

SMWIA LOCAL UNION 28 WELDERS'S UPDATE JUNE 2010

GREETINGS BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Hello and I hope everyone had a good Memorial Day weekend, God Bless Our Fallen Veterans. As you all know we are experiencing some very difficult times in our industry. Many of our members are still working due to their diligence in maintaining their welding certifications and their FDNY Certificates of Fitness (fireguard, torch operator & compressor operator) and of course OSHA related certifications. This is a good thing. Unfortunately we have some members who are calling in desperation when they realize that they let these certifications expire. There is very little we can do other than sign you up for the next available class, but ***we are having some very big problems with the membership in the actual attendance of these classes!!***

On the actual start of the class, the members who have not paid the fees **usually don't show up or show up so late that** they will not be able to properly receive the training and henceforth **are not entitled to get a certificate of completion**. There have even been incidents where members who have paid and not shown up without even the courtesy to call and inform us, we could have gotten another member to attend. **The biggest problem is when we have to contract out for qualified instructors who are not on staff to teach a course set up for 30 members and only 13 show up. This costs Local 28 thousands of dollars that we cannot afford to absorb. You see, the fees we ask for are only a small part of the actual costs.** The International and our Local subsidizes some of it, then the fees we ask for helps pay for the rest.

This happened just recently at the hanging scaffold class that our sister Local 137 **set up specifically for us**. Only 13 members showed up. The ones that had not paid the required fee (17 of 30) were supposed to give the money when the class started. Out of the 17 members that didn't show, only 2 had the courtesy to call, but that was the morning of the class. It was too late to make any adjustments. Local 28 had to absorb the difference caused by the no shows. It cost us over \$3,500.00 for the members who decided not to attend. But this situation is not an isolated one, similar actions have occurred in our night journeyman classes on a regular basis. **WE CANNOT AFFORD THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR. It is costing every member money we cannot afford to waste! That money could have been used for other required training our members need now or in the future!!!**

In the very near future we will have new procedures and requirements for all of our night courses. That information will be published in the newsletter, at the meetings and online at our Local 28 website.

On a happier note, we have been able to set up a "Welders Quick Check" link on our Local 28 website in order for our members to check on their welding certification expiration dates. Go to our website and click on that link and it will send you to the ITI site and click the Quick Check Icon again. It will ask for your IA member number. Enter your number and it will bring up your expiration date. **If you have let it lapsed, it will say that" you have no current certifications". If this happens you will have to RE-CERT.**

Recently we have gotten word that **NYC may** issue their Welding License/Permits through acceptance of our AWS/ITI Certified Welding Program criteria. Let's keep our fingers crossed and hope they see our program in that positive light!! I will keep you posted through the website and at the meetings and of course this newsletter. That's it for now, take care and be safe!

Fraternally,
Robert G. Belluzzi
Welding Program Director/CWI/CWE/NDE