

UNITED ASSOCIATION LOCAL NO. 562



# PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS LOCAL 562



**ESTABLISHED 1912**

COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY THROUGH 2021

# ST. LOUIS & EASTERN MISSOURI PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS LOCAL 562

## FROM BROTHERHOOD TO TRAINING, OUR PAST SHAPED LOCAL 562

On March 7th, 1912, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 562 began its journey with the United Association of Plumbers, Pipefitters & Sprinklerfitters. We all wonder what those earlier years looked like, but one thing is for sure: Those men and, eventually, women started and maintained something that has been extremely beneficial for all of us along the way.

Like most long-standing organizations, history is so important in shaping the way we do business. Local 562 is rich in its history, from leadership, to membership, and wages and fringe benefits. But most important have been the local's ability to change and adapt to each era and its many generations of young men and women that have been a vital part of our organization.

When we take a step back in time, we can observe the local's many different union halls and their unique locations, and we are thankful that each facility was ahead of its time in every era. We can admire the foresight of the local's training facilities.

We can also thank each leader of this organization for having a significant role in shaping Local 562 into what it is today.

So, we must look at the things we have today and remember those men and women that shaped each monumental portion of today's everyday workplace. We look at the most fundamental work habits, which include an 8-hour workday, a 40-hour work week, and overtime pay when we work longer than mandated work hours. These are all things our generation takes for granted.

Safety is another aspect of our history that has made the workplace better for all workers. It was not that long ago that hard hats and safety glasses were not part of every worksite, but now we are blessed with a safety culture that is a No. 1 priority on all jobsites.

For Local 562, training and education has always been a top priority. It is what has made this organization last this long. After decades of training our own workforce, we must thank those generations before us for passing on this key ingredient for success. Each generation took training to a different level, and we now have a tremendous advantage over our competition because of it.

The most important message that has been passed down from generation to generation is the ability to work as a team. We have been taught the importance of brotherhood. This very tool has been the backbone of Local 562. It has made us better workers and better recruiters and, most of all, has brought a true family atmosphere to everything we have and will be accomplishing in the future.

Enjoy the different parts of our history in this look back on how we have been molded into Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 562.

Faternally,



John J. O'Mara, Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer  
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local No. 562, St. Louis



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# THE HISTORY OF U.A. PLUMBERS A PERPETUAL BEA MISSOURI & ITS

# & PIPEFITTERS LOCAL No. 562 CON FOR EASTERN PIPING INDUSTRY

SINCE 1912

*“Permit me to state that Local Union No. 562 is here to stay! The very able support tendered Local No. 562 by (U.A. General President John R.) Alpine, who attended their meeting on the night of March 14, inspired in their members that courage and zeal that will enable them to climb over safely the traps that usually engulf the inexperienced and oft-times engulf the one of real experience.”*

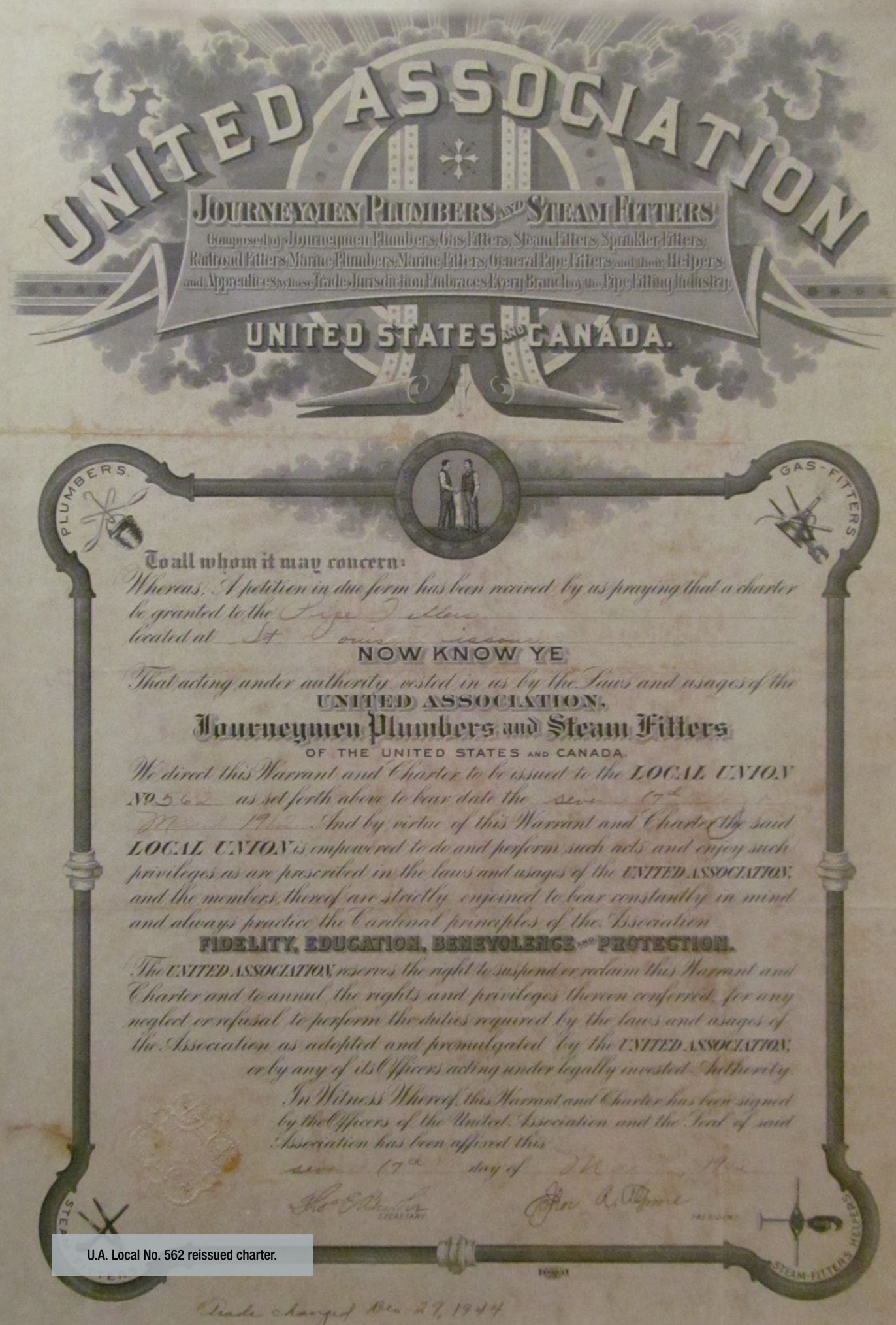
Report of U.A. General Organizer Edward W. Leonard, April 1912 U.A. Journal

**PLUMBERS &  
PIPEFITTERS**  
LOCAL 562

Not long after the United Association of Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers (U.A.) chartered new Steamfitters Local No. 562 in St. Louis on **March 7, 1912**, the International Association of Steam, Hot Water and Power Piping Fitters and Helpers (I.A.) **Local No. 29** of the city drew its battle line in a letter in the May 12, 1912, *St. Louis Star and Times* newspaper. “The Heating and Power Contractors' Association are employing now steamfitters and helpers of the International Association, Local Union No. 29, which they have always employed and will continue to do so in the future,” the local's representatives wrote. “The Journeymen Steamfitters and Helpers, International Association, Local No. 29, have been the only organization representing that trade since the steamfitting trade has been organized, and the rank and file of all other trades recognize them as such.”

By that time, the U.A. (which was dominated by plumbers, gasfitters and sprinklerfitters) and the I.A. (which consisted mostly of steamfitters and pipefitters) had been engaged in an intense rivalry since the U.A. was created in 1889, clashing regularly over jurisdiction. Few steamfitters groups initially participated in the U.A., and no local consisting solely of steamfitter members joined the U.A. for its “Founding Convention” that year while only the steamfitters of Pittsburgh joined the union immediately afterward in May 1890.

As the national conflict neared a tipping point, in early 1912 the Contractors' Association in St. Louis entered into a new, two-year working agreement with Local 29, which had been chartered by the I.A. in 1891 after breaking away from the Knights of Labor in 1888. And while the steamfitters local was no longer affiliated with the **Building Trades Council of**



U.A. Local No. 562 reissued charter.

the City of St. Louis, neither were locals of the carpenters, plasterers, bricklayers, stone-setters, stone and derrick workers, electrical workers, plumbers' laborers, tuck-pointers, hod-carriers, roofers and boilermakers.

However, during its convention held November 28 to December 5, 1910, in St. Louis, the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) had suspended the I.A. because of "repeated violations of the laws of the Department." Specifically, the I.A. had refused to adhere to the "Pittsburgh Decision," which was rendered by the Executive Council of the Building Trades Department in February 1909 to bring a measure of peace between the two rival piping unions by reducing issues over work jurisdiction.

U.A. General Secretary Thomas E. Burke subsequently declared in the January 1911 U.A. *Journal*: "The Building Trades Department recognizes in the U.A. the only bona-fide steamfitters' organization of the Department, and it now becomes our imperative duty to organize steamfitters wherever and whenever such organizations can be performed honorably. This we propose to do without delay."

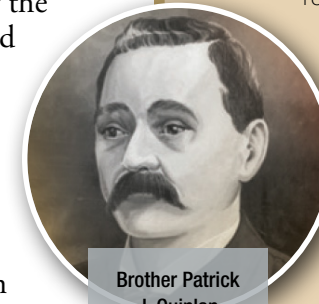
Within St. Louis itself, the city's Building Trades Council unequivocally supported the establishment of a U.A. local. In fact, a letter to U.A. **General Organizer Edward W. Leonard** from Council Secretary James Pendergast plainly spelled out as much: "I desire to inform you that at the regular meeting of the Building Trades Council, held on Wednesday, February 28, 1911, it was voted to give their endorsement to the creation and institution of a local of steamfitters and steamfitters' helpers of the United Association."

### UNRELENTING FOR A SINGLE LOCAL

The U.A. had chartered **Plumbers Local No. 35** in St. Louis way back on June 20, 1890, and true to its word, the union established **Steamfitters Local No. 439** in East St. Louis in August 1911. Just seven months later, the

### U.A. ORGANIZED OVER 130 YEARS AGO

With a general lack of stable, national organizations to represent steamfitters and plumbers at the time, **Patrick J. Quinlan**, a plumber from Boston, sent a letter on April 25, 1889, to **R.A. O'Brien**, a plumber in Washington, D.C., proposing the formation of a new, national pipe-trades union. Subsequently, on October 7, 1889, 40 delegates from 23 piping-trades locals in 10 states and the District of Columbia assembled in Washington for a convention.



Brother Patrick J. Quinlan

Four days later, the **United Association of Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada (U.A.)** was born on October 11, 1889. The U.A. selected Brother Quinlan as its president, Brother Henry Collins of New York City as its vice president and Brother O'Brien as its secretary-treasurer.

Meanwhile, most steamfitters were attempting to sustain their own national union, the National Association of Steam, Hot Water and Power Piping Fitters and Helpers that they had formed in 1888, soon after which it would become the International Association (I.A.). For two decades, however, the two piping unions clashed regularly over jurisdiction – before the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) ordered the I.A. to amalgamate into the U.A. in 1912.

The union endured through two world wars and the Great Depression, after which on January 1, 1947, it changed its name to the **United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada**.

As the nation's two competing piping-trades unions – the United Association and the International Association – battled for supremacy during the early 1900s and into the 1910s, U.A. Local 562's first business representative and former 20-year I.A. member **Brother Robert Williams** pushed for the amalgamation of the I.A. into the U.A. as he felt it was in the "best interests" of the former's member fitters and helpers.



The Railway Exchange Building in downtown St. Louis, for which Local 562 members performed the steamfitting work, under construction in 1914. (Photo courtesy of Missouri Historical Society.)

union staked its claim to the City of St. Louis when it established Local 562 – with the assistance of Local 35 – to represent steamfitters and steamfitter helpers throughout the town and St. Louis County.

After being inaugurated on the evening of March 7, 1912, the fledgling Local 562's first meeting, held on March 14, was attended by U.A. **General President John R. Alpine**, who in his report in the April 1912 U.A. *Journal*, noted, "The meeting was well attended and much enthusiasm prevailed, it being evident that the new local union is destined to be entirely successful." After initiating six new members during that inaugural gathering, he was confident enough to further declare, "I am very well pleased with the outlook in St. Louis, feeling confident that we will be ultimately successful."

That same day it was instituted, Local 562 also signed agreements with two of the largest steamfitting shops in St. Louis, **Hanley & Casey** and **Kauffman Heating and Engineering Company**, to only employ U.A. members. What's more, President Alpine met with "several" steam-heating contractors while in St. Louis, each of whom he believed "will be prolific of favorable results."

Meanwhile, the U.A. and the local worked to "secure a complete amalgamation" with I.A. Local 29, U.A. General Organizer Leonard reported in the April 1912 *Journal*. "Everything that could be given the I.A. local, even to their own defining of the jurisdiction of a steamfitter, was given," he announced. This included proposing I.A. members pay a moderate \$1 "charter fee" that would entitle them to all U.A. "benefits and privileges."

But the I.A. officers and members, as a whole, continued to refuse to amalgamate with their U.A. counterparts in St. Louis, despite the U.A. having drafted a resolution during a March 7 meeting with the **Master Steam and Hot Water Fitters' Association of St. Louis** that stated, "In the event of such amalgamation, this Association pledges to do all in its power to protect all of the rights and privileges now enjoyed by the members of Local 29." General Organizer Leonard further pointed out that "every objection of the I.A. local has been removed by our signed proposals to them."

The decree further stated outright that the contractors' association recommended to Local 29 that it "affiliate and amalgamate" with the U.A. before March 12, 1912. The master steamfitters, "recognizing the fair offers made," as Brother Leonard reported, voted unanimously in favor of the resolution.

The I.A. local still would not concede to the U.A., despite the imploring of Local 562 **Business Agent Robert Williams**, a former 20-year I.A. member, to do so and the employers' refusal to sign any further agreements with



Local 562 first union hall location at 1401 North Grand Avenue, shown circa 1925. (Photo courtesy of Missouri Historical Society.)

Local 29. Undeterred, Local 29 even appealed to the Building Trades Council on March 13 to retract its endorsement of the new U.A. local, but it was to no avail as the Council rejected the request outright.

Subsequently, the Council in May 1912 ordered all trades working on one of the largest buildings in the city to cease work because I.A. steamfitters were employed on the project. "In St. Louis, the scene has changed from one of conference after conference with contractors, builders, owners, etc., to a practical demonstration of sympathy and support of United Association steamfitters by the St. Louis Building Trades Council," General Organizer Leonard described afterwards in the June 1912 *Journal*.

Then on May 9 during "one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings of St. Louis U.A. locals," as reported by the general organizer, Local 562, Local 35, **Gasfitters Local No. 80** and **Sprinklerfitters Local No. 268** unanimously voted not to work on any building in the city on which I.A. members were employed. As a result, the U.A. rapidly gained "fair" employers and

## LOCAL 562 UNION HALLS

**U.A. Pipe Trades Headquarters**  
1401 North Grand Avenue, St. Louis  
1912 into 1916

**U.A. Pipe Trades Headquarters**  
2228 Olive Street, St. Louis  
1916 into 1927

**Hibernian Hall**  
3619 Finney Avenue, St. Louis  
1927 into 1930

**Musician Club Hall**  
3535 West Pine Street, St. Louis  
1930 into 1934

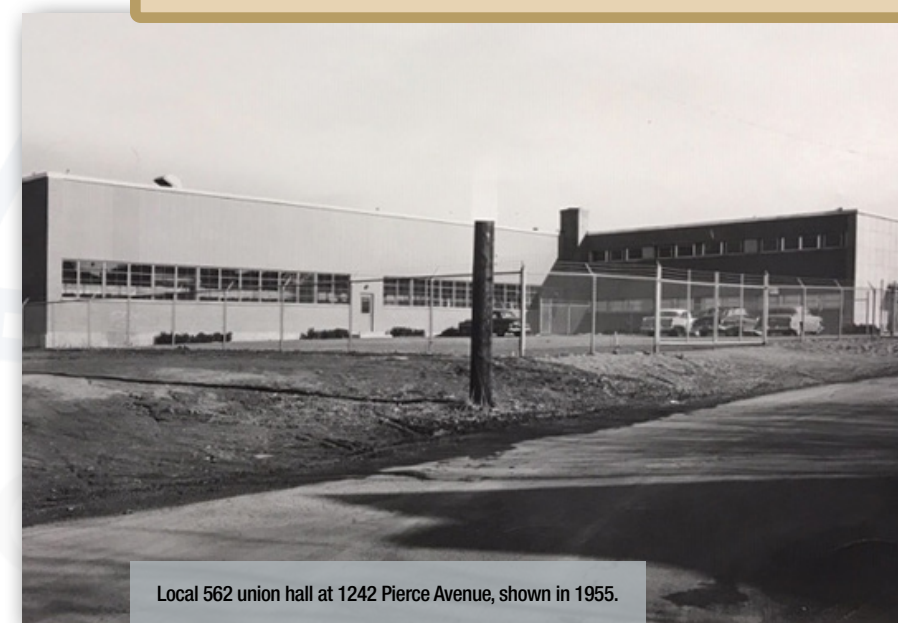
**U.A. Local 562 Union Hall**  
3309 Olive Street, St. Louis  
1934 into 1947

**U.A. Local 562 Union Hall**  
1558 South Vandeventer Avenue, St. Louis  
1947 into 1955

**U.A. Local 562 Union Hall**  
1242 Pierce Avenue, St. Louis  
1955 into 1972

**U.A. Local 562 Union Hall**  
12385 Larimore Road, Spanish Lake  
1972 into 2018

**U.A. Local 562 Union Hall**  
3640 Corporate Trail Drive, Earth City  
2018 to current

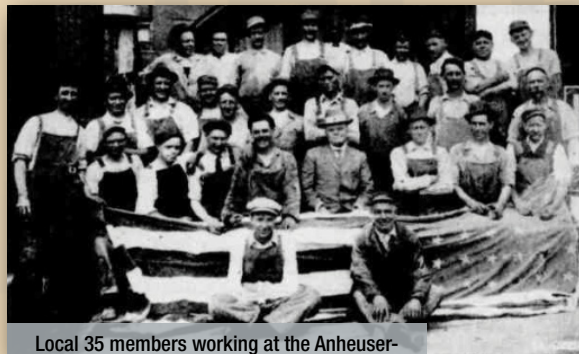


Local 562 union hall at 1242 Pierce Avenue, shown in 1955.

*Continued after next spread.*

# PLUMBERS LOCAL SERVED ST. *CHARTERED IN 1890, U.A. LOCAL No.*

# LOUIS FOR OVER A CENTURY *35 MERGED WITH PIPEFITTERS IN 1999*



Local 35 members working at the Anheuser-Busch brewery in St. Louis in 1917.

In the fall of 1881, a band of plumbers – who would eventually be known as “the solid seven” – formed a local union in St. Louis, which contained nearly 150 plumbers at the time. The group, consisting of brothers Philip Horan, Thomas F. Donahue, Samuel S. Dooly, Jonathan F. Reardon, J. T. Cooney, Jonathan Cunningham and Robert Arnold, enrolled 80 new members at its first meeting, during which it elected Brother Donahue as the local union’s president, Brother William Morrison as its treasurer and Brother P. Ring as its secretary.

Soon after, the local gained membership into the International Association of Steam, Hot Water and Power Piping Fitters and Helpers. However, when that union was in the midst of an internal conflict over its funding of cooperative shops in Milwaukee during a strike by its local there in 1885, the St. Louis local disassociated and became the **St. Louis Journeyman Plumbers Protective and Benefit Association**.

