

# QUARTERLY UPDATE

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Shopworkers • Cement Masons • Pointers/Cleaners/Caulkers • Concrete Products Specialists

MARCH 2018



Credit: Terry Wong

## Retiree McCarthy Shares How to Preserve History

By Patricia Johnson

John McCarthy's decades of life stretch between England and Minnesota and back more than several times. The BAC Local 1 MN/ND retiree, born and raised in Clevedon, England, came to the United States in 1974. Throughout the next several decades he, his wife Nancy and their two kids would travel "back home" to visit relatives. Primarily, he says, so the kids could spend time with their grandparents.

Today, McCarthy lives in a suburb of St. Paul. His son and daughter and four grandchildren are also Twin Cities' residents. About once a year he'll travel back to England to visit his father, now 99 years old.

His grandfather and father were both born in Wales. His grandfather was a coal miner; his father, a bricklayer, making McCarthy a second generation bricklayer.

"I quit high school when I was 15," McCarthy says. "I wasn't very bright, but I was practical." He spent the next five years as an apprentice laying

*Continued on page 3*

## Icy Winter Build Makes for Warm Memories



See page 6 for complete story and additional photos.

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## Welcome

### OUR NEW MEMBERS

Daniel Andersen  
 Eric Andersen  
 Robert Anderson  
 Micah Aronson  
 Matthew Beck-Weidner  
 Jeremy Berndt  
 Jeffrey Bostic  
 Kevin Brown  
 Micah Byas  
 Hugo Carranza  
 Kevin Dalbello  
 Chad Davidson  
 Richard Foglesong  
 Dallas Foley  
 Nicholas Frisbie  
 Jonathan Halejak  
 Joshua Johnson  
 David Jones  
 John Kaunzner  
 Tobbie Krueger  
 Trevor Maino  
 Alyssa Muller  
 Cody Nett  
 David Patterson  
 Seth Robles  
 Calvin Rohde  
 Brandon Salzbrun  
 Steven Saunders  
 Alexander Schoenberg  
 Troy Shawd  
 Casey Shields  
 Darrin Spearman  
 Otis Tengben  
 Joseph Trcka  
 John Zaffke

# Suicide Awareness and Prevention in the Construction Industry



Suicide rates among building trades workers are a staggering 53.3 percent per 100,000, defining this industry with the second highest rate across all careers. This statistic is more than four times the overall US suicide rate.

#### Risk factors include:

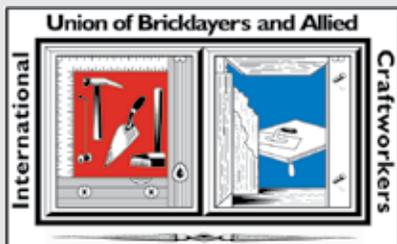
- The existence of the “tough guy” culture coupled with a general reluctance to seek help for mental health issues.
- Construction workers often have easy access to the means of suicide: tools, heights, pills and firearms.
- Sometimes work-injuries can lead to the use of addicting painkillers.
- The nature of construction work can be cyclical with lay-offs and weather-related interruptions.
- The pressure to get the job done, on time and on budget, can lead to chronic stress, coupled with the knowledge that the day-to-day work is dangerous.
- Among 18-29 year olds, suicide is the second leading cause of death (think of the average age of apprentices).
- Some construction workers may have PTSD from military service or from witnessing the injury or death of a co-worker.



Add to those factors a series of life-challenges such as strained marriages and finances coupled with undiagnosed or untreated mental conditions, and the “why” starts to become clear.

The good news is that there are multiple effective treatments for anxiety, depression and addiction, all which may be related to suicide. These include counseling, effective administration of anti-depressant medications and stress interventions. Even exercise and good nutrition can combat mental illness. However, many people do not get counseling help because they are

*Continued on page 10*



**BAC LOCAL 1:** 612-379-2966 **Fax** 612-379-8754

**BAC INTERNATIONAL UNION:** 1-888-880-8222

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** BAC1MN-ND.org

**APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING:** BACtraining.org or phone 763-404-8345

**BENEFITS:** Check the Zenith American Solutions website, zenith-american.com  
 Call 651-256-1801 or 1-800-879-4412

## Vice President Election Rerun is Complete



Doug Schroeder,  
President/  
Secretary/Treasurer

### Officers Start Their New Terms

The appeal of the protested officers election was upheld and the International Union requested a rerun of the vice presidents election with the omitted name replaced in order of nomination. This rerun election was conducted within 60 days of their ruling date of Dec. 13, 2017, as per the constitution.

