

# LIUNA!

## MIDWEST REGION



### Retiree Newsletter - Winter 2022

#### Black History Month

The theme for Black History Month 2022 is Black Health and Wellness where we acknowledge the scholarship and medical contributions of Black American men and women to western Medicine.

James McCune Smith (1813-1865), first Black American to obtain a medical degree. He was also the first Black physician to establish and operate a pharmacy, and the first Black physician to publish articles in U.S. medical journals.

Dr. Rebecca Lee Crumpler (1831-1895), the first Black woman physician in the United States after earning her degree from the New England Female Medical College in Boston.

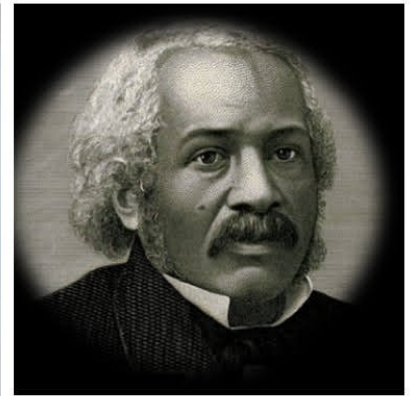
Dr. Daniel Hale Williams (1856-1931) Surgeon and founder of Provident Hospital and Training School for Nurses in Chicago, the first interracial hospital in the US. Dr. Williams also performed one of the world's first successful heart surgeries, saving the life of a man who had been stabbed in the chest.

Dr. Mae Jemison first Black Woman in outer space, astronaut, physician, global health activist and technology entrepreneur.

Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett scientist at the National Institute of Health (NIH), working directly to develop and produce COVID-19 vaccines.

Those are but a few...

As a Union we also hold up the voices of Black Workers across the county as part of Black History Month and remember that LIUNA has always been a leader in lifting up those among us who fight for equality and stand for the working men and women who continue to help build this country.



## Women's History Month

In March we will celebrate Women History Month and acknowledge the achievements of Women throughout history, culture and society. Women in the labor movement have always been and will continue to be our leaders and our backbone. From Mother Jones feeding strikers and leading rallies against child labor laws and unfair contracts and working conditions from 1901 until her death in 1930 to Liz Shuler the current President of the AFL-CIO. The fight for equality in the workplace begins and ends with unions. Our contracts level the playing field for all races and genders.

## RECRUITING



With the passage of the largest infrastructure bill in US History our members will have job opportunities for years to come. It will also require us to expand our list of members. There are estimates that this plan will create thousands of new construction jobs in each state. WE will need everyone's help in finding the brothers and sisters to add to our union ranks.

If you know of anyone interested, anywhere in the country, reach out to them and explain how our union impacted your life. If they are interested direct them to the LIUNA Training web site (<https://www.liunatraining.org/find-training/>) to find their local training center. We can build back better but we will need the skilled men and women of LIUNA to do it.

## MESSAGE FOR LIUNA RETIREES

# POLITICS AND YOUR UNION WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### **Fight for Infrastructure Investment**

From investment in roads, bridges and tunnels to water and energy infrastructure, building our nation creates tens of thousands of good jobs for LIUNA members. A significant number of the construction hours worked by your fellow members work are tied to transportation work.

We must push members of Congress and state leaders to keep our roads and bridges from falling into disrepair and invest in restoring our country's infrastructure. When work hours decline for LIUNA members, it means fewer contributions are made to your pension fund and your brothers and sisters struggle to feed their families.

### **Protect Prevailing Wage Laws**

Prevailing wage laws ensure that taxpayer-funded projects pay local prevailing wages and benefits. Those are the wages and benefits that prevail in your community. That way government projects don't drive down local pay or benefits standards. Without prevailing wage laws, union contractors will struggle and so will proud LIUNA members.

### **Stop So-Called Right-to-Work**

So-called right-to-work laws are part of the conservative agenda to defund unions and stop workers from winning fair wages and benefits. Twenty-eight states have right-to-work laws on the books already and more states are considering the legislation.

With so-called right-to-work, unions are forced to represent members whether they pay dues or not. It's not fair that freeloaders can take advantage of the same wages, benefits and working conditions.

