

ROOFERS AND WATERPROOFERS  
LOCAL UNION NO. 11

*100-Year Anniversary*



COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY  
1919 - 2019





Congratulations to Gary Menzel, the officers and all the members of Local 11, on the great accomplishment of your union's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The dedication and commitment of Local 11's leadership over the last 100 years has helped create the upper middle class standard of living that your membership has had the fortune to enjoy for decades now. The dedication that the leadership of Local 11 and its staff have demonstrated over the last several years surely brings comfort and confidence to the families who will be depending upon Local 11 for themselves and their families in the foreseeable future.

On behalf of myself and our entire GWC family of lawyers and staff, we wish everyone associated with Local 11 continued success as you move into the second century of service to your members and to the American Labor movement. If Gary's past vigilance as Business Manager is an indication of what is planned for the future, the future of Local 11 is looking very bright. Keep up the good work.



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**100 YEARS!**



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**Happy 100<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary to the  
Roofers & Waterproofers  
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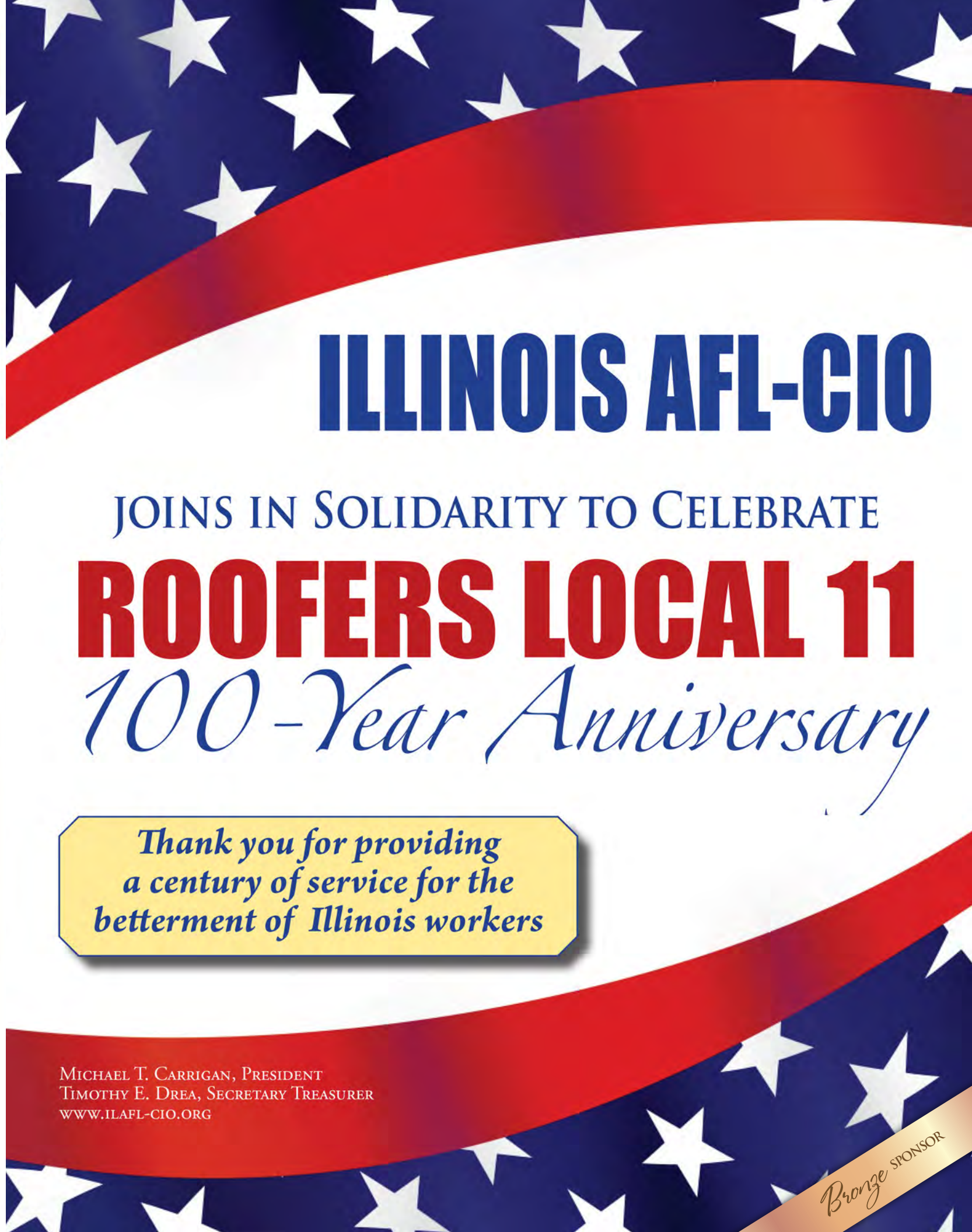
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*Thank you for providing  
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### *Local 11*