The results were posted on the website. All nominees and election committee members were notified by mail of the results.

The results are stated in order of their appearance on the ballot:

John Slama	114
Michael Ganz	454
John Herman	130
Rodrick Schmidt	161
Stan Paczynski	250
Eric Vik (Taco)	204
Joe Vanek	199
Michael Churilla	67

The following members will be your new vice presidents for the remainder of the 3-year term through Nov. 30, 2020.

Michael Ganz  
Stan Paczynski  
Eric Vik (Taco)

Congratulations to the three new vice presidents.

### Retiring President Mike Cook

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Michael Cook for his years of service to the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local #1 of Minnesota and North Dakota.

Mr. Cook has helped to establish the HRA program, Prefunding Retirement program, better diversify the Pension Fund, and helped the union to stay afloat during

the recession.

He made cuts when they needed to be made and worked with the management committee to build back up the reserves for the local when the time was right to do so.

We wish you well in your retirement and again, Thank You.

## Retiree McCarthy *Continued from page 1*

brick nine and a half hours a day while attending night school. During his early career he renovated many Victorian homes in England, using hand tools, such as the scutching tools shown in the picture, to replace stones; shaping bricks and stones to the desired shape and size.

In 1967, McCarthy married Nancy, a Minnesotan he met in England, a friend of a friend, and they renovated their first home together, a condemned house, where they lived for about 10 years. From there they started a family and in 1974 the family of four, each with one suitcase, came to the states to be closer to Nancy's family. With a strong background in bricklaying he went on to join BAC Local 1 MN/ND and continued his career.

In 2016, McCarthy brought from England the first scutching tool. The following year he brought his second. The scutch hammer, or chisel, in particular, had great significance in the 1950s and 1960s because it was used to preserve the integrity of the older buildings. The noise and vibration of power tools

would certainly damage the older building structures. The tool had a drove at one end and a comb at the other; designed to cut and groove stone as needed. Today both tools are on display at the BAC Training Center.

McCarthy describes his wife as his "best buddy." They were both avid outdoors people, having his-and- her kayaks and bicycles, swimming in Lake Elmo and the St. Croix River about twice a week, camping, fishing and traveling to England numerous times together. He retired in 2005. Unfortunately last year, his wife of 50 years passed away after a long illness.

Today McCarthy encourages the young guys at BAC to listen to the older guys. "You're going to learn more from those guys than what you learn in school." And with his family spread out between England and the U.S., preserving decades of life through stories and memories, he has two simple words of wisdom, "Be happy."

## 2018 Continuing Education Schedule

All journeyworkers are welcome to attend any course register by calling 763-404-8345 or go online at [www.bactraining.org](http://www.bactraining.org)

Date	Time	Branch Of Trade / Location	Class
3/7 & 3/14/18	4:30 - 8:30 p.m.	All / Metro	CPR/First Aid
Safety Certifications through Minnesota Safety Council that includes 1st Aid, CPR, and AED (use of automated external defibrillator) MUST ATTEND BOTH DAYS.			
3/7/18	4 - 8 p.m.	Tile / Metro	Custom Building Products
3/15/2018	8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Bemidji Area	Flashing & Grout
3/20/2018	4:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Bismarck Area	Silica Awareness/Quality Workmanship
3/26/2018	4:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Duluth Area	Silica Awareness

**Classes to be offered by demand, so reserve your spot early.**

Watch for mailing: Flashing & Grout Upgrades-Bismarck Area April 2018. Date and Time TBD.

### Did you Receive Your Vacation Check for 2017? More than 100 checks are unclaimed

BAC Local 1 MN/ND has more than 100 unclaimed 2017 vacation checks. Please call Zenith American Solutions at 651-256-1801 to make sure you received yours and the office has your current mailing address.

It is extremely important to report any address change to the Local at 612-379-2966 as soon as possible to avoid any delay in benefits which are due you.

### Women Building Success Event

In recognition of Women in the Trades Week, join us on March 7 at Surly Brewing Company 5-8 p.m. for Women Building Success. There will be a short awards program for Apprentice of the Year, Journeyworker of the Year, and Women's Advocate of the Year. Enjoy a night of complimentary appetizers and an opportunity to meet and network with other tradeswomen in the metro area. Tickets are limited so call 763-404-8345 to get your ticket.