### **Protecting Pensions**

Some members of Congress are pushing proposals that would undermine our union's network of multi-employer pension funds; including increasing the fees paid into the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and new surcharges on contributing employers. Increases in government-imposed fees don't help retirees make ends meet or improve the financial well-being of pension funds. LIUNA is committed to ensuring the retirement security of the hundreds of thousands of LIUNA members and their families who depend on union pensions.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Get involved with your Local Union by participating in meetings and events.**
- **Sign up for email updates from your union by going to [Liuna.org](http://Liuna.org) and joining the LIUNA Action Network.**
- **Contribute to the LIUNA PAC and support candidates that fight for working families. Ask your Local Union for details.**

**LIUNA!**  
*Feel the Power*

[www.liuna.org/retirees](http://www.liuna.org/retirees)

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



## Fraud Alert: FBI Warns Cybercriminals Tampering with QR Codes to Steal Victims Funds



According to the FBI, cybercriminals are replacing legitimate Quick Response (QR) codes with fraudulent codes to steal victims information.

A QR code is a square barcode that you scan on your phone to take you to a website. These codes are used legitimately by businesses such as restaurants and their use has increased since the pandemic.

When you enter a site using a QR code, it is important to practice caution when entering login, personal, or financial information. **Tips to protect yourself:**

- Once you scan a QR code, check the URL to make sure it is the intended site and looks authentic. A malicious domain name may be similar to the intended URL but with typos or a misplaced letter.
- If scanning a physical QR code, ensure the code has not been tampered with, such as with a sticker placed on top of the original code.

- Do not download an app from a QR code. Use your phone's app store for a safer download.
- If you receive an email stating a payment failed from a company you recently made a purchase with and the company states you can only complete the payment through a QR code, call the company to verify. Locate the company's phone number through a trusted site rather than a number provided in the email.
- Do not download a QR code scanner app. This increases your risk of downloading malware onto your device. Most phones have a built-in scanner through the camera app.
- If you receive a QR code that you believe to be from someone you know, reach out to them through a known number or address to verify that the code is from them.
- Avoid making payments through a site navigated to from a QR code. Instead, manually enter a known and trusted URL to complete the payment.

If you believe you have been a victim of stolen funds from a tampered QR code, report the fraud to your local FBI field office at [www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices](https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices).

## Regional Retiree News - In Union There is Strength

### In Memoriam

#### Emma Reynolds

**February 27, 1947 - January 31, 2022**

Emma was married to the love of her life Richard Reynolds, LIUNA National Retiree Council Representative, for 50 years. Emma was active in the union through her husband and accompanied Richard to numerous LIUNA events.



### In Memoriam

#### John Price III - Local Union #773

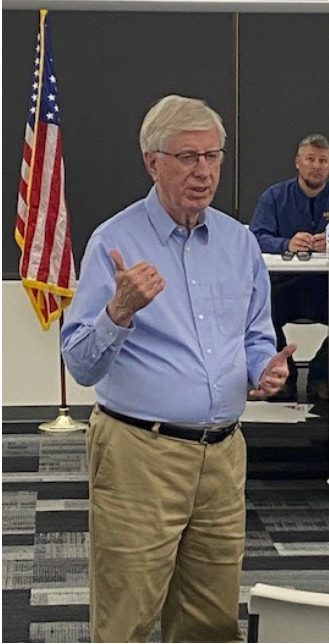
**January 29, 1956 - January 31, 2022**

Retired Local 773 Business Agent and secretary treasurer. John dedicated his life to the working men and women of the Union and The Laborers Charitable Foundation of Local 773. He began working construction in 1976 and served in various positions including business manager, secretary treasurer, representative for Railroad Construction and maintenance, Vice President of 12th District AFL/CIO C.O.P.E. (Community on Political Education), Sergeant at arms for the S&CILDC, and delegate to the LIUNA National Convention until his retirement in 2017. After his retirement John served the Local Union by remaining on the Local 773 Retiree board and later serving as President.



## Regional Retiree News - In Union There is Strength

### Iowa Attorney General Addresses LIUNA Local Union #177 Political Activists



Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller addressed a recent meeting of a number of Local Union #177 most progressive political activists and reminded them of the importance of their continued involvement and engagement within the political and legislative processes in Iowa and throughout our Country.

The Attorney General was presented to the meeting by LIUNA's National Retiree Council Coordinator Bob Wright, a fifty plus year Member of Local Union #177.

Brother Wright praised Attorney General Miller for his support of the Trade Union Movement as a whole and in particular, LIUNA during his decades-long tenure as Attorney General.

Mr. Miller expressed his sincere gratitude for the opportunity of appearing before such a dedicated and enthusiastic gathering.