The newly formed United Association of Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters’ Helpers of the United States and Canada (U.A.) invited the St. Louis union plumbers to its first convention in 1889, to which it sent **Brother Robert Simons**. The following year, the St. Louis plumbers were chartered by the U.A. on **June 20, 1890**, as Plumbers Local No. 35.



Local 35 officers Oscar “Bud” Bennett, Jack Comer, Charles LeRoy and Ed Bishop take a stroll on the Atlantic City, New Jersey, boardwalk in 1923 during a break in the United Association convention held there that year.

By 1894, when the U.A. held its convention in St. Louis, Local 35 had thoroughly organized all of the roughly 300 plumbers in the city over which it had full jurisdiction. During the 1930s, the straight-line plumbers local proceeded to organize St. Louis County and surrounding Missouri County areas, while it also received a **U.A. Metal Trades charter** in 1937.

Throughout its history, Local 35 had an at-times contentious relationship with sister U.A. steamfitters and pipefitters Local No. 562, as the two were often engaged in combative jurisdictional disputes and political squabbles. One such dispute in 1956 resulted in a four-day shutdown on construction of the Union Electric Company’s new Meramec power plant, and in early 1963, the two locals explored the idea of merging in order to help suppress their quarreling and create a single, powerful pipe-trades local.

It was not until **January 1, 1999**, however, that Local 35 and Local 562 were consolidated (and subsequently designated as Local 562) after their respective memberships had each voted to merge – at the behest of the U.A. international office. The amalgamation of the 2,200 pipefitters and 1,300 plumbers would also help cut costs, as the training programs and other administration services of the two locals would be combined.

“Initially, nobody was happy about losing their identity,” Local 35 **Business Manager Michael Chumley** told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* at the time. “This change is for the good. (Local 35 members) are behind it 85 to 90 percent.”

## LOCAL 35 BUSINESS MANAGERS

*(Prior to electing its first Business Manager in 1970, the Local 35 Business Agent with the most votes in the local’s elections was the de facto administrative leader of the local.)*

**Leo Flotron**  
1970-1979

**Harry Lierman**  
1979-1985

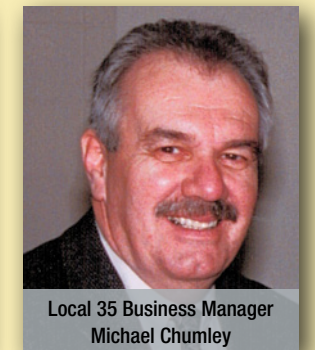
**Donald Summers**  
1985-1998

**Philip Vitello**  
1992-1998

**Michael Chumley**  
1998-1999



Local 35 Business Manager  
Donald Summers



Local 35 Business Manager  
Michael Chumley



Local 35 officers pose together sometime during the 1940s.

## LOCAL 35 UNION HALLS AND TRAINING FACILITIES

Plumbers Local 35 was located in several union halls during its 109-year existence. At first, the local made its home in **Lightstone’s Hall** on the corner of Franklin Avenue and 11 Street in St. Louis. It was later located in the **Carpenters Hall** at Grand and Cousins avenues and the **Italian Fraternal Hall** at Vandeventer Avenue and Olive Street before moving into the **Cement Masons Building** at 5323 Easton Avenue in 1955.

In 1962, Local 35 began construction on its own union hall at **5735 Elizabeth Avenue**, into which it moved the following year. (During construction, the local held its union meetings at the V.F.W. Hall at 1717 South Big Bend Boulevard.) The local was still in that facility when it was merged with Local 562 in 1999.

Local 35 opened its **Journeyman and Apprentice Training School** facility at its union hall in 1967 with 91 apprentices. In 1969, the training area was expanded with the addition of a second story to the original building.

## LOCAL 562 TRADE CLASSIFICATIONS

### Steamfitters and Helpers

1912-1925

### Steamfitters and Gasfitters

1925-1944

### Pipefitters

1945-1947

*(Beginning in 1946, the U.A. dropped individual craft names from locals' charters and issued new charters in three classifications: Building & Construction Trades Division; Metal Trades Division; and Building & Construction & Metal Trades Division.)*

### Building & Construction & Metal Trades Division – Pipefitters

1947-1971

### Building & Metal Trades Division – Pipefitters

1972-1999

### Building & Metal Trades Division – Plumbers and Pipefitters

1999-current

the Local 562 membership likewise grew, approaching nearly 100 “loyal members” early that month. Additionally, some of the shops signed by the local provided an increase in wages for the U.A. steamfitters.

Recognizing that jurisdiction of work was the foundation of its existence, in 1912 the A.F.L. ruled that a single union would represent all of the nation’s pipe trades and declared that the U.A. would be that union. As such, the A.F.L. ordered the I.A. to amalgamate into the U.A., to which the I.A. international office reluctantly agreed.

Still, Local 29 did not submit – and would not do so throughout the balance of the year.

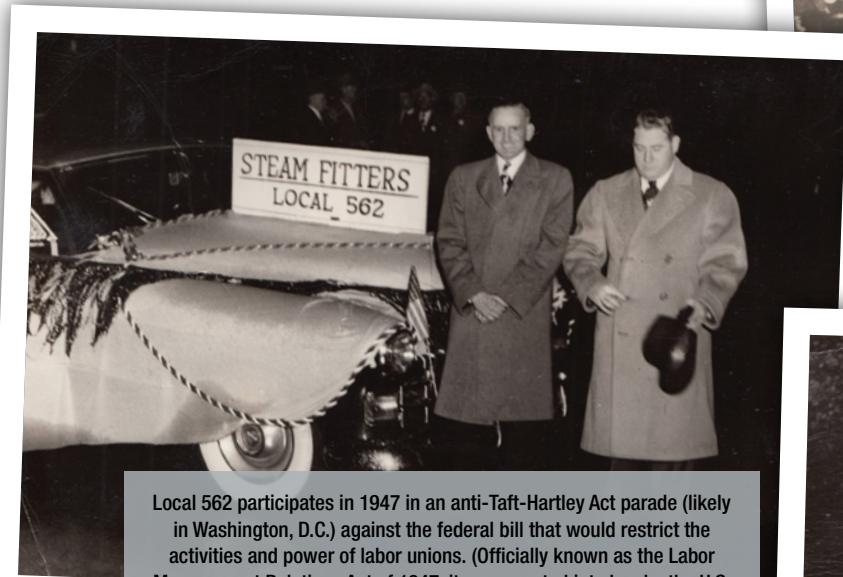
Regardless, Local 562 gained momentum as 1912 progressed, while affiliating with the **Missouri State Federation of Labor** and sending two representatives, Business Representative Williams and **Brother Frank Cod**, to its convention in Sedalia beginning September 16. During the second day of the conference, the Local 35 officers in attendance,

**Brother Arthur Black** and **Brother Gus Reardon**, presented a resolution declaring that I.A. locals would no longer be recognized or entitled to a seat in the state convention, which was adopted the following day “without debate.” U.A. **General Organizer Frank J. Kennedy** reported in the November 1912 *Journal*.

Perhaps almost as significantly, by that time the U.A. local’s members were being employed by steam-heating and ventilating contractor Hanley Casey Company of Chicago on construction of the new **Railway Exchange Building** in downtown St. Louis, despite strong competition for the \$300,000 contract from steamfitting companies affiliated with the I.A. Additionally, all of the plumbing and piping work was being performed by U.A. members for the 21-story high-rise, which would be the tallest in the city when it opened in 1914. *(Once the home of May Department Stores and its Famous-Barr flagship store but vacant since 2013, the 1.2-million-square-foot building in 2020 is the second-largest downtown building by interior area.)*

With nearly all of its almost 250 members out of work after 15 of its 23 contractors broke their agreements, I.A. Steamfitters Local No. 29 met on January 10, 1913, at the American Hotel to consider the latest U.A. merger proposal. Among the provisions of the January 9 “Proposed Plan of Amalgamation” were provisions for clear distinctions between the duties of steamfitters and plumbers and a \$1 initiation fee for I.A. members to be admitted into the U.A.

At long last, Local 29 accepted the plan and agreed to be merged into Local 562, which officially transpired on January 13, 1913. As part of the agreement, I.A. Steamfitters Local No. 55 of East St. Louis, another holdout, was amalgamated with Local 439 under the same provisions.



Local 562 participates in 1947 in an anti-Taft-Hartley Act parade (likely in Washington, D.C.) against the federal bill that would restrict the activities and power of labor unions. (Officially known as the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, it was enacted into law by the U.S. Congress over the veto of President Harry S. Truman on June 23, 1947.)

## STAKING CLAIM TO ITS JURISDICTION

Just as the controversy with the I.A. in St. Louis was coming to an end, the U.A. locals in the area reached their first-ever trade-line agreement on January 9, 1913. Local 562, Local 35, Local 80 and Local 268 of St. Louis; Local 439 and **Plumbers, Gasfitters and Sprinklerfitters Local No. 360** of East St. Louis; and the region’s piping-industry contractors created the pact to help establish standardized wages and working conditions while also instituting work jurisdiction for each local within their respective trades.

Over the ensuing several years, Local 562 fought hard to expand its influence and benefits while at the same time growing its membership. For instance, in May 1914 the local went on strike to enforce the cutting of all pipe of 4-inches and under on jobs, and then that August the local increased its pressure on the city’s many breweries “to get them to employ our members on the work which properly belongs to them,” as reported in the September 1914 *Journal* by U.A. **General Organizer Jason H. Sheehe**, who was assisting in the endeavor.



Meanwhile, Brother Sheehe also took notice of the way in which Local 562 was progressing, which compelled him to further write:

*“This local is to be complimented in the progressive way in which it does its business, and all one has to do is to see the attendance at its meetings and you can readily find the answer of why they are so successful. Simply that all its members take an active interest in the welfare of the local.”*

During that time, major projects on which the local’s members were working included installing the heating system in the new **U.S. post office building** in St. Louis in 1914. **Sodemann Heat and Power Company** employed the union steamfitters on that project.



Local 562 Business Manager Lawrence Callanan (left) meets with U.S. President Harry S. Truman (center) sometime during the late 1940s or early 1950s.

But later that year and throughout 1915 – and the rest of the decade – Local 562 and the U.A. international office regularly worked to settle jurisdictional disputes, often within the breweries with the brewery workers union, with which the piping locals “had been battling for a long time,” according to General Organizer Sheehe in his November 1915 *Journal* report. The brewery workers “insisted on doing work which belongs to the members of our organization,” Brother Sheehe explained, “which we will never concede to any other organization as the American Federation of Labor has repeatedly awarded this work to the members of the United Association.”

The local was also often made to call upon the U.A. during that time to help protect jurisdictional work that was being performed by the operating engineers and their oilers.

By early November 1915, the Local 562 membership had grown to 116 steamfitters and 124 helpers (or apprentices). That year and into 1916, jobs on which many of those members worked in St. Louis included the new **St. Louis Post-Dispatch** newspaper building, the **Orpheum Theater**, the **Luyties Building** on Laclede Avenue and a facility for the Mississippi Valley Steel Company, although in late 1915 and early 1916 the unions pulled their men off of those jobs and others as they protested for union recognition and conditions from several employers in the city.

Local 562 continued to make inroads, however, and by 1916 the local was offering its membership a **Death Benefit** of \$100, which was paid to family members in addition to the U.A. Death Benefit. Additionally, by that time members who were sick for a full month or

more were exempt from paying union dues for the time they were unable to work, as the local advanced the dues to the U.A. headquarters so that sick members would not be suspended from the union.

Also in place was an assessment system for funding the local and the union, by which members paid dues (which were \$1.50 per month at the time) and an additional percentage of their earnings. At that time, steamfitters paid 2 percent of their income and helpers paid 1 percent into the local’s coffers.

The local gained another measure of strength within its jurisdiction on February 1, 1916, when the U.A. merged Local 80 and its gasfitters into Local 562, adding more than 100 fitters to its membership and adding “gasfitters” to its trade classifications. Members of the former Local 80 were provided with the Local 562-level wage scale of \$6 per day after the local negotiated a new contract for its gasfitters on July 1, 1916, with the **Association of Master Plumbers of St. Louis**. Significantly, provisions of that agreement included a pledge by the contractors to only hire Local 562 members or gasfitters through shops that were fair to the union.

As the local continued its fight for better conditions, U.A. **General Organizer John M. Ryan** noted the camaraderie he experienced while attending one of the local’s gatherings in the early fall of 1916, which he described in that October’s *Journal*: “I never saw a more harmonious meeting. A brotherly spirit was predominant among all. Plenty of action going on all the time but in an orderly manner, which reflects with great credit on the officers in charge of our local union.”

But the union steamfitters and gasfitters continued to face outside challenges, most notably from Plumbers Local 35, with which it would continue to regularly clash over jurisdiction for much of the next eight decades. At issue between the two St. Louis

U.A. Gasfitters Local No. 80 of St. Louis, which had been organized and chartered in August or September 1892 with 32 members, was merged into Local 562 effective February 1, 1916, after the Local 80 membership unanimously voted for the amalgamation during a meeting on January 24. The next day, the Local 562 membership likewise unanimously approved of the amalgamation of Local 80’s 30 members, giving Local 562 jurisdiction over gasfitters as well as steamfitters within its jurisdiction.

U.A. locals in late 1916 was work on a job for the **National Chemical Refining Company**, in which antimonial lead pipe for steam coils was installed in most of the refining tanks and required lead burners to complete the job. After several meetings, the U.A. divided the work in a settlement that U.A. General Organizer Kennedy stated in the January 1917 *Journal* was “fair to both locals.”

Recurring jurisdictional clashes between the two locals were highlighted in early 1918 in a dispute over the installation of some piping on construction of the Anheuser-Busch **Bevo Bottling Plant** in St. Louis. (*A non-alcoholic malt beverage similar to beer, Bevo was first brewed by the company in 1916 when alcoholic drinks were prohibited by the U.S. armed forces and would become popular during Prohibition, when beer, wine and distilled liquors were illegal across the nation from 1920 to 1933.*) Unable to get committees consisting of **Brother Palmer Johnson** and **Brother William Francis** from Local 562 and **Brother Arthur Black** and **Brother James Gary** from Local 35 to reach an agreement, General Organizer Sheehe decreed that the work would be divided in accordance with the line agreement reached in early 1913 after the I.A. amalgamated with the U.A.

## ROARING INTO, THROUGH THE ‘20s

Following World War I, which ended in November 1918, Local 562 enjoyed many gains leading up to and during the so-called





Local 562 members and families enjoy the local's annual summer outing on July 25, 1953.

“Roaring Twenties,” during which much of the decade saw dramatic economic growth and social change as well as a boom in construction around the country. St. Louis likewise experienced a growth stage in the 1920s, building new structures and more and better city amenities.

In that setting, Local 562 wages substantially increased, with journeyman steamfitters gaining a raise to \$1 per hour in mid-1919, up from 87-1/2 cents per hour the year before. Membership was also on the rise, surpassing 390 steamfitters, gasfitters and helpers during that final year of the 1910s.

A new, one-year agreement with its employing contractors effective April 1, 1920, raised the pay for the local's roughly 350 journeymen to \$1.25 per hour (or \$10 per day) and the pay for its helpers to \$6 per eight-hour day. The local would enjoy that wage scale for the ensuing three years – although in December 1921 the St. Louis Building Trades Council, citing a stagnation in construction caused by the highest building-trades wage scale in the country, proposed a 20-percent reduction in wages, which the Local 562 membership flatly rejected at a meeting on December 20 by a 210-to-0 vote.

As the decade progressed, many members were employed on significant projects that included a large job at Anheuser-Busch in early

1922. Also that year, members worked on a large job at the **Jefferson Barracks Military Post**, a key U.S. Army installation on the Mississippi River just south of St. Louis in Lemay, Missouri.

Challenges to Local 562's jurisdiction did not subside, however, including those from Steamfitters Local 439. “This has been a very acute situation for a few years past, making it unpleasant for not only the members of both locals but also the employers,” U.A. **General Organizer Richard P. Walsh**, who the U.A. General Executive Board sent in early 1923 to St. Louis to broker a solution, described in his report in the June 1923 *Journal*.

The two locals were able to reach a settlement on May 8 that addressed their respective memberships working in each other's territory. “I am pleased to be able to report that an agreement has been signed by both locals which in the future will eliminate all trouble between them,” General Organizer Walsh announced in the *Journal*.

Shortly after, U.A. **General Organizer E. B. Fitzgerald** visited Local 562 and was subsequently able to provide a favorable outlook on conditions in his report in the June 1923 *Journal*: “Things are going along very nicely in St. Louis at this time and prospects are very promising for the future.”

As such, Local 562 gained a new contract with the **Heating and Power Contractors' Association** that would raise the journeyman steamfitter wage scale from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per hour beginning on October 1, 1923. The pact also increased the pay for helpers to 87-1/2 cents per hour.

Then that November, the U.A. granted Local 562 jurisdiction over a massive power plant being built on the Mississippi River near Grand Tower, Illinois, by the **Central Illinois Public Service Company**. Construction of the \$15-million, 40,000-kilowatt generation station would employ hundreds of workers before it was completed in 1925.

More good news came in March 1924, when the Anheuser-Busch Company agreed to employ only union steamfitters. The brewer also pledged to hire more fitters and at a greater rate of pay than anywhere else in the country.

As Local 562 enjoyed strong employment through the mid-1920s, its administration realized it needed more and better-trained new members as work in its jurisdiction became more abundant and increasingly complex. To that end, in September 1925 the local and its contractors resolved to create a more-formal apprenticeship program, and in July the following year, they formed a committee to establish guidelines for a permanent system of apprenticeship.

Further realizing that its journeyman members likewise needed to expand their skills, in November 1927, the local also asked its steamfitters to enroll in **welding** classes. By December 16, night classes in welding at Beaumont High School were being attended by 48 members.

Meanwhile, the Local 562 membership voted during its general union meeting on November 16 to request a **five-day, 40-hour workweek** from its contractors, with 108 members voting for the elimination of the half-workday on Saturdays and 82 members voting against it. The local's employers agreed in June 1928, and the five-day workweek was instituted on July 1 of that year.

## STAYING STRONG IN TROUBLED TIMES

Along with many union locals across the country, Local 562 and Local 35 felt the debilitating effects of the **Great Depression**, the historic economic disaster and resultant social catastrophe that began with the “Black Tuesday” Wall Street stock-market crash of October 29, 1929. Tragically, hard times gripped the nation's U.A. families as unemployment in the building trades soared while “the worst economic downturn in the history of the industrialized world” put some 15 million Americans out of work and shuttered nearly half the country's banks, according to A&E HISTORY: *Great Depression History*.

*Continued after next spread.*

# LOCAL 562 UNION ADMINISTRATION

Local 562 first instituted the position of Business Manager in 1944, before which the local was administered jointly by Business Agents, Presidents and Financial Secretaries/Treasurers. **Brother Edward Henry served as the local's Acting Business Manager from 1954 into 1961.** The local combined the positions of Financial Secretary/Treasurer and Business Manager in 1994.