### Pre-Apprentic Six-Week Training Programs

On March 5, training will begin for our first 2018 six-week pre-apprentice training programs. The programs will be funded again this year by a Construction Career Readiness Training Grant that was Awarded to the Training Center by the MN Department of Labor & Industry Apprenticeship Division. We will also be providing additional six-week training programs in early June. Refer a friend or family member for any of these programs by contacting the Training Center at 763-404-8345. Your name will automatically be entered into our "Refer a Friend and Win" drawing for cash prizes.



**Don't Miss It!**

Visit [healthandbenefitfair.org](http://healthandbenefitfair.org) to learn more about this highly anticipated educational and fun family-centered event.

**Mark your calendar!**

**April 21, 2018**  
8 am - 2 pm

USbankstadium

# Mike Cook Steps Aside



As most of you know by now, I am no longer the President/Secretary-Treasurer of Local 1 MN/ND. I decided last October not to run again for this position. This year, 2018, I will be a 40-year member of this Local Union. It was time for me to step aside and let some younger members take over.

In May 2010 I took over as president when Jim Lundquist retired. I said to

the staff that one of the main parts of my job was to prepare the staff and officers for my eventual departure. I believe that I have left the Local in good and capable hands.

I had more than 18 years of experience in the field before I made the move to the office in September 1996. I was the first apprenticeship coordinator to be hired and head up our training program on a fulltime basis. Many changes have occurred in that program during the years. We started in the fall of 1996 in an old fire station on Broadway Street in St. Paul. A couple years later we moved to a 10,000-square foot site on Minnehaha Avenue in St. Paul when we were still affiliated with St. Paul Technical College. A few years after that the college decided to drop their affiliation with some of the trades. The Apprenticeship leased the building for a few years and eventually purchased a 22,000-square foot building in New Hope in 2014, where we are still housed today.

The Union office in 1996 had two computers. Both had only one DOS program which the secretaries used to process our membership records and dues. I was asked to purchase a PC computer to help get the office into the new age and the technology boomed from there. The business agents all had pagers. We carried coins so that if we got paged we could find a phone booth and call the office to see what was needed. Anyone seen a phone booth lately? I eventually got a cell phone that was about as big as a shoe box and didn't work very well. Now all of the BA's have computers at their desks on a network and have smart phones that keep them in constant contact with the office and the rest of the staff. Many changes have occurred during these years.

Our benefits have also changed dramatically in the past 20 years. Health care reform and the Affordable Care Act played a big part on how we had to shape our health benefits to stay in compliance with federal law. Many changes were looked upon favorably by the membership while other changes were not. With any change there is always winners and losers. Our goal was always to do what was in the best interest of the

majority of members while keeping the plan's assets safe and following the new rules handed down by the government. I believe that we have done well in that respect. While premiums have increased for the active membership, we have kept them rather steady over the last couple of years. The plan has benefits now that the trustees would never have imagined adding into the plan 15 years ago.

Our defined benefit pension plan remains in good shape and we are still in the green zone. The crash of the stock market in 2008 still has lingering effects on the fund. But we were not hurt as bad as some other funds because of our diversity of investments and how our managers were positioned. Yes, we had to tighten our belts and make changes, everyone did. But we tried to keep the changes modest and protect the assets of the fund. We have made our changes very methodically under the direction of our fund professionals and kept our fund in good shape. Our Local Union Pension Fund now has more than \$370 million in assets.

My term as President/Secretary-Treasurer ended on Nov. 30, 2017. Doug Schroeder began his new term with the rest of his team on Dec. 1, 2017. I remained on staff until Jan. 31, 2018, to help the new team transition. I worked with the new staff to make sure that they understood all of the new responsibilities. We also worked with the auditors as they compiled all of the financial statements and processed the tax returns for 2017 for the Union, the Mutual Relief Fund and the Apprenticeship and Training Fund.