He personally thanked Business Manager Mike Weckman, President Ritchie Schmidt, Secretary Treasurer, Tom Hayes, and Political Coordinator, Dylan Gramlich for their untiring efforts in behalf of his previous campaigns, as well as their support during his terms in office.

Brother Weckman then noted that Tom Miller now had the honor and distinction of being the longest serving State Attorney General in the history of the United States. Mr. Miller expressed his appreciation for such recognition but urged caution against being overly confident in his forthcoming campaign.

He pointed out that Iowa had recently been and continued to politically be a right-leaning conservative Republican state. "Which is exactly why," he stated "that the political activists at this meeting, Sisters and Brothers, Active Members, S.O.U.L. Members, Retirees and Spouses will provide an integral role in electing worker-friendly, family friendly, and Union friendly Democratic candidates during the mid-term elections in 2022 and the general election in 2024."

The Attorney General was then afforded a long-standing round of applause for his remarks.

He then remained to answer a number of pertinent questions from those activists in attendance.



### LIUNA Local Union #1140 Reconstitutes Retiree Council: Elects New Officers

Under the leadership and with the total support of Business Manager Sam Renshaw, the Local Union #1140, Omaha, NE, Retiree Council has been completely reconstituted and reactivated.



Since its initial formative meeting in late summer of 2021 the attendance of interested and engaged Retirees has steadily increased each successive meeting. The outpouring of support for the Retiree Council was highlighted by the election of officers. In the photograph, Business Manager Sam Renshaw administered the Oath of Office to the newly elected officers including:

President John Blassingame; Vice President Craig Sunderman; Secretary Treasurer Peggy Beacom, and Executive Board Members, Jack Manz, Mike Hoel and Ed Sorenson. Not pictured is Recording Secretary Larry Lewis.

Business Manager Renshaw expressed his gratitude not only to the newly elected officers, but to each of the retirees who had provided critical assistance in the reconstitution of the Retiree Council. He also thanked LIUNA National Retiree Council Coordinator, Bob Wright, for his guidance and support, and recognized Local Union #1140 staff member, Megan Hardy, for her assistance and photographic contributions.

## COVID-19 Over-the-Counter (OTC) Tests & Medicare



**Question: Private insurance covers the cost of up to 8 FDA-authorized rapid tests per member per month. Does Medicare cover OTC COVID-19 tests?**

**Answer: Not yet but they that will change starting early spring.**

Original Medicare does not currently pay for over-the-counter COVID-19 tests, but the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is launching an initiative in early spring 2022 to enable people with Medicare to get up to eight free over-the-counter COVID-19 tests a month.

Right now, Medicare Advantage Plans may cover and pay for over-the-counter COVID-19 tests as a supplemental benefit in addition to covering Medicare Part A and Part B benefits. If you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan, check with the plan to see if it will currently cover and pay for these tests. All Medicare beneficiaries with Part B will be eligible to get eight free over-the-counter COVID-19 tests per month through our new initiative, whether enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan or not.

**Question: When can I get a free, OTC COVID-19 test through my Medicare coverage?**

People with Medicare can access free tests right now through a number of channels.

- Request free over-the-counter tests for home delivery at **covidtests.gov**.
- Access low-to-no-cost COVID-19 tests through community based testing sites. Find a location near you at: <https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/community-based-testing-sites>
- Access a lab based test ordered by your health care professional at no cost through Medicare. In addition to accessing a COVID-19 lab test ordered by a health care professional, people with Medicare can also access one lab-performed test without an order, also without cost sharing, during the public health emergency. Call 1-800-Medicare with questions about where to find a test.

Starting in early spring, people with Medicare will be able to go to eligible pharmacies and other entities that are participating in this initiative to receive over-the-counter COVID-19 tests for free through their Medicare part B coverage. More information about eligible pharmacies and other entities that are participating in this initiative will be available in the early spring.

**Question: Will I need to buy the tests first and then be reimbursed?**

No. Medicare beneficiaries will be able to pick up tests at no cost at the point of sale and without needing to be reimbursed.

**Question: Can my family members get free COVID-19 tests if they don't have Medicare?**

Yes. Every home in the U.S. is eligible to order four free, at-home COVID-19 tests, delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. You can request four at-home tests for home delivery for free at **covidtests.gov**.

For those who have difficulty accessing the internet or need additional support placing an order, you can call 1-800-232-0233 to get help in English, Spanish, and more than 150 other languages. This call-line is open 8 a.m. to midnight ET, 7 days a week. There's also TTY line (1-888-720-7489) to support access by hearing impaired callers.

