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The 2018 Steward School is fast approaching, and I would like to encourage everyone to attend. This annual meeting is an important part of our Local's rich history. Not only will you learn about the agreement and our precedents and practices, but you will have the opportunity to spend time with those members you have not seen in a while. I have always looked forward to attending this event and hopefully the membership will share in my enthusiasm by making their reservations after reading this article. If you are going to be a part of this great Local, then actually be a part of it by being in Tulsa April 9th-13th.

I have recently received numerous calls asking about when the work is going to break. All signs are pointing to Spring 2018, with the Mountaineer Express and Mountain Valley receiving their highly sought-after West Virginia and Virginia 401 Water Quality permits. The process has started, and trees are being cleared for pipeline construction. With these two projects we are looking at 460 miles of 36" and 42" pipe that will be kicking off in WV and VA. It also looks like the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (600 miles of 42" in WV, VA and NC) will do some work in 2018, but how much and where will depend on permits being secured for all three states.

I wrote in my last report about how important safety will be in the Northeast in 2018. I have worked on two previous projects where deaths have occurred, both happened on steep hillside jobs and terrain was a factor in each of the incidents. We need to look out for each other and be dedicated to making it home every day the same way we reported to work that morning. Please be focused on safety all day, every day. I will continue to drive this point home throughout 2018, because it is something that weighs heavy on my mind. I have seen the terrain where these lines will be laid; it is no joke, and it must be respected.

In closing, I would like to address those members who are currently or have worked non-union recently. Being a union member involves some sacrifice. Historically, we haven't worked year-round, year in and year out, as we are currently doing. The retired members know this, but some of the younger and newer members set their budget and lifestyle up on working 365 days a year. The unorganized need to work all year because they are working for cut-rate wages with no health benefits or pension.

I have tried to procure some building trades work and have found some of that work for those who would like to work it, but it has been slower this year in comparison with the previous two years. There will be times when the entire oil and gas industry slows down, and jobs become scarce. At last count, I had approximately 1,100 members working in my jurisdiction. It is a huge blessing to have that many folks working in the Northeast in the dead of winter. Times will not always be like this. We need to learn to save our money and not count on the boom times.

If you feel you need to jump back over the fence after you've worked six months or more out of our Local, then I suggest you jump back over there and stay over there. You are not helping the union movement, which is constantly fighting for work conditions and worker's rights in a largely for profit oil and gas industry that could care less about your rights and working conditions. **If you jump back and forth, you are a problem not the solution. The solution is to organize the entire industry. The way to do that is to only work union!**

Pre-Jobs:

Ace Pipeline, Inc.:

-Salem, WV. 15,400' of 20" new-lay. Superintendent: Jeremy Phillips. Welder Foreman: Jason Pitts. Mainline rates: Working 5-10s.

Apex Pipeline Services:

-Elkins, WV. 11 miles of 26" take-up and re-lay for WB Express. Superintendent: Roman McKown. Welder Foreman: Kevin Lancaster. Mainline rates. Working 5-10s.

-Nitro, WV. 5,000' of 36" new-lay and fabrication install for WB Express. Superintendent: Cecil Hill. Welder Foreman: Charlie Thomas. Mainline rates. Working 5-10s.

-Seneca Rocks, WV. 15 miles of 26" take-up and re-lay for WB Express. Superintendent: Dana Keaton. Welder Foreman: Josh Nichols. Mainline rates. Working 5-10s.

Blue Flame Pipeline:

-Smithburg, WV. Additional 3.4 miles of 30" new-lay. Superintendent: Cliff Frymier. Welder Foreman: Matt Harris. Mainline rates. Working 6-10s.

Henkels and McCoy:

-Orangeville, PA. ASR West Diamond Meter Station. Superintendent: Gary Seidel. Welder Foreman: Gary Mullin. Mainline rates. Working 6-10s.

Otis Eastern:

-Milford, PA. 8 miles of 16" install and associated fab. Superintendent: Rod Tyson. Welder Foreman: Ryan Copley. Special Agreement paying High-Scale. Working 6-10s.

Precision Pipeline:

-Mansfield, PA. 10 miles of 16", 12" and 8" steel plus 10 miles of 16" poly. Superintendent: Jim Mallon. Welder Foreman: Luke Bruns. Mainline rates. Working 6-10s.

Price-Gregory International:

-Yorktown Heights, NY. Install approx. 200' of 60" casing for HDD. Superintendent: Buck Hines. Welder Foreman: Jerry Haynes. Mainline Rates. Working 6-10s.

Rockford Corporation:

-Montrose, PA. 4.97 miles of 16" tie-ins (Job taken from non-union contractor). Superintendent: Kevlin Shaw. Welder Foreman: Jesse Davis. Mainline rates. Working 6-10s.