

# LIUNA Midwest Region Retiree E-Newsletter

**Laborer For Life: Once a Laborer, Always a Laborer....A Laborer for Life!**

**April 2018**



Look for the next email news letter in July. To contact us call 800-218-2253 or email [kutter@midwestlaborers.org](mailto:kutter@midwestlaborers.org)

**Dealing with hearing loss** is about so much more than what you may or may not hear. Addressing hearing loss can have a positive effect on your self-confidence, mood, relationships, job performance, income, brain and overall health.

**3 ways that treating hearing loss could help you.**

### **#1 Improve Social Relationships**

A National Council on Aging, Seniors Research Group study found that older adults with untreated hearing loss were less likely to participate in social activities compared to those who wore hearing aids.

### **#2 Increase Earning Potential**

According to a Better Hearing Institute study, Americans with hearing loss earn an average of \$12,000 less per year than individuals without hearing loss.

### **#3 Develop Better Health**

Hearing loss has been linked to cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease and diabetes. Treating hearing loss may help more than just your hearing, which is why it's so important to get a hearing screening.

**You spoke, we listened.** Due to many requests, we are pleased to announce the launch of your "new" email newsletter.

We hope the email newsletter will be a welcome addition to your inbox and encourage you to invite other retirees and those who are not retired, to subscribe.

It is our goal to create a newsletter that contains valuable content that our retirees will appreciate. We chose a quarterly schedule to ensure that our correspondence is never overwhelming and that the content delivered is relevant.

Let us know what you think about the news letter. We want your input and ideas for content. If you have an event, story, topic request, or pictures you want considered for future newsletters, please email us. We welcome any feedback and will strive to improve with each issue.

**Charlie Shempf Retires :** Great Plains Laborers' District Council Business Manager retires after 45 years.



This May, 2018, Charlie will have been with the Laborers' Union for 45 years. He worked his first 25 years "in the ditches," then went on to work for the district council for the next 20 years out of Local 165 in Peoria. "It's been a real privilege to work for all the members out there," said Charlie.

Best wishes to Charlie, and many thanks for his years of service!

## **BENEFITS PLUS**

LIUNA Midwest Region is proud to offer several voluntary purchase products through its Benefits Plus program. The self purchase products are available to members and their families.

**The hearing program available is offered through Amplifon.** Amplifon offers an average savings of 56 percent off all manufacturer retail prices, a two -year supply of free batteries, one year free follow-up care, a 60-day risk-free trial, and a 100 percent money-back guarantee. Visit [www.midwestlaborers.org/health-safety/benefits-plus](http://www.midwestlaborers.org/health-safety/benefits-plus) for more information.

# A Big Thank You!

## LIUNA Retirees Volunteer During National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week

Retirees distributed information at Rest Areas on Friday, April 13th as part of a week long National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week.

The retirees answered questions and provided information to the motoring public as well as let folks know about driving safely through a work zone.



Local 362 members Richard Kellerhals, Gary Leake, and Glenn Arbogast pass out crayons and work zone safety coloring books.



Local 773 members Danny Herila and Rose Bochantin remind drivers "no phones in work zones".



Local 773 members Kenneth Rosson Sr. and Kenneth Rosson Jr. answer questions about the dangers of distracted driving.



Local 773 members James Lindhurst and James Hobbie talk to visitors about slowing down when approaching the work zone and be prepared to stop.



Local 231 members Paul Eggena and Dale Hoyle hand out publications about Work Zone safety.

**"Work Zone Safety: Everyone's Responsibility"**

# Your New Medicare Card & Avoiding Possible Scams



Since the program's beginning, Medicare cards have used a person's Social Security number as part of their claim number. Stamping Medicare cards with this valuable information has become increasingly problematic in the age of identity theft. With about 59 million people currently in the Medicare system, that's a lot of potential victims for criminals and scammers to target.