## Business Managers



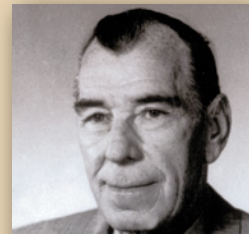
**Lawrence Callanan**  
1944-1954  
1966-1971



**George Seaton**  
1976-1980



**James O'Mara**  
1991-2002



**John "Doc" Lawler Sr.**  
1961-1966



**Harold A. Foley**  
1980-1984



**Michael O'Connell**  
2002-2007



**Edward Steska**  
1971-1972



**John Lawler Jr.**  
1984-1985



**Patrick Kellett**  
2007-2012



**Virgil Walsh**  
1972-1976



**Donald Devitt**  
1986-1991



**John O'Mara**  
2012-current

## Business Agents

**Robert Williams**  
1912-1913

**Joseph J. Sullivan**  
1913-1914

**Walter T. Powell**  
1914-1915

**William W. Francis**  
1916-1918

**Joe O'Connor**  
1918

**James O'Brien**  
1918-1920

**Louis D. Rodgers**  
1920

**M. J. Molloy**  
1920-1925

**M. J. Hickey**  
1925-1929

**E. J. Canty**  
1929-1932

**Thomas Royal**  
1932-1933

**M. Hickey**  
1933-1935

**Al Burns**  
1935-1937

**Edward G. Flynn**  
1937-1942

**P. J. Hickey**  
1942-1943

**Emmet Canty**  
1942

**Lawrence Callanan**  
1943-1944

**Frankie Tighe**  
1943-1945

**Daniel Looney**  
1943-1944

**F. W. Meyers**  
1944-1945

**Art Thompson**  
1945

**Tom Royal**  
1946

**Ray Waites**  
1946

**John "Doc" Lawler Sr.**  
1947-1966

**George Seaton**  
1949-1969

**Edward Henry**  
1952-1954

**Samuel N. Latta Sr.**  
1952-1980

**Daniel Long**  
1952-1954

**Virgil Walsh**  
1963-1972

**Patrick Hickey**  
1969-2004

**Thomas J. Callanan**  
1969-2004

**John Lawler Jr.**  
1966-1980

**George Thompson**  
1969-1976

**Harold A. Foley**  
1970-1976

**Robert McDonald**  
1971-1985

**Robert Kneemiller**  
1975-1976

**James Hickey**  
1976-1981

**Ulys Lane**  
1977-1992

**James O'Mara**  
1980-1991

**Donald Devitt**  
1980-1986

**John Ricks**  
1980-1993

**John Foley**  
1981-1993

**Edward Ramshaw**  
1984-1993

**Jack Kiely**  
1985-1994

**Michael O'Connell**  
1991-1994

**Richard Sullivan**  
1991-1994

**Michael O'Mara**  
1992-2002

**James Lane**  
1992-2007

**Emmett Garner**  
1993-2009

**Richard Kellett**  
1993-2000

**Frank Beller**  
1994-2003

**Andy Rule**  
1994-2002

**Terry Flynn**  
1995-1996

**Daniel Murphy**  
1996-2008

**Michael O'Laughlin**  
1998-2012

**Donald Orf**  
1999-2004

**James Mossinghoff**  
1999-2004

**Philip Bary**  
1999-2004

**John O'Mara**  
2002-2007

**Patrick Kellett**  
2002-2007

**Michael Grady**  
2002-2019

**Mark A. Fohey**  
2004-current

**C. Brian Chumley**  
2004-current

**Michael J. O'Connell III**  
2007-current

**James J. Lane**  
2007-current

**John Reiter**  
2007-2017

**Elmo "Skip" O'Neal**  
2007-2013

**Mark V. Morgan**  
2008-current

**Michael Mulligan**  
2008-2012

**Stephen P. Garner**  
2009-current

**Richard M. Kellett**  
2011-current

**Lawrence F. Baker**  
2017-current

**William J. Dougherty Jr.**  
2018-current

**Charles P. Harr**  
2020-current

**Financial Secretaries/  
Treasurers**

**Robert Williams**  
1912-1913

**John Riegert**  
1913-1916

**Palmer Johnson**  
1916-1919

**Joseph J. Sullivan**  
1919-1929

**M. J. Hickey**  
1929-1932

**Thomas F. Quinn**  
1932-1944

**John Burke**  
1944-1969

**George Seaton**  
1969-1976

**Harold A. Foley**  
1976-1980

**John Lawler Jr.**  
1980-1984

**Donald Devitt**  
1984-1986

**Robert McDonald**  
1986-1991

**John Kiely**  
1991-1994

## Presidents

**J. P. Campbell**  
1914-1918

**John Slevin**  
1919-1926

**J. Eberle**  
1926-1927

**E. J. Campbell**  
1927-1930

**Charles Moore**  
1930-1932

**Jason Burke**  
1932-1934

**E. Rooney**  
1934-1935

**<None elected>**  
1935-1943

**R. Waites**  
1943-1944

**Daniel Long**  
1944-1949

**James Burke**  
1949-1952

**Arthur Thompson**  
1952-1961

**Edward Steska**  
1961-1971

**Harold A. Foley**  
1971-1976

**Patrick Hickey**  
1976-1994

**John Marshall**  
1994-1996

**Michael O'Connell**  
1996-2002

**Daniel Murphy**  
2002-2015

**Brian J. Nichols**  
2015-current



Local 562 officers, members and guests attend the dedication and open house ceremony for the local's new Union Hall facility at 1242 Pierce Avenue in St. Louis on May 15, 1955.

“... Construction all but stopped, and this led to a significant decline in manufacturing,” the *U.A. International History* recounts. “The economies of both (the United States and Canada) spiraled ever downward, until unemployment reached extremely high numbers and workers began to give up altogether.” The history even notes that the *Journal* ran several issues during the early 1930s that offered advice on how members could make their wages go as far as possible, such as growing their own food in their own gardens, but much of the focus was either on calling on the government to take action to help people or on trying to offer some kind of hope and encouragement to the U.A. membership. Yet while membership declined, and no U.A. International conventions were held between 1928 and 1938, “the union held it together.”

By December 1930, Local 562 had been affected by the Depression to the point at which its members voted to provide \$5,000 from the

local's treasury to lend to “brothers in destitute circumstances,” as recorded in December 4 meeting minutes. Any member in need was limited to a \$200 loan, which would be paid back when he was working again.

Meanwhile, the local's employers of the **Heating and Piping Contractors Association** had informed the local that, beginning January 1 of that year, its member contractors would pay the steamfitters with payroll checks instead of currency “due to the general depression.” In the announcement letter, however, the association guaranteed payment of any payroll check issued by one of its members to a member of the local.

Despite the turmoil, work was still available to many Local 562 members. For instance, in July 1930 the local's members were employed at Anheuser-Busch to remove and erect piping that had been installed by non-union steamfitters. Elsewhere, Local 562 steamfitters were working in shifts on construction of

the new arena in late 1931 to give more men opportunities to work; and that year and into 1932, members were being rotated on projects such as the **Normandy School**; the new **Homer G. Phillips Hospital** for blacks; and **Hyde Park, O'Bert's, Columbia, American** and **Carondelet breweries**.

The local also kept up its guard to protect the reduced employment opportunities within its jurisdiction. In doing so, when Anheuser-Busch used non-union workers on a project in 1933, the local during its September 7 general membership meeting that year passed a motion by which any member caught drinking or buying any Anheuser-Busch product would be fined \$25. Soon after, the local removed the brewery from its “unfair list” on November 2.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs also helped put U.A. members back to work in the early- and mid-1930s, as they helped build schools, libraries, public buildings and housing projects under the Public Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration. In and around St. Louis, those projects included the U.S. Court and Custom House from 1933 to 1935; Bayless High School from 1934 to 1935; the Main Post Office from 1935 to 1937; and completion of the Homer G. Phillips Hospital in 1936.

As the local kept its head above water, its membership unanimously voted on September 6, 1934, to rent the building at **3309 Olive Street** to use as a union hall. The new facility would combine the local's offices, meeting space and training labs and classrooms into a single location at which the local would remain until 1947.

The local continued to grow, as well, and by mid-1935, numbered more than 400 member journeyman fitters and apprentices. Work remained relatively steady, too, through the later years of the Depression, highlighted by construction on a stock house at the Anheuser-Busch brewery in 1937 for which pay on work performed after 4:30 p.m. was double the basic wage.

With the Great Depression mercifully nearing its end in 1939 but another world war brewing in Europe and Asia as the turbulent decade neared its conclusion, Local 562 again gained momentum. However, it was the full outbreak of **World War II** and the busy wartime economy of the 1940s that pulled the local, the nation and its unions completely out of the Depression.

At one point in mid-1940, Local 562 consisted of 282 journeyman steamfitters, 54 apprentices, 146 service fitters and 210 pipe



Local 562 members and families enjoy the local's annual summer outing at Holiday Valley Park in Kirkwood, Missouri, on July 23, 1955.



Local 562 members work on construction of the new Meramec Power Plant in south St. Louis sometime during the late 1950s.

fabricators, many of whom were employed on upgrading the coal-fired **Ashley Street Power Plant** in downtown St. Louis in 1940. By January the following year, the local had three shifts of fitters working at the **McDonnell Aircraft Company Curtiss-Wright Plant** at Lambert St. Louis Flying Field, which was undergoing a \$10-million expansion for military production. (*McDonnell Aircraft later merged with the Douglas Aircraft Company to form McDonnell Douglas in 1967.*)

The local's members were also employed in 1941 on construction of the **St. Louis Ordnance Plant**, which when completed in

early 1942 was the world's largest small-arms ammunition plant and would go on to produce 6.7 billion cartridges during the war. In July of that year, the local made a concession to allow for the use of pipe machines on the project to speed up the work.

Following the official entry of the United States into World War II after the Japanese attack on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, the busy wartime economy would keep Local 562 members well-employed during the conflict. Across North America, in fact, U.A. membership during the war swelled from 81,000 in 1941 to 210,000 members, many of whom worked in shipyards, weapons plants, aircraft factories and other facilities to support the war effort.

Undeniably, the skills of the Local 562 membership were invaluable on the homefront to answer the call for war materiel. The *St. Louis Labor Tribune* noted as much in a column in a wartime issue:

*“Since the inception of the defense building program, Local 562 has been in the vein of those unions which provided 100 percent cooperation with the contractors and the government and, as a result, always completed their exacting work on schedule.”*



Local 562 members with more than 45 years of service in the United Association gather during a testimonial dinner in their honor on May 28, 1959.

But while restricting its membership to around 400 journeymen and apprentices, the local was still determined to claim jurisdiction over all pipefitting work in its jurisdiction, which was far more than its membership could manage. As such, the local set up a “B Sub-Local,” an “M Sub-Local,” a “Fabricators Sub-Local” and a “Refrigeration-Service Sub-Local,” all of whose members were required to pay dues and fees but were not permitted to vote in union matters.

In January 1942, when the local ratified a new agreement with Anheuser-Busch, its membership reached nearly 1,000 – and the local would continue to grow rapidly during the war. With those multiple additional workers under its dominion, eventually its treasury “swelled to unprecedented proportions with the collection of various fees and assessments from several thousand workmen employed, at the peak of war-plant construction, in jobs which would have gone to union steamfitters if there had been enough union steamfitters to handle the work,” according to an article in the January 9, 1944, *Post-Dispatch*.

During that time, the local's wage scale also grew to \$15 per day for journeyman steamfitters in November 1943 and \$8 per day for apprentices. Additional major projects on which all members were working into 1944, including “B” and “M” fitters, included expedited **refinery construction** on the city's east side, which was providing ample overtime “which goes with the 10-hour day and seven-day week being worked as these refineries are being rushed to completion,” the *Post-Dispatch* reported.

In October of that year, the U.A. ordered Local 562 to organize **service-fitters** within its jurisdiction, and on October 19 the local passed a motion to change its title from “steamfitters” to “**pipefitters**” to better represent the various piping classifications of its membership (although the U.A. would not approve of the change until January 4, 1945).

## BROTHERS GAVE LIVES IN SECOND WORLD WAR



Among the multiple Local 562 members who have answered the call to serve the country during times of war, **Brother Emery James Carr**, **Brother Marvin Lee Rosa** and **Brother Harold S. Swingler Jr.** each made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II.

A private in the U.S. Army, Brother Rosa was killed in action on the beachhead during the Battle of Anzio, Italy, on May 22, 1944. He was 28 years old.

A captain in the Army and commander of a paratrooper unit, Brother Swingler was killed in action in France on D-Day, June 7, 1944, when Allied forces invaded Europe. He was 26 years old.

A private-first class in the Army, Brother Carr was killed in action on July 14, 1944, while on a mission with the 91 Reconnaissance Squadron in Italy. He was 32 years old.

Then in November 1944, the U.A. gave Local 562 jurisdiction of Rolla, Missouri, further expanding its territory.

## EXCEPTIONAL PROGRESS – AT A COST

For the nearly three decades during and following World War II, Local 562 experienced a period of marked prosperity primarily under **Business Manager Lawrence Callanan** – its first business manager – who ran the local from 1944 to 1954 and again from 1966 to 1971, his administration interrupted by an eight-year prison sentence for union-related racketeering. While he was out of office, the local was administered by an acting business manager, **Brother Edward Henry**, for nearly seven years and then by elected **Business Manager John “Doc” Lawler Sr.** from 1961 until Brother Callanan's reelection in 1966.

During that time, Business Manager Callanan was credited with obtaining a Health and Welfare contribution total increase to the local's wage scale of \$4.67-1/2 per hour

## LOCAL 562 OFFICER WAS MISSOURI'S MOST DECORATED WWII VETERAN

Local 562 Brother Harold A. "Bud" Foley, who served in many offices within the local including business manager from 1980 to 1984, was the most decorated World War II veteran from the State of Missouri. For his actions while serving in the U.S. Army, he received two purple hearts, two bronze stars, seven battle stars, three presidential citations and the Croix de Guerre from France.



Brother Foley was a sergeant assigned to the Army's 197 Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion, which took part in the D-Day Allied invasion of Europe that began on June 6, 1944, landing on Omaha Beach in Normandy, France.

The battalion went on to perform combat missions in the Cherbourg, Northern France, Ardennes Forest, Rhineland and Central Europe campaigns.

One of his battle citations read: "Sergeant Harold A. Foley, for exceptionally meritorious service as a Chief of Section of Battery C, 197 AAA AW Battalion from 1 May 1944 to 9 May 1945. His personal courage and coolness under fire, his outstanding leadership, resourcefulness, initiative and his devotion to duty were an outstanding contribution to the exceptionally high state of morale and combat efficiency of his Battery and Platoon of which his section was a part."

A member of Local 562 for 42 years, having joined the local as an apprentice in 1942 before enlisting in the Army after the United States entered the war the previous December, Brother Foley had been a business agent and secretary-treasurer before passing away in 1984 while serving as business manager. Upon his sudden death, Local 562 President Patrick J. Hickey said of him, "It's hard to find someone more sincere and dedicated to his position as a labor leader. He always tried to improve the quality of life for working people."

(Photos courtesy of the Foley Family, with special assistance from Christine Foley and Judy Ward.)



and total increases for other fringe benefits of \$2.85 per hour. From 1944 to 1971, the local's membership also more than doubled to about 2,000 members.

However, Local 562 was closely scrutinized while being run by Business Manager Callanan until his death on May 2, 1971 (shortly after he and other officers were convicted of making unlawful political contributions). "Under his control, the union was often the target of federal investigations, political scandals and allegations of ties to organized crime," an article in the May 25, 1996, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* later recounted.

But first, back in November 1942, Local 562 seven-term **Business Agent Edward G. "Jerry" Flynn**, the local's ranking official, volunteered to join the U.S. Navy Seabees (the service's Construction Battalions) during World War II and was granted a leave of absence by the local until its next election. A well-known labor leader throughout the area, Brother Flynn was also president of the St. Louis Building and Construction Trades Council and president of the A.F.L. bowling league.

While Brother Flynn was away, Brother Callanan, a former convict who had just become a journeyman steamfitter in the local in January 1942, wrested control of the local from **Brother E. J. Canty**, who had been appointed to fill Brother Flynn's position. Several "former gangsters" who had become involved in the union "when they learned the union had a bulging treasury from wartime work permits estimated at \$500,000" supported Callanan, according to an article in the January 20, 1946, *Post-Dispatch*.

"The gangsters, trading on their reputations as tough gunmen, began carrying union cards and appeared on construction jobs singly or in groups as 'goon squads' to enforce the collection of money for dues and work



Local 562 Brother Ed Langendorf, center, is presented with a radio and \$100 upon his retirement on June 1, 1955 — after having worked with the Anheuser-Busch Company since January 1934 — by (left to right) fellow union members General Foreman J. W. Coughlin, Jim Fairchild, Jack Kavanaugh and Paul Wilhite; company superintendent Ben Schilly; and fellow member Shop Steward Jack Regan.

permits," a January 21, 1946, *Star and Times* article expounded, "and to make certain that rank-and-file members got no rash ideas about talking out of turn."

When Business Manager Callanan learned that Brother Flynn was seeking a discharge from the Seabees and was planning to return to St. Louis in 1945, the local's by-laws were changed at a special meeting, according to the newspaper. The amendment kept Business Manager Callanan and his fellow officers "in control through the war and for a year thereafter," the newspaper reported.

What's more, "The presence of men with long police records at union meetings had the effect of silencing any protests which respectable members might consider voicing," the article continued. "Flynn's friends in the union discussed the 'freeze' in whispers through fear of what might happen to them if they talked openly."

During those first years of the Callanan tenure, the U.A. international office briefly suspended Local 562 in January 1944 after more than 300 "inner circle," "A" members

divided up \$118,000 from the local treasury after its by-laws were amended "to permit slicing of the melon," the January 8, 1944, *St. Louis Star and Times* reported. The money "was piled up in the treasury by fees and assessments paid by members of both the 'inner' and 'outer' circles during the boom period occasioned by local war-plant construction," according to the newspaper.

At the peak of war-plant construction, "when men who had never held a wrench in their hands were getting jobs as steamfitters," the union issued permit cards for 50 cents a day that permitted men to work union steamfitting jobs, according to the January 9, 1944, *Post-Dispatch*.

The U.A. international office ordered the local to stop the practice after only a few months.

After the local's "B" and "M" members protested the scheme, U.A. **International President Martin Durkin** subsequently placed the local under the control of U.A. **International Representative Leslie Dilg**, who ordered the money be returned and converted into war bonds held in the local's name. On January 17, the entire membership unanimously voted to return the funds for war bonds.

Two years later in January 1946, Business Manager Callanan offered to resign from his position after Federal authorities raided the Local 562 offices on January 18 and found a revolver that they later determined was not used in an earlier gang-related killing but arrested Brother Callanan and three other officers on charges of suspicion of possessing stolen property. However, after the charges were settled, the local's membership rejected the resignation during a special meeting on January 25 and "overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with (Callanan's) policies and his conduct," the February 12 *Star and Times* reported.



Local 562 members Jerry Oliver and Joe Weaver install a hydraulic system on a job for the Hanna Mining Company at Pilot Knob, Missouri, sometime in 1965 or 1966.

Despite the occasional internal disturbances, Local 562 made great strides during the balance of the war and throughout the second half of the 1940s. For instance, in early January 1945 when the U.A. approved the local's name to be changed to **"Pipefitters Local No. 562,"** the local was also awarded all of the paint-line work at the Atlas Powder Company's **Weldon Spring Ordnance Works** west of St. Louis that was producing explosives during the war and at the St. Louis Ordnance Plant.

By August of that year, Local 562 journeyman pipefitters were earning \$1.75 per hour. The following year, after the U.A. expanded the local's jurisdiction in January 1946 to include Hannibal, Mexico and Poplar Bluff, Missouri, Local 562 on April 8 won another new contract with the **St. Louis Heating, Piping and Air Conditioning Contractors' Association** for a wage increase of 12-1/2 cents per hour for its approximately 1,500 union pipefitters.

