
Midwest Region Laborers' Retiree E-newsletter

The LiUNA! Retiree E-Newsletter, April 2013

Welcome to your Retiree Council E-newsletter!



Pictured: Retiree Council Steering Committee members Glyn Ramage, Vice President John F. Penn, Rick Fassino, Ernie Brown, Wally Abernathy and Bob Wright. Not pictured are Steering Committee members Reno Hammond, Mike LaHood, Jim Miller, Richard Reynolds and Stacey Salmon.

The Midwest Region Retiree Council Steering Committee, led by co-chairs Bob Wright and Richard Reynolds, is hard at work expanding and strengthening the Retiree Council program in the ten states of our Midwest Region.

Retiree Councils at the Local Union level offer retirees the opportunity to contribute to the Local and to their community, the opportunity to have a voice and the opportunity to socialize, Wright said. In addition, he said, there is an aspect of brotherhood for Retiree Council members. "They maintain contact with all the guys they worked with," he said.

The Retiree Council Steering Committee, which oversees the activities of Retiree Councils at the Local Union level, is committed to developing strong Local chapters.

"The Steering Committee is available in any way, shape or form to assist in that process," Wright said. Any individual council chapter can request assistance, and the Retiree Council Steering Committee will meet with the local chapter, show how to get the chapter going, how to comply with the Constitution, have an election of officers and explain various programs other chapters

are doing. Wright said he and fellow co-chair Richard Reynolds are dedicated to helping individual chapters in this process.

Reynolds said retirees get involved with local Councils to engage in activities that they're passionate about, including social, charitable, civic and recreational activities, and for the love of the union.

For example, Wright pointed to the Special Olympics Track and Field Events at Drake University in Des Moines as one program he is particularly looking forward to. In addition, local Retiree Councils participate in Labor Day parades, golf tournaments, attend professional sporting events together, host holiday dinners for retirees, and do many other things to stay in touch and keep retirees involved.

Another important activity is Meals From the Heartland, where retirees join with many other community volunteers to package meals up to be shipped to needy third-world countries. "We're awfully proud of that, and we're awfully proud of the things we do for (charitable) organizations," Wright said. "We contribute a great deal of money to various causes throughout the year."

Reynolds says that his Local 773 Retiree Council helps to raise money for the Therapy Learning Center in Carterville, IL, which offers services to children living with disabilities. The Retiree Council also hosts a dinner for retirees and does volunteer work for political causes.

And Local Unions can benefit from a strong Retiree Council chapter. Some Retiree Councils assist with maintenance of the union hall, such as yard work or helping clean up after events. And if there is a political issue that will affect the union, retirees can get out and make their voice heard.

"If the local wants a crowded city hall because of a prospective measure that's being taken up, pro or con for the local, the retirees are there in force to help make sure that the local union has a lot of visibility and a lot of influence on local legislation," Wright said. In addition, he said, Retiree Councils can help with phone banking or lobbying on important issues.

For a retiree who is looking to help others by serving in their community, stay informed on how the political process is affecting the Laborers' Union, or just get together with their buddies to catch a game or eat a nice meal, the Retiree Council offers a chance to get involved.

Attention Veterans!

Laborers who served in the military between 1950-1953 are invited to take part in a group trip to Washington, D.C., being planned for Spring 2014 by the Laborers' Midwest Region Veterans' Committee. Flight, lodging and ground transportation costs for each Veteran, plus one guest, will be paid for by the Midwest Region Retirees and Veterans' Committees. If you served between 1950-1953 and are interested in going on this trip, please let us know by calling Melissa Hendricker at the Midwest Regional Office at 217-522-3381.

Share your story!

If you have photos or an article about your Retiree Council activities that you'd like to share in the next newsletter, please contact Melissa Hendricker at msslissa_h@yahoo.com.

Social Security: Switch to Direct Deposit of monthly checks

If you are still receiving your Social Security payment as a paper check through the mail, it's time to switch to direct deposit, where the amount of your payment is automatically transferred into your bank account.

According to CNN, approximately 93% of payments are now being made electronically. However, about 5 million checks are still mailed each month -- representing an additional \$4.6 million in monthly costs, since each mailed check costs 92 cents more than a direct deposit transfer, according to the Treasury Department.

To switch to direct deposit, please visit <http://www.ssa.gov/deposit/>.

Go4Life campaign for fitness in older Americans

Being physically active is vital to maintaining health and independence as we age, and a federal campaign for people 50 and older can help. Introduced by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the *Go4Life* campaign encourages sedentary older adults to reap health benefits by making physical activity part of their daily lives.

The research-based resources of *Go4Life* center on a colorful, interactive website (www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life) providing information and motivation for exercise. The site features specific exercises, success stories, and free materials to motivate growing numbers of older people to start exercising and keep going.

Some specific benefits of exercise for health and aging include:

- Fitness and cardiorespiratory health: In one study, moderately fit women and men had a 50 percent lower risk of type 2 diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease, obesity and some cancers when compared with their low-fit peers. High-fit people obtained additional benefit, typically another 10-15 percent lower risk.
- Reduced pain, better function with osteoarthritis: In a clinical trial of people age 60 and older with knee osteoarthritis, those who participated in an aerobic exercise or resistance exercise program reported less pain and better function than those in the group assigned to a health education program.
- Preventing diabetes: Results from the NIH-sponsored Diabetes Prevention Program, which examines ways to prevent or delay the development of non-insulin-dependent diabetes, found that people over age 60 at high risk for diabetes reduced their risk by 71 percent by adopting a moderate exercise routine and a low-fat diet.