To deal with this problem, the federal government will spend the next year issuing new Medicare cards. From April 2018 to April 2019, the government will mail all current Medicare participants a new card that replaces the Social

Security number with a brand new Medicare Number. Each new 11-digit Medicare Number will be a unique, randomly generated mix of letters and numbers that will be much more secure.

**Here are the other key facts current Medicare beneficiaries need to know about the transition:** Your benefits and coverage are not changing.

- Both the old card and the new card will be accepted by health care providers until the end of 2019.
- Receiving the new card is automatic and free.
- Doctors will be able to look up your Medicare Number at their offices if you forget to bring your new card.
- Because cards will be mailed out over the next year, your new card might arrive at a different time than a friend's or family member's, especially if they live in a different state.
- When you receive your new card, don't just throw the old one away; shred it, cut it up or destroy it in another way.

The only action you may need to take before receiving your new card is making sure your address is up to date. If you think your address needs to be updated, contact the Social Security Administration at [ssa.gov/myaccount](http://ssa.gov/myaccount) or 1-800-772-1213. TTY users can call 1-800-325-0778.

## Avoiding Scams Related to New Medicare Cards

Unfortunately, there have already been several reports of different scams based around the new Medicare cards. Some scams involve charging a fee for a "temporary card." Other scams involve attempting to "confirm" personal information in order to issue the new Medicare card. In all of them, the goal is the same – to gather personal bank or credit card information or a Social Security number. These are only some of the possible scams out there and more will likely pop up as scammers change their tactics. Fortunately, a few key pieces of information will help you avoid these scams and others like them:

- There's no fee for new Medicare cards. It will arrive in the mail on its own.
- Medicare will not call or email you unless you ask them to; they communicate by regular mail.
- If you are not sure the person contacting you is actually from Medicare, hang up or don't respond.
- Medicare representative will NEVER ask for your personal information over the phone or by email.

If you think you've been the victim of a scam, contact your banking institutions to place holds on your accounts, then report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission at [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov) or by phone at the following number: 1-877-438-4338.



OLDER  
AMERICANS  
MONTH

ENGAGE AT EVERY AGE: MAY 2018



*Call the Local  
Union...join the  
Retiree Council!*

Across the country, older Americans – a rapidly growing population – are taking part in activities that promote wellness and social connection. They are sharing their wisdom and experience with future generations, and they are giving back to their communities. They're working and volunteering, mentoring and learning, leading and engaging.

This year's theme, "Engage at Every Age," emphasizes the importance of being active and involved, no matter where you are in life. You are never too old (or too young) to participate in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotion well-being.

It is becoming more apparent that remaining socially engaged can improve the quality of life for older adults. If you are not engaged in your local union, Older American Month is a good time to reach out to your local union and become involved in your Retiree Council.

### Alcohol and Heart Health: Its Complicated

**The link between moderate alcohol use and heart protection is complicated.** Alcohol is a drug that affects the body in several ways, and each body may react differently.

**If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.** This means an average of one to two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women. (A drink is one 12 oz. beer, 4 oz. of wine, 1.5 oz. of 80-proof spirits, or 1 oz. of 100-proof spirits.)

**Drinking more alcohol increases such dangers** as alcoholism, high blood pressure, obesity, stroke, breast cancer, suicide and accidents.

**Also, it's not possible to predict in which people alcoholism will become a problem.** Given these and other risks, the American Heart Association cautions people NOT to start drinking ... if they do not already drink alcohol. Consult your doctor on the benefits and risks of consuming alcohol in moderation.

### Safety Corner

#### Play It Safe With Dogs

**Dogs bite millions of people, mostly children, each year.** When children come to the house, teach them the boundaries with the family dog:

- ◇ Ask before petting.
- ◇ Don't tease a dog with toys or food.
- ◇ Don't bother the dog if sleeping, eating, injured, growling, or with her puppies.
- ◇ Never make sudden movements toward the dog or yell in a dogs face.
- ◇ Never pull at a dogs collar, ears or tail.

Supervise children at all times around dogs, even friendly dogs.