Business Manager Callanan's grasp on Local 562 was reaffirmed in an election on June 29, 1946, when he defeated former Business Agent Flynn by a convincing 721-to-165 vote. While Brother Flynn had asserted that supporters of the business manager had threatened him if he would not withdraw from the election,

according to the July 1 *Star and Times*, Brother Callanan won another four years at the helm – just a few months after he held a special meeting during which the term of the business manager was extended from one to four years.

Firmly in place, the local's administration continued to produce favorable results for its membership. Perhaps most notably, under new contracts with the contractors' association and its approximately 50 contractors, the wage rate for the local's more than 1,300

journeyman pipefitters climbed to \$2.125 per hour on January 1, 1947; then to \$2.25 that August; then to \$2.50 in April 1948.

By 1947, Local 562 had also been representing over the previous 10 years more than 400 members working at the **Midwest Piping & Supply Company**, who were manufacturing pipe fittings and performing other types of non-construction work, and 100 members working at the **Russman Legioner Company**, who were manufacturing refrigeration equipment. Consequently, the U.A. changed the local's charter in early 1947 to read **"Building & Construction & Metal Trades Division."**

As the decade was coming to an end, Local 562 was acutely aware of the need to remain competitive in the construction industry and, as a result, did not seek a raise to its \$2.50-per-hour journeyman rate from its contractors in April 1949 when its contract was about to expire. "The cost of living appears to have reached its top level, and we don't want to price ourselves or the industry out of the market," Business Manager Callanan explained in the April 29, 1949, *Star and Times*. "We advocated the same position last year, but the general trend in the entire building trades at that time was for wage increases."

The local continued to make significant gains on other fronts, however, such as acquiring all copper-pipe work at Anheuser-Busch in April 1949 after a drawn-out battle with the coppersmiths there. Then that October, the local organized pipeline contractors within its jurisdiction, and its new contract with Anheuser-Busch signed that month included the dismantling and installation of all piping "of any description for mechanical purposes."

Before the year was out and the decade was complete, the flourishing local's membership surpassed 2,000 journeymen and apprentices in the various trades it represented.

### SHINING BRIGHT AMID DARK DAYS

Although Local 562 sustained its success into the 1950s, outside forces did not relent in their incursions on the local's jurisdiction. In one particular instance, the local's members working on a building at the **Missouri Portland**

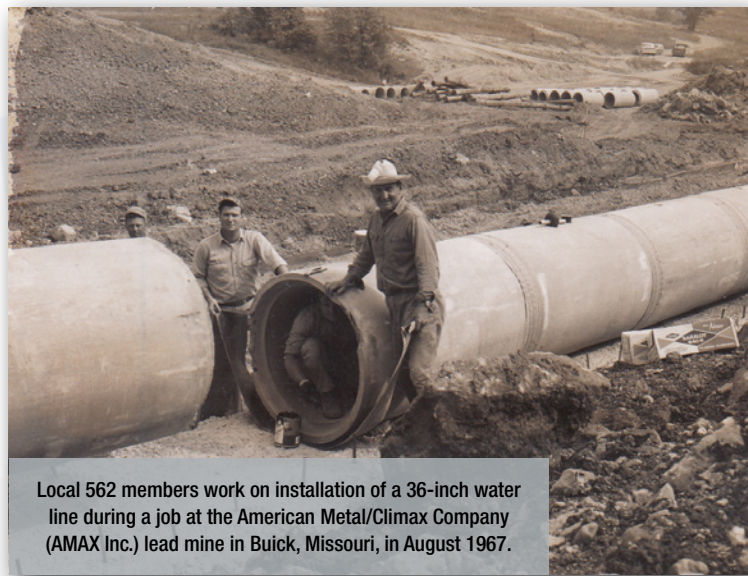
**Cement Company Plant** in St. Louis stopped working and put up a picket line on March 6, 1950, for several hours before a dispute with United Lime, Cement and Gypsum Workers Local No. 110 over installation of a gas pipeline was favorably resolved.

Regardless of the external quarrels, the local's membership remained well-employed throughout the first half of the decade on jobs such as the start of a \$4-million expansion of the Union Electric Company's **Bagnell Dam** on the Osage River, on which 75 of the local's pipefitters were already working by April 1951. The project would add two generators to provide an additional 55,000 kilowatts of capacity to the hydroelectric plant of the dam, which was first put into operation in 1931 and created the Lake of the Ozarks reservoir.

More good news came for the local's membership when they received a raise to the journeyman pay scale to \$2.625 per hour on



Local 562 members working on construction of a gas-line compressor station in Marble Hill, Missouri, for the Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America in 1965.



Local 562 members work on installation of a 36-inch water line during a job at the American Metal/Climax Company (AMAX Inc.) lead mine in Buick, Missouri, in August 1967.

August 14, 1951. However, the local did begin deducting a daily \$1 assessment from each member's paycheck, of which 50 cents per day went into a new, voluntary **Political Fund** to help support candidates and issues favorable to labor, and in October 1951, it also raised its initiation fees for entry into the local from \$150 to \$350.

Then on January 15, 1952, the local's new **Educational and Welfare Fund** to provide medical insurance and a hospital plan as a fringe benefit to members and also finance its training programs went into effect. As part of their collective-bargaining agreement with Local 562, contractors who employ its members would contribute an amount equal to 5 percent of wages paid to the members into the fund, which would be used to train apprentices and provide life insurance, disability pay, and hospital and medical expenses for members and their dependents.

But growing displeasure with the Callanan administration was emerging within the local, with actions such as the political assessment agitating an increasingly more-vocal portion of the membership. What's more, many former convicts had been joining the local, according to an article in the February 26, 1953, *Post-*

*Dispatch*, which also noted, "The ease with which men with prison records can become union members is in decided contrast to the difficulties experienced by ordinary apprentices in attaining credentials entitling them to the \$23-a-day pay of a working steamfitter."

The quasi-rebellion was further stoked when in January 1953 the business manager appointed his brother, Thomas F. Callanan, the former sheriff of St. Louis, as executive director of the Educational and Welfare Fund at a salary of \$150 per week and \$25 for automobile expenses. "Members complained

bitterly that the position ... should have gone to a steamfitter," the February 6, 1953, *Post-Dispatch* reported.

The newspaper article, which was reporting on the February 5 bombing of Thomas Callanan's home, even mentioned that police investigating the incident were "taking into account the recent rapid growth of an insurgent group within the ranks of Local 562." While the black-powder bomb caused relatively minor damage, the newspaper reported, "The high-handed rule by (Business Manager Callanan) ... has caused increasing resentment."

Ten days later on February 15, a "heavier" bomb was planted and exploded outside the business manager's office at the local's union hall at **1558 South Vandeventer Avenue**, although again no one was injured.

In the aftermath, a grand jury opened an investigation into the incidents "to obtain a possible explanation for the bombings," according to the February 17, 1953, *Post-Dispatch*. Ultimately, however, the case involved looking into the local's financial records, which led to the indictment of Business Manager Callanan for conspiring to violate the federal anti-racketeering law by extorting more than

\$28,000 from a Tulsa, Oklahoma, contractor building a pipeline in the St. Louis area, for which he was sentenced on July 19, 1954, to 12 years in prison.

Local 562 business agents **Richard M. Secor**, **William Poster** and **Lawrence A. Thompson** were also found guilty of the same charge and sentenced to 12 years. A fifth defendant and officer of the local, **Carl J. Bianci**, received a 10-year prison sentence in connection with the violations.

During the trial, the local voted to pay an additional 50-cent-per-day assessment from members beginning February 1, 1954, for Business Manager Callanan's defense, which was to be collected "for an indefinite period until the union raises \$50,000 for attorney's fees and an additional amount to be used for appeals in event of convictions," according to the January 21 *Post-Dispatch*. At that time, the local's journeyman pipefitters were earning \$3.05 an hour, plus contractors were contributing an additional 5 percent of wages paid to members of the local into the Educational and Welfare Fund.

With **Brother Edwin Henry** named acting business manager after Brother Callanan was sentenced (he was eventually sent to Leavenworth Federal Prison in 1955), Local 562 enjoyed a strong second half of the decade. Many members were already at work on the \$7.2-million expansion and new terminal of the **Lambert Field Air National Guard Base** that would be completed in 1956 to handle increased commercial traffic. (*The airport would become Lambert-St. Louis International Airport in 1971.*)

Having already received a new, \$3.20-per-hour wage scale for journeymen in May 1954, early the following year the local moved

into its new headquarters in a building at **1242 Pierce Avenue** it had purchased and renovated. The local held a grand opening on May 15, 1955, for the union hall and dedicated the training center it had built into the facility.

Out in the field that year, many Local 562 pipefitters were working on a major renovation project at the **Southwestern Bell Telephone Company** building at 1010 Pine Street in St. Louis by November. Among several other gains, the local signed a new contract with Anheuser-Busch in October 1956 for 12-cent raises each of the coming two years, and in early 1957, work began at the U.S. Army's **Fort Leonard Wood** on the renovation of 128 barracks that would be performed with union labor, including Local 562 members.

Then construction of the **Chrysler Saint Louis Assembly South** plant in Fenton, Missouri, began in February 1958. Work on the first phase of the automobile factory – the South plant would open in 1959 and the North portion in 1966 – provided a large amount of manhours for Local 562 members during the final years of the 1950s and into the 1960s, when the facility would initially produce Dodge Dart, Dodge Lancer and Plymouth Valiant cars.



Local 562 members B. Miller, E. Gaeldis, E. Roe and D. Wiseman work on installation of a ball mill discharge launder at the American Metal/Climax Company (AMAX Inc.) lead mine in Buick, Missouri, circa 1967.

# Local 562 Training and Education

## PREPARING INDUSTRY-BEST PIPING P

## ROFESSIONALS FOR GREATER ST. LOUIS



A Local 562 steamfitters apprentice class at Hadley Vocational School in March 1946. (Photo courtesy of Missouri Historical Society.)

suitable building with educational facilities." The following year, the local introduced its first, formal apprenticeship training program on October 1, 1945, and one month later on November 1, the local allotted \$300 from its treasury to purchase books and literature for apprentice training.

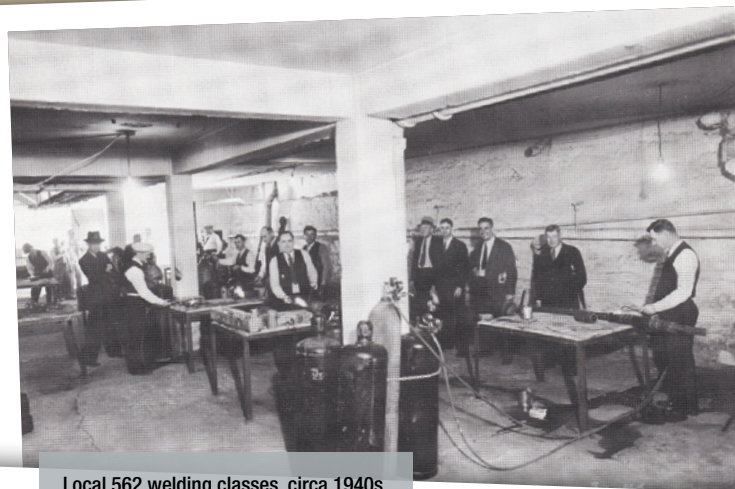
Continuing to hold classes at Hadley Vocational, in 1955 Local 562 and its employers with the St. Louis Mechanical Contractors Association formed the [Pipefitters Welfare Educational Fund](#) and established a [Training Center](#) at the local's new union hall at 1242 Pierce Avenue, which contained small classrooms and welding booths. In January 1960, the apprenticeship program had an enrollment of about 200 students, who attended classes in the evening (as did some journeymen who sought to keep abreast of new equipment and techniques) after working during the day throughout the four-year-long apprenticeship.

Throughout its 109 years, Local 562 has placed a premium on educating and training its membership to be the most qualified piping-industry professionals available. From its very beginning in 1912 in order to prepare its highly skilled workforce, the local instituted the practice of apprenticeship, by which trainees new to the industry work alongside experienced, professional piping journeyman members while earning wages and receiving benefits as they learned.

The local sought to definitively enhance the training of its membership as early as September 1, 1925, when it passed a resolution to discuss with its employers the creation of a formal apprenticeship program. It would not be until July 20, 1926, that three members of the local and three contractors formed a committee "to draft rules for governing a permanent system of apprenticeship."

But it was in 1934 when Local 562 began to truly improve upon its training system when at its September 6 membership meeting it unanimously voted to rent the building at [3309 Olive Street](#) for a combined office, meeting hall and "rooms adjoining for educational purposes." The following month on October 18, the local announced it had formed a class for apprentices at [Hadley Vocational School](#) that would take place on October 22 beginning at 7:30 p.m.

A decade later on March 10, 1944, the local's membership voted to allocate \$90,000 to purchase "a



Local 562 welding classes, circa 1940s.



Local 562 steamfitters apprentice classes in May 1955.



As the local grew and its training program expanded and became a more-structured, five-year-long apprenticeship (although it briefly reverted to four years until returning back to five years in 1984), the local's new complex in [Spanish Lake](#) that opened in 1972 included space for training and classrooms in the basement of its union hall. Two decades later, the local purchased a building at 1084 Kenran Industrial Drive in the nearby suburb of Bellefontaine Neighbors and converted it into its new, state-of-the-art [St. Louis Training Center](#) in 1992.



# Local 562 Training and Education PREPARING INDUSTRY-BEST PIPING P

# ROFESSIONALS FOR GREATER ST. LOUIS



The United Association's National Apprenticeship Committee inspects the Local 562 Training Center in its union hall at 1242 Pierce Avenue in 1959.

Seeking to provide more-convenient training opportunities to its membership in other parts of its jurisdiction, Local 562 opened its [Fulton Training Center](#) at 451 West St. Eunice Road in June 1997. It also opened a second satellite location with its [Cape Girardeau Training Center](#) at 417 North Spring Street.

Within its three training centers and out on various jobsites, Local 562 has continued to provide a superior educational program for apprentice plumbers and pipefitters that integrates technical, on-the-job and academic training. As such, apprentices begin their careers in the construction industry enrolled in a curriculum that teaches the many facets of the plumbing and pipefitting trades – and over the course of five years, they learn their craft from journeymen in the field while also attending formal classroom training that is funded by the local's signatory contractors. Classes provided by the local's training program include general pipefitting; rigging, plumber and pipefitter math; blueprint reading and drafting; pipe fabrication; fiber optics; certified welding; pneumatic controls installation and maintenance; workplace safety; and introduction to supervision.

During their five-year apprenticeship, apprentices are required to complete five years of training, with each year consisting of up to 2,000 hours of paid on-the-job training and a minimum of 216 hours of classroom instruction. After successfully completing the program, apprentices become journeypersons, and they can also earn an Associate's Degree of Applied Science in Apprenticeship Pipefitting with further education.

Meanwhile, journeyman plumber and pipefitter members also attend classes in order to update their licensed skills and learn the newest and most-advanced industry methods. Continuing education and training opportunities are provided to allow journey-level members to advance their knowledge and skills and allow for maintenance of their certifications and licenses.

What's more, all Local 562 welding classes are conducted in association with the National Certified Pipe Welding Bureau, medical gas system classes are approved by the American Medical Gas Institute, and training in refrigerant reclamation is approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through

the United Association. Backflow prevention training is approved by the American Backflow Prevention Association and meets all state water-safety standards.

As always, the training programs are funded by Local 562 and its contractors through their collective bargaining agreement. Importantly, now more than ever, the programs have instituted the highest level of standards for its training, helping the local to produce plumber and pipefitter foremen, journeymen and apprentices with consistently high skill levels and motivation.

## NEW, IMPROVED AND CENTRAL TRAINING FACILITY IN 2021

All three of the local's training centers were fully operational when the local broke ground in November 2018 for a new, ultra-modern, 79,000-square-foot training facility in Earth City on five acres adjacent to the local's new headquarters at 3640 Corporate Trail Drive. Completed in 2021, the training center has 50 welding booths and multiple technology-equipped classrooms for continuing education classes.

The local's 4,500 members and 400 apprentices voted to help pay for the new facility. "It not only shows their commitment to our community but will ensure that future members will have the best training possible in the industry," [Business Manager John O'Mara](#) stated at the time.

During the groundbreaking ceremony held on November 9, Brother O'Mara also pointed out that the local's contractors played a significant role in making the new training center a reality as well. "We couldn't do something like this if we didn't have a contracting group that really knew what training was all about," he said.

United Association [General Secretary-Treasurer Patrick H. Kellett](#), a Local 562 member, thanked the local's members and

retirees, too: "Our retirees set this system up that we all work under, our men and women that work every day out in the field, the organization that we've structured to train our members, to retire with dignity, the great healthcare that you have through the years. We all have a lot of gratitude for the members that set this up before us."

Now fully operational, the new facility offers increased opportunities for men and women who are interested in working within the piping industry to train and learn in one of the preeminent training facilities in the country.

The new Local 562 training center in Earth City under construction in August 2019.



The new Local 562 training center in Earth City under construction in March 2020.



The new Local 562 training center, which opened in 2021.



Local 562 members fabricate a gas header on a jobsite at the Noranda Aluminum Company smelter in New Madrid, Missouri, in February 1970.

## MAKING MORE SUBSTANTIAL GAINS

After work on larger projects such as the Chrysler plant slowed during the early 1960s, many of Local 562's more than 1,700 members found themselves unemployed into 1962, and the local's meeting minutes from March 14 even noted, "15 pages of men out of work." An abundance of smaller jobs and work on new cement plants in the area helped keep the local on its feet until conditions improved.

## TAKING CARE OF RETIRED MEMBERS

The Local 562 Pension Plan was started on January 1, 1960. Jointly administered by the local and the St. Louis Mechanical Contractors Association, the plan's first pension checks were distributed to 75 retired members in a special ceremony on January 5 that year.

By March 13, 1963, the local's Pension Fund contained over \$1 million.

In the local's 108 year in 2020, members are eligible for retirement at age 62, after which they receive two pensions (one from the local and one from the U.A. international office) and comprehensive healthcare. Additionally, spouses of retired members are also covered for life.

During that time, the local also finally held an election for business manager to officially replace the incarcerated Brother Callanan. In 1961, its membership elected Brother Lawler to head the local. He led negotiations for a new contract signed on June 13, 1962, that raised the wage scale for the local's journeymen from \$4.42-1/2 to \$4.62-1/2 per hour.

Several Local 562 members then had the honor of working on construction of **The Gateway Arch** in downtown St. Louis on the west bank of the Mississippi River beginning in February 1963. When completed in October 1965, the 630-foot-tall, stainless-steel monument to the westward expansion of the United States became the world's tallest arch and Missouri's tallest accessible building.

Later that year, however, the Local 562 membership voted, 848-to-9, on June 12, 1963, to go on strike against the **Mechanical Contractors Association of St. Louis** (M.C.A.) after negotiations for a new contract reached an impasse, resulting in an 11-week-long walkout. With the old contract set to expire on June 15, primarily at issue were the local's insistence that its workweek hours be reduced but its weekly paid hours remain the same and its hourly wage rate be increased 75 cents, while the local was also seeking additional benefits and conditions.

After contractors refused to implement a dues check-off system, with which employers check off union dues from members' paychecks, until a new contract was negotiated, the local staged a week-long walkout beginning April 8. While no picket lines were set up during that action, Business Manager Lawler recommended that

the dues check-off system, for which the local was seeking a total 4-percent-of-wages assessment from each member to be used as dues and contributions to the political fund, be negotiated in the next contract.