Thank you for 100 years of dedication  
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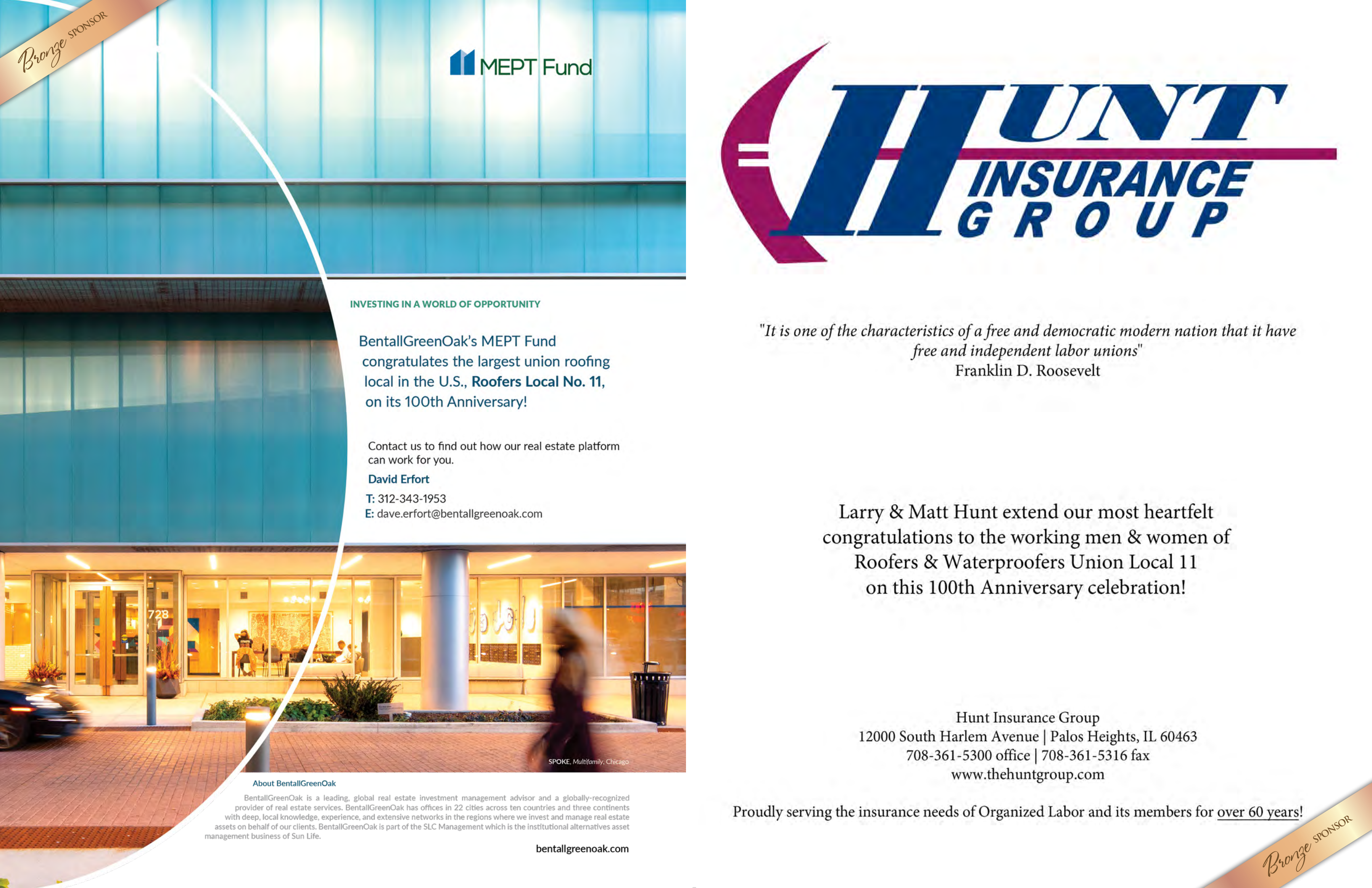
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Franklin D. Roosevelt

Larry & Matt Hunt extend our most heartfelt congratulations to the working men & women of Roofers & Waterproofers Union Local 11 on this 100th Anniversary celebration!

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## Roofers Local No. 11 100-Year Anniversary Celebration

Friday, November 1, 2019

Hilton Chicago/Oak Brook Hills Resort  
3500 Midwest Road, Oak Brook, Illinois

Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres Reception .....2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
100th Anniversary Presentation.....4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Food Stations .....5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Socializing and Dessert Tables..... 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

100 Year



Anniversary

## MEMBERS, CONTRACTORS & OTHERS MAKE UP OUR PAST & FUTURE

I would like to welcome all of our guests on behalf of the Local 11 membership, staff and Executive Board officers as we gather this first day of November 2019 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Local 11 Roofers and Waterproofers union. This centennial celebration is a momentous occasion, and I am honored to be the Business Manager of this great union at this point in time. I would not be here if it were not for the membership believing in my ability to move us forward and putting me in charge, and for that, I would like to thank our members.

I would also like to thank our signatory contractors, who have employed our members for a century and with whom we have developed a partnership over the past 100 years.

A union is created out of the need for workers by business owners. From the beginning of this union, the workers of Local 11 banded together because they all had one thing in common: they wanted a decent wage that would provide for their families. The business owners needed men to perform the roofing and waterproofing work in the Chicago market. They needed men who would perform one of the hardest and dirtiest jobs in the construction industry. This relationship between the workers and management has been tumultuous at times. I can proudly say that for the past 31 years, we have built a business partnership with our contractors and the association, and we have had labor peace because of this working relationship. These accomplishments have been built out of trust and necessity. We need signatory contractors so our members have a career that offers them a living wage, family healthcare and retirement; and our contractors need a skilled workforce to grow their businesses.

The partnership we have developed goes deeper than the contractors and the union. I would also like to thank the many vendors who have assisted us over the years for the betterment of our membership and the industry. We would not have advanced as far as we have without our attorneys, accountants, actuaries, investment managers, consultants, insurance carriers, bankers, manufacturers, supply houses and many more who have made us who we are.

Now it is time for us to focus on the next 100 years. We must continue advancing our trade by training the membership for the future. The newer technologies in the roofing and waterproofing industry are centered around solar, water recapture and energy efficient sustainable roofing and waterproofing systems that will be environmentally friendly. We must stay at the forefront of this ever-changing industry and we must train and educate the future Local 11 roofers and waterproofers so our signatory contractors will always have a highly skilled and trained workforce.

Again, thank you for joining us in our centennial celebration; you have assisted us, and by doing so, you have helped make us the largest union roofing and waterproofing local in the country.

