAP program or therapy. Just being a buddy helps when you notice signs of stress or withdrawal in your co-workers.

I read an article on one worker’s story, and his quote was, “I felt alone; every day I showed up to work like nothing was wrong, but inside I was struggling. When a co-worker opened up, it gave me the courage to do the same. That small discussion really saved my life.” There are resources and support related to the construction industry. To name a few, 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Crisis Text Line, Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP), and many more resources are out there. Mental health matters no matter what occupation you are in. Please keep an eye out for your co-workers, friends, family, and especially our loved ones. Take a moment and ask, “How are you doing?”

Work in District A is going to be busy the next couple of



**Steve Buffalo**

Financial Secretary, Chief of Staff,  
District A Manager

years. The Wisconsin Public Service Commission has approved We Energies’ gas plants, located in Oak Creek and the Town of Paris, Kenosha County, for \$1.5 billion. We Energies says it needs these natural gas plants to satisfy the growing demand for electricity in Southeast Wisconsin, including Data Centers and Industrial Expansion, which will supplement solar and wind power generation. The Oak Creek Common Council approved a conditional use permit for 120 gas pumps for the proposed Buc-ee’s Fueling Plaza with a 73,300-square-foot convenience store. Buc-ee’s purchased three properties on 27th Street and I-94. The first lot is just over 22 acres for the travel center, and the other two lots will be for future commercial development. The



Operators Tyler Timmel and Andy Olson working for  
Interstate Tree Landscaping Co. in Delafield.

LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY MARK RABAGO

## Business Agents/Organizers Serving District A



**Tim Krieg**



**Thomas Moore Jr**



**Mark Rabago**



**Kele Schneller**



**Brian Swearingen**



Mount Pleasant Microsoft Data Center is still moving along. The Walsh Group is currently in phase 1. Kiewit started phase 2 but has since withdrawn from the project, which will be re-bid. Microsoft reiterates its commitment to building this data center. Port Washington is also advancing plans for a 3.5-gigawatt, 1,900-acre data center campus that developers say could be one of the largest in the country. The plan approved by the city's planning commission includes 11 data center buildings, five substations, three office buildings, new

roads, and three water detention ponds, all located north of Port Washington city limits and could be completely online by 2030. The \$2 billion east-west freeway is underway, with construction set to begin in late 2025. 3.5 miles of 1-94 between 70th Street and 16th Street, which includes the stadium interchange and five local and service interchanges. Our other industries, which include Associated Earth Movers, Sewer, Water & Tunnel, and Utilities (DCA), are all extremely busy in Southeast Wisconsin. 🌱



*Operators Marcus Davis, Christopher Kuehl, Jason Wry and Apprentice Ruben Fuentes working on Highway 158 for Payne & Dolan in Kenosha.*



*Left: Mechanic Evan Mixon with Equipment Corporation of America working on Jones Island in Milwaukee. Above: Mechanic Jason Van Dusen working at Payne & Dolan's aggregate shop in Franklin.*



# Coloma Training Pays Off This Season

**A**s we progress into this work season, I hope all is well and everyone is having a prosperous and productive year.

Not surprisingly, dispatch requests continue to come in for skilled journey workers and apprentices, and once again, you have risen to the occasion.

Work throughout South Central Wisconsin is strong. Based on current bids and upcoming projects, there should be plenty of work for the rest of the season and beyond.

Let me give you a brief update on what's happening in District B. On the EPIC campus, over 90 operators are working among J.P. Cullen & Sons, Inc., J.H. Findorff & Son, Inc., Edgerton Contractors, Inc., Hooper Corporation, Nicholson Construction Company, and 1901, Inc.

Miron Construction Co., Inc. is moving forward with the new Dane County Jail, Sun Prairie Utilities Building, Men's Homeless Shelter, and Ho-Chunk Casino in Beloit.

Moll Construction, Inc. has started the 260-acre Veridian Homes project in Hidden Hills, with Parisi handling the sewer, water, and concrete work and Payne & Dolan working on the asphalt.

R.G. Huston Company, Inc. is moving dirt for two large commercial lots in DeForest, along with various reconstruction projects in the area.

Findorff is working at the Madison Historical Center, CDIS on campus, Madison's Engineering Building, and the \$420 million Phillip A. Levy Engineering Center at the University



**Jeremy Allen**

Executive Board Member at Large,  
District B Manager

of Wisconsin.

J.P. Cullen has begun work on the 100-acre SSM Health Verona Outpatient Campus site, with Edgerton handling site work and utilities, Hooper handling the plumbing, and 1901 managing the electrical work.

Several small bridge projects were awarded to the following contractors: Sheet Piling Services, LLC, Concrete Structures, Inc., Pfeiffer Brothers Construction Co., Inc., Zenith Tech, Inc., and Lunda Construction Co.

Mathy Construction Co. is busy in the Driftless Area with projects on Highway 21 in Tomah, Highway 80 in Richland Center, and Highway 82 in Viroqua. Subcontractors include Gerke Excavating Inc., Forward Traffic & Marking, LLC, Century Traffic, LLC, Lepke Trucking & Excavating, LLC, Chippewa Concrete Services, Inc., W.K. Construction Inc., Arbor Green, Inc., Smith Restoration, Inc., and Augelli Concrete & Excavating.

The A.Y. McDonald project on the Mississippi River is employing many operators with the help of Portzen Construction, J.P. Cullen, Ace Material Placing, LLC,



*Operators Matthew Connelly and Colby Cade working for Milestone Materials in Liberty Quarry in Vernon County (2024).*

LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY AL FOGEL



## Business Agents/Organizers Serving District B



**Mike Cox**



**Chris Feldmann**



**Al Fogel**



**Matt Ison, Jr.**



**Tim Vike**

A-1 Crane Rental & Machinery Moving, Inc., and Reynolds Rigging & Crane Service, Inc.

Payne & Dolan, Rock Road Companies, Inc., Wolf Paving Co., Inc. and Tri-County Paving, Inc. remain busy in the area, working on numerous Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and private asphalt projects.

D.L. Gasser Construction is active on I-90 in Mauston and on County Highway K in Reedsburg, totaling over \$14 million in WisDOT work.

Iverson Construction is also on Highway 11 in Shullsburg with a \$4 million WisDOT project.

I wish everyone a great summer and hope you stay safe, Brothers and Sisters. 🌿

## RETIREES – NEW FACES ALWAYS WELCOME!

### LA CROSSE

Meets quarterly at Corky's Pizza on the third Thursday in February, May, and August at 11:00 a.m. The December meeting coincides with the La Crosse Christmas Meeting at Coulee Golf Bowl.

### MADISON

The Madison retirees hope to see some new faces — feel free to stop by and join! They meet at the Madison Union Hall on the second Tuesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.



*Apprentice Alex Goetsch, Operators Richard Christy, Schunn Hicks, Jonathan Borntrager, Arica Lierman, Michael S. Hale, Todd Zickert and Apprentice Dominic Susa working for American Asphalt of Wisconsin working in Rome.*



*A Tri-County Paving, Inc. crew working on the Kilkenny Farms West subdivision in Waunakee.*



*Edgerton Contractors, Inc. performing demolition work to make room for the new addition at Deerfield High School.*

LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY CHRIS FELDMANN

LOCAL 139 PHOTOS BY TIM VIKÉ



# Blatnik Bridge Plans Advance as Work Stays Busy

**B**y June 2026, the \$2 billion Blatnik Bridge Replacement project is expected to have a contractor in place, with construction beginning in 2027 through 2031. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) recently held a public informational meeting in Superior to confirm that both state and federal funding remains secure—approximately \$1 billion from the federal government and \$400 million from each state.



**Aaron Raab**

Treasurer, District C Manager

Project managers told news media the Blatnik Bridge replacement is urgent because the bridge itself is beyond repair and too large to maintain economically. The current Blatnik Bridge will close by 2030. The new bridge will have a 100-year lifespan and include a 12-foot multi-use path for bicycles and pedestrians.

