

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to begin by thanking everyone who was able to attend our Regional Meeting in Cleveland, OH, because you made it an overwhelming successful event! As an organization we are aware that many of you may not be able to attend the meetings throughout the year in Tulsa, and we are so pleased when we are able to see you and your families. I would like to thank Lincoln Electric for so graciously providing its facilities to host our event, and assisting with sponsorship. The company truly has an impressive manufacturing site, and I hope everyone was able to tour the facility. I want to give a special thank you to Matt Fleming and Lisa Byall for all the hard work that went into organizing our event; they went above and beyond for our members, and I am grateful for the many things they do for our Local throughout the year. Also, I would like to thank the vendors who attended in support of our meeting.

I was humbled to see so many new members who attended the meeting who are prepared to take an active role in advancing our great Local. I would ask each of you to welcome these new members into our 798 family, and demonstrate to them by your actions the importance of taking pride in our work and our Local. Once again, I would like to thank Black Schroeder and Guy Williams, on their Right-of-Way Etiquette and Standard of Excellence presentations. If you have not heard these two speak, please view their presentations on our website. I would like to thank our office staff for all they did to prepare for our Regional Meeting. And, I extend a special thank you to Josalyn Johnson, Tracy Lee, Amber Vreeland, and Dwayne Base for traveling to Cleveland and setting up our off-site office to better serve our membership. I was also thankful to see Terry Langley and Chris Lancaster in attendance. Please continue to remember them as they deal with their health issues.

We recently asked our membership to donate their Voluntary Fund Contributions to the American Red Cross to assist those in need due to Hurricane Harvey, and since that time, two additional hurricanes, Irma and Maria, have devastated parts of Florida and the Caribbean. I am proud to report we recently sent a check in the amount of \$81,782.05 to the American Red Cross to assist those in need due to the recent hurricanes, and I would like to personally thank everyone who gave in the name of our Local. I am proud to part of an organization that is willing to help others in their time of catastrophic loss.

The Board of Trustees met in September and I am pleased to report the Board of Trustees have approved pension increases for our membership:

Welder/Journeyman from \$175.00 to \$190.00 per credit year and Helper from \$116.00 to \$126.00 per credit year. Retirees will get their retroactive 5 percent increases and a thirteenth check in October, with the increases showing on their November 1 payments. This is a testament to the excellent stewardship of our Board of Trustees and to Bob Kime and Renee Vause at the PIBF Office.

I would like to thank Sheila Ledbetter and Jaimee Grisham for their years of service to our membership. Sheila will be retiring at the end of November, and Jaime will be retiring in December. If you have the opportunity, please let them how much you appreciate their dedication to our members. Also, I know many of you are aware that Darrell Turner is retiring at the end of the year. I would personally like to thank him for his many years of service to this great Local in many capacities including Job Steward, Welder Foreman, and Business Agent. He treated others with dignity and respect. He will be missed!

I would like to welcome Dale Crabtree to his new position as Business Agent. Dale has been a UA member in good standing since 1986, and he is a third generation 798 member with a long family tradition of upholding the values of our great Local. Dale has served our membership in many different roles including Welder Foreman, Job Steward, and Inside Guard. I know he will continue to serve our membership with honor and loyalty. Ed Coker will assume the position of Pension Director beginning October 1, 2017. He has been a UA member in good standing for 10 years, and is a second generation 798 member. Ed has served as Job Steward, as a member of the Finance Committee, and as a delegate to the 2016 UA Convention. Please help me welcome Ed to his new position. He will be an asset as he moves forward with his new duties. After thoughtful consideration, Danny and I believe Justin Wallace is the right person to take over my duties as Financial Secretary-Treasurer. He has been a UA member in good standing for 18 years, served as a Job Steward, as a delegate to two UA conventions, and served as the Pension Director for more than five years. I have worked closely with Justin, and attended several financial seminars with him. He has the foundation to oversee the monetary aspects of our Local. In my opinion, he possesses the most important quality needed for the position of Financial Secretary Treasurer: character. I firmly believe he is a man you can trust, and he will have the best interests of this Local in

mind with every decision he makes. Please welcome him as he transitions over to his new position.

In closing, as always, thank you for allowing me to serve this great Local. If I can be of assistance please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Wade Pilgreen
Financial Secretary-Treasurer