Gary Menzel, President/Business Manager  
Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers Local No. 11



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### Roofers and Waterproofers Local 11 and Union Histories give special thanks to the following for their contributions to this book:

100-Year Anniversary Committee: Gary Menzel, Laura Avizius, Rich Coluzzi, Jim Querio  
United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers  
Local 11 Retirees Ralph Black, Neal Lowrey, John Martini, Doug Huebner  
Chicago Roofing Contractors Association; Bill McHugh, Executive Director; and Linda McHugh, Associate Director  
Local 11 signatory contractor Riddiford Roofing Company, President George Riddiford

Resource cited: "A Brief History of The Roofing Industry and Our Union," United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, 2019

Resource cited: "One Hundred Twenty-five Years of Roofing in America," National Roofing Contractors Association, 1986

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Research Assistant: Sean Quinn

Proofreader: Ann Wilkins Jefferson

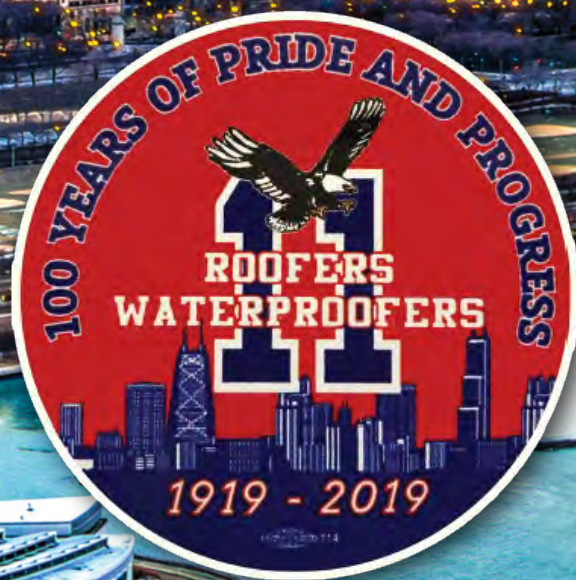




Roofers & Waterproofers Local No. 11 at 100 Years

# A CENTURY-LONG

# COMMITMENT TO COVERING CHICAGO



Roofers in Chicago have been organized as far back as at least 1886, when **Felt and Gravel Roofers' Union Local No. 1** represented about 195 members in the city. By that time, the roofing industry throughout the United States was rapidly expanding – particularly in the area of composition roofing – and would continue to do so into the 20th century, according to *One Hundred Twenty-five Years of Roofing in America* by the **National Roofing Contractors Association**.

In the aftermath of the “**Great Chicago Fire**,” which had devastated the city on October 8 and 9, 1871, as flames, fueled in part by highly flammable roofing materials such as tar and wood shingles, killed about 300 people, destroyed 17,500 buildings and left one-third of the city’s population homeless, the roofing industry “acknowledged its role in major urban fires and worked to provide more effective fireproofing roof coverings,” *Roofing in America*

states. “Industry members acknowledged the dismal condition of the industry and its reputation at the turn-of-the-century and worked to reverse the trend.” Likewise, as the roofing trade made those technological, material and labor advances before and after the turn of the 20th Century – including others for built-up roofing and the development of asphalt shingles for sloped roofing – the need for skilled roofers dramatically increased.

Another roofers organization, the **Gravel Roofers Union and Benevolent Society**, was formed and chartered in Chicago by the State of Illinois in 1890. The local union signed up more than 200 members in its first year alone.

However, the first international roofers unions to be organized were the **International Slate and Tile Roofers Union of America**, which was chartered by the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) on June 5, 1903, and the



# United Slate, Tile & Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers' Ass'n.

DO TH GRANT THIS

**Certificate of Affiliation** to the organized Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof  
Workers of Chicago, Ill.  
to be hereinafter known as

## Composition Roofers, Damp & Waterproof Workers

Local No. 11 of Chicago, Ill. and Vicinity,

for the purpose of a thorough organization of the Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers' craft, and the said Local No. 11 is hereby authorized to establish, operate and maintain such laws, rules and regulations for the government of said crafts in said locality as shall to them appear most practical, possible and beneficial.

For a gross violation of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Slate, Tile & Composition Roofers, Damp & Waterproof Workers' Association, this Certificate of Affiliation may be suspended or revoked, by a majority vote of all affiliated Locals at any Annual Convention and not otherwise. And should said Local No. 11 of Chicago, Ill. and Vicinity, be dissolved, suspended or forfeit this Certificate of Affiliation, the member thereof, then serving as president, does hereby bind himself to surrender the same, together with such other property as shall belong to the United Slate, Tile & Composition Roofers, Damp & Waterproof Workers Association, to the Officers thereof.

## The United Slate, Tile & Composition Roofers, Damp & Waterproof Workers' Ass'n

does hereby bind itself to support said Local No. 11 of Chicago, Ill. and Vicinity in the exercise of all its rights, privileges and authority as an affiliated Local with voice and vote the peer of any and superior to none in the affairs of all.

Given under our hand and seal this Twenty fourth  
day of November 1919

United Slate, Tile & Composition Roofers, Damp & Waterproof Workers' Association,

J. J. Hurley President.  
J. M. Garlak Sec'y and Treas.

Local 11 charter, issued November 24, 1919.

100 Year



Anniversary

**International Brotherhood of Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers**, which received its charter from the A.F.L. on November 6, 1906. Early on, the Slate and Tile Roofers chartered a local in Chicago (possibly Local No. 1), and the Composition Roofers chartered **Local No. 6** in the city.

When the Composition Roofers union and the Slate and Tile Roofers union merged in September 1919 to become the **United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association** (which would be renamed the **United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers** in 1978), they brought their 1,600 members together in a single organization of locals, which were each assigned new numbers. In Chicago, the composition roofers of Local 6 were renamed **Gravel and Composition Roofers Local No. 11** and were subsequently chartered on **November 24, 1919**, and the slate and tile roofers were renamed **Slate and Tile Roofers Local No. 17**.