Throughout the years I have held many positions and wore many different hats. I have been a trustee on all of the funds and at one time or another the chairman of most of them. I was a vice president of the Local Union for several years in the early 2000's and the executive vice president for almost six years from 2004 through 2010. From there I accepted the position as the president/secretary-treasurer from May 1, 2010, through Nov. 30, 2017. I helped lead the union through some very tough times. I made tough decisions to cut wages, cut hours for the business agents and staff and cut back on some of the extra things that the union usually did to keep our assets intact and keep as many of the members working as we could when times were bad. Now times are good again. I am leaving with our funds in good shape, our union assets in great shape and our staff in excellent condition.

It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to serve the membership of this union throughout the last 21 years. I thank you all for the opportunity.

## BAC Welcomes New Apprentices

Apprentices were sworn in at holiday banquet held December 11, 2017 at the Prom Center



### St. Paul Winter Carnival Ice Palace

BAC members arrived on January 9 wearing winter outdoor gear ready to tackle the icy project ahead of them – the 2018 St. Paul Winter Carnival Ecolab Ice Palace. The carnival, which ran from Jan. 25- Feb. 10, 2018, offered more than four dozen events and new attractions. Most were free and took place in downtown St. Paul and the Minnesota State Fair grounds. In the midst of all the winter celebration was Super Bowl LII, held at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis on Feb. 4.

Construction began around January 3 on the signature event. The structure required more than 4,500 500-pound ice blocks from Green Lake in Spicer, MN. The total cost reached \$800,000 including harvesting and transporting the ice and construction of the palace.

“We built six ice towers,” says Terry Wong, executive vice president, “the shortest being 26 feet and the tallest, 69 feet and two King Boreas’ ice thrones. We finished



# MEMBER RECOGNITION

Back row (l-r): David Enstad, Calvin Rohde, Julien Shaughnessy, Sean Robinson, Bryce Brahaum, Will Magnuson, Brock Kingsley, Scott Dunn. Middle row (l-r): Matthew Hopkins, Steven Mckinney, Marcel Luckette, Chaz Buchanan, Nathan Willis, Chad Davidson, Mark White, Dominic Peltier, Jayson Moore, Darrell Koffler. Front row (l-r): Chue Xiong, Chris Galmeier, Kevin Brown, Kevin Dalbello, Rick Fink, Sean Eckman, Nicholas Cayeaux, Aaron Syring, James Gunderson, Tom Harrington.



## Reel 'Em In!



Left to right: Bill Powers, Dale Tillman, Chris Berg, John Asproth, Mike Stassen, Stan Paczynski, Barry Buria and Jeff Lieble.

The weather was nice and everyone enjoyed the outdoor fellowship at this year's fishing event held on February 10 at Nichols Lake in Cotton, MN. On shore, people enjoyed a campfire, lunch, and storytelling. Snowmobilers stopped by to join in the refreshing camaraderie. Fishermen received small gifts. Chris Berg won a new ice fishing rod for catching the largest fish. **Mark Feb. 9, 2019, for next year's event!**



the build on January 24 and felt the full effects of a Minnesota winter during that time...all four seasons.” Temps ranged from 45 degrees to 15 below. “One day it snowed one foot and the guys worked 11 hours that day. They all really stepped up to the plate and delivered – from journeyworkers, to apprentices and retirees.”

Wong extends a warm heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who came out to help build this magnificent palace – the third tallest - for all to enjoy: Brody Avery, Jim Baker, Kenny Becklin, Jess Blazing, Ryan Buhr, Roger Burge, Hugo Carranza, Sean Eckman, Rob Frahm, Frank Fundelsland, Mike Ganz, Emilio Garcia, Matt Gauder, Dave Helman, Dick Kentzelman, Mike Mages, Joe Nelson, Kevin Otting, Ruben Perez, Mitch Reins, Rich Riese, Rod Schmidt, Doug Schroeder, Bob Stienbring, Brody Teed, Eric Vik, Pao Vang, Joe Vanek and Nathan Willis. **Beautiful work, everyone!**





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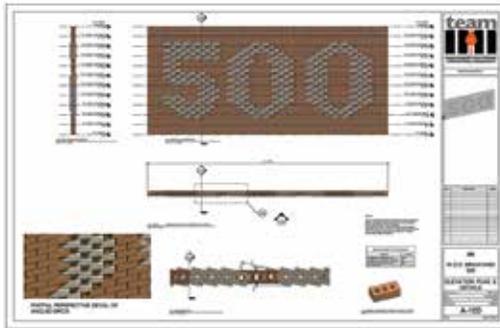
### Imagining the Future of Masonry Design and Construction

#### Key IMI Activity Highlights

IMI Director Mark Swanson creates job opportunities for BAC Local 1 MN/ND members by providing masonry education and consulting to the design and construction community, and promoting masonry and skilled union craftworkers.