Preliminary work on the Blatnik Bridge project has already begun. WisDOT has acquired property from about six Superior businesses. Lidgerwood Mundy, a custom winch and hoist company, will relocate but stay in Superior. Howard Immel has been awarded the contract for Lidgerwood's new \$19 million facility, while Northern Interstate Construction is handling the site work for the new 68,000-square-foot precast building. During the construction of the Blatnik Bridge, all traffic will be diverted to the Bong Bridge. Lunda Construction Company has a \$7 million contract to prepare the Bong Bridge for the extra traffic.

The Enbridge Line 5 relocation near the Bad River Reservation is still in the permit phase through summer 2025, with public hearings planned. Enbridge also finished the Log Jack project

on the Bad River Meander to stabilize the eroding shore near the Line 5 crossing.

District C remains busy. RiverView Construction, Inc. is busy building a new cell at the landfill in Sarona through October. Ashland Sand & Gravel, LLC and Northwoods Paving are working on a \$2.5 million parking lot for the Bad River Tribal. Howard Immel, Inc. and Veit are renovating the Vaughn Public Library in Ashland for \$3.3 million. Miron Construction has various projects, including a roof replacement at Lake Superior Elementary School in

Ashland. They are also working on a \$21.5 million project with Soper Companies at a wastewater treatment plant in Minocqua. Miron's hospital projects include renovations at Aspirus Hospital in Merrill, valued at \$40 million, and the fall completion of work at the Marshfield Clinic in Park Falls, worth \$35 million. They are working on this project with Soper, Chippewa Concrete Services, Inc., and American Asphalt of Wisconsin. C.D. Smith Construction, Inc. is also working on a nearly \$8 million project at a wastewater treatment plant in Medford. Our signatory contractors, including C.D. Smith, J.H. Findorff & Son, Inc., and Miron Construction Co., Inc., are busy with school referendums in Rhinelander, Rib Lake, Medford, and Three Lakes, totaling about \$80 million. McCabe Construction, Inc. is at the JFK Memorial Airport in Ashland, working with Northwoods Paving on a \$4 million project. Additionally, Northeast Asphalt has airport work in Eagle River at the Union Airport valued at nearly \$1 million.

Solar projects are moving ahead. The 2,200-acre solar farm in Plover is underway. Mashuda Contractors, Inc. and



## Business Agents/Organizers Serving District C



**Casey Aronson**



**Adam Kaseno**



**Mathew Laabs**



**Darin Rubenzer**



Highway Landscapers, Inc. have been working there for a month. AZCO Inc. has recently started work, and Badgerland Connections and Frattalone Companies will be joining soon.

Additionally, eight smaller scale solar farms are being installed across West Central Wisconsin. These 2.5 MW solar farms occupy an average of 20 to 30 acres, with an average of 13,000 pilings supporting 52,000 panels. Southpaw Fencing, LLC is installing all the fences on these projects. Frattalone Companies is performing the dirt work, roads, and installing the piling.

Bridge projects continue across the region. Zenith Tech has been awarded work on eight bridges on Highway 53 in Barron County and one in Hurley. Larson Construction is busy with bridge projects, combined worth \$773,000, at the Little Black River Bridge, the Forestry Bridge, and the Plum Creek Bridge. Pheifer Brothers Construction Co., Inc. has work in Taylor County and at the Turtle River Bridge with Wisconsin Interstate Contracting on various bridges with a combined total of about \$2 million. Sheet Piling Services and Lunda Construction also have bridge projects in northwestern Wisconsin.

Road work is keeping crews busy. American Asphalt recently started a \$10 million project on I-39 between Highway 29 and Highway 34, working around the clock with Arbor Green, Chippewa Concrete Services, Merrill Gravel & Construction, Allstates Pavement Recycling & Stabilization, and Century

Traffic, LLC. Meanwhile, Mathy Construction Company started work on the \$23 million Highway 29 project in Clark County between Abbotsford and Chippewa Falls. The subcontractors working on the project include Smith Restorations, Inc., Badger State Screening Services, W K Construction Co., Chippewa Concrete Services, Lunda Construction Company, Allstates Pavement Recycling & Stabilization, Inc., and Century Traffic. Albrightson Excavating, Inc. is reconstructing 19 blocks in Ellsworth, including sewer, water, storm, and roadwork. Musson Brothers has nearly \$7 million in city street work in Rhinelander and Woodboro. James Peterson Sons is replacing sewer lines in Westboro and doing additional work in Rhinelander. Northeast Asphalt is handling Phase 1 of County Road Q in Rhinelander, valued at \$450,000.

Northwest Wisconsin has several active WisDOT projects. American Asphalt has over \$20 million in work. Northwoods Paving and James Peterson Sons are working on a \$4 million Highway 2 project in Iron County, a \$7.1 million project with Lunda at the Bad River Bridge with Musson Brothers on Highway 169 in Ashland, and a nearly \$2 million project on Highway 51 in Iron County.

We hope you're having a safe and productive season. Please keep your information up to date on the Out-of-Work list, and don't forget to register for the Annual Family Picnic taking place on Saturday, July 19. See you there! 🍷🍷



*Operators Jamie Bowe and Rachel Greeno working for Veit on the Wood County Jail demolition project in Wisconsin Rapids.*

LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY MATHEW LAABS



# Kewaunee Eyes New Nuclear

The work season took a bit to get going in District D, but summer is off to a promising start. The I-41 corridor between Oshkosh and Fond du Lac is seeing some great upgrades with GJ Grube Construction Co. building new box culverts for Northeast Asphalt's \$25.9 million overlay project with Michels Corporation helping build temporary lanes. Zenith Tech, Lunda Construction Company, Sheet Piling Services, LLC, and Pheifer Brothers Construction Co., Inc. are building new bridge structures as part of the I-41 Project expansion from Appleton to Kaukauna. All bridge structures are expected to be completed late this fall. As you can imagine, the I-41 corridor is lined with orange barrels, which means there is a greater chance of traffic slowdowns for your summer commutes. Vinton Construction Company



**Shane Griesbach**  
Recording-Corresponding Secretary,  
District D Manager

and its subsidiary, RelyCo Plus, LLC, continue to secure numerous projects throughout District D. The Highway 8 Expansion project, located between Crandon and Laona, is being performed by Integrity Grading & Excavating, Inc. and Sheet Piling Services.

C.D. Smith Construction, Inc. has multiple large-scale projects throughout District D this year. The MilliporeSigma building in Sheboygan and the Freedom School District addition are both valued at \$60 million, and the \$200 million, six-story addition to St. Mary's Hospital in Green Bay is expected to start this

fall. Miron Construction Co., Inc. began the \$100 million UWGB Cofrin Technology and Education building project in collaboration with Ostrenga Excavating, Inc. and Veit this spring. Miron's projects at the wastewater treatment plants



*A Northeast Asphalt crew paving Highway B with a shuttle buggy to feed the paver for a continuous finish in Florence County,*

LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY KEVIN DOUCETTE



## Business Agents/Organizers Serving District D



**Kevin Doucette**



**Travis Martzahl**



**Tyler Person**



**Rick Valenta**



in De Pere and Seymour together total \$26 million.

Phase 2 of the Kewaunee Nuclear Plant Decommissioning work continues with Energy Solutions and Brandenburg Industrial Service. Some interesting news came out in May for this site. Energy Solutions is working with WEC Energy Group to explore new nuclear technology for the site once the demo is complete. The proposed plan is to add a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) for future energy needs. The SMR design is an Integral Molten Salt Reactor (IMSR), which has an operational lifespan of 56 years. Lastly, to work at Wisconsin nuclear sites or federal facilities, you must upgrade your Wisconsin driver's license to a REAL ID. This must be done in person at any Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office. Local 139 dispatch will require this moving forward, as it's needed for access to the Point Beach Nuclear Plant.