When last-ditch efforts by federal mediators to negotiate a truce failed, the local went on strike against the association's 30 contractors on June 15. After 74 days, during which independent contractors hired around 200 of the roughly 800 members who were affected by the M.C.A. contract, the lengthy strike ended on August 27, 1963, when Local 562 ratified a new, three-year agreement that provided total wage and benefit raises of \$1.27-1/2 per hour. The new total wage-and-benefit rates, which would range from \$6.20 to \$6.70 per hour over the duration of the contract, gave the local the highest hourly scale of any union in St. Louis, according to an article in the August 28 *Post-Dispatch*.

The pact also included a 2-1/2 percent of wages assessment check-off from members' paychecks, which would be forwarded to the local's treasurer on a regular basis. (Previously, union representatives collected on a daily basis the local's 50-cent assessment and 50-cent political-fund contribution from members working out on their jobs.) The local and the M.C.A. further came to a "gentlemen's agreement," the newspaper reported, by which the association would meet the union's demand that M.C.A. Executive Secretary Ed Stoltz, with whom the local often clashed, be removed as a trustee of the union's pension, educational and welfare funds.

Local 562 also continued to protect its jurisdiction and employment sources, as well. For instance, the local successfully picketed a \$40-million mine construction

## LOCAL 562 WORKED TO INTEGRATE ITSELF

In response to calls for construction-trades locals to train and hire more minorities during the racially charged 1960s and 1970s and having been accused by the N.A.A.C.P. of "barring negroes from membership," according to the February 14, 1966, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Local 562 made several inroads to address the issue. Perhaps most notably, after its apprentice-training program was suspended from O'Fallon Technical High School in mid-1962 following charges that the program's union-management committee had "refused to make its text available to Negroes training at the school" — an accusation the local vehemently denied — Local 562 in early 1966 launched a special, on-the-job training program for black apprentices.

The local hired former St. Louis City Alderman William L. Clay to coordinate the program, which initially involved 10 trainees. The men were required to attend classes two nights a week and worked on St. Louis area projects such as the Chrysler building in Fenton and the Mansion House while receiving journeyman's pay of \$4.92-1/2 an hour. At the end of the six-month training period, they were eligible for union membership.

After the Congress of Racial Equality had worked with the local to establish the program, Woodrow Zenfell, who was area coordinator of that federal equal-employment-opportunities program (and had also served as the government engineer in charge of building the St. Louis Gateway Arch in 1960), told the *Post-Dispatch* that he felt the effort was "a tremendous breakthrough in providing equal employment opportunities for all citizens in the construction industry." He went on to say that he felt that "the impact of the program would go far beyond St. Louis."

By October 1968, Local 562 had about 30 black journeyman members who were making more than \$13,000 a year as steamfitters in St. Louis, according to the October 22 *Post-Dispatch*. Before it hired Brother Clay, the local had no black members, the newspaper reported.

But as racial disparity persisted, Local 562 and the Mechanical Contractors Association of St. Louis devised a new minority group hiring plan in March 1972 that was endorsed by the city's Urban League. At the time, only 20 of the local's nearly 2,100 members were black, and a year earlier, the local had been one of six locals sued because they had not voluntarily joined the St. Louis Plan, a program to increase minority membership in construction unions.

Under the new Local 562 hiring program, a 20-member apprentice training class would be immediately organized and at least 50 percent of its new trainees would be black. In addition, at least 20 percent of all new Local 562 journeyman pipefitters, who were needed to fill future vacancies because of attrition and a construction-industry "boom," would be "chosen from minority-group members," according to a report in the March 29, 1972, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

As the local continued to work to provide membership opportunities to minorities, by 1990, about 15 percent of the local's 1,300 active members were black.



Local 562 Brother John Lane is assisted into his diving suit for a dive to work on an underwater inlet structure during construction of the New Madrid Power Plant in New Madrid, Missouri, in 1970.

job for the Meramec Mining Company in Pea Ridge, Missouri, for 19 days beginning August 20, 1963, after members of the laborers union were initially being used on construction of a water line. The contractor for the job awarded the work to the steamfitters following a meeting between officials of both unions and the employers – which the laborers’ representative failed to attend.

A significant construction boom within its region beginning that year essentially put every available Local 562 member to work throughout the mid-1960s, by which time the pipefitting industry in the local’s jurisdiction was virtually fully unionized. The manhours available for members were so substantial, in fact, that in November 1965 the local presented families of about 1,100 members each with a \$250 “Christmas gift” in lieu of vacations, as the shortage of building mechanics in eastern Missouri during the boom often forced the pipefitters to work overtime and left little free time for breaks. Trustees approved the \$275,000 total expenditure be taken from the local’s welfare fund, into which employers were contributing part of the \$1.27-1/2 per hour worked they paid into the local’s benefits funds as part of the wage package negotiated in 1963.

Among the more noteworthy projects on which the local’s members were employed that contributed to the boom were construction of the \$45-million, mixed-use residential and commercial **Mansion House** project on the river in downtown St. Louis and the Union Electric Company’s \$76-million **Sioux Power Plant**. Work on the generating facility in Portage de Sioux, Missouri, began on June 1, 1963, and the two-unit, 986-megawatt, coal-fired facility was completed in 1968. *(The plant is now owned by Ameren Missouri.)*

The Anheuser-Busch brewery, which already employed numerous steamfitters and in 1963 obtained the first no-strike agreement in the area from the St. Louis Building Trades Council following negotiations spearheaded by Local 562, began a \$10-million expansion program that would put many more members to work there during the balance of the decade. During that period, the company at one time employed more than 300 in-house fitters from Local 562 and other U.A. locals whose members travelled into the jurisdiction to work.

Then on May 25, 1964, ground was broken for construction of the new **Busch Memorial Stadium** in St. Louis, which would also utilize scores of union pipefitters. After it was completed in May 1966, the multi-purpose sports facility served as the home field of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team from 1966 until the stadium was closed in 2005 and as home to the Cardinals of the National Football League (N.F.L.) for 22 seasons.

In the midst of those seemingly boundless employment conditions, the local’s roughly 1,700 journeyman pipefitting members gained a new, three-year contract with the M.C.A. on April 25, 1966, that eventually increased pay for journeyman pipefitters to \$5.60 per hour. Effective June 15, 1966, to June 14, 1969, the pact provided the local’s journeymen with a total wage-and-benefits package of \$7.85 per hour over the final year, including 30 cents

more for health, welfare and pension benefits; and 2-1/2 cents for a new **Industry Benefit Fund** that was established to promote the unionized mechanical-construction trade.

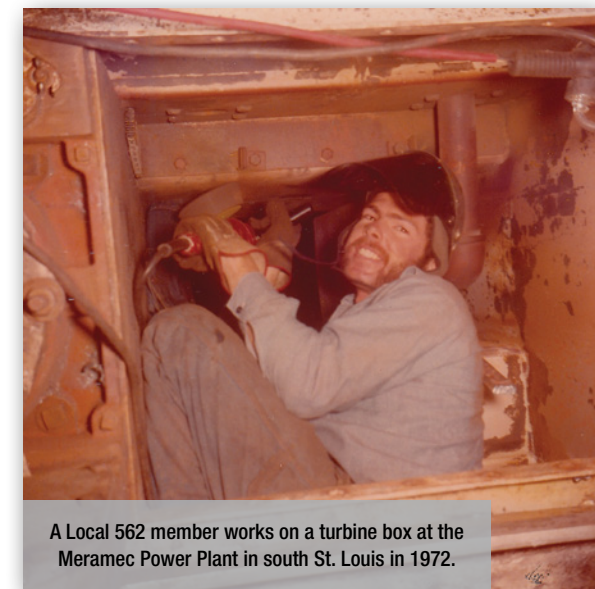
## DEALS, DIAPERS AND RECREATION

After nearly five years in prison, former Local 562 Business Manager Callanan was released on probation and left jail on April 30, 1960. Four years later in April 1964, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson pardoned Brother Callanan and commuted his 12-year sentence for racketeering – making him eligible to serve as a union official again, after which he worked as director of Local 562’s **Voluntary Politics, Educational, Legislative, Charity and Defense Fund**.

Then on October 12, 1966, Brother Callanan won an election to replace Business Manager Lawler, who stepped down because of time constraints resulting from out-of-town assignments for the U.A. international office and his duties as chairman of the Democratic City Central Committee. “This election was a chance for the members to put (Brother Callanan) back where he belongs,” Brother Lawler stated in the October 19, 1966, *Post-Dispatch*.

For the remainder of the second half of the 1960s, work was steady for the local and members generally experienced full employment throughout that period. In that busy environment, the local passed a resolution in 1966 to create the new office of **assistant business manager**, which was initially filled by Brother Lawler.

Adding to the abundant employment opportunities for Local 562, construction of the new **Labadie Energy Center**, a coal-fired power plant in Labadie, Missouri, began in May 1967. Work was so plentiful, in fact, in December of that year, 986 Local 562 members and 349 travelling U.A. pipefitters employed in the local’s jurisdiction received



A Local 562 member works on a turbine box at the Meramec Power Plant in south St. Louis in 1972.

holiday and vacation checks from the local’s funds as a gift for the extraordinary amount of manhours they had worked during the year.

Local 562 then gave its full support in early 1968 to a request by the **Procter & Gamble Company** for a no-strike, no-work-stoppage agreement among construction unions in St. Louis and southeast Missouri if it were to build a new, \$100-million plant in Cape Girardeau. After other trades followed the pipefitters’ lead, the agreement was signed that February and construction on the facility was completed in 1969 with union labor, including many

## SUPPORTING HIGHER-EDUCATION GOALS

Local 562 began awarding **college scholarships** along with its employers of the Mechanical Contractors Association of St. Louis in 1969. Initially the program awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors who were sons or daughters of members of Local 562 or a mechanical contracting firm.

More than half a century later, the **Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 562 Scholarship Foundation** continues in 2021 to provide partial scholarships for tuition, books and materials to selected members’ children who are entering a college, university, community college or trade school. As part of the application process, students are required to submit an essay addressing a relevant organized-labor issue.

The pipefitting members of **U.A. Local No. 279** of Jefferson City, Missouri, a plumber and pipefitter local that was chartered on August 27, 1910, were merged into Local 562 on April 22, 1969. Local 279's plumbing members were likewise merged into U.A. Plumbers Local No. 35 of St. Louis.

The pipefitting members of **U.A. Local No. 581** of Hannibal, Missouri, a plumber and pipefitter local that was chartered on April 17, 1915, were merged into Local 562 on November 4, 1969. Local 581's plumbing members were likewise merged into Local 35.

The pipefitting members of **U.A. Local No. 318** of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, a plumber and pipefitter local that was chartered on February 24, 1941, were merged into Local 562 on November 4, 1969. Local 318's plumbing members were likewise merged into Local 35.

Local 562 members, with the facility initially producing Pampers diapers.

The local and the M.C.A. reopened their contract negotiations in May 1968, a full year before their current, three-year agreement was set to expire. The resulting pact for the union steamfitters, effective June 15, was the first five-year deal among the unionized construction trades in the region and was "one of the fattest in the nation," the July 15, 1968, *Post-Dispatch* declared while also noting, "It far surpasses any wage agreement in the St. Louis area."

Four years later, when the contract still had a full year remaining, then-Local 562 **Business Manager Virgil Walsh** recalled in the June 14, 1972, *Post-Dispatch* that the union sought a five-year contract "to stabilize pay here. Without a long contract like that, nobody knows where they're at on construction costs."

The new agreement provided a total package increase of \$2.60 per hour, including \$1.20 in wages, which would take journeyman take-home pay to \$6.80 per hour, and \$1.40 in fringe benefits, which would raise the total benefits contribution by contractors to \$3.57-1/2 per hour over the final year. The employers

would also pay an additional 7-1/2 cents per hour over the life of the new contract into the union's industry promotion fund.

Additional projects on which the local's members worked during that time further included work on a sulfuric-acid plant for the **St. Joseph Lead Company** in Herculaneum, Missouri; construction of a \$70-million plant in New Madrid for the **Noranda Aluminum Company**; and a job for the **River Cement Company** in Selma, Missouri.

To cap off the 1960s, the Local 562 membership and jurisdiction, which at that time covered 62 Missouri counties, were both substantially expanded when three Missouri-based U.A. locals were merged into the St. Louis local during 1969. The roughly 50 steamfitters of the 98-member **U.A. Plumbers and Steamfitters Local No. 279** of Jefferson City were merged into Local 562 on April 22 of that year, while the local's plumber members were simultaneously merged into Local 35.

Then on November 4, the steamfitters of **U.A. Plumbers and Steamfitters Local No. 581** of Hannibal and **U.A. Plumbers and Steamfitters Local No. 318** of Cape Girardeau, which had 138 total members at the time, were merged into Local 562. The plumber members of both former locals were simultaneously merged into Local 35.

Meanwhile, on August 22, 1969, Local 562 opened its 309-acre recreation and retirement center in Clarksville, Missouri, the first of two such complexes the local would construct at a total cost of about \$10 million financed entirely out of its Welfare and Education Fund. The larger complex Near Spanish Lake in north St. Louis County, which would also serve as the local's union hall, administrative offices and training center, opened two years later in 1972.

Into the 1970s, the local's 2,000-strong membership remained busy and even experienced regular manpower shortages as

it continued to work on numerous projects, including expansions and changeovers for new models at the area's automobile plants. A large number of pipefitters were also employed at the time on construction of the **City of New Madrid Power Plant**, a two-unit, coal-fired generating station built in conjunction with the Noranda Aluminum plant to address its substantial electricity needs. With the contributions of skilled Local 562 members, the power plant's Unit 1 was completed in 1972 and its Unit 2 was operational in 1977.

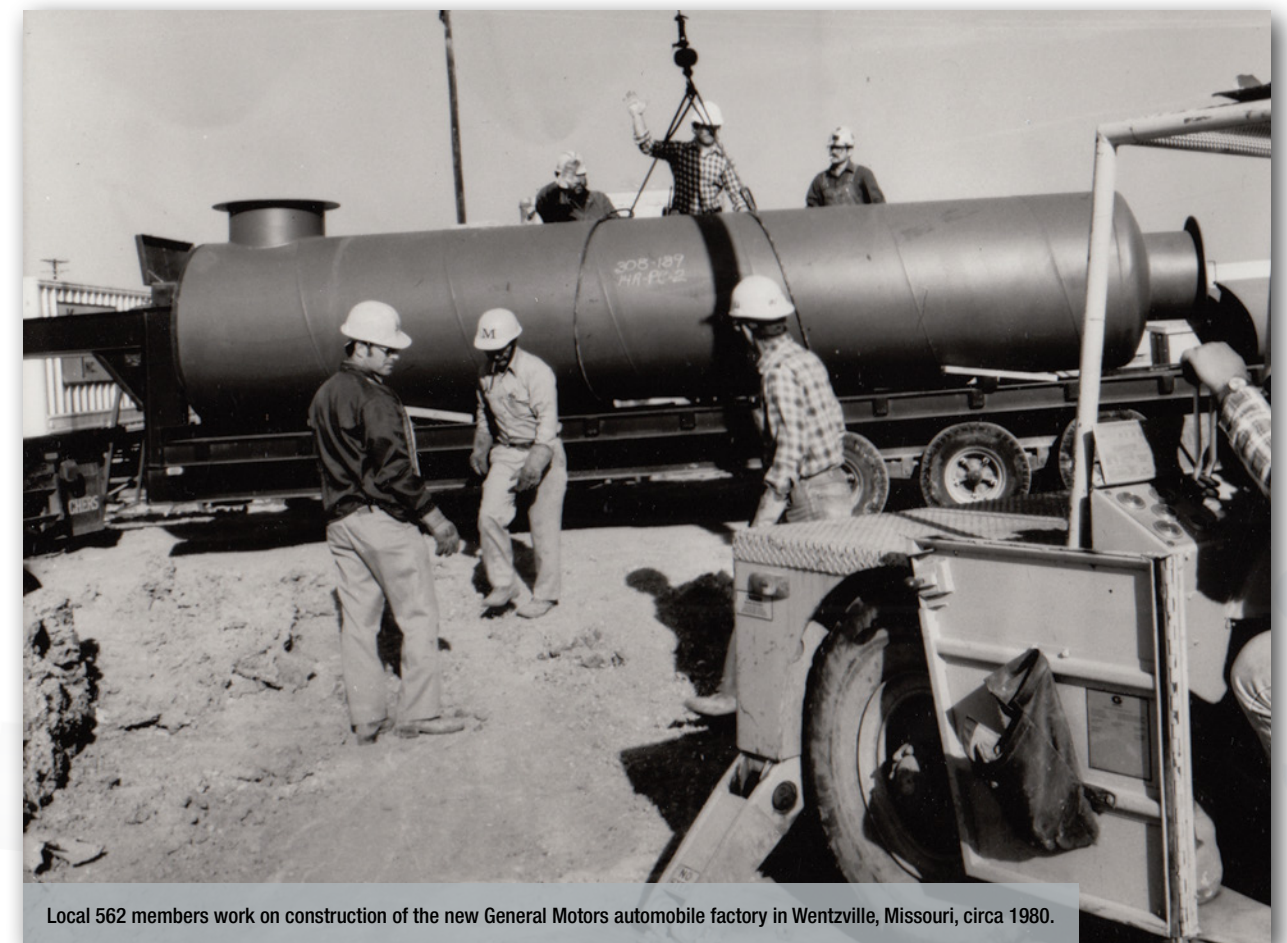
However, Business Manager Callanan passed away on May 2, 1971, while still in office after suffering a heart attack. He was 62 years old.

At the time of his death, he and two other top Local 562 officers, Assistant Business Manager Lawler and **Vice President George Seaton**, were appealing their 1968 convictions

for conspiring to violate federal election laws by contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars from the local's political fund, into which members were allegedly forced to contribute, to the campaigns of candidates for federal office. But in one of the rare challenges to reach the U.S. Supreme Court, the justices voted, 6 to 2, to overturn the convictions "because the political contributions had been derived from voluntary contributions by union members," the June 22, 1972, *Post-Dispatch* reported – although Brother Lawler had passed away that January.

### FORGING AHEAD DESPITE TRAGEDIES

Still grieving from the losses of Business Manager Callanan and Assistant Business Manager Lawler, the local was violently shaken on February 24, 1972, when new Local 562



Local 562 members work on construction of the new General Motors automobile factory in Wentzville, Missouri, circa 1980.

Continued after next spread.

## Spanish Lake and Clarksville Complexes

### LOCAL PROVIDED UPSCALE REC/RETIREMENT/UNION FACILITIES



Overhead view of the Local 562 complex at Spanish Lake during the 1970s.

When Local 562 purchased 309 acres of farmland in Clarksville and 425 acres in the Spanish Lake area of North County during the late 1950s and early 1960s, Business Manager Lawrence Callanan had visions of turning them into working-man's country clubs. Those ambitions were realized when the local opened its multimillion-dollar retirement, recreation and rehabilitation centers in Clarksville in 1969 and in Spanish Lake in 1972.

"It was the place to be," longtime Local 562 staff member and events coordinator Jane Schneider recalled about the Spanish Lake complex in 2019. "It was a place where working families could afford to go to get away."

The purchase and construction of both facilities, which cost a total of about \$10 million, was financed entirely by the Steamfitters Welfare, Pension and Education Fund, into which Local 562 members made monthly contributions that were matched by the Mechanical Contractors Association of St. Louis. The local paid \$2,700 per acre for most of the Spanish Lake ground, after which the asking price for land around that parcel "skyrocketed" to around \$8,000 per acre since word of the union's plans became public, according to a May 9, 1964, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article.