#### BIM for Masonry and the Bricklayer 500 Competition at World of Concrete

This January, BAC, IMI, and IMTEF exhibited at World of Concrete in Las Vegas, NV, home of the annual Bricklayer 500 Competition, and created a festive wall to display during the event. IMTEF National Training Director Bob Arnold and Swanson collaborated on the wall's design, which featured rotating brick laid out to form "500," in nod to the competition. Swanson created a virtual mockup in Revit using individual brick units downloaded from the Masonry Unit Database, which was used to plan for the build. Arnold and a team of BAC/IMTEF instructors completed the build on site, including Roger Jones, Dan Flores, Dave Wysocki, and Paul Wooten. The wall was a highlight of the event for attendees and was featured in promotional videos.



#### Recent IMI Seminars

IMI educates architectural and structural engineering firms on how to use masonry aesthetically, structurally, and

efficiently in projects. In January, IMI Consulting Engineer Sam Rubenzer, PE and Swanson presented "What Non-Engineers Need to Know about Structural Masonry" to the BKV Group in Minneapolis.

Additional seminars were held at Architectural Consortium, U+B

Architecture, LSE, and Nelson Rudie Structural Engineers. Swanson also recently met with Paces Lodging Corporation in Fargo to discuss rain screen wall systems.

#### Craftworker Upgrade Programs

Swanson is working with Greater MN/ND Coordinator Dave Malone and Masonry Coordinator John Slama to deliver upgrade programs for BAC members using IMTEF's new curriculum. In January, Swanson and Malone provided Flashing Upgrade Training – consisting of a seminar and demonstration -- to 20 craftworkers in Mankato. In February Swanson and Slama delivered the same program to another 20 journeymen and apprentices at the New Hope Training Center. These programs are critical to advancing the skill sets of members and keeping them up-to-date on new products and installation techniques.



#### Masonry Wednesdays

Masonry Wednesdays occur on the third Wednesday of the month. These events expose the design community to new masonry systems and also create opportunities for suppliers to donate material to the training center for members to train on. The monthly series features IMI invited vendors and special

*Continued on page 10*

Mark Swanson can be reached at [mswanson@imiweb.org](mailto:mswanson@imiweb.org), 612-332-2214 or on his cell at 612-840-8695.

To learn more about the International Masonry Institute, visit [www.imiweb.org](http://www.imiweb.org).

## Masonry *Continued from page 9*



Masonry Wednesdays

guest speakers to the BAC Training Center to present to architects, engineers, and signatory contractors. Meagan Elfert, CSI, from York Flashing presented “Through-Wall Flashing Compatibility, Sustainability and Performance” to more than 80 architects and contractors in January. She discussed new flashing products hitting the market like flexible stainless steel flashing. This was our largest audience to date for the Masonry Wednesday seminar series.

## Training Programs for You

Swanson always advocates using skilled union labor, whose training is unmatched in the construction industry. To learn more about training programs available to BAC members, visit [www.IMTEF.org](http://www.IMTEF.org) and [www.bactraining.org](http://www.bactraining.org). Follow the IMI Minnesota Facebook page for updates on programs offered locally.



## Passings

### DECEASED MEMBERS

We are sorry to report the deaths of these members:

**#1 MN-St. Paul**

James Monzel

**#2 MN-Minneapolis**

Henry Johnson

**#3 MN-Duluth**

Robert Calverley

**#4 MN-St. Cloud**

John Jasken

Alcuin Linn

**#18 MN-Tile**

Robert Mcgregor

Kim Vickroy

## Suicide Awareness *Continued from page 2*

unsure where to go for help or they think they cannot afford counseling. Others are concerned about confidentiality or they think they do not have the time to see a counselor.

**The hard part is making the first call and keeping that first appointment.**

If you recognize a union brother or sister is under stress or in crisis, listen to his/her story and tell that person you are concerned for their well-being. Some indicators are changes in behaviors, dress and/or an increased use of alcohol or drugs. The person may voice the world would be better without him/her or may begin to give away prized possessions. Consult with a counselor at TEAM and urge the person to make an appointment and provide contact information. Assure the person that the counseling is free and confidential. Check in with this person frequently.