Be safe out there, and look out for our new members! Be a good mentor. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Family Picnic on Saturday, July 19. 🌿



LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY TYLER PERSON

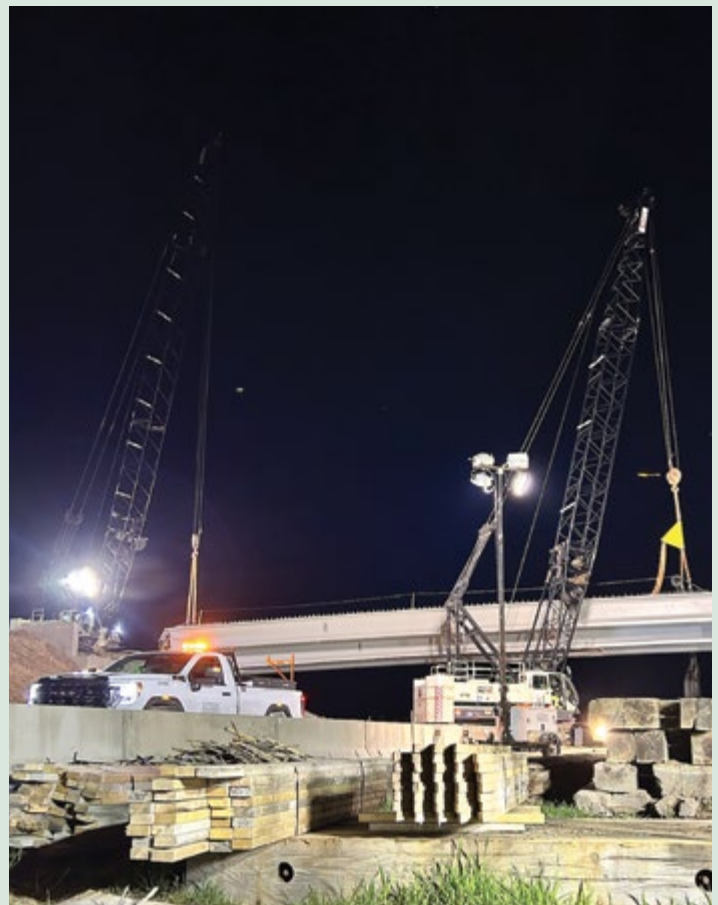
*Operators Christopher Jorgenson and Frank Sobczak, Jr. working for Stark Asphalt on Highway A in Green Lake County.*

## I-41 PROJECT

The project will expand 23 miles of I-41 to six lanes, add auxiliary lanes between close interchanges, and build collector-distributor roads from Ballard Road to WIS 441.



*Operators James Prill, Joseph Barnes, Cole Petit and Joshua Prellwitz working for Pheifer Brothers Construction Co., Inc. in Kaukana.*



*Operators Nathan Sonneberg and Jacob Wunderlich setting beams for Lunda Construction Company in Little Chute.*

LOCAL 139 PHOTOS BY TRAVIS MARTZAH



# Skill Up This Summer

**B**rothers and sisters, I hope you are having a safe and rewarding summer.

We have been busy at the Coloma Training Center serving the members.

Some staff members dedicate time each week to helping members obtain their CDLs. We have four trucks and four trainers on the road every week, enabling members of Local 139 to get their Class A CDL. Not all members are aware that, in addition to training our members, we also serve as an official test site.

For the crane operators or members interested in obtaining their crane license, we can also help. We offer the CCO and the Operating Engineers Certification Program (OECF), which has been growing in popularity with our members.

Members are coming to take their OECF written test, and immediately after passing, they head into the field to



**Dan Sperberg**  
Vice President, Training Director

complete their practical exam on-site. It's great to see the excitement on their faces as they leave, knowing they're now certified by the Operating Engineers as crane operators.

Another way we've been supporting members is through on-demand training. We've been especially busy with forklift certification and re-certification. Many members call us on slow or rainy days to use the equipment they need to sharpen their skills and improve productivity.

This includes dozers, excavators, cranes, scrapers, graders, skid-steers, forklifts, and tractor-loader backhoes.

Besides all the great things happening with Local 139, I would like the members to watch out for fellow co-workers and their families. Keep cool and safe this summer! Please do not hesitate to call the training center with any questions or if we can assist you in any way at (715) 228-4911. 🚧

## Congratulations Recent Apprentice Graduates

### GRADUATION DATE

Kevin Bouska	June 23, 2025
Joseph Brewer	June 7, 2025
Daniel Burgos	May 27, 2025
Nickolas Burrows	April 29, 2025
Angelo Carini	May 9, 2025
Max Carns	May 9, 2025
Alexander Cernick	April 10, 2025
Austin Champlin	June 18, 2025
Austin Daly	April 23, 2025
Dominic Daniels	June 9, 2025
Brice Delzer	June 20, 2025
Derek Fink	June 24, 2025
Axel Fischer	May 9, 2025
Joseph Fisher	March 20, 2025
Ryan Fleury	April 12, 2025
Robert Fliess	May 9, 2025
Cole Gerke	March 18, 2025
Mason Gerke	June 9, 2025
Steven Gerth	April 12, 2025
Mitchell Goham	April 12, 2025
Dylan Gravunder	April 15, 2025
Derek Gresenz	May 12, 2025
Trevon Griffin	May 30, 2025
Colton Groth	April 12, 2025
Tadd Hackbarth	June 12, 2025
Jakob Hadjinian	April 12, 2025
Kyle Helm	April 12, 2025

### GRADUATION DATE

Jonathan Henney	May 9, 2025
Clinton Hinkley	April 12, 2025
Hans Jawson	April 16, 2025
Jamey Jensen	June 9, 2025
Caleb Johnson	April 12, 2025
Cameron Johnson	May 9, 2025
Tyler Kalkofen	June 5, 2025
Jeremy Kirsch	May 9, 2025
Kyle Konkell	April 12, 2025
Jordan Krause	April 12, 2025
Connor Kretchman	March 14, 2025
Koral Krieg	June 18, 2025
Craig Kudrna	May 7, 2025
Jace Laher	April 12, 2025
Jarrold Lepak	May 9, 2025
Laine Lisowe	May 28, 2025
Tyler Lockstein	May 27, 2025
Mitchell Magnuson	May 27, 2025
McLean Mahner	May 6, 2025
Cameron Maier	June 17, 2025
Bryan Maraccini	April 12, 2025
Dalton Martzahl	March 14, 2025
Anthony Matheny	May 16, 2025
Carter Melcher	May 12, 2025
Dominick Meurett	May 12, 2025
Jeremy Middleton	May 1, 2025
Anthony Neira	April 12, 2025

### GRADUATION DATE

Damion Nichols	March 25, 2025
Conner Nolan	April 12, 2025
Nathaniel Parker	March 19, 2025
Devon Phaneuf	June 2, 2025
Ryan Reagan	May 9, 2025
Tyler Reynolds	June 24, 2025
Hunter Rhea	June 24, 2025
Charles Rohner	March 14, 2025
Joshua Roloff	June 2, 2025
Noah Schoepp	April 7, 2025
Jesse Scholl	April 12, 2025
Ben Shafer	March 13, 2025
Travis Smith	April 12, 2025
Dakota Standiford	May 9, 2025
Ward Steinmann, Jr	June 10, 2025
Blake Sterba	April 17, 2025
Cole Stiemke	June 12, 2025
Chase Stoerp	April 1, 2025
Justin Suter	April 12, 2025
Chad Tarvis	May 9, 2025
Nolan Thiel	June 2, 2025
Tyler Timmel	May 7, 2025
Ryan Vinz	June 9, 2025
Brennan Ward	April 12, 2025
Jacob Watts	June 18, 2025
William Wiemero	June 7, 2025
Ronald Witt	April 12, 2025



# CONCRETE PUMPING

LOCAL 139 PHOTO



*L-R: Partners and members Nicholas Oldenberg, Mark-Anthony Aguirre, James M. Krueger, Seth Butler, Carter Schmidt, John Farr, Christopher Kissinger, Jamie Bowe, Matt Wilinski and Ean Goll at the Coloma Training Center.*



DRONE PHOTO BY KYLE SPERBERG

*Concrete Pumping Class students put their skills to the test — and their pride on display — by using Ace Material Placing's pump to make a bold "139" into the sand at the Coloma Training Center.*



# Labor Law Basics: Part 1

**A**s attorneys for Local 139, we are regularly asked questions that arise under the labor law. For lawyers, this has a very specific meaning. Labor law means the National Labor Relations Act and the cases that arise under the Act and that interpret the Act. Before the Great Depression in the 1930s, labor law was decided in state courts. Part of the problem with having each state decide labor law questions was that there was no uniform policy, and each state's law could be slightly different. Not all state laws supported a worker's right to collectively bargain with his or her employer.