## TWENTIES' HIGHS & DEPRESSION'S LOWS GOING FROM A ROAR TO A WHIMPER

**A**lthough the 1920s was generally a period of prosperity for the roofing industry, according to *Roofing in America*, during which there were more roofing contractors, more roofing workers and more local industry associations during the decade than ever before and "old roofing systems prospered as new ones were perfected," it began with a thud for Local 11 and Local 17. After a lengthy strike by the Chicago building trades in 1921, U.S. Federal Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis (who was also serving as Major League Baseball's first commissioner and that year expelled eight members of the Chicago White Sox from organized baseball for conspiring to lose the 1919 World Series in the so-called "Black Sox Scandal") arbitrated in September 1921 that the trades would be penalized with significant wage reductions, decreasing composition roofers' hourly rate from \$1.25 to 92-1/2 cents and slate roofers' from \$1.25 to \$1.



Members of Chicago's Gravel and Composition Roofers Union, a predecessor of Local 11, pose on Labor Day 1904.



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION

The American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) chartered the International Slate and Tile Roofers Union of America on June 5, 1903, and soon after chartered the International Brotherhood of Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers on November 6, 1906. While the two unions functioned cooperatively over the next 13 years, in September 1919, the organizations met in Pittsburgh and merged to form the United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association, which was issued a charter by the A.F.L. in December of that year.

Thanks in large measure to organizing efforts during the Great Depression of the 1930s and military work generated by World War II in the early 1940s, the Association grew from 1,600 initial members to more than 7,000 by 1944. With construction booming after the war, its membership doubled by 1950, and steady growth during that decade and the 1960s and 1970s expanded the organization to 28,000 members by 1978.

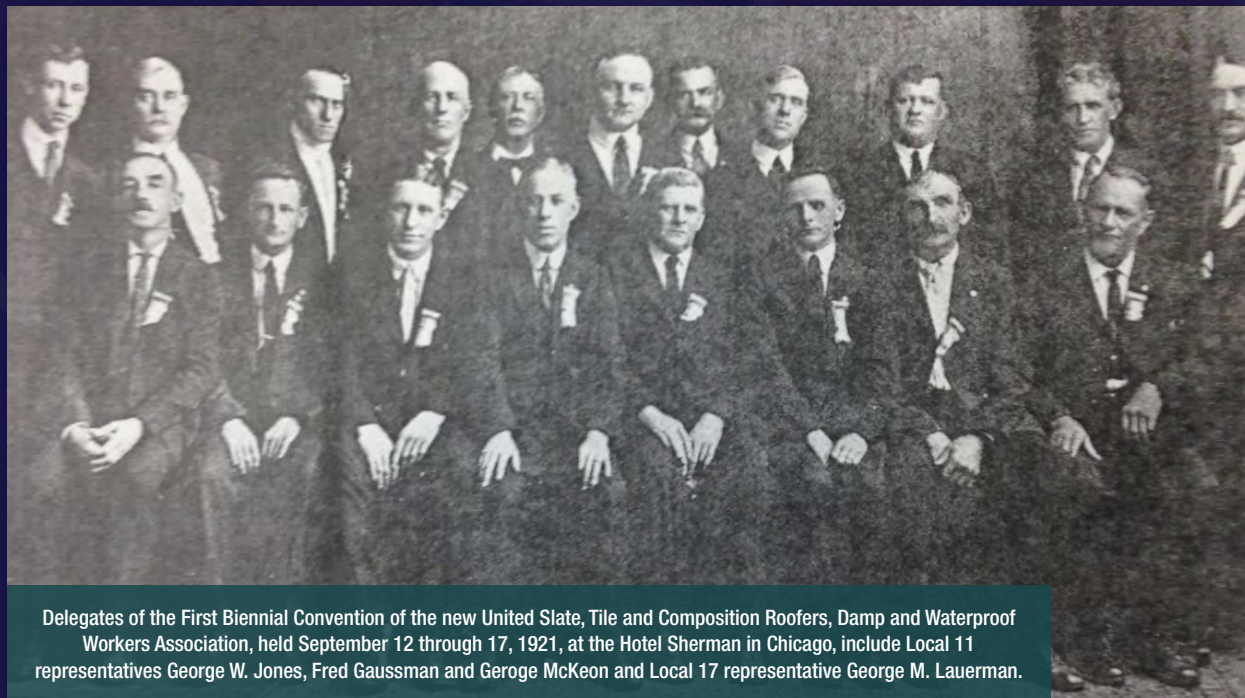
The original sites of the general offices of the United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association were first in Cleveland and then at 130 North Wells Street in Chicago during the 1940s and 1950s before the union permanently moved its headquarters to Washington, D.C., in 1961.

The very first Biennial Convention of the United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association was held at the Hotel Sherman in Chicago from September 12 through 17, 1921.

That year during its 21st Triennial Convention, the union adopted its new name, the **United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers**, and it also approved extensive revisions to its constitution and began a new health and safety program.

With its nationwide membership in a steep decline during the 1980s, the union appointed a Director of Organizing in 1990, began conducting Construction Organizing and Membership Education and Training (COMET) classes across the country and embarked on a new "Labor-Management Cooperation" effort to assist its signatory contractors with obtaining work by making them more competitive in the roofing industry. Those endeavors ultimately reversed the negative trend, and by the close of the 1990s, the union had grown back to more than 23,000 members.

Also during that time, the United Union relocated its international offices, which had been moved from Chicago to Washington, D.C., in 1961, to its current headquarters at 1660 L Street NW in D.C.



Delegates of the First Biennial Convention of the new United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association, held September 12 through 17, 1921, at the Hotel Sherman in Chicago, include Local 11 representatives George W. Jones, Fred Gaussman and Geroge McKeon and Local 17 representative George M. Lauerman.



Among the roughly 350 Local 11 members taking part in the United Nations Victory Parade held in Chicago in June 1942 are (left to right) Treasurer Walter Zeller, Financial Secretary Earl Kruse, Joseph Luckow, International Vice President Frank Wodylak, Arthur McGonigal, Recording Secretary Patrick McDonough and Trustee William McCall.