The suicide epidemic is a call for change and unions can work to address self-harm and mental health issues. Talking openly about these concerns is the first step. Further education and training can help business agents and apprenticeship instructors recognize warning signs and effectively refer members to TEAM. Include Zero Suicide with the union’s Zero Incident and Zero Injury safety and health program. Learn from each other, share best practices, and know this is a challenging conversation for everyone. Recognize World Suicide Prevention Day and post information about the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) in common areas for workers. Encourage and strengthen the union “buddy system.” Changing the culture of the construction industry starts today.

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# 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please clip the calendar and post it in a convenient spot so it's handy when you want to check meetings and events.



## Chapter 1-Minneapolis-St. Paul

312 Central Ave., Minneapolis:  
4:30 p.m. Mar. 12, May 14, June 11,  
Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Nov. 12  
Envision Catering & Hospitality, 484  
Inwood Ave., Oakdale: All Metro  
members 7 p.m. Dec. 10

## Chapter 3-Duluth-Hibbing-Iron Range

Duluth, Duluth Labor Center:  
5 p.m. Mar. 14, June 13, Sept. 12,  
Dec. 12  
Hibbing, Crown Ballroom: 6 p.m. May 9,  
Aug. 8, Nov. 14

## Chapter 4-St. Cloud-Brainerd

St. Cloud Labor Home: 7 p.m. Mar. 7  
(Wage Allocation meeting),  
May 2, Aug. 1, Nov. 7  
Brainerd American Legion: 7 p.m.  
June 7, Sept. 6, Dec. 6

## Chapter 8-Rochester-Faribault

Rochester, Rochester Eagles Club:  
7 p.m. Mar. 5, Sept. 10, Dec. 3  
Faribault, Eagles Club: 7 p.m.  
May 7, Aug. 6, Nov. 5

## Chapter 11-Mankato-New Ulm

Mankato, Mankato Eagles Club:  
7 p.m. Mar. 1, June 7, Sept. 6,  
Dec. 6  
New Ulm, American Legion:  
7 p.m. Apr. 5 (Wage Allocation meeting)

## Chapter 15-Bemidji and ND

Bemidji, Elks Club: 5 p.m. Mar. 8, May  
10, June 14, Aug. 10, Sept. 13, Nov. 8,  
Dec. 13  
Bismarck, AmVets: 7 p.m. Nov. 13  
Fargo, Dilworth Hi Ho Tavern: 5:30 p.m.  
Sept. 25, Dec. 11  
Fargo, W. Fargo Speedway: 6 p.m.  
Mar. 16  
Fargo Area Meeting, Glyndon Rod &  
Gun Club: 5:30 p.m. June 26  
Grand Forks, E. Grand Forks American  
Legion: 7 p.m., June 27, Sept. 26,  
Dec. 12  
Grand Forks, Speedway: 6 p.m. Mar. 15

Minot VFW: 7 p.m. Mar. 13 (Wage  
Allocation meeting), May 16, Aug. 8,  
Nov. 14

## GOLD CARD DINNERS

Letters will be mailed.

### Metro Area Gold Card Luncheon

Envision Catering & Hospitality, 484  
Inwood Ave., Oakdale: 11 a.m. July 12

### Chapter 3-Duluth-Hibbing-Iron Range

Duluth area: Holiday Inn, 6 p.m. Oct. 12  
Iron Range: Valentini's, 6 p.m. Oct. 13

### Chapter 4-St. Cloud-Brainerd

St. Cloud Eagles Club: 6 p.m. Apr. 7  
Nevis, Bullwinkles: 6 p.m. Apr. 28

### Chapter 8-Rochester-Faribault

Rochester, Rochester's Eagle Club:  
6 p.m. June 1

### Chapter 11-Mankato-New Ulm

Mankato, Mankato Eagles Club:  
6 p.m. Apr. 27

### Chapter 15-Bemidji and ND

Fargo, West Fargo Speedway: 6 p.m.  
Mar. 16  
Grand Forks, Speedway: 6 p.m. Mar. 15