In 1935, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act also known as the Wagner Act. It was named after the Senator who sponsored the bill, Robert Wagner. The Act provided the right of employees to organize a union and collectively bargain with their employer. The bedrock of the Act was Section 7:

Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in concerted activities for collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.

There is a lot contained within that one sentence. The first right is to organize. That means employees have the right under Federal Law to organize a union and/or join a union. The second right is to bargain collectively through the union. Bargain collectively means representatives of the union sit down with representatives of the employer and negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. The third right is to "engage in concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection." Concerted activities for collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection means a variety of actions. It can mean seeking better pay or benefits or working conditions when negotiating a union contract. It can mean seeking better pay or benefits as a group, even if it does not result in a contract. It can mean seeking to organize or form a union. It can include the right to engage in strikes, picketing, or hand billing. It can mean joining with coworkers to complain about a work-related issue. But it must be "concerted," meaning it has to be an activity between two or more coworkers, not just an activity you take on behalf of yourself. If you bring complaints to an employer, for those to be considered part of "concerted"



**Laura Finnegan**  
Legal Counsel

activity, the complaints have to effect more than just you. Those complaints have to affect at least you and one other employee or often a group of employees. The Wagner Act applied to all employers involved in interstate commerce, meaning commerce between states, except airlines, railroads, agriculture and government.

The Wagner Act also created the National Labor Relations Board, which hears complaints, also called unfair labor practice charges, about violations of Section 7. The Wagner Act granted

unions and employees the ability to enforce the rights created to form or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively, and engage in concerted activities. Section 8 of the Act says that:

It shall be an Unfair Labor Practice for an employer: to interfere with, restrain, or coerce employees in the exercise of their rights guaranteed in Section 7; to dominate or interfere with the formation or administration of any labor organization or contribute any financial or other support to it with regard to hiring tenure of employment of any term or condition of employment to encourage or discourage any membership in any labor organization; to discharge or otherwise discriminate against an employee because he has filed an unfair labor practice charge or given testimony; and to refuse to bargain collectively with Unions or with representatives.

When a group of employees wants to form a union and is actively engaging in a campaign to do that, an employer, for example, cannot promise extra breaks or extra pay, take away breaks, or reduce pay during a union campaign. The employer may present employees with its views on unionization, but it cannot retaliate against or offer benefits to the employees as a way to influence them against union representation. Simply put the employer must maintain the status quo from before the union campaign. It cannot change any of the terms or conditions of employment. It cannot change paydays or how often employees are paid. It cannot change working hours or work schedules. It cannot change when breaks are scheduled. It cannot change how it collects or responds to employee complaints or grievances. It cannot fire employees who it suspects or knows are in favor of the union. If an employee or union that represents an employee believes that his employer has "interfered, restrained, or coerced" him in his Section 7



rights, he can file an unfair labor practice (ULP) charge with the NLRB. If an employee does file a ULP charge, the employer cannot discriminate or terminate that employee for filing the ULP charge or even given testimony in a case before the NLRB.

Once employees have voted for a union, and the union wins a majority of those votes, the employer is required to “recognize” the union as the “exclusive bargaining representative” of the employees. The next step is to bargain a

contract. Again, during the period between the union election and the first contract, the union cannot change and of the terms or conditions of employment. If the employer refuses to bargain, it is also a violation of an employee’s Section 7 rights. Moreover, the employer must bargain in “good faith.” We will address “good faith” bargaining and other issues in Part 2. Until then, we hope everyone has a safe and productive construction season! 🚧

## New Contractors

**Aqua Designs, Inc**  
*Rockdale, IL*  
National Maintenance Agreement

**Bay Crane Midwest, LLC**  
*Columbus, OH*  
Area II Building

**Crane Creek**  
*Faribault, MN*  
Heavy & Highway

**Construct WI, LLC**  
*Superior, WI*  
Area II Building

**Custom Land Services, Inc.**  
*Spring Grove, IL*  
Associated Earth Movers

**Fairway Gas, LLC**  
*New Ipswich, NH*  
National Distribution

**Prime Earthworks, LLC**  
*Marinette, WI*  
Associated Earth Movers, Heavy & Highway

**QC Crane, LLC**  
*Rock Island, IL*  
Area II Building, Heavy & Highway

**Secure Fencing, LLC**  
*Gilman, WI*  
Associated Earth Movers,  
Area II Building, Heavy & Highway

**YTS Utility Group (dba YTS Clearing)**  
*Maple Grove, MN*  
Area II Building



LOCAL 139 PHOTO

*New signatory contractor Custom Land Services, Inc., a residential excavation company based in Spring Grove, Illinois, joins Local 139. (L-R) David Dahm (Local 150), Local 139er Jose Vicente, Owner Frank Miller and Organizer Travis Briones.*



# House Bill Threatens Clean Energy Jobs

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a sweeping bill that would dismantle nearly all of the clean energy tax credits established by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)—legislation that has fueled billions in investments, thousands of union jobs, and a robust pipeline of clean energy projects across the country. The bill, dubbed by its supporters as the “One, Big, Beautiful Bill,” now heads to the U.S. Senate for consideration. Local 139 urges our Senators to stand firm and defend the critical IRA provisions that power job growth, workforce training, and American energy leadership.



**Bob Welch**


The IRA of 2022 was a landmark investment in America’s energy future, delivering \$270 billion in tax incentives for clean energy technologies, including wind, solar, carbon capture, clean hydrogen, and nuclear—sectors where Local 139’s members have already made a substantial impact. This funding has translated into construction jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, and long-term careers for Operating Engineers across Wisconsin and the nation.

If this bill becomes law, it would eliminate the 30% production and investment tax credits (PTC/ITC) for clean energy projects that have not begun construction within 60 days of its passage. Those who start in time would still face a hard deadline—projects must be completed by December 31, 2028—to retain eligibility. This arbitrary cliff would throw uncertainty into a sector that depends on multi-year planning and stable policy signals.

Local 139’s apprenticeship programs, including many focused on renewable infrastructure, are at risk. Clean energy projects have become an essential part of our training model, giving new Operating Engineers the opportunity to develop their skills on large-scale wind and solar farms, advanced nuclear sites, hydrogen facilities, and carbon capture projects. If tax credits vanish, those projects—and the training and jobs that come with them—could dry up overnight.

Renewable projects don’t just lower energy bills and improve grid resilience—they create jobs. Fortunately, the U.S. Senate still has a chance to stop this bill from reaching the President’s desk in its current form. Some Republican Senators, including Wisconsin’s Ron Johnson, have indicated they want to see changes. If the Senate amends the bill, it would return to the House of Representatives, where it only narrowly passed by one vote.

We encourage you to contact Wisconsin’s Senators—Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson—to express your concerns about the enormous impact this legislation would have on our work. Stay tuned for updates from us on the outcome of this critical federal debate.

Bob Welch is based in Madison and works on Local 139’s legislative issues. 