Source: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-19-over-counter-otc-tests-medicare-frequently-asked-questions.pdf>



## Small Steps For A Healthy Heart



**Want to make some changes to protect your heart but not sure where to start?** You can work with your doctor to make a plan. Your doctor can help by: Checking your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers — and teaching you how to check your numbers at home. Sharing advice for healthy eating and physical activity. Supporting you in other heart-healthy changes, like quitting smoking. Connecting you with specialists to treat heart problems and other conditions. Prescribing medicines if you need them.

Small changes in your eating habits make a big difference in your heart health — and there's no one right way to eat healthy! You can find healthy eating habits that work for you. Try these tips to make heart-healthy changes:

- Eat more fruits and veggies. Make half your plate fruits and veggies at each meal.
- Cut down on sodium. Too much sodium (salt) can raise your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.
- Choose healthier fats. Try using healthier unsaturated fats like fats in olive oil, avocados, and nuts.



**Get on track with healthier eating habits.**

CDC Foundation | Million Hearts



  
**Stay active for your heart health.**

CDC Foundation | Million Hearts

Physical activity is key to a healthy heart. And when you're active, it's easier to keep doing all the things you love — like traveling, seeing friends, and playing with your grandkids. Start with just 5 minutes. If you haven't been active lately, start slow and go at your own pace. Even 5 minutes of activity a day has real health benefits, and you can build up to more over time.

Your “numbers” include: Total cholesterol, HDL (good) cholesterol, LDL (bad) cholesterol, triglyceride, and blood glucose levels, and your blood pressure. Knowing your numbers is an important part of keeping your heart-healthy. It can help you and your doctor know your risks and mark the progress you're making toward a healthier you.



**Knowing your numbers is key to heart health.**

CDC Foundation | Million Hearts



**Talk with family about heart health.**

CDC Foundation | Million Hearts

Show your family how you're taking steps to protect your heart.

- Talk about your family health history.
- Get active together. Family time is a great time to be active!
- Share healthy meals. Mealtimes are a great opportunity to pass on healthy habits. Ask your kids or grandkids to help you shop for healthy ingredients and cook a meal to enjoy with the whole family.

**Learn More at [hearthealthysteps.org](https://hearthealthysteps.org)**

## Stay Physically Active This Winter

According to the US Department of Health & Human Services, adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. But it's winter!

It's cold outside and exercising during the winter months can be challenging, especially as temperatures drop, roads and sidewalks are slippery, and storms prevent outdoor activities.

Want to move more and sit less? Here are 5 tips to help keep you active during the winter months.

1. Explore online exercise videos. You can find many short videos on the internet with exercises for older adults focused on stretching, strength, balance, and many other workout options. Find videos at National Institute on Aging's YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/user/NatlInstituteOnAging](http://www.youtube.com/user/NatlInstituteOnAging)
2. Find an exercise class near you. It can be hard to stay motivated while exercising alone. Find a class that offers different options for activities and provides an opportunity to meet up with friends.
3. Find an indoor community track or Mall and go walking. Moving your regular walks inside for the winter provides a warm, safe, and well-lit environment to keep active.
4. Walk outside when safe to do so. If you do walk outside, winterize your shoes, boots, and assistive devices to help prevent falls on slick, icy surfaces. Add spikeless ice and snow gripper sole covers to



your shoes. Choose winter shoes with rubber soles to help maintain traction. Add an ice gripper cane tip that has spikes on the bottom. These can be purchased online.

5. Do some chores. When bad weather keeps you from going outside, look for ways to be physically active indoors. Housework such as vacuuming, sweeping, or cleaning out closets are all physical activities that get you up and active. Walking up and down stairs in your home can be a great workout too.

No matter what activity you choose, regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do to improve your health. If you are not physically active, it is recommended you consult with your health care provider before you start

## Cozy Beef Stew Recipe (American Heart Association)

### Ingredients

4 lb lean beef roast cut into 1 inch cubes

4 cups baby carrots

4 cups baby red potatoes cut in half

2 medium onions chopped

2 cups chopped celery

1 cup water

1-15oz can no-salt added tomato sauce

2 Tbs brown sugar

1 Tbs plus 1 tsp. quick-cooking tapioca

1 tsp each: pepper, celery salt, dried parsley crushed, dried thyme crushed

Put all ingredients into a slow cooker. Cook, covered, on low for 4 to 6 hours (until veggies are tender).