Following the conflict between the unions and their employing contractors, the building industry in Chicago was nearly "stagnant," according to an article in the July 1926 *University Journal of Business*. What's more, Judge Landis employed a Citizens Committee to act as a volunteer police force to enforce his decision, further crippling the union construction sector.

Nationally, however, the number of people identifying themselves as roofers doubled from 12,000 in 1920 to 24,000 in 1930, according to *Roofing in America*, "reflecting the doubling in construction expenditures from 1920 to 1930." Additional industry innovations continued to improve the roofing profession, including the use of trucks, which by 1923 had begun to replace the horse-drawn "Democrat" wagons to make roofers' jobs easier.

By mid-decade, Local 11 (which at the time still counted among its membership some past members of the former Gravel Roofers Union and Benevolent Society, as it would into the

mid-1930s) and Local 17 were enjoying the prosperity of the so-called "Roaring Twenties." Subsequently, by 1927, wages for Local 11 roofers were up to \$1.50 per hour and for Local 17 members were up to \$1.75 per hour in contracts with the **Chicago Roofing Contractors Association**.

Local 11 had organized nearly all of the composition roofers in the city by April of the following year, and it also had every "Landis award firm" organized after a seven-year-long struggle following the infamous strike of 1921. "That's going some, ain't it?" Local 11 **Brother Fred Gausman** declared in the April 1928 issue of the *Journeymen Roofers Magazine*, the international union's official journal. "Thanks to the officers and that loyal bunch of stickers behind them, the rank and file."

But the first half of that year, work slowed so dramatically that more than half of the local's members were unemployed at times – and those working were often employed only part-time.





Local 11 members taking part in a blood drive on August 21, 1943, included (and desk) William Bullard; (seated, left to right) Larry Belles, Robert Swetman, Harry Jester, George Butler, John Johanson, Fred Anderson, Dan Ganas, Harold Burgess and William Woods Jr.; and (standing) Joseph Wilmer, Irvin Rogers, President Dean Moore, A. J. McGonegar, James Parker, William Schmidt and Herb Perlberg.

Hopes for a continued recovery were decimated the next year by the **Great Depression**, which essentially began with the U.S. stock market crash of October 29, 1929 (history's "Black Tuesday") and lingered for nearly a decade. The catastrophic economic and human disaster almost immediately impacted the nation's roofing industry and continued to hinder employment for several years. Over the first two years of the Depression, the number of roofers in the country dropped 30 percent between 1929 and 1931, according to *Roofing in America*. "As the pace of construction slowed, contractors hoped to maintain profits by increasing their volume. Prices were cut to increase sales in the face of stiff competition," the book also explains. "The resulting price cutting spiral was inexorable."

In Chicago, wages for Local 11 members dropped sparingly from \$1.87-1/2 cents per hour in 1929 to \$1.70 per hour in 1932, while Local 17 wages held at \$1.75 per hour into that

year. But the composition roofers felt the full effects of the times, reporting in the January 1930 *Roofers Magazine* that work was "very slow in Chicago" and more than one half of its members were idle and the rest were "working part-time only."

The local even posted a "Special Notice" in that year's April *Roofers Magazine* to warn travelers from other roofers' locals who were looking for work, which read: "All members are requested to stay away from the jurisdiction of Local No. 11, Chicago, Illinois, until further notice." Regardless, the local still held its annual turkey give-away drawing that December 18.

Conditions for Local 11 remained "terrible" into the following year, as Brother Gausman described them in the January 1931 *Roofers Magazine*, as only about 40 percent of the membership was working only part-time. The local's scribe did point to a ray of hope, however, noting, "In the face of all this, our members are remaining loyal. Not one desertion."

## Kruse Martini Office Center

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE LOCAL 11'S HOME

For nearly 100 years, Local 11 rented space in which it located its union offices and meeting hall. After it was first chartered in 1919, the local's union hall was located at 777 West Adams Street in Chicago until 1926, when it moved to the Bricklayers Hall at 910 West Monroe Street in the city — in which most all of the town's building trades union were located.

By 1941, the local moved its offices and meeting location into rented office space in a building at 36 South Peoria Street in Chicago. Before the final year of that decade, Local 11 moved again, relocating to 2216 West Madison Street, where it would remain into 1956, when it moved to 113 South Ashland Avenue in the city.

By 1962, the local moved back into offices at 36 South Peoria Street, where it would remain until the early 1970s, when it was located in new offices at 3245 South Grove Avenue in the suburb of Berwyn, Illinois, by late 1971. More than a decade later, the local moved again, relocating its offices in 1983 to 9838 West Roosevelt Road in Westchester, Illinois. Meanwhile, meetings were being held in a building owned by the butchers union until the local began meeting at its Apprenticeship Training Center at 7045 Joliet Road in Indian Head Park, Illinois, in 2005 (where the local continues to hold its general membership meetings in 2019).

In 2015, after 96 years of renting office space, Local 11 purchased a 21,000-square-foot building in the Oak Brook suburb



Local 11 current union hall, the Kruse Martini Office Center, at 2021 Swift Drive in Oak Brook.

of Chicago to become the permanent home for its administrative and health-and-welfare offices. The local began a total, top-to-bottom renovation of the space to fit its needs, with construction beginning in 2016; renovations included building offices for the union and the welfare and pension staffs, and adding a parking lot and landscaping.

Local 11 officers and staff moved into the new — but sparsely decorated — union hall at 2021 Swift Drive in Oak Brook in July 2017.

Nearly two years later, after more interior work and decorating had been completed, Local 11 honored two of its former leaders who also served as general presidents of the International Union of Roofers and Waterproofers by dedicating the new building in honor of brothers Earl J. Kruse and John C. Martini. On May 1, 2019, officers and members of Local 11 unveiled a plaque on the building's brick exterior that memorializes brothers Kruse, who passed away in 2005, and Martini for their "determination and perseverance in seeing that Local 11 members — and roofers and waterproofers around our country — would earn a living wage and have family healthcare and retirement benefits."