Operator Douglas Derksen and Apprentice Patrick Austin working for A.W. Oakes & Son, Inc. on Oakes Road and Highway 11 in Sturtevant.



Congratulations to Member Harrison Funmaker (left), inducted into the 2025 North American Indigenous Athletics Hall of Fame on Saturday, June 7, in Oneida! Harrison, a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation, is being congratulated by his friend, Rodney Rave, 139 Retiree.

LOCAL 139 PHOTO BY KELE SCHNELLER

SUBMITTED PHOTO

# RE-REGISTER APRIL–NOVEMBER

## OUT OF WORK?

Re-register on the Out-of-Work list between the 1st and 5th of each month.

## BACK TO WORK?

Remove your name from the Out-of-Work list when you return to work.

Call your local union hall or  
visit [portal.iuoe139.org](http://portal.iuoe139.org)

## 2024 Bloomer Area Veterans Center



Thank you very much for the \$500 donation.  
— Retiree Frank Laufenberg

## In Memoriam

**Myles Bruch**, Brookfield ..... June 9, 2025  
**James Boyson**, Fremont ..... April 14, 2025  
**Gary Cox**, Wilton ..... June 10, 2025  
**John Dittbrender**, Ringle ..... March 24, 2025  
**Joseph DiMaggio**, Waukesha ..... May 18, 2025  
**William Fisher**, Dunbar ..... March 27, 2025  
**Clarence Glodowski**, Rosholt ..... April 10, 2025  
**John H. Gremore**, New Berlin ..... March 31, 2025  
**Fred Heinz**, Antigo ..... March 19, 2025  
**Robert Heitman**, Grand Marsh ..... April 22, 2025  
**Jeff Herman**, Kaukauna ..... April 16, 2025  
**Larry Joseph**, Hillsboro ..... June 11, 2025  
**Robert Kwidzinski**, Berlin ..... May 27, 2025  
**Loyal Johnson**, Beloit ..... April 30, 2025  
**Robert Kretschmer**, Ixonia ..... April 13, 2025

**David Lapp**, Tripoli ..... March 26, 2025  
**Patrick Lilly**, West Bend ..... April 24, 2025  
**Kevin Lindsey**, Merrilan ..... May 30, 2025  
**Dan Meidam**, Bowler ..... July 20, 2024  
**Scott Merritt**, Onalaska ..... June 6, 2025  
**Dale Miller**, Madison ..... June 9, 2025  
**John Nowak**, Muscoda ..... April 2, 2025  
**Daniel Renel**, Cecil ..... May 19, 2025  
**James Romanowski**, Stanley ..... May 10, 2025  
**Duane Schwarz**, Marshfield ..... June 13, 2025  
**Christopher Sobon**, Caledonia ..... March 21, 2025  
**Gerald Umnus**, Burlington ..... March 23, 2025  
**Lyle Vesperman**, Boscobel ..... March 16, 2025  
**Dennis Wright**, Eagle ..... May 23, 2025



## Remembering Business Manager Dale A. Miller

December 7, 1939 – June 9, 2025

**D**ale A. Miller served three terms as Business Manager for Local 139 from 1995 to 2004. He will be remembered for establishing an aggressive salting and organizing program, creating a task force and bargaining department, and introducing the initial concept for a pre-funded healthcare department. 🚧



# Wisconsin Must Continue to Invest in Our Roads and Bridges

By Robb Kahl, Executive Director, Construction Business Group



It is state budget season once again. Every two years, the Wisconsin Legislature and Governor must pass a two-year budget. Of primary importance for many Local 139 members and their roadbuilding employers is the state transportation budget. The last three biennial budgets have seen significant investment in transportation on a bipartisan basis. However, the data proves that we must continue to push our elected officials to responsibly invest in Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure.

According to WisDOT's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, from 2006 to 2024, general fund tax collections increased (despite tax cuts) because of growing individual incomes and consumer spending. In contrast, transportation user-fee revenues decreased during that same time period. Here's why.

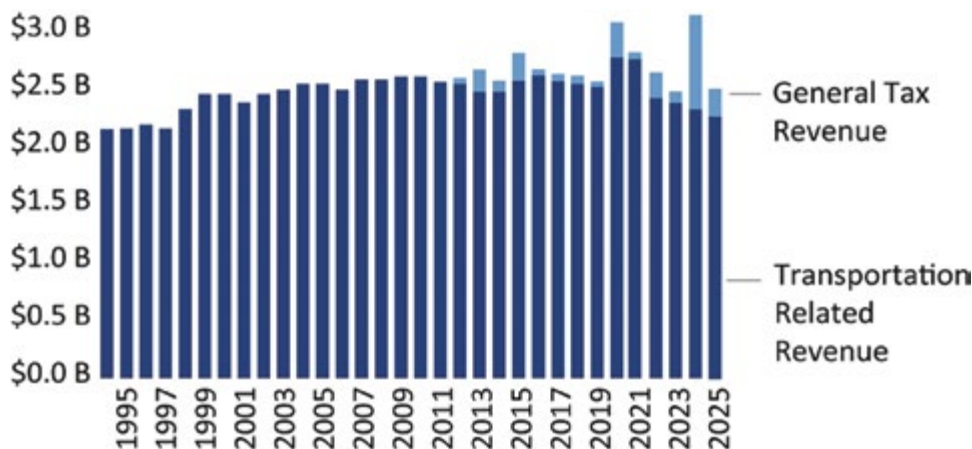
According to a January 2025 Legislative Fiscal Bureau paper, the average fuel efficiency increased from 20.3 miles per gallon in 2006 to 25.4 miles per gallon in 2024. Motorists drive fewer

miles and buy fewer gallons of gas today compared to 2006. As a result, every driver pays \$36.68 less in gas tax today than in 2006.

As the graph below illustrates, inflation-adjusted transportation revenue is at the lowest point since 1998. As a result, transportation needs are increasingly met by general fund tax collections rather than transportation fund tax collections.

While our economy has been strong over the last few years, it can quickly change due to national and international factors, e.g., tariffs and wars. Therefore, increased reliance on general fund tax revenue for transportation needs comes with significant risk.

Every option must be explored in this and future budgets, such as vehicle title fee increases, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fees, tolling, license renewal fee increases, and increased transfer of auto parts, repair, etc. sales tax to the transportation fund. Please encourage your elected officials to explore alternative, dedicated funding sources for transportation. A healthy and safe transportation system is vital to economic development, job growth, and the delivery of goods to our communities. 🇺🇸



*The graph depicts transportation revenue, adjusted for inflation, at its lowest level since 1998. \*Source, Wisconsin Policy Forum Report – Road Map: Assessing and Funding Wisconsin's Transportation Needs.*

# Progress Made With Pre-Apprenticeship Courses, but Much Work Still to Be Done

By Mindy Mulryan, Workforce Development Director/Project Manager, Construction Business Group



Construction Business Group (CBG) and Local 139 have worked hard since 2017 to build the pre-apprenticeship program for high school students through Destinations Career Academy (DCA). The pre-apprenticeship program offers high school students the opportunity to learn about the industry, specifically, the Operating Engineers' career pathway.

High school students can earn high school credit for the Operating Engineers' classes and get a head start on their future career. With good grades, they also earn credit toward their registered apprenticeship through Local 139's Training Center.

Most students take the Operating Engineers' classes on a part-time basis while staying in their home school district for the balance of their educational coursework. Like the four-year college-focused Advanced Placement (AP) classes that are offered (and highly encouraged) in most high schools, DCA classes meet post-secondary academic and career planning that is required by Wisconsin law. However, unlike AP classes, students and their families often must advocate for Operating Engineers' classes and can encounter numerous roadblocks. CBG works tirelessly with parents, students, teachers, and Local 139 staff to get around these roadblocks.