The Spanish Lake facility, which was located on Larimore Road and took nearly 10 years to complete before opening in 1972, initially included a 58-unit apartment complex for Local 562 retirees; a medical clinic for members and their families; a 1,000-seat auditorium and country club; an Olympic-size swimming pool; a children's pool; and a building with lockers and a cafe. The local also relocated its administration offices and union hall into a state-of-the-art building at the facility, where the local's headquarters remained into 2018.

Then in 1994, the local opened the 18-hole Emerald Greens Golf Course at Spanish Lake.

A dedication ceremony on August 23, 1969, officially opened the Clarksville facility and was attended by 4,000 members and their families (as well as baseball great Stan Musial and Anheuser-Busch President August A. Busch Jr., who was made an honorary member of the local). The complex included an Olympic-size swimming pool, a bathhouse, a 14-acre lake stocked with fish, a retirement home, and a medical center for members and their families, and the local would hold its annual picnics at the facility during its heydays of the early 1970s.



Local 562 Spanish Lake complex under construction in 1969.



Local 562 members and families enjoy the fishing lake at the local's Clarksville complex during the late 1960s.



Local 562 members and families enjoy the pool at the local's Clarksville complex during the late 1960s.

Local 562 was very generous with use of its Spanish Lake facilities, often sharing its pools with groups such as boys' clubs, girls' clubs, orphanages and schools. It also regularly provided its auditorium for numerous charitable events and rented it for various other social occasions, which became so popular that the local started its own catering business.

Hundreds of high-school and college students also benefited from the local's summer college program, which allowed them to work maintenance jobs at the Spanish Lake complex. Local 562 dependents were eligible for the jobs, through which they earned money for college.

Local 562 sold its Clarksville complex in 1979 and then sold its Spanish Lake complex to the St. Louis Zoo in 2018 for \$7.1 million after it moved its headquarters and training center to Earth City to better serve its 4,000 members with a more-central location. The local bought the 40,000-square-foot, former ITT Technical Institute building located at 3640 Corporate Trail to house its offices, health and welfare personnel, and health center.

A new, 70,000-square-foot training center adjacent to the office building would be located at 3772 Corporate Center Drive and was completed in 2021.

Situated on Local 562's 425-acre Spanish Lake recreation and administration complex, Emerald Greens Golf Course reflects designer Jim Cochran's "sensitivity to design that accommodates public players of all skill levels," according to a November 13, 1994, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article. The 70-par course measured 6,258 yards from the back tees and 4,986 yards from the front tees.

Turnout for the course initially "exceeded expectations," Jack Marshall, executive director of the local's complex, told the newspaper. The local sold the course to the St. Louis Zoo in 2018 as part of its purchase of the entire Spanish Lake complex.



Opening day of the Local 562 Spanish Lake complex pool in 1971.



Jane Schneider, longtime Local 562 coordinator of events at the local's Spanish Lake complex, shown in 2019.



Local 562 officers and staff in 1982: (front row, left to right) Thomas J. Callanan, John Foley, Martin Madigan, John L. Lawler Jr., Harold "Bud" Foley, Hugh Gorham, Donald Devitt, Vincent Grassmuck, Jack Marshall and Patrick Hickey; and (back row) James Ricks, James Kelley, James O'Mara, Edward Ramshaw, George Britton, Arthur Murphy, Ulys "Mutt" Lane, James Stiffler, Jack Kiely, John Martin, Robert McDonald and Michael McLaughlin.

**Business Manager Edward J. Steska** was shot to death as he sat in his office in the local's union hall on Pierce Avenue. "He was a good guy, well-liked," an anonymous member said in the February 26 *Post-Dispatch*. "I can't understand who'd want him."

*(The murder remains unsolved. A key suspect, known mafia hoodlum and rising labor racketeer Louis D. Shoulders, whom Business Manager Steska blocked from becoming involved in Local 562, according to the August 25, 1975, Post-Dispatch, was killed on August 25, 1972, when a dynamite bomb planted under his car exploded. Another suspect, Local 562 officer **Thomas J. Callanan**, son of deceased Business Manager Callanan, lost his legs in a car bombing on June 15, 1973, in what police believed was a "reprisal for Steska's murder" as Thomas Callanan had sought the local's business manager position, according to the December 2, 1979, Post-Dispatch. He was later cleared in the murder investigation.)*

The day after the killing, the local's Executive Board met and chose a new business manager to complete Brother Steska's three-year term (shortened from the usual four years in the wake of Business Manager Callanan's death),

appointing Brother Walsh, a member since the early 1940s, to the position. During a union meeting on March 2 at which he was confirmed by a vote of the local's membership, new Business Manager Walsh addressed the members on the recent series of deaths, stating:

*"We cannot just sit in sorrow and do nothing. Local 562 has been and will continue to be the best labor organization anywhere."*

While the regional and national construction industries were going through a significant down period that would last into the second half of the 1970s, Local 562 suffered another debilitating – if not as tragic – blow in June 1972 when the Federal Construction Industry Stabilization Board ordered curtailments on the wages of several St. Louis-area buildings trades to help steady construction and utility costs. As such, the \$1.65-per-hour raise in pay and benefits Local 562 was to receive beginning June 13 for the fifth and final year of its contract with the M.C.A. was completely nullified by the board. The ruling was believed to have been the first time the Construction

Industry Stabilization Board totally rejected an increased package, according to the June 14 *Post-Dispatch*, leaving the local's journeyman hourly scale at \$7.05 in pay and \$3.75 in benefits for the coming year.

But the serious decline in work continued and unemployment in the St. Louis construction industry was estimated to be about 30 percent in late 1972 – by which time Local 562 had opened its new union and recreation complex in Spanish Lake. Association of General Contractors figures later showed that the number of hours worked in construction in 1972 was half that worked in 1965.

Before the year was out, Local 562 itself made four major changes in its work rules that were designed to reduce costs, increase productivity and "generally benefit construction in the St. Louis area," Business Manager Walsh announced in the November 9, 1972, *Post-Dispatch*. In a letter to the M.C.A. outlining the concessions, the local and its 1,850 members pledged to provide a second shift of pipefitters on jobs rather than compel contractors to use the first crew and pay overtime; drop requirements on the number of pipefitters that must be hired for a specific job; allow contractors to specify which members of a crew would be laid off; and allow contractors to move key workers or entire crews from one job site to another without having to replace them at the first site.

Subsequently, Business Manager Walsh was given the first-ever **PRIDE award** (Productivity and Responsibility will Increase Development and Employment) from a group of all elements of the construction industry that had formed

in August 1972. The owners, contractors, craftsmen, architects and engineers had come together to establish principles that would help overcome their past shortcomings and benefit the industry.

*(One the factors cited for the formation of the PRIDE organization was the "adverse national publicity St. Louis had received over the murder of Edward J. Steska seven months earlier," according to an article in the August 18, 1978, Post-Dispatch. But, the newspaper noted at the time, PRIDE was an initial success, as "labor strife in the construction industry in eastern Missouri has been minimal," and "non-union and independent union contractors have made few inroads here.")*

The drop in construction employment continued, however, leading Local 562 to again ease its working rules as part of a new, three-year contract with the M.C.A. reached on June 16, 1974. A joint statement announcing the agreement stated, "The new contract included further liberalizing of work rules to limit costs for contractors and make the industry more competitive by increasing productivity," the *Post-Dispatch* reported the following day.

The agreement provided wage increases totaling \$2.65 per hour over the three years,



Winners in the Local 562 annual Bass Fishing Tournament in 1982.



Local 562 members at work at the Anheuser-Busch brewery in St. Louis in February 1987.



\$1 of which was retroactive to June 1 while 85 cents would be paid in the second year and 80 cents would be added in the third year. Major changes from the previous contract included a decreased hourly pay scale of up to 85 cents less for residential and light commercial work throughout the local's entire jurisdiction, and assurances by the local that it would cooperate in forming a branch local for members limited to air-conditioning and heating service work.

Local 562 then held its first contested election for business manager in nearly 30 years on December 14, 1974, during which the membership re-elected Business Manager Walsh by an 829-to-616 vote over **Brother William E. Dolan**. Long-time **Secretary-Treasurer George Seaton** and **President Harold "Bud" Foley** were also re-elected by similar margins.

But work remained so slow beginning in 1975 that the local did not offer a new apprentice class in its training program that year. Members were still able to find work on projects such as the new, coal-fired **Rush Island Power Plant** in Festus, Missouri, whose two generating units would be completed in

1976 and 1977, respectively, and the ongoing jobs at Noranda Aluminum plant and the New Madrid power plant.

Construction of the **Callaway Nuclear Generating Station** near Fulton, Missouri, beginning in September 1975 added another power-plant job that employed Local 562 members during the mid- and late-1970s. The U.A. had awarded jurisdiction on the \$6-billion project to the St. Louis local over **Plumbers and Pipefitters Local No. 317** of Columbia, in whose jurisdiction the plant is located, because Local 562 had the manpower to handle the project. When the plant was put into operation on December 19, 1984, it became the state's only commercial nuclear unit.

Tragedy struck the local again when Business Manager Walsh passed away on April 4, 1976, at age 67 after being in a hospital for eight days to be treated for heart and lung diseases. The local's Executive Board the next day appointed Secretary-Treasurer Seaton to fill the unfinished term to head the 1,800-member local; President Foley to be secretary-treasurer; and **Brother Patrick Hickey**, a former state representative, to

be president. The membership overwhelmingly approved the selections on April 8.

Grieving again but still undeterred, Local 562 continued to push forward, and in one example of outstanding civic pride, the local in September 1976 donated \$50,000 and pledged another \$50,000 toward completion of the new **St. Louis Gateway Convention and Exhibition Center**, whose construction employed many union pipefitters. The local's contributions clinched a community goal to raise half-a-million dollars for the project, making available matching funds from Monsanto Company and ensuring that the facility (which was later renamed the Cervantes Convention Center after former St. Louis Mayor Alfonso J. Cervantes) would be completed on time for its target opening in June 1977.

As construction work within the Local 562 jurisdiction continued to escalate during the second half of the decade at a rate that caused a shortage of pipefitters within the industry during that time, major expansions of the

**Lambert-St. Louis International Airport** contributed to the overflow of manhours for the local's membership. Development jobs on which the local's members participated involved a total of \$290 million in projects that would eventually boost the airport's capacity by 50 percent.

Among other work keeping Local 562 pipefitters busy during that time was construction for the **St. Louis Metropolitan Sewer District**, as it improved its infrastructure utilities and facilities in and around the growing city in the late 1970s and into the early 1980s.

While reveling in strong conditions, the local ratified a new, three-year contract with the M.C.A. on July 31, 1977, that provided a total \$2.50-per-hour increase to the journeyman hourly wage of \$10.45. Effective on June 1, the agreement gave no increases to benefits, which totaled \$3.68 per hour, but raised the base hourly pay scale 90 cents the first year, 80 cents the second year and 80 cents the third year to \$12.95 per hour.



Local 562 members and families march in the Labor Day Parade in St. Louis in 1994.



Local 562 officers in 1995: (left to right) Vice President John O'Mara, President John Marshall, Recording Secretary Jim Kelley, Assistant Business Manager Mike O'Connell and Business Manager Jim O'Mara.

The contract also changed some work rules to offset the wage increases and help contractors be more competitive, such as no longer requiring employers to pay an additional 56 cents per hour to pipefitters who work outside St. Louis city and county. Other concessions included allowing contractors to fabricate pipe in their own shops instead of on jobsites and conceding to allow the local's members to perform shift work at night instead of necessitating overtime at double pay.

During the late 1970s, anti-union forces in state government stepped up their attacks on organized labor, highlighted by their attempts to pass a so-called "right-to-work" law for Missouri in 1978, which would prohibit unions from collecting dues from some employees in workplaces the unions were chosen to represent. In response, Local 562 was at the forefront of

efforts to defeat the measure, and on May 10 its membership voted to voluntarily donate \$2 per week to fight the legislation, which would ultimately be defeated in November. *(It would not be the last time the local would lead the charge against efforts to legislate "right-to-work" practices in the State of Missouri.)*

### RALLYING AFTER MORE CHALLENGES

Booming downtown commercial construction and a complete, \$75-million renovation to retool and modernize the Chrysler plant in Fenton beginning in May 1981 helped sustain the St. Louis-area building trades, including Local 562, during the crippling recession of the early 1980s. Construction of the new, state-of-the-art, \$500-million **General Motors Wentzville Assembly** automobile factory in Wentzville,

Missouri, that began in 1979 also employed most of the local's membership at one time or another during the early 1980s. When it was completed in December 1983, the 3.2 million-square-foot plant originally built full-size Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac sedans and took over operations of the former St. Louis Truck Assembly facility that had been in operation since 1920.

With additional industrial jobs such as work on the area's chemical plants, including expansion of facilities for St. Louis-based **Monsanto Chemical Company**, providing manhours for some of the local's more than 2,200 piping members, Local 562 and the M.C.A. agreed to a new, three-year contract effective June 1, 1983, that provided a 6-percent wage increase for each year. The pact also included work-rule changes designed to increase productivity and stimulate new construction and development in the St. Louis metropolitan area, such as allowing for flexible starting times, no work stoppages and time and a half for overtime.

Completion of work on the General Motors plant and other larger projects stunted employment for Local 562, continuing a fluctuating trend in manhours for the local's membership that would persist throughout the

mid- and late-1980s. A steady rise in non-union competition would pose a further challenge to the union pipefitting industry and its employment conditions as the decade progressed.

What's more, the local was dealt a pair of personal blows beginning with the sudden death on July 21, 1984, of Business Manager Foley, who had ascended to the local's top position in 1980. Brother Foley, who was 64 and was also president of the St. Louis Building and Construction Trades Council at the time, suffered a fatal heart attack that day while at the local's annual summer picnic at its Spanish Lake complex.

During a meeting on July 26, **Brother John L. Lawler Jr.** was the unanimous choice of the local's Executive Board to fill the business manager position. **Business Representative Donald Devitt** was simultaneously appointed to succeed Brother Lawler as the local's secretary-treasurer.

Less than a year and a half later, shortly after the local had completed the sale of its Clarksville complex in early December 1985, Business Manager Lawler died on December 23 after suffering a heart attack. A former president of the St. Louis Building and Construction Trades Council, city alderman and chairman of the St.



Local 562 members working at the Anheuser-Busch brewery stockhouse in 1997.





In 1988, Local 562 implemented **drug testing** of its members, thereby being able to sell itself as a “drug-free workforce.” Testing was funded through contributions from contractors signatory to the union’s collective bargaining agreement, and the program did result in the local gaining more work.

On February 1, 1995, the local signed a **substance-abuse program** with Consumers of St. Louis and the Mechanical Contractors Association. As part of the initiative, all members would be randomly tested once within every 2,000 manhours worked.

Louis County Democratic Central Committee, Brother Lawler was 47 years old.

Brother Devitt was selected by the local to fill the vacant business manager position beginning in January 1986.

That June, as the union construction industry continued to scuffle, Local 562 and most all other building-trades unions in St. Louis reached deals on new contracts with employers comparatively quickly, “continuing a pattern of relatively swift contract renewals in the area’s construction industry this year,” the June 3, 1986, *Post-Dispatch* reported. As part of the “reasonable” pay increases in the agreement, journeyman pipefitter wages were at \$10 per hour and benefits were at \$3.53 per hour in April 1987.

But the unions’ struggles persisted during the late 1980s as non-union competition in eastern Missouri proliferated. Regardless, Local 562, which had as many as 300 members out of work at one point in 1989, did not yield – in one show of its determination, the local picketed the Missouri River Waste Water Treatment Plant in St. Charles in November 1987 because pipefitters and other construction workers employed on an upgrade there were being paid substandard wages.

For the first time in several years, the local reached full employment in October 1990,

but those conditions did not last as a poor national economy throttled the country and its construction industry. Throughout much of the ensuing decade, there often was not enough work for the entire Local 562 membership.

Initially compounding the local’s situation, Business Manager Devitt suffered a stroke in September 1991. He subsequently resigned from the position on December 11, and **Brother James O’Mara** was appointed to fill Brother Devitt’s unexpired term.

Business Manager O’Mara, who joined the local as an apprentice in 1955 (and whose grandfather emigrated from Ireland, joined the union in 1915 and remained a member for 50 years), would go on to serve a longer consecutive term as business manager than any of his predecessors before retiring in 2002. Over the remainder of the decade in which Brother O’Mara took over the local, it would establish a 401-A retirement plan for its members; increase pension unit contributions from \$31 to \$47; establish and pay for its new **St. Louis Training Center** in Bellefontaine Neighbors in 1992; and take its treasury from \$4 million in the red to \$25 million in the black while closing its Spanish Lake recreation complex, among many other accomplishments.

In May 1992, Local 562 negotiated a new, four-year contract with employers that featured a “work sharing” program that increased the number of hours worked by individual members to make more work available to more members. “It’s good for morale and good for the contractor,” Business Manager O’Mara explained in the October 18, 1993, *Post-Dispatch*.

The contract also provided total raises of \$2.75 per hour and \$1.75 per hour to health and welfare benefits over the first three years, and an additional 75 cents plus a cost-of-living raise for the final year. Additionally, as part of the agreement, contractors would buy bonds so as not to be delinquent in payments with the union.

As construction work in the region and, subsequently, employment for the memberships of U.A. locals in the state remained sluggish in 1993 and into 1994, Local 317 of Columbia voted in June 1994 to merge with Local 562 and Local 35 to strengthen union-piping representation in eastern and central Missouri. The U.A. officially merged Columbia’s pipefitters into Local 562 and its plumbers into Local 35 on October 1, 1994.

That year, following the death of Local 562 **Secretary-Treasurer John Kiely**, Business Manager O’Mara combined the offices of business manager and secretary-treasurer into one office.

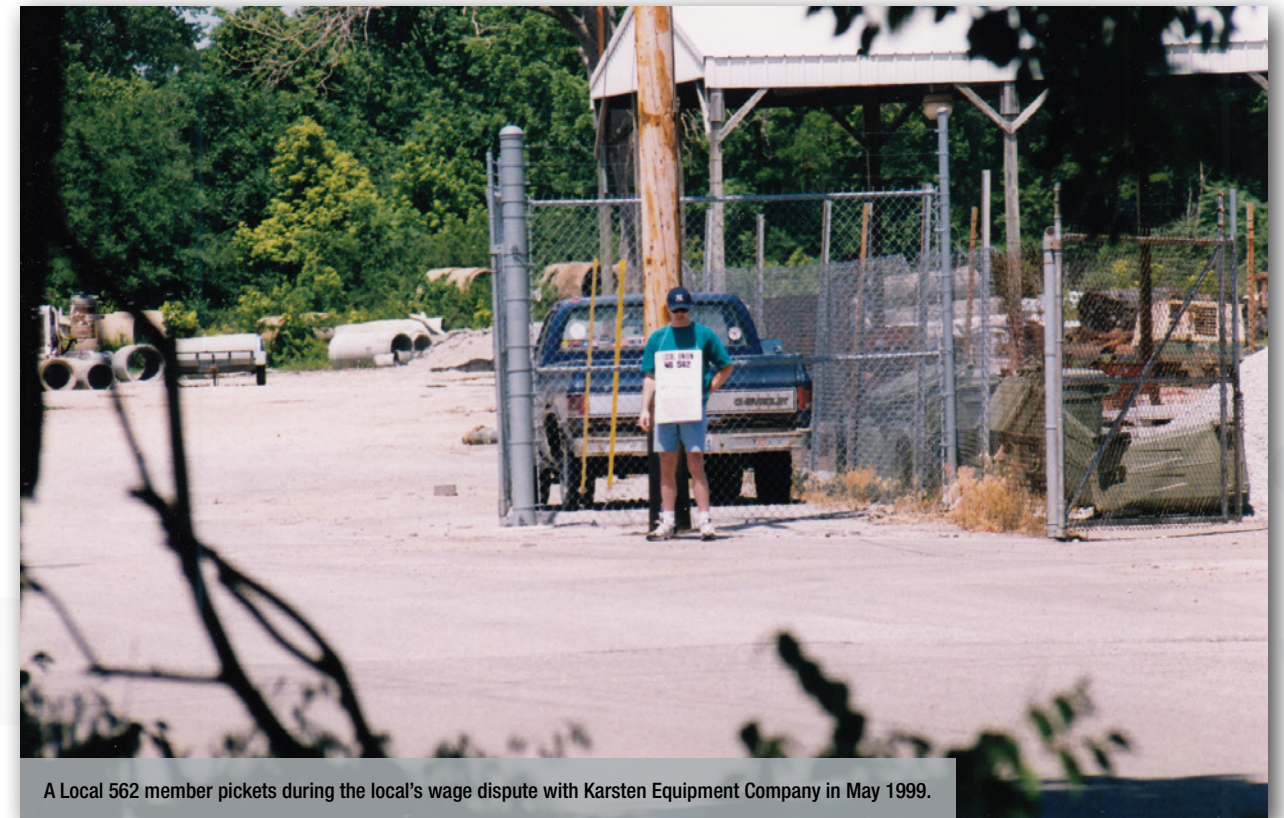
To better serve the membership throughout its expanded territory, Local 562 announced in September 1995 that it would establish a new training school and satellite office in Kingdom City, Missouri, just east of Columbia.

