

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The 2018 Steward School has just concluded. While it is impossible to put into words all that transpired for the week, I will try to give you a brief snapshot of the events. Monday afternoon was the charity golf tournament that was sold out completely, thanks to all the participants and the many sponsors. Cathy Blackmore from the Dispatch Office did an outstanding job making sure the event went off without a hitch. Tuesday, **Lincoln Electric** hosted their annual BBQ down at the Training Center for all the early arrivals. Lincoln showed off their latest and greatest equipment and consumables. Wednesday's kickoff was highlighted by special guests: UA Executive Vice President Jim Moss, Director of Pipeline and Gas Distribution David Barnett and UA Attorney Ellen Boardman. They conveyed the message to the membership that we had the #1 pension of all the UA locals, and the #1 health care in the organization. Wednesday evening, the Ladies of 798 held their annual charity basket auction and set a new record of over \$138,000! It was a lively event to say the least and enjoyed by all. Special thanks to Charlsey Fromme and all the ladies and men behind the scenes who built and bought baskets. Thursday was another fun-filled day of interpretations from the contract, and later that evening we honored our retired members with 50+ years of service. **What a remarkable group of men who brought this Local together 69 years ago and have entrusted it into our hands for safe keeping.** The personal highlight for me was being able to give my father, Doyle Hendrix, his 53-year certificate. That night we also had the Pendergraft brothers receive awards: Claude and Harvey received their 50-year certificates; Dewey received his 51-year certificate; and big brother George came in at 58 years! Congratulations to the four of you. Friday concluded the interpretations, and we finished the afternoon back at the Training Center for the crawfish and shrimp boil hosted by **Miller Electric**. Friday night's regular meeting was well attended and concluded the week.

There were so many inspiring moments during the week it would take the whole Blue Light to mention them all, but I do want to mention a couple of good ones. Friday morning, Black Schroeder presented the *Pipeline Etiquette*, and Guy Williams presented the *Standard of Excellence* with a heavy dose of pipeline seasoning. If you did not attend these two presentations, you should mark it on your bucket list as a "must do" for next year. Thank you, Brothers, for your heart-felt sincerity and servitude to Local 798. **I would like to thank President Preston Richard, Inside Guard Chad Williams, and all the volunteers for the entire week.** Without your help, none of this would be possible. I would be amiss if I didn't mention my entire staff inside and outside the hall, PIBF, and the Training Center for all your hard work guaranteeing that the members were catered to for the week. Local 798 Office Manager Josalyn Johnson made sure everything flowed well. Even when I didn't follow the agenda, she stayed cool and calm, never letting anyone see her sweat! Last but certainly not least, a big round of applause to all our vendors who support Local 798 and the Training Center, not just during Steward School but all 365 days of the year: Lincoln Electric, Miller Electric, PFERD, PSS, Mathey Dearman, Darby Equipment, DeWALT and Hypertherm. With your support we continue to supply the industry with trained professionals.

My message for all the attendees at Steward School and the membership receiving this publication is, we must continue to partner with the clients at the various meetings in support of pipeline projects. **It is vital that we exceed the clients' expectations of members advocating through the Action Network.** This plan is working, and we are seeing the fruits of our labor already with more clients wanting to partner with organized labor now, and into the future. **You are in control of your destiny by your actions or inactions.** Don't leave the heavy lifting to others, we must all pull in unison and share the load. Advocate!!!

Bob Kime, PIBF administrator, will be retiring as of June 1 this year, after 48 years of dedicated service. Bob was recognized on stage at the opening session and was awarded Honorary Membership into 798 for his nearly five decades of loyal service to the participants. Congratulations, Bob! We wish you and Suzy all the best as you enter this exciting chapter of your life. Renee Vause, assistant administrator, will

move up to take over Bob's spot and I feel confident that she, too, will do a great job for the members. The pension fund closed out the year at 119.7 % funded and I anticipate that later in the year, we will be calculating some future increases and retiree raises!

The work outlook for the next few years is absolutely amazing, but I want to remind the active membership about keeping safety at the forefront. A large portion of our work will be located in some of the toughest pipeline terrain in the world. I realize that we have worked in these mountains before, but never with such large diameters including hundreds of miles of 42". Be your Brother's and Sister's keeper. If something doesn't look right, immediately speak up. The life you save may be your own. As Always, I am proud to say, ***"I work for you, the greatest pipeliners in the world."***

Fraternally,

Daniel C. Hendrix