One example is Marcus. Marcus learned about the Operating Engineers' classes during his senior year from CBG and Local 139 social media campaigns. Marcus shared the information

with his school, Fort Atkinson High School. CBG and DCA staff made several attempts to contact Fort Atkinson High School staff to facilitate enrollment for Marcus, but those attempts were unsuccessful. Marcus and his family even presented at a school board meeting and asked that the district allow him to take the Operating Engineers' classes through official school channels.

In the end, Marcus enrolled himself, and his family paid out-of-pocket for his classes. Not all students and families can afford to do this. Marcus is now a first-year apprentice working for Gabe's Construction. He succeeded despite the roadblocks.

Marcus is not alone in his tireless efforts to get access to the Operating Engineers' classes at Fort Atkinson High School. A graduating senior from the Class of 2025 also had to register himself and pay for his own classes, despite CBG and Local 139 staff being invited into classrooms to talk about opportunities available to them. This student recognized the career potential not only for himself but also to help his family. He made the choice to work to cover the cost of the classes.

But we are not giving up on Fort Atkinson High School! Several community members, Local 139 members and staff, and CBG staff appeared at a recent Fort Atkinson school board meeting to share information about the Operating Engineers' classes. We firmly believe these classes should be available to students, just like AP and other four-year college-focused classes. While we have not yet convinced Fort Atkinson High School to allow their students to take the Operating Engineers' classes, we will continue to try and remain hopeful.

This isn't to say that there aren't many amazing districts out there that have helped their students explore the Operating Engineers' classes. Since 2017, approximately 900 Wisconsin high school students have had the opportunity to take at least one DCA class. Over 155 school districts have participated in the DCA pre-apprenticeship program. But there are over 420 school districts in the state! This means many students have not had the opportunity to learn about the Operating Engineers' classes.

If you are aware of a school that is erecting barriers for students wanting to take the Operating Engineers' classes, reach out to CBG. We will advocate for any high school student with a genuine interest in pursuing a career as a heavy equipment operator. We will continue to encourage schools to treat technical education career paths as equally important and valuable as college preparatory classes.

For more information on DCA classes, please contact Mindy Mulryan at [m.mulryan@cbgwi.com](mailto:m.mulryan@cbgwi.com).



Marcus, second from right, on a job site with his Gabe's Construction crew.



# Another Successful Spring Externship in the Books!

By Laura Cataldo, Director, Construction & Real Estate Services, Baker Tilly US, LLP



Once again, Local 139 opened the doors of the Coloma Training Center to approximately 800 high school students, parents, and educators. With an average of 250 registrants each day of the Spring Externship Event, Local 139 continues to lead the state in helping students explore the Operating Engineer pathway and registered apprenticeship.

A special thank you to the many operators and apprentices who volunteered at the event and the following contractors that participated in the contractor panel:

**Lindsay Tuquero**, *J.F. Brennan Company, Inc.*

**Reed Scharpf**, *Calnin & Goss, LLC*

**Adam Schroeder**, *Lunda Construction Company*

**Dawn Schmidt**, *Michels Corporation*

**Chuck Spoehr**, *Miron Construction Co., Inc.*

**Josh Regent-Smith**, *Super Western, Inc.*

**Rita Friedel**, *Walbec Group, Inc.*

**Brent Kostrzewa**, *Walbec Group, Inc.*

**Sara Wasielweski**, *Walbec Group, Inc.*

**Daniel Webster**, *Walbec Group, Inc.*

Watch for details about future events. If your company is interested in participating in outreach events, please contact [laura.cataldo@bakertilly.com](mailto:laura.cataldo@bakertilly.com).







*"I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to be part of the Externship last Thursday. I loved being able to learn more about machine operators and what that job entails and how to get there. It was such a cool experience to be able to try out some of the excavators. I learned a lot of valuable information and would love to be in touch to continue to learn even more. Thank you for sharing your time to create such a great experience."*

*— Ana, High School Junior*





# Health Screenings Return to the Training Center

**A**s we enter a new plan year, please take a moment to review your benefits, schedule your annual physical, and keep your information up to date to help maintain your health and support a strong Health Fund.

## ANNUAL DEDUCTIBLE

Please note that the annual deductible resets on June 1, 2025, for the 12-month period from June 2025 through May 2026.

## HEALTH SCREENING AND ANNUAL PHYSICAL

We partnered with nurses from Aurora Health Care to bring health screenings back to the training center in Coloma this past winter, and nearly 350 members underwent screenings. Thank you all so much for your interest and for taking the time. Eleven individuals had a screening and returned a few weeks later for a recheck. They wanted to make some personal lifestyle changes and see if it made a difference. That is exactly what we are looking for when we promote health screenings and annual physicals. Know your numbers. Get your annual physical with a blood draw. Once you know your numbers, it's your choice to make lifestyle changes to improve your results, if needed. Or simply to



**Rita Becker**  
Health Benefit Fund  
Administrative Manager

start the process of learning what the healthy ranges are for blood pressure, blood sugar levels, cholesterol, and triglycerides, and how you are trending from year to year.

## DEPENDENT CHILDREN'S INSURANCE

The Health Fund covers dependent children until they turn 26 years old. If your child works and has insurance through their job, please let the Health Fund know. Your children are not required to take their employer's insurance. However, if they do, that active plan pays first, and this plan pays

second, reducing our costs.

## KEEP YOUR RECORDS CURRENT

Please remember, if you move or get divorced to notify the Union, Health Fund, and Central Pension to update your address and beneficiary information.



*Health Benefit Fund Administrative Manager Rita Becker provided Medicare retiree coverage updates at the June retiree meetings in Madison and Pewaukee, with presentations from Anthem and Hearing Care Solutions representatives. Photos provided by the Health Benefit Fund, Anthem and Organizing Director Mike Ervin.*



# Strong Start for Medicare Advantage

**N**ow that we're more than a year into the Anthem Medicare Advantage Plan, the feedback regarding the medical, prescription, and vision programs has been supportive. Who would not like having no co-insurance for medical, lower prescription prices, and an increased vision benefit? However, the feedback on the Liberty Dental program continues to have issues. While the Trustees are looking into whether and how we can improve the dental program, I would like to suggest ways to make it less stressful. If you use a dentist in the Liberty network, you should not have any issues as services are covered in full, up to the dental annual maximum. If you choose to continue using your dentist who is not in the network, however, it will cost you more because Liberty will base your benefit on the usual amount covered for dentists in their network, which is often considerably less than the amount charged. If you need help finding a Liberty network dentist near your home, call the Fund Office. They will connect you with Liberty to find one. If they don't have a network dentist near your home, they will talk to your dentist to negotiate an exception to cover your dentist on an in-network basis. Liberty will let



**Mary Jane DeBattista**

Health Benefit Fund Retiree Trustee

you know if you have been approved for an exception.

**Pre-certification** is the biggest issue. Pre-certification serves as a protective measure to ensure that the proposed treatments are appropriate and necessary, preventing unnecessary treatments and helping you avoid unexpected costs. You do not need pre-certification for exams, routine cleaning, x-rays, or fillings. However, regardless of whether your dentist is a Liberty dentist or out-of-network, you **MUST** get pre-certification for all other procedures, including crowns,

root canals, bridges, dentures, and implants. Dental offices know how to obtain the pre-certification. It is a routine required by most insurers. You don't need to do anything other than ensure that the dental office submits the request for pre-certification before they begin the work. If you do not pre-certify, your claim may be denied, and you may have to pay the full cost of the procedure.



## 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Picnic

**SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2025**

**RSVP**



[iuoe139.org/picnic](http://iuoe139.org/picnic)





# A Silent Crisis in Our Industry

Local 139 once again attended the International Healthcare Initiative Conference at ITECH in Texas, joining nearly 50 other locals. One of the topics that stood out at an alarming rate was the issue of suicide in the construction industry. It has one of the highest rates of suicide among professionals in the workforce, with the rate among male construction workers 75% higher than that of men in the general population, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An estimated 6,000 construction workers died by suicide in 2022—an increase from 2021, according to the most recent data available. That compares to around 1,000 who died from construction work-related injuries.