During that time, the local under the direction of Business Manager O’Mara made

The pipefitting members of U.A. Local No. 317 of Columbia, Missouri, a plumber and pipefitter local chartered on June 2, 1928, was merged into Local 562 on October 1, 1994.

organizing **heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) service technicians** one of its priorities. Starting out with about 100 members early in the effort, nearly 25 years later the local would have more than 850 HVAC service members with a business representative specifically assigned to serve them.

Meanwhile, among other projects, repair work and upgrade shut-downs at power plants in the area, including the Meramec and Rush Island coal-fired facilities, continued to be a source of consistent employment for the local and union labor into the mid-1990s. Local 562 members were also regularly employed on work at the Callaway Nuclear Generating



A Local 562 member pickets during the local’s wage dispute with Karsten Equipment Company in May 1999.

Continued after next two spreads.

# Community Involvement

## A LEGACY OF BEING GOOD NEIGHBORS



Local 562 crew and contractors that participated in the Heat's On campaign to provide free inspections and repairs of faulty furnaces, hot water heaters and smoke detectors for St. Louis' needy and elderly residents in 2007. (Photo courtesy of Bradley Arteaga and Arteaga Photos LTD.)

Local 562 has always been involved in charitable activities within its communities, with its officers and membership constantly volunteering their time, talents and financial resources to help others. Among the countless benevolent acts performed by the local throughout its 108-year history was the giving of two days' pay from each member (a total of \$11,554) in 1942 to the Greater St. Louis War Chest and its contributing \$77,500 from the Pipefitters Voluntary Fund in 1970 to the Dismas House, a rehabilitation center for former convicts.

As the local prepared for its 100 anniversary celebration picnic in June 2012, *Business Manager John O'Mara* spoke with great pleasure about its generosity in a June 4 article in the *St. Louis Labor Tribune*: "We have a proud union with

a proud tradition of working with our contractors to insure the finest quality work anywhere in America, and part of that proud tradition is our supporting worthwhile community efforts where our members give of their volunteer time and skills and our contractors join us with providing materials and support."



A Local 562-sponsored youth baseball team in 1962.

The local's continuing philanthropic activities encompass a wide range of initiatives, which more recently include:

- **Heat's On**, beginning in 1987 with the Mechanical Contractors Association, which provides free services to St. Louis' poor and elderly residents to inspect and/or repair faulty furnaces, hot water heaters and smoke detectors.
- **Rebuilding Together**, beginning in 1993, which provides plumbing repairs and home renovations for elderly, low-income and disabled residents throughout the St. Louis area.
- **Habitat for Humanity**, which assists in building decent, affordable housing in St. Louis to help needy families that are determined to proactively better their lives.
- **Fishin' Fitters Annual Tournament** annual charity fishing tournament at the Lake of the Ozarks with proceeds donated to the St. Louis Backstoppers, which provides support to families of St. Louis' policemen, firefighters and other emergency responders who were killed in the line of duty, and to Shriners Hospital for Children in St. Louis.
- **Salvation Army**, for which members volunteer as bell ringers during the holidays for the organization's famous red kettles to collect funds to help those in need.
- **U.S. Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots** campaign, for which members and Local 562 signatory contractors host toy drives during Christmastime for needy families.
- **Veterans In Piping (VIP)**, a nationwide United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters program to help returning veterans obtain job skills through the Local 562 training facilities.



Local 562 members and their families regularly take part in the Salvation Army's annual red-kettle fundraising campaigns during the holidays.



Local 562 makes a donation to Our Little Haven, a faith-based organization that provides early intervention services for children and families dealing with abuse, neglect, unhealthy mental and behavioral issues, in 2018.



Local 562 displays the many items it collected in December 2019 for the USMC Reserve Toys for Tots drive, which collects toys and distributes them to less fortunate children at Christmastime.

# Community Involvement

## A LEGACY OF BEING GOOD NEIGHBORS





The Local 562 softball team in August 2009.

Station during the second half of the decade – and the local even received a compliment from the Fluor-Daniels Corporation, contractor at the plant, in February 1997 noting that the local has “the most successful welding program in the country,” Local 562 meeting minutes from February 12 recorded.

Construction of the new **Trans World Dome** (which would be renamed the Edward Jones Dome and then The Dome at America’s Center) in 1995 employed many Local 562 members until its completion in 2001. The multi-purpose stadium in downtown St. Louis helped convince the N.F.L. Los Angeles Rams to relocate to the city at the beginning of the 1995 season.

Additional large projects during the late 1990s on which the local’s members worked included a major job at Procter & Gamble’s Cape Girardeau plant. The union pipefitters were one of the few union craftworkers on the project who were paid at their full wage scale.

### MERGING TRADES TO BENEFIT ALL

Perhaps one of the most significant events in the oft-intertwined histories of Pipefitters Local 562 and Plumbers Local 35 was the merger of the two politically powerful locals into a single, larger and more-influential local on January 1, 1999, after which the “new” organization was known as **Plumbers and Pipefitters Local No. 562**. The pipefitting members of the “original” Local 562 had voted in favor of the amalgamation on September 16, 1998, while the Local 35 membership had also approved of the consolidation that month.

The merger of the 2,200 pipefitters and 1,300 plumbers into a single local would help cut costs by combining training and administrative functions for all 3,500 members. The move would also help avoid and settle jurisdictional squabbles between members of the two piping trades.

Now a unified piping organization seeking to help attract business for the union sector,



ensure labor peace and enhance job security, Local 562 and its two major contractor groups, the M.C.A. and the **Plumbing Industry Council**, in December 1999 signed a new, unprecedented, **10-1/2-year-long agreement**. Effective January 1, 2000, the contract would apply to all work on residences, hospitals, electrical companies, sewage plants, water plants, chemical plants, schools in St. Louis and 69 counties stretching to Columbia, between the Iowa and Arkansas state lines to the north and south.

The agreement was apparently the longest contract negotiated in the nation, according to the December 17 *Post-Dispatch*. “I’ve never heard of anything close to that, definitely in construction, and nothing else comes to mind in labor



Local 562 apprentice graduation and awards ceremony on November 20, 2009.





Members and guests attend the Local 562 retirees' Christmas party and holiday celebration on December 7, 2009.

in general,” Bob Gasperow, executive director of the Construction Labor Research Council in Washington, D.C., told the newspaper.

The pact contained several “unusual” clauses aimed at getting workers and contractors to “cooperate and gain a sense of ‘ownership’ of their work,” as the *Post-Dispatch* reported. Among those new rules defined in the contract, pairs consisting of a union foreman and a company project manager would be sent to communications seminars to understand each other’s problems, and individual workers would guarantee their work, fixing it on the spot when necessary.

During negotiations, the union “agreed to yield some authority over work rules in exchange for helping protect their jobs and seeking to attract construction projects from around the county,” the newspaper reported. In exchange, the local would receive a \$1-per-hour raise for each year of the contract, added

on to its average \$26 per hour plus fringe benefits, as well as 25 cents per hour for health and welfare benefits.

Reaching an agreement was complicated by the fact that two distinct crafts were involved, but M.C.A. President Dave Hardin told the newspaper that the “positive attitude” of union members made the “landmark settlement” possible. Even the method of arriving at the contract was new, according to the newspaper, “with labor and management hiring a research firm in St. Louis to do a 10-month study of attitudes among consumers, architects, engineers, contractors, business owners and others.”

Despite the booming economy of the late 1990s that was providing good employment for the local, many workers were still concerned about their futures because of consolidations and job changes, the *Post-Dispatch* pointed out. But with the new, groundbreaking contract,

Business Manager O’Mara declared:

*“We know we’re going to be union for 10 more years, and that’s kind of comforting in this atmosphere.”*

Armed with the historic agreement as it entered the new Y2K millennium, by April 2000 the local’s plumbers reached full employment. The local also began putting more resources into organizing smaller employers, and a boom in smaller commercial jobs subsequently brought a large amount of that type of work for members.

That month, the local threatened to organize a nationwide boycott of Anheuser-Busch products if pipefitters working at the St. Louis brewery were not treated better by management there – an issue that had been festering for the previous five years. While only about 50 members were employed by the brewery, another 50 to 100 union members worked at the brewery on construction projects at any time. According to an article in the April 27, 2000, *Post-Dispatch*, those members complained of “harassment, intimidation and unilateral changes by Anheuser-Busch in work rules that had been negotiated with the union.”

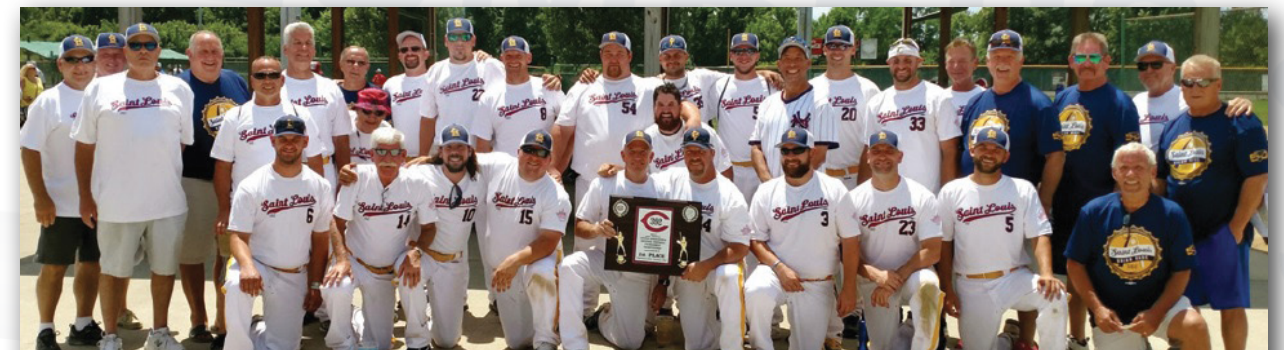
Soon after, a long-standing feud over work jurisdiction – especially on air-conditioning jobs – between Local 562 and **Sheet Metal Workers Union Local No. 36** ended in late

November 2000 when the unions jointly organized and signed a contract with **Zipf-Air, Inc.**, a small, non-union heating-and-air-conditioning contractor. In the past, the two locals had battled over which would represent workers at smaller contractors doing rehabilitation and remodeling jobs, especially involving air-conditioning.

Officials for the two locals told the December 1 *Post-Dispatch* that “their new, cooperative effort to bury the hatchet will benefit consumers as well as their members.” They saw the deal with Zipf-Air, a first in the St. Louis area, according to the December 4, *Post-Dispatch*, as a way to gain “more unionization among smaller contractors in St. Louis.”

By July 2001, Local 562 had more than 3,300 active members. These included 3,182 construction journeymen, 485 maintenance journeymen, 424 construction apprentices and 42 maintenance apprentices.

Some of the local’s efforts from three years earlier came to fruition in 2002 with completion of construction of the **Marriott Renaissance Grand Hotel** (now the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel), a long-sought convention-headquarters hotel in downtown St. Louis, which had been built into the former Statler and Lennox hotels. Before work was started in 2000, Local 562 helped make possible the largest private loan for the \$240-million



The Local 562 softball team won the “B” Division championship in the national United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters Softball Tournament in June 2017 when Brother Jason Walkenhorst hit a game-winning homerun in extra innings of the title game. Members of the local’s first-ever U.A. championship team were journeymen Chuck Bales, Adam Conway, Rob Costello, Dan Schuerman, Rick DuBose, Joe Katke, Andy Finklang, Ben Fichter, Jason Walkenhorst, Tom Reiter Jr. and Jake Moellman; apprentices Patrick Nichols, Adam Pomirko, Joe Reiter, Brian Beck, and Nick Gumm; and pre-apprentices Tim Benoist and Stephen Franzen.



Dignitaries including Local 562 Business Manager John O'Mara (third from left), other local leaders, U.A. international leaders and county, state and federal elected officials participate in a ceremonial ground-breaking on November 9, 2018, to mark the start of construction of the local's new, state-of-the-art training facility adjacent to the local's headquarters in Earth City.

project – \$30 million from the national A.F.L.-C.I.O. Building and Investment Trust – with an infusion of cash into the trust.

But work slowed and remained stagnant for much of the remainder of the decade. To help counteract the lethargic conditions, Local 562 was one of three locals that in September 2002 made an “historic gesture” and guaranteed that St. Louis-area construction job sites would be “free of lockouts, strikes, picketing and other labor disruptions,” the September 24 *Post-Dispatch* reported. The pact with the unions’ respective contractor groups aimed to “answer complaints by large (project) owners about productivity and to quell rumblings by owners in recent months about using more non-union labor,” according to the newspaper.

However, one of the jobs on which Local 562 members did work during that time was one of the more prominent projects in which the local has ever been involved: construction of the new, state-of-the-art **Busch Stadium** in downtown St. Louis beginning in January 2004. Home of the Cardinals baseball team, the \$365-million park opened April 4, 2006, with a seating capacity of 44,494 and a commercial area, Ballpark Village, adjacent to it.

Although service work remained strong during the second half of the decade, after completion of the stadium, 2008 and 2009 were markedly down years in employment for the local’s members. Regardless, the local grew, and by the end of the decade it numbered more than 3,650 construction journeymen, 445 construction apprentices, 470 maintenance journeymen and a dozen maintenance apprentices.

## BUILDING ONTO ITS FIRST CENTURY

*“Local 562 has a long history of service to its members and the communities it serves. Our local has had a strong leadership role in economic development and industry in the Greater St. Louis area. Within the jurisdiction we serve, there are magnificent examples of the highly skilled craftsmanship of 562 members ... in the industrial, commercial, institutional, municipal structures and residential homes which comprise our commerce and industry.”*

In a letter to the membership, Business Manager O’Mara reflected on Local 562’s extraordinary past as it marked the 100-year

anniversary since it was chartered by the U.A. in March 1912 with a Centennial Celebration Picnic during the summer of 2012.

Initially organized as a steamfitters-only local 100 years earlier, in 2012 the 4,500-member strong Local 562 was composed primarily of pipefitters and plumbers throughout 67 counties in eastern Missouri, but it also represented other bargaining groups such as **coil cleaners, petroleum maintenance workers, lawn irrigation specialists, drain cleaners and building maintenance workers.** Additionally, every member was provided with world-class training sponsored and funded by the local and its signatory contractors to build up and enhance their skills.

By that time, work had picked up considerably within the local’s jurisdiction, beginning a three-year period of strong employment for Local 562 members that would sustain them into the mid-2010s. Among the jobs providing the favorable conditions were projects at automobile plants, especially the installation of lines for paint, hydraulics, water and air in the factories.

A **Project Labor Agreement** (P.L.A.) between the building trades and the Hancock Place School District resulted in union

craftspeople working in 2012 and 2013 on the \$7.9 million in improvements on the district’s campus that included renovations inside the Tiger Dome, which is the commons area, cafeteria and gym shared by students from the high school and middle school, and a multi-purpose building and gym added to the middle school building. Funds saved because of the P.L.A. and the efficiency of the union workers also allowed the district to add some additional “value projects” to its renovations, according to the September 16, 2013, *Labor Tribune*.

The building trades had come to depend on labor-friendly P.L.A.s, which ensure projects are completed on time, under budget and to the highest standards, to gain jobs – and they would continue to do so.

Importantly, within Local 562, its administration, led by **Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer John O’Mara**, in 2014 began implementing the use of more committees to address union issues. With members serving on committees that would deal with topics such as bylaws, fundraising and diversity, more of the membership would be able to become involved in the local’s decision-making processes.



Local 562 members and families March in the Labor Day Parade in St. Louis in 2019.

## BROTHER KELLETT LEADS FROM THE TOP OF U.A.

U.A. International General Secretary-Treasurer and Local 562 member [Brother Patrick H. Kellett](#) followed his father, Dick Kellett, and older brother, John, into the local as an apprentice pipefitter in 1981. Thirty-five years later, Brother Kellett was unanimously elected to the position of general secretary-treasurer at the 39 U.A. General Convention in August 2016.



Brother Patrick H. Kellett

After completing his apprenticeship in 1985 and working as a journeyman, foreman and general foreman out in the field, Brother Kellett's leadership role in the local began in 1998 when he was appointed to the finance committee. Two years later, he was appointed a business representative, and from there, he was ultimately elected business manager/secretary-treasurer in 2007.

Before his election as general secretary-treasurer, he served as administrative assistant to the U.A. general president.

His civic contributions include the Heat's On program, the Fishin' Fitters tournament, the Rebuilding Together program, Habitat for Humanity and the Adopt a Local 562 Family Christmas program. He also served on the Board of Directors for the United Way of Greater St. Louis and the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association.

More work as construction and, subsequently, employment picked up for Local 562 included the all-union-built [Cortona at Forest Park](#), a \$42-million, five-story, 278-unit apartment complex – the first of its kind to address the unique lifestyle preferences of Generation Y – in 2014 and 2015. The entire project was “made possible through union investments (from the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Building and Investment Trust) and labor-management cooperation aimed at reinvesting in St. Louis and creating jobs,” according to the April 21, 2015, *Labor Tribune*.

“Unions did a fantastic job here,” Cortona Community Manager Mark Milford told the *Labor Tribune* in April 2015 after the project was complete. “Their craftsmanship shows everywhere. It was a dream to work on this job.”

That year, in another example of strong labor-management cooperation, Local 562, the M.C.A. and the Plumbing Industry Council in July 2015 reached agreement on their second-straight five-year contract. Business Manager O'Mara, whose father, James, had led negotiations as business manager on the decade-long contract between the three organizations that ran from 2000 to 2010, told the July 20 *Labor Tribune* that the agreement was a “win-win for our members, for the industry, for the consumer.”

“This contract puts money in our members' pockets in recognition that our plumbers and pipefitters are the best in the country,” Brother O'Mara further stated. “It also benefits our contractors in terms of language changes to keep them competitive, and it benefits the consumer because they will get high-quality products and services for their investment.”

Key to reaching agreement on the contract was the open dialogue the union had with its contractors, allowing each to share issues so that all parties had a clear understanding of any concerns and, therefore, they were able to work together to resolve them. To help ensure those open communications, labor and management were meeting no less than once a quarter to deal with issues that impacted the industry as they were taking place.