## OTHER EVENTS

**Health Fair**, U.S. Bank Stadium,  
Minneapolis: 8 a.m. April 21

### Retirees Club Breakfast meetings

Jax Cafe, Minneapolis, 9 a.m., Mar. 29,  
June 28, Sept. 27, Dec. 6



### Duluth area Retirees coffee meetings

Miller Hill Mall Perkins, Duluth 9:30 a.m.,  
First Wednesday of each month

### Iron Range Retirees coffee meetings

Sportsman's Cafe, 9 a.m., Hibbing  
Third Monday of each month

### St. Cloud Retirees coffee meetings

Brigittes Café, 9:30 a.m.,  
Third Tuesday of each month

### Executive Committee meeting

312 Central Ave., Minneapolis  
9 a.m. Apr. 6, Oct. 5

### Semiannual Meeting-All of MN and ND

312 Central Ave., Minneapolis  
9 a.m. Apr. 7, Oct. 6

### Chapter 1 Apprenticeship Banquet

6 p.m. Mancini's Char House, June 7



### BAC ATV Ride and Cookout

Stomping Grounds, Akeley July 14  
Ride: 10 a.m., Cookout: 6 p.m.



### BAC Golf Tournament

Pheasant Acres: 7 a.m. July 28

### BAC Training Center

Apprenticeship Orientation Open  
House: 4:30 p.m. Aug. 23

### Chapter 3 Golf Tournament

Grandview Golf Links, Duluth  
8 a.m. Sept. 8

# QUARTERLY UPDATE

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Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers  
Local 1 Minnesota/North Dakota  
312 Central Avenue, Suite 328  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Seven Corners  
Printing to add  
current  
mailing indicia  
and Permit #

Quarterly Update is published four times a year by Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local 1 Minnesota/North Dakota to communicate with its members.

Postmaster: Send address corrections to Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local 1 Minnesota/North Dakota, 312 Central Avenue, Suite 328, Minneapolis, MN. 55414.

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## GOVERNMENT POLITICS: OUR ISSUES

By Bill McCarthy,  
MN AFL-CIO President

### Let's start off with the bad news

For more than 40 years, working people in the U.S. have become increasingly productive and have helped to grow our economy into the largest in the world. Unfortunately, that money hasn't found its way back into the pocketbooks of everyday working women and men. We may be working harder than ever, but wages have not kept up with worker productivity. Since the early 1970s, wages have all but stalled when adjusted for inflation. That means more people working more hours, but still having to stretch every dollar they earn just to support their families.

### The good news is it doesn't have to be this way.

When working people join together in strong unions, they have the power to advocate for a better life for themselves, their families and their communities. Unions have played a critical role in building and protecting the middle class in America. They provide hard working people with economic stability and give them the tools to level the economic playing field.

Negotiation is the best tool working

people have to raise wages; and the more people we have negotiating, the better we'll do. When workers stand together and negotiate with an employer with a united voice, they take home, on average, nearly 14 percent more pay, they're 28 percent more likely to win health insurance and 54 percent more likely to achieve retirement security.

Strong unions also improve the lives of union and nonunion members alike. When union membership is high, entire communities enjoy wages that represent a fair return on their work and greater social and economic mobility. It's no coincidence that as union membership increased in 2017, so did Minnesotans' average wages. Union workers set standards for wages and safety that benefit all working people.

Unfortunately, the mega-wealthy and corporate special interest groups know that when working people join together in unions they are more empowered to fight back against abuse, exploitation and anti-worker policies.

That is the reason why billionaires and corporate CEOs invest millions and millions of dollars to suppress the voices of working people who want the freedom to join a union. We're seeing this at the national level with the upcoming Supreme Court case, Janus v. AFSCME. Janus is the culmination of decades of

attacks on working people by the rich and powerful to rig the economy in their favor. Their goal with Janus is no secret: they want to use the Supreme Court to take away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions, because unions give workers the power to unrig the rules and make our economy fair for working families again.

But, working people's determination and resilience are stronger than any efforts to destroy their aspirations to organize in a union. Momentum has been building for working people during the last few years. People want good jobs, fair trade and rising pay. A powerful majority of Americans support unions, and their popularity is growing. During the past 10 years, according to Gallup, the approval rating of the labor movement has grown from below 50 percent during the Great Recession to about 63 percent last year, and it's climbing. Empowering workers and rewriting the rules of our economy won't be easy, but there has never been a more important time for workers to assert their collective power.

When we join together in union, we win, and our success spreads.

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A STRONG, UNITED VOICE FOR  
MINNESOTA'S WORKING PEOPLE