Focusing on statistics closer to home, I decided to look into the rate here at Local 139. For a membership of over 11,000, from January 2024 to the third week of May 2025, Local 139 has suffered the loss of 8 members who took their own lives. This is heartbreaking. We often think that what's happening in the world doesn't affect us directly—but it certainly does. When you are more likely to die by suicide than from a job site accident, that is a true crisis in our industry.

Each of us knows how to show up and get the job done every day, but we all need to improve at protecting our mental well-being. The construction industry demands a lot from us—extreme temperatures, transient work, long hours



**Shaun Mc Hugh**  
Health Benefit Fund Liaison

away from loved ones, and income that ebbs and flows based on demand. These pressures can amplify an already strenuous career.

**Always remember: there is help.** We've often been taught not to show weakness or talk about struggles—there's a belief that construction workers don't have feelings, for fear of not being hired. But that's far from the truth. Local 139 members specifically have access to an Employee Assistance Program. Contact information is printed on the back of your Health Fund card, and you can reach out to speak with someone anytime, day or night.

Everywhere you look on a job site, you have brothers and sisters in the Operating Engineers who are ready to help in a time of need. If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. You can also call (800) 273-8255, text HOME to 741741, or visit [speakingofsuicide.com/resources](https://speakingofsuicide.com/resources) for additional support.

Please remember: all lives matter. Even one suicide is too many. And never forget—the first three letters of “union” are UNI. Together, we all make a difference.



**988** | SUICIDE & CRISIS  
LIFELINE

**24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT**



**CALL 988**



**TEXT 988**



**CHAT 988lifeline.org**

## ANTHEM EAP

(800) 865-1044 or [www.AnthemEAP.com](https://www.AnthemEAP.com)

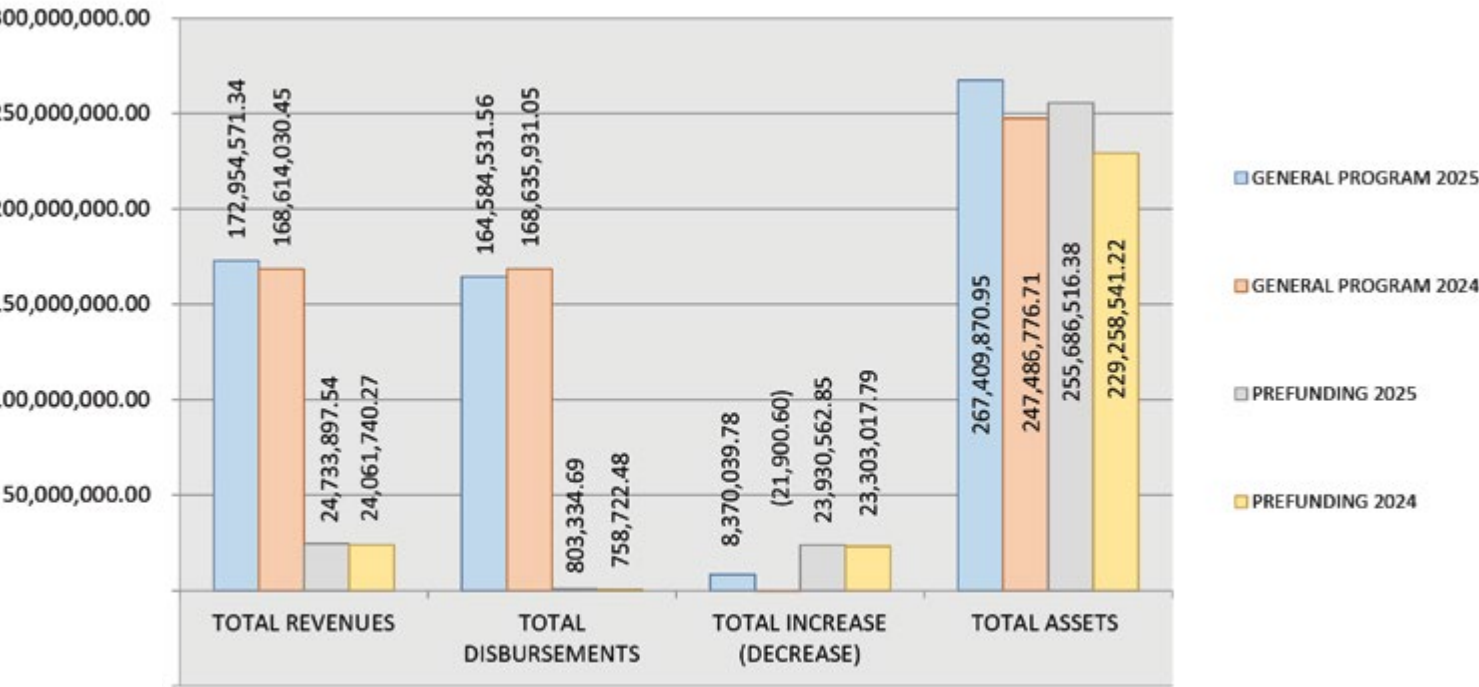
Click on the Log In button and enter  
company code OE Local 139

**Contact the Health Fund office for more details  
on your mental health treatment benefits at  
(262) 549-9190**

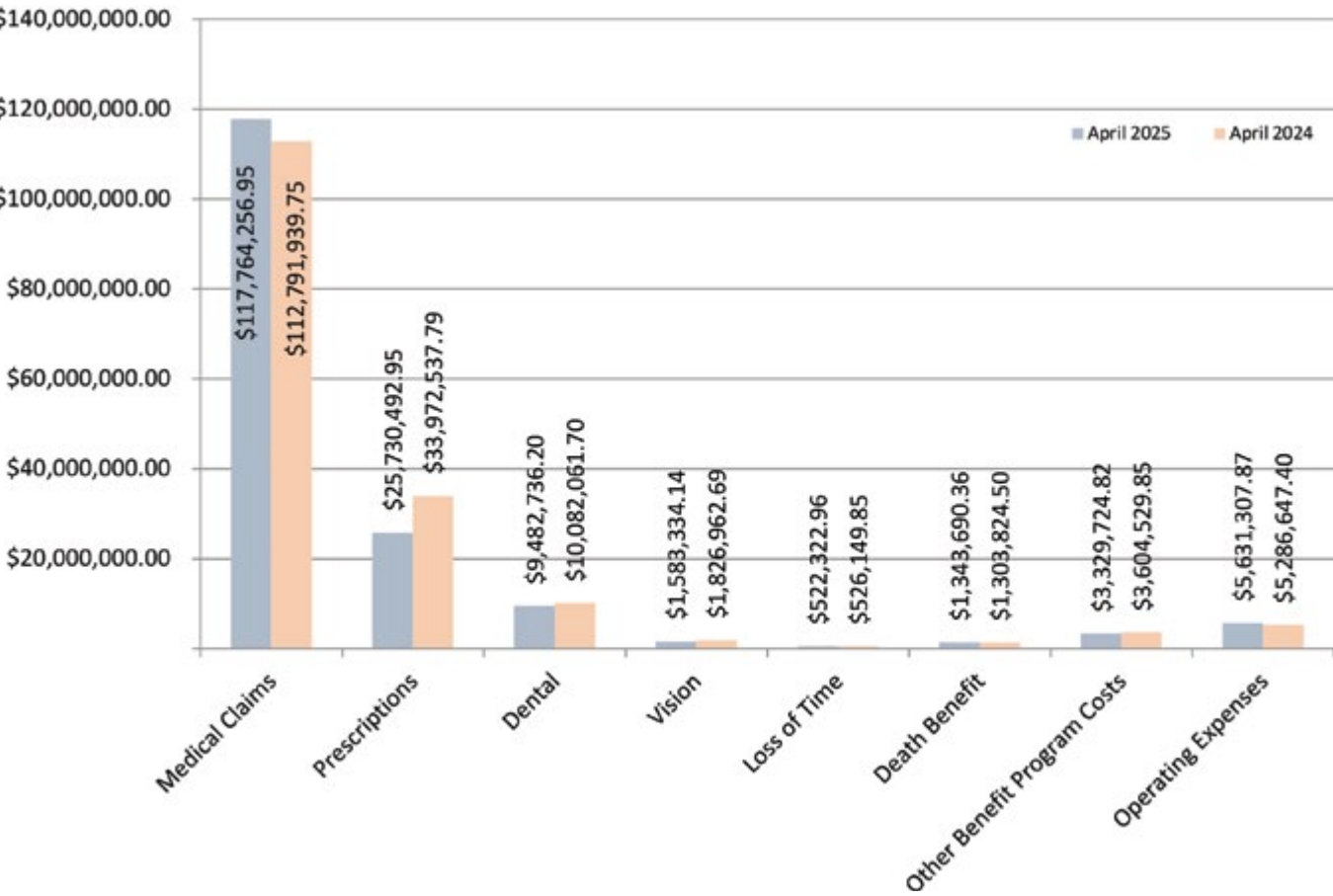
Additional Resources:

[speakingofsuicide.com/resources](https://speakingofsuicide.com/resources)

# Quarterly Health Fund Activity through April 30



## Disbursements





## Congratulations Recent Retired 139ers

<b>Wayne Aaberg Jr.</b> , Oregon..... May 1, 2025	<b>Joseph Lechner</b> , Waupun ..... January 1, 2025
<b>Peter Albert</b> , Junction City ..... December 1, 2024	<b>Donald Oakes</b> , Racine..... December 1, 2024
<b>David Armatoski</b> , Neshkoro..... June 1, 2025	<b>Dean Phernetton</b> , Webster..... January 1, 2025
<b>Richard Balck</b> , Freedom ..... May 1, 2025	<b>Steven Pierce</b> , Coon Valley..... May 1, 2025
<b>Larry Brisighella</b> , New Berlin..... March 1, 2025	<b>David Powell</b> , Milwaukee..... April 1, 2025
<b>Brian Bub</b> , Malone..... June 1, 2025	<b>Mike Prasnick</b> , Ingram ..... January 1, 2025
<b>Scott Buechner</b> , Mount Horeb ..... January 1, 2025	<b>Larry Richardson</b> , Galena ..... June 1, 2025
<b>Nick Cady</b> , Lone Rock..... March 1, 2025	<b>Randy Scott</b> , Tomah ..... April 1, 2025
<b>Robert Donaldson</b> , La Crosse ..... March 1, 2025	<b>Alan Vehrenkemp</b> , Ettrick ..... April 1, 2025
<b>Bill Dreyer</b> , Cambria ..... May 1, 2025	<b>Rick Weis</b> , Marshfield ..... April 1, 2025
<b>Richard Katzman Jr.</b> , Burlington..... May 1, 2022	<b>Mark Wendt</b> , Beaver Dam ..... April 1, 2025
<b>Jeffrey Klingbeil</b> , Princeton ..... February 1, 2025	<b>Roy Wisniewski</b> , Medford ..... May 1, 2025
<b>Ann Kuzmic</b> , Wind Lake..... April 1, 2025	<b>Christine Zaja</b> , Baraboo ..... May 1, 2025

## Stay Connected with Your Local 139 Brothers and Sisters

Join a retiree club! Make new friends, reconnect with your work crew, and share stories.



Retirees gather for monthly bus tours, casino trips, and breakfast/lunch meetings.

## Retiree Club Meetings

*The La Crosse and Madison Retiree Clubs are welcoming new members!*

### MADISON HALL

4702 South Biltmore Lane  
11:00 a.m., second Tuesday, except July

### PEWAUKEE HALL

N27W23233 Roundy Drive  
10:00 a.m., third Wednesday,  
except July and winter months

### NORTHEAST

Jar's Bar & Grill, 4863 Elm Street, Laona  
9:00 a.m., third Wednesday,  
except July and December

### LA CROSSE

#### NEW SCHEDULE

11:00 a.m., meets quarterly, third Thursday in  
February, May and August  
**Aug. 21** – Corky's Pizza, La Crescent, MN  
**Dec. 9** – Coulee Golf Bowl, Onalaska, WI

### CENTRAL

Olympia Family Restaurant  
200 Division St A, Stevens Point  
9:00 a.m., third Tuesday,  
except July and December

### APPLETON HALL

5191 Abitz Road  
10:00 a.m., first Wednesday  
**Aug. 6** – Brat and Hamburger Lunch  
**Sept. 3** – Fish Fry  
**Oct. 1** – Pizza Party  
**Nov. 5** – Potluck Lunch  
**Dec. 18** – Chicken Sandwich Lunch  
**Jan. 7, 2026** – Pizza Ranch Lunch

### EAU CLAIRE

29 Pines, 5872 33rd Ave, Eau Claire  
9:00 a.m., first Thursday,  
except July and December

# Buddy Checks

As the warm months roll in and our calendars fill with cookouts, vacations, and time outdoors, we must remember that not every veteran experiences summer as a season of ease. Since we recently passed Mental Health Awareness Month in May and PTSD Awareness Month was observed in June, I believe this is an important topic.

This summer, we're making a renewed commitment to the Buddy Check program, an initiative that is as simple as it is powerful. A phone call, a text, a knock on the door. These small gestures can make all the difference. The American Legion Buddy Check campaign reminds us that service doesn't end when the uniform comes off. Sometimes, our most meaningful mission begins afterward, checking in on a fellow veteran who might be struggling in silence.

Whether they served in combat or stateside, five years ago or fifty, every veteran deserves to be seen, heard, and reminded



**Brian Swearingen**  
Post 139 Commander

that they are not alone. Many are dealing with isolation, mental health challenges, or unresolved grief. And too often, they don't reach out. That's why we NEED to reach in!

This summer, I challenge every Legionnaire and every friend of the Legion to set a reminder, make a list, and do five Buddy Checks. No one should feel forgotten, especially not by those who understand.

One phone call can save a life. One conversation can lift a spirit.

Let's do our part.

Please visit us at our Post 139 booth at the summer picnic.

Forward. Together.



LOCAL 139 PHOTO



American Legion Post 139 Commander Brian Swearingen and Retiree Vern Schultz attending a ceremony honoring the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of the US Army at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison.

PHOTO BY BUSINESS AGENT BRIAN SWEARINGEN



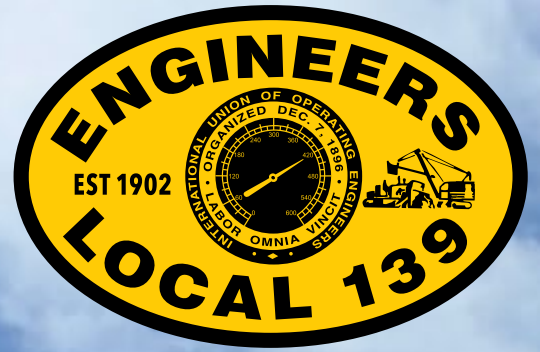
American Legion Post 139 Member/Retiree Robert Zaretske enjoying his 87<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 10.

LOCAL 139 PHOTO



District C volunteered to help Russel "Butch" Wentlandt over Memorial Day weekend, installing flagpoles at cemeteries in Dunn and Polk Counties. L-R: Butch's great-nephew Trace Anderson, Organizer Rich Lego, Tracy Gifford, Business Agent Casey Aronson, District C Manager Aaron Raab, Butch and Business Agent Darin Rubenzer.





*Operator Joshua "Cupcake" Boruszewski, Casey Neuendorf, Perry Schaller and Heath Dhein working for New Berlin Grading, Inc. in Racine.*