Local 11's facility is now the Kruse Martini Office Center.

"We honor these two men for their dedication to the labor movement and their ability to continue the fight against the struggles roofers and waterproofers have endured over the past 50 years," Local 11 Business Manager Gary Menzel said during the dedication ceremony.



Local 11 former union hall at 9838 West Roosevelt Road in Westchester.





## Brothers Jones, Kruse & Martini

# MEMBERS LED INTERNATIONAL UNION FROM THE TOP

Local 11 has the proud distinction of having had three of its members serve as general presidents of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers. Brother George W. Jones, Brother Earl J. Kruse and Brother John C. Martini each held the top leadership position for the union, which has only been held by a total of seven men.

## UNITED UNION INTERNATIONAL GENERAL PRESIDENTS

J. T. Hurley  
George W. Jones  
Charles D. Aquadro  
Roy E. Johnson  
Joseph A. Wiederkehr  
Earl J. Kruse  
John C. Martini  
Kinsey M. Robinson

Brother Jones became the union's first elected general president on September 8, 1919, during the convention at which the two existing international roofers unions merged to form the United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association (forerunner of the United Union). He would continue to serve in the position for nearly 23 years before stepping down on March 23, 1942.

*(Brother Charles D. Aquadro of Pittsburgh succeeded Brother Jones and served a highly-successful term of more than 31 years, during which the union grew four-fold, before resigning on January 1, 1974.)*

Brother Kruse, who joined Local 11 in 1950 as a third-generation union roofer, was elected general president by the International Union Executive Board in February 1985 and would serve in the position for 18 years until 2003. Returning to the trade after serving in the U.S. Army from 1951



Brother Earl J. Kruse

to 1953 during the Korean War, he became a trustee of the local in 1961 and was elected its vice president in 1968. From 1961 until 1980, he also served on the Local 11 Executive Board, and from 1969 until 1979, he served as chairman of the Local 11 health and welfare, pension and vacation plans.

In 1972, Brother Kruse was elected international vice president and in 1979 was appointed special assistant to the general president, serving in both positions until he was elected international general president. In that position, he placed a strong emphasis on developing quality apprenticeship, safety and health programs, and his leadership was instrumental in the development of new apprenticeship manuals for the union.

Brother Kruse received his 50-year union service pin and a gold watch from Local 11 in 2001. He passed away in 2005.

Brother Martini, who joined Local 11 in 1957, succeeded Brother Kruse when he was elected United Union general president in 2003, and he would serve in the position until his retirement in 2006. Having held various elected and appointed positions for the local, including business agent, he was appointed an international representative in 1985 and in 1993 was elected international vice president.

In 1998, Brother Martini was elected international executive vice president and served as chairman of the National Roofing Industry Pension Plan from 2003 until 2012. He also honorably served in the U.S. Army National Guard.



Brother John C. Martini



Local 11 Brother Larry Belles served as the local's president from 1945 into the early 1960s.

But by the mid-1930s, the American economy began to recover and construction expenditures slowly began to increase after bottoming out in 1933, according to *Roofing in America*. What's more, "the improvements in the economy had an immediate effect on roofing materials manufacturers. Between 1933 and 1935, the total value of roofing supplies produced increased a dramatic 70 percent. By the end of 1935, roofing factories were employing more workers than before 1929."

While the federal government's New Deal programs were helping to put people back to work on federal projects

around the country during that time, including in Chicago, the roofers' union and locals 11 and 17 likewise actively worked to revive the local roofing industry. To that end, during its April 3, 1935, union meeting, Local 11 voted to "make a temporary agreement with the Contractors Association in which the wage scale on work uncontrollable by this local shall be one dollar per hour." The membership further unanimously approved a measure by which any member caught "working below the established wages" would be expelled from the union.

Then in 1938, as the Great Depression was nearing its ultimate end, delegates from Local 11 attended the sixth convention of the United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association from November 7 to 12 in Cincinnati. During the proceedings, Local 11 delegate **Brother William O'Connell**, who served as the local's secretary at the time, stated that while the local had been "hit very hard" by the Depression, it had tried to pay its debts and the local intended to pay its debts and "wert <sic> not so far behind that they could not do it."



A Local 11 member operates a new hot-pitch pump and kettle used for the first time to move tar to the roof for the 110,000-square-foot job on the General Motors parts warehouse in Chicago in 1946.



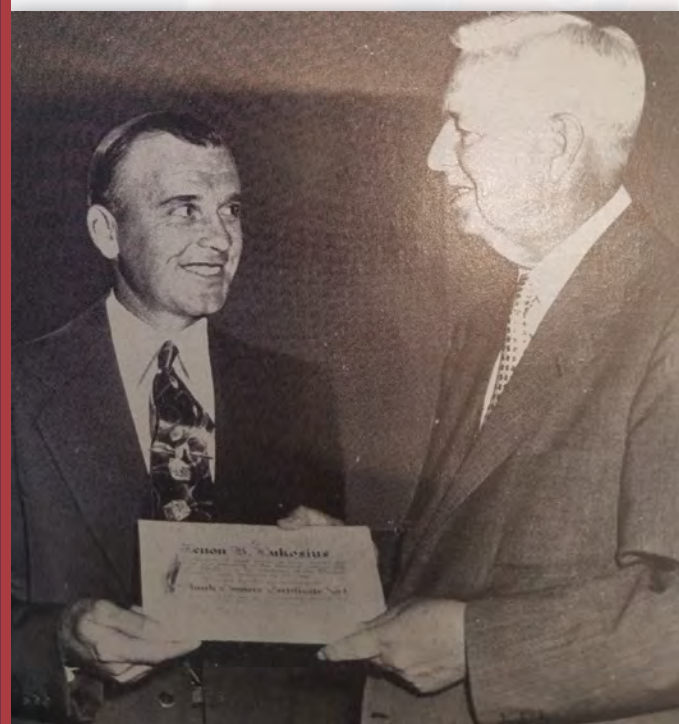
## LOCAL NEARLY IMPLODES AMID WORLD WAR RECOVERING FROM ITS DARKEST DAYS

As the nation strengthened its military might during the late 1930s and into the 1940s as World War II was being fought on other continents, Local 11 reported to the International union that its employment conditions were “fair” in late 1940. Into the following year, the local’s wages also remained steady at \$1.75 per hour for its journeyman roofers, while Local 17 journeymen were receiving the same scale.