The pact, which replaced the previous five-year contract that expired June 30 and ran through June 2020, featured a total wage-and-fringe-benefit package increase of \$7.25 per hour over the life of the contract, with \$5.75 going to wages and \$1.50 to be used for either wages or benefits depending on the union's needs. The agreement further included several language changes addressing new, commercial



Local 562 members and families display their opposition to Proposition A during a rally at the local's union hall in July 2018.

mechanical equipment and how it is used and staffed, which were intended to keep union contractors competitive in their technologically advancing industries.

Also placed in the contract was a “very unique solution” to the issue of whether to retain the local's defined-benefit pension plan or offer members a defined-contribution plan such as a 401-K, by which Local 562 members would choose between the plans. After members were presented the pros and cons of each plan during a two-year “educational program,” they would decide if they want both options available to them as a union, and if so, which option each person wants for him- or herself.

The concept was a first within the U.A., according to the *Labor Tribune*, and lead contractor negotiator, Dennis Corrigan of [Corrigan Company Mechanical Contractors](#), even said a management consultant called it “a trailblazer.” At the time, the Local 562 pension plan was 93 percent funded, making it one of the best-funded plans in the nation, according to the *Labor Tribune*.

Meanwhile, however, Local 562 and the entire organized-labor industry of Missouri were again forced to take on anti-union legislators and their supporters who were pushing in 2015 for a so-called “right-to-work” law to be passed in the state. In response, the union plumbers and pipefitters again led efforts to

## WE ARE 562 PROVING 'RIGHT TO WORK' IS WRONG

Immediately after the State of Missouri passed anti-union, so-called “right-to-work” legislation into law on February 6, 2017, Local 562 sprang into action and spearheaded a statewide effort to counteract and reverse the measure. The U.A. September/October 2019 *Journal* called the subsequent “Vote No Prop A” campaign, enjoined by the plumbers and pipefitters local's [We Are 562](#) program as part of the [We are Missouri](#) initiative, “Perhaps the most successful anti-right-to-work campaign in history.”



Contractors' trucks and vans spell out organized labor's opposition to Proposition A on the grounds of the Local 562 Spanish Lake complex in July 2018.

Missouri became the 27 state to impose a 'right-to-work' law, which prevents unions from collecting mandatory fees from all unionized-workplace employees, even if they are not union members, to cover the costs of collective bargaining. But that distinction did not last very long.

The very day after Missouri's governor signed the bill, Local 562 [Business Manager John O'Mara](#) organized a union meeting to begin formulating a plan to fight the law. Eventually, unions across the state secured 310,000 signatures on a petition, which resulted in the law being overturned.

The We Are 562 and We Are Missouri campaigns held rallies and training sessions throughout the state, focusing on the positive impact of organized labor's community involvement, to defeat the anti-worker regulation and spread information about the consequences of so-called “right to work” for every Missourian. When the measure appeared on the state's ballot in August 2018 as “Proposition A” – after Local 562 and other Missouri organized-labor organizations poured \$15 million into the race, dominated the airwaves, took their campaign into unionized workplaces and knocked on 800,000 doors – the referendum was soundly crushed by an overwhelming 2-to-1 margin.

## MEMBER BROUGHT HOME THE GOLD

Local 562 Brother Billy Hanning was part of the gold medal-winning Team U.S.A. Sled Hockey Team at the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games held in PyeongChang, South Korea. The U.S. squad won the gold over Canada in the title match held March 18.

Brother Hanning joined Local 562 in 2003 when he was 18. One week later, he found out he had bone cancer below the knee in his right leg.

After eventually losing his leg, Brother Hanning first learned about sled hockey after watching a local TV broadcast that featured Steve Cash, goaltender for the U.S. National Sled Hockey Team and a fellow St. Louis-area native. He later joined the Disabled Athlete Sports Association (DASA) St. Louis Blues in 2008 and assisted the team in winning the 2013 U.S.A. Hockey Adult Sled National Championship.

"Growing up playing able-bodied sports and then losing my leg and still trying to play able-bodied sports, I was having a real tough time with it," the then 32-year-old Brother Hanning said in a March 15, 2018, *Sports Illustrated* article. "Just to find a sport where everyone is on the same playing field, you kind of feel normal again, if you will."

As a U.S. National Development Sled Hockey Team member, he made his international competition debut after he was called up to the U.S. National Team in 2012 to play in the World Sled Hockey Challenge. As a member of the national team, he played in two International Paralympic Committee Sled Hockey World Championships and five World Sled Hockey Challenge tournaments and helped Team U.S.A. win the 2018 Para Ice Hockey International Tournament in Turin, Italy.

At the Paralympics in 2018, Brother Hanning skated in three games, tallying a pair of assists. While he was thrilled with winning gold, he was "equally ecstatic" when his union brothers and sisters paid tribute to him for the accomplishment during a union meeting.

"We are so proud of Billy for not giving up," Local 562 Business Manager John O'Mara told the May 7, 2018, *St. Louis Labor Tribune*. "He was dealt a tough challenge, and he responded by making his life, his family's life and the lives of the members of his U.S.A. Sled Hockey Team better. That is why Local 562 is proud to have a member like Billy."

defeat the measure, highlighted by their local's participation in a rally and mobilization effort on September 12, 2015, to sustain Governor Jay Nixon's veto of the legislation, House Bill 116, which was ultimately defeated.



Pictured in 2018 (left to right) are Local 562 Assistant Business Manager Brian Nichols, gold-medalist Brother Billy Hanning, Business Manager John O'Mara and business agents Brian Chumley and Dick Kellett.

As work and employment remained strong within its jurisdiction, Local 562 moved into its new headquarters in Earth City, Missouri, in late 2018, allowing the local to better serve its 4,000 members from a more centralized location. The local in June 2017 had purchased and began renovating the 40,000-square-foot-building that formerly housed ITT Technical Institute at **3640 Corporate Trail** for its offices and health center, and it also began making plans to build a new training center on nearby land at **3772 Corporate Center Drive** it had simultaneously acquired.

"Our offices and the training center need to be in a place to better serve our members," Business Manager O'Mara explained in the June 29, 2017, *Post-Dispatch*. "Our training center will be better equipped to keep up with new technologies, training devices and will allow us more space for our quality hands-on training programs."

Local 562 sold its former, 425-acre headquarters complex in Spanish Lake to the St. Louis Zoo Association, a private, nonprofit group that oversees fundraising, in March 2018 for \$7.1 million. *(The zoo planned to use the land for breeding facilities and a wildlife and safari adventure park, according to the October 8, 2018, Post-Dispatch.)*

Out in the field as the year 2020 approached, Local 562 was gaining more market share in the piping industry while members were employed on a rising number of projects, such as construction of four new buildings for **Washington University in St. Louis** in 2018. Elsewhere, some of the prominent jobs on which the local's union plumbers and pipefitters worked included the new **St. Louis Aquarium at Union Station** that opened in fall 2019 and a major **Saint Louis University Hospital** job that year.

Through more than 109 years, Local 562 has adapted to industry change, multiple mergers and numerous internal and external challenges while embracing new technologies, methods and tools. This is evident in its more recent commitment to acquiring and staffing more service work, including a focus on plumbing service, as witnessed by the local's formation of its first **plumbing-service apprenticeship** class in 2019.

As a result of its dedication to acclimate and adjust and take on challenges, Local 562 has grown to include more than 4,100 members who serve the plumbing and mechanical industry in 67 counties in eastern Missouri in 2020.

The local has also confronted – and continues to confront – the unique challenges thrust upon the union and the entire nation by the deadly **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic** beginning in early 2020. To help stem the spread of the deadly disease, Local 562 responded by closing its offices and training schools in March and providing information to its membership on staying safe during the fatal epidemic while providing **assistance programs** to those who were left unemployed during the ensuing shutdown caused by the pandemic.

The local has sustained its response to the pandemic on behalf of its membership as the epidemic persisted into mid-2021. For instance, in March and April 2020, Local 562 established a **"share-time" program** after Business Manager O'Mara met with

## LOCAL 562 HEALTH CLINIC FOCUSED ON THE WELFARE OF MEMBERS, FAMILIES

Local 562 greatly expanded upon its legacy of providing healthcare services to its members when it opened its new, state-of-the-art **Health and Wellness Center** in August 2019 at its new headquarters in Earth City, into which the local moved in 2018. The local had offered full-service, affordable healthcare at its former complex facility in Spanish Lake since 1971, when it first opened that sprawling compound.

But the local's new Health and Wellness Center is triple the size of the former facility, and its more-centralized location initially doubled the number of patients its doctors and nursing staff were previously seeing. As always, all Local 562 members and retirees are eligible to utilize the center's many services, most all of which are free of charge to members and their dependents.



Staff of the new Local 562 Health and Wellness Center in February 2020 (left to right) Dana Freebersyser, Monica Danchus, Patty Hirschbuehler, Lyndsey O'Mara and Kate Bushman are shown in the center's spacious medical station. *(Photo courtesy of the St. Louis Labor Tribune.)*

"The atmosphere may have changed, but one thing hasn't changed, and that is the special care that Local 562 members get from everyone on the Health and Wellness staff," Local 562 Business Manager John O'Mara declared in the February 4, 2020, *St. Louis Labor Tribune*. "We have been blessed with such a great opportunity for our members and their families to get such great preventative and ongoing care throughout our careers and retirement."

Funded through the **Local 562 Welfare Plan**, the healthcare center's services include health screenings for early detection of diseases including lung cancer; pediatric-care services; mammograms; minor surgeries; drug testing and counseling; and even a vision center. Through the facility, patients have access to physicians and internists who are contracted with the local, a psychiatrist, and even a dermatologist.



its employing contractors, helping to ensure members who applied to be part of the program are not out of work for more than two weeks at a time.

Local 562 office staff have continued to work from home, learning new, distant means of communicating to perform their jobs and service members. The local's health center likewise acquired new ways of doing business and keeping themselves and members safe while never closing down for a day. In doing so, the center made sure its staff had the proper personal-protection equipment they needed; changed check-in policies for patients; and altered schedules to accommodate higher-need patients.

With those and more efforts in place, in May 2020 the local initiated 40 new members into the union and in July 2020 it performed a "white ballot" (only one candidate for each position so no vote is required) for the regular election of its officers. Then in September 2020, the local held its first-ever virtual general membership meeting, after which it would run the meetings virtually until May 2021. That January, the local nominated its representatives for the 40 United Association Convention,



These Local 562 members successfully completed 18 heavy-wall hot welds and replaced a high-pressure boiler feed pump, lube oil coolers, HEP/FAC, four boiler circ pump casings and four 24-inch gate valves while working for the Murphy Company on a project at Ameren utility company's Labadie, Missouri, power plant in November 2019.

and in February the membership elected 44 delegates and alternates to the convention solely by mail-in ballots.

Meanwhile, in November and December 2020, the local reinstated its COVID-19 relief program, which it had begun in April and provided through June, for members who were out of work.

Local 562 has also rendered invaluable aid to its communities during the pandemic. In August 2020, for example, the local started a "plexiglass program" through which it made nearly 2,000 plexiglass shields for students' desks and teachers in surrounding school districts.



Local 562 office staff wear pink to work in October 2019 to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Faced with the challenge of safely reopening its own schools for training its apprentices and members, the local mandated social distancing, the wearing of masks and the use of hand sanitizer, and constructed plexiglass dividers to provide shields for students and instructors. After learning that the school districts in its area needed the same dividers, Local 562 decided to mass produce them by enlisting the manpower of its out-of-work members.

"It was a win/win situation because we were able to help our community and in turn put a few members to work and give them a paycheck," Business Manager O'Mara said at the time. "We are always wanting to make our community better and stronger, and the schools in our area are some of the best, so we want nothing but the best for them and the future students that we hope to see in trade schools someday."

"But these schools also helped our members and gave our members a chance at a paycheck," he continued. "When we all work together, the outcome is the best it can be."

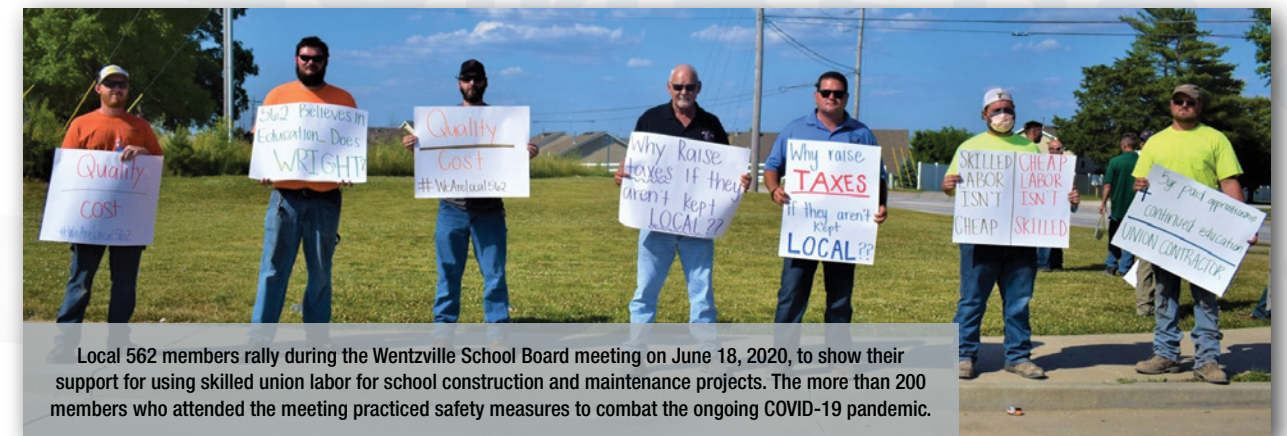
With more than 4,000 members, nearly 3,000 of whom were out on jobsites most days during the COVID-19 pandemic, the local continued to build its city, including the new **St. Louis University Hospital**; renovations to **Busch Stadium** and the surrounding area; upgrades to the **Enterprise Center** arena



The 50-year-old, 8-ton ornamental Local 562 logo that had been etched in the bottom of the pool at the local's former recreation complex in Spanish Lake is installed in its new home at the local's future training center on June 3, 2020, as the centerpiece of a monument in front of the facility at 3755 Corporate Trail that is set to open in the summer of 2020. The pool had been filled in about 15 years earlier, but the logo was extracted and placed near the first tee at the union's Emerald Green golf course and was later placed in storage.

in downtown St. Louis; and many school buildings, while also performing general repairs and upgrades to buildings and facilities throughout its jurisdiction.

As always, in the end, Local 562 will prevail and be a part of helping others overcome the latest challenge in its history and that of the industry and communities it serves. ■



Local 562 members rally during the Wentzville School Board meeting on June 18, 2020, to show their support for using skilled union labor for school construction and maintenance projects. The more than 200 members who attended the meeting practiced safety measures to combat the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



Local 562 plexiglass workers at work on a job in 2021 while wearing masks to protect themselves against the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.



Local 562 officers and members follow safety and social-distancing measures during a May 28, 2020, meeting at the local's union hall during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

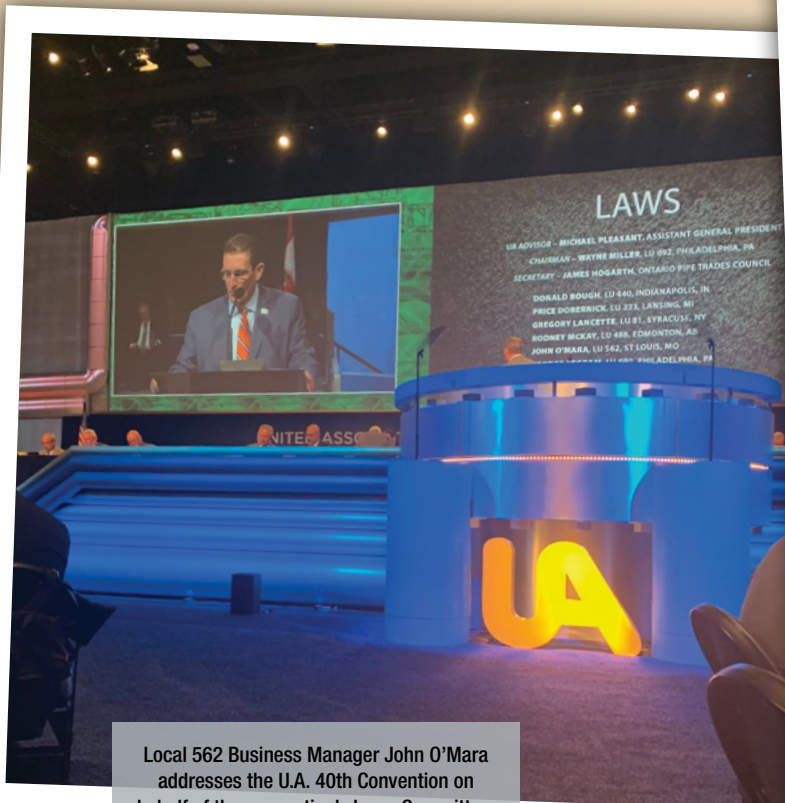


Local 562 apprentices attend class in 2021 wearing masks as protection against the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

## UNITED ASSOCIATION 40TH GENERAL CONVENTION, 2021



The Local 562 contingent of delegates and alternates attending the U.A. 40th Convention in San Diego from August 23 through 27, 2021.



Local 562 Business Manager John O'Mara addresses the U.A. 40th Convention on behalf of the convention's Laws Committee.



During the U.A. 40th Convention, Local 562 Business Agent Richard "Dick" Kellett nominates his brother, former Local 562 business manager Patrick Kellett, to remain as U.A. General Secretary-Treasurer.

# UNITED ASSOCIATION

## JOURNEYMEN PLUMBERS AND STEAM FITTERS

Composed of Journeymen Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters, Sprinkler Fitters, Railroad Fitters, Marine Plumbers, Marine Fitters, General Pipe Fitters and their Helpers and Apprentices whose Trade Jurisdiction Embraces Every Branch of the Pipe Fitting Industry.

### UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

PLUMBERS



GAS-FITTERS

To all whom it may concern:

Whereas, A petition in due form has been received by us praying that a charter be granted to the Pipe Fitters located at St. Louis, Missouri

**NOW KNOW YE**

That acting under authority vested in us by the Laws and usages of the

### JOURNEYMEN PLUMBERS AND STEAM FITTERS

OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

We direct this Warrant and Charter to be issued to the **LOCAL UNION** No. 562 as set forth above to bear date the seven 19th March 1914.

And by virtue of this Warrant and Charter the said **LOCAL UNION** is empowered to do and perform such acts and enjoy such privileges as are prescribed in the laws and usages of the **UNITED ASSOCIATION**, and the members thereof are strictly enjoined to bear constantly in mind and always practice the Cardinal principles of the Association: **FIDELITY, EDUCATION, BENEVOLENCE AND PROTECTION.**

The **UNITED ASSOCIATION** reserves the right to suspend or reclaim this Warrant and Charter and to annul the rights and privileges thereon conferred, for any neglect or refusal to perform the duties required by the laws and usages of the Association as adopted and promulgated by the **UNITED ASSOCIATION**; or by any of its Officers acting under legally invested authority.

In Witness Whereof, this Warrant and Charter has been signed by the Officers of the United Association and the Seal of said Association has been affixed this

seven 19th day of March 1914

*Geo. E. [Signature]*  
SECRETARY

*John A. [Signature]*  
MEMBER

STEAM-FITTERS

STEAM-FITTERS HELPERS

Trade changed Nov 27 1914