After the United States officially entered the war following the December 7, 1941 Japanese attack on the U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Local 11’s more than 700 members remained busy on defense projects through to the war’s end on September 2, 1945. Those wartime jobs included waterproofing underground ammunition magazines in and around Chicago.

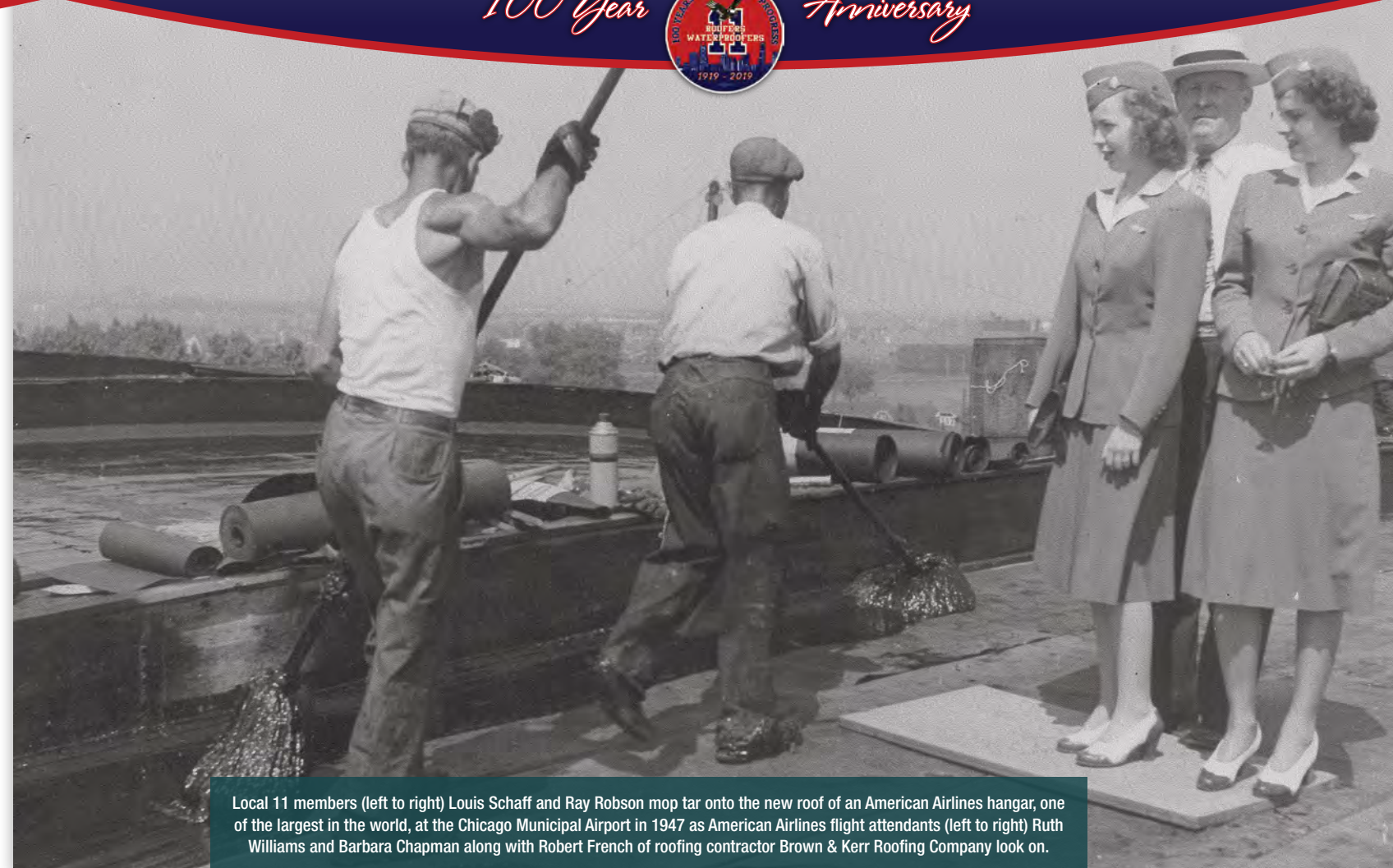
Longtime Local 11 member Brother Zenon B. “Luke” Lukosius was honored in 1953 for his part in the capture of a German submarine, U-505, during World War II, receiving a “Plank Owner’s Certificate” from Chicago Mayor Martin Kennelly that stated, “In recognition of his heroism as one of the first boarders when the U-505 was taken off the French West African coast on June 4, 1944, he will always be welcome aboard her in her final harbor.” Brother Lukosius was serving aboard the U.S. destroyer escort Pillsbury when the ship pulled alongside the abandoned submarine, whose crew had set demolition charge and opened a seacock to sink the vessel. After entering the U-boat, he replaced the cover on the seacock while two shipmates diffused the explosives.

According to an article in the September 1953 issue of *The Journeyman Roofer and Waterproofers*, the capture, which was kept a secret until after the war, “yielded information of immeasurable aid to the allied anti-submarine campaign.” At the time of the award ceremony, the Nazi sub was in dry dock in the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Navy Yard and was being readied for towing to Chicago, where it was scheduled to become a permanent war memorial at the city’s Science Museum.



However, Local 11 became involved in a fierce internal fight that severely hindered the local throughout the first half of the 1940s as war raged around the world. The battle at home began in earnest during a union meeting on October 14 when members demanded repeal of a contract with the Roofing Contractors Association that they had not been allowed to see until it was signed. They complained the contract was unfair and not acceptable to them, and while they later asked the International roofers union office in Cleveland to rescind the contract, its officers did not follow through on their promise to investigate, according to the December 4 *Chicago Tribune*.

A petition presented in 1941 to the International charged that the local’s rank and file members were “denied a voice in the union’s affairs,” the April 4, 1942, *Tribune* later reported. Local 11 business agents **Brother Luke Ward** and **Brother Peter Riley** subsequently attempted to expel the 26 signers of the petition from the union.



Local 11 members (left to right) Louis Schaff and Ray Robson mop tar onto the new roof of an American Airlines hangar, one of the largest in the world, at the Chicago Municipal Airport in 1947 as American Airlines flight attendants (left to right) Ruth Williams and Barbara Chapman along with Robert French of roofing contractor Brown & Kerr Roofing Company look on.

Then on December 3, 1941, the group of “rebellious” members filed suit in the state’s Superior Court against Brother Ward and several of the local’s other officers, asking for an injunction to prevent their expulsion from the union. According to the December 4 *Tribune*, as part of their suit, the rebel faction pointed out that Brother Ward had previously served at least three prison terms, that the set of officers were not legally elected and that they “have never made any accounting of funds and yet dare to expel summarily any members who question their high-handed rule.”

The rebel members, who were led by Local 11 officer **Brother Larry Belles** and trustees Brother Irwin Rogers, **Brother Robert Tartar** and **Brother Charles Tannihill**, also charged that union dues were \$48 a year and initiation fees were \$125, although average earnings of a

roofer did not exceed \$1,500 a year. The further alleged that the officers issued numerous permits to temporary workers who were assessed \$1 per day for the period they worked.

Brother Belles in early April took the fight to the International union’s convention, which was being held in Philadelphia. After asking again for an investigation of Local 11, the April 4, 1942, *Tribune* reported, he also attacked **International President George W. Jones**, a former Local 11 business agent who was up for reelection as president and “allegedly sponsored Riley and others.” (As a result of Brother Belles’ attack, according to the newspaper, Brother Jones would withdraw as a candidate for reelection.)

The controversy further escalated on April 2, 1942, when Brother Belles was physically assaulted at the door of his apartment, the April 3 *Tribune* reported, in an attack that police said





(Left to right) Local 11 member Ray Robson, Ruberoid Company representative Tom Dantz, George Brown of Brown & Kerr Roofing Company, flight attendants Ruth Williams and Barbara Chapman, Robert French of Brown & Kerr and Local 11 member Mike Kilcourse pose during the roofing job on an American Airlines hangar in 1947.

was “motivated by the union fight.” What’s more, by that time, the International union had placed Local 11 under the supervision of **International Fourth General Vice-President Frank Wodylak** after Brother Ward was forced to resign following the attack.

A new election of officers won through the law suit and supervised by a Circuit Court judge on November 18, 1942, placed four of the “rebel members” into the local’s offices, including **Brother Dean Moore** as president and **Brother Harry Jester** as vice president. The balloting was also “held under the watchful eyes” of a police labor detail, according to the November 19 *Tribune*.

However, although new officers had been elected, Vice-President Wodylak remained in charge of the local, but another petition signed by more than 100 members of Local 11 in April 1943 and sent to the International

office “protested against the arbitrary action of Wodylak in suspending meetings of the local since February 15 and his order of March 1 which raised the dues of the 500 members from \$4 to \$5 a month with an additional assessment of \$1 a week per member,” the April 6, 1943, *Tribune* reported. In addition, the petition charged that there had been no accounting of local’s funds.

Wodylak had advised members that monthly dues would be increased on March 1 and that a special weekly assessment of \$1 would be levied to bring the local’s treasury up to the \$5,000 required by the union’s constitution, and that all meetings had been suspended because the membership had proved it “could not conduct business in an orderly manner,” according to the newspaper. It further reported that the local’s treasury was depleted “apparently because the former officers had paid \$7,000 to an attorney

for representing them in their squabble with the rebellious members.”

In another election of officers on June 23, 1943, members of Local 11 overwhelmingly rejected Brother Ward, who had attempted a comeback as president, putting the “finishing touch” on the “housecleaning of their affairs,” as the June 24 *Tribune* reported. Following the balloting, Brother Moore, who was re-elected as president, said the results made the union fully independent, according to the newspaper, while Lieutenant George Barnes of the police labor detail, who supervised the election, “hailed the downfall of Ward ... as a victory for honest unionism.”

Following that volatile period for the local, as wartime work continued, an International officer’s report in the Third Quarter 1944 issue of the union’s *Journeyman Roofers and Waterproofers Publication* announced, “The local seems to be progressing greatly under the new administration and business is transacted in a modern, efficient manner.”

That year, with abundant employment generated by the need for military materiel, Local 11’s wages held at \$1.75 per hour, as they had the previous year as well.



Local 11 members (left to right) Leo Anderson, Harry Jester, Business representative Dean Moore, Chester Reed, Edward Belice, (Edward Norton of Norton Sons Roofing Company) and William Belice pose during a job on the roof of the Sanitary District Pump and Blower House in Chicago in 1948, for which the roofers used a new scraper machine to remove old materials.



Local 11 member William Belice and Chester Reed of Norton Sons Roofing operate the new scraper machine used for the roofing job on the Sanitary District Pump and Blower House in Chicago in 1948.

A felt shortage during the war resulted in yet another challenge for the roofing industry in Chicago and nationwide, as felt was the preferred primary component applied in composite roofing at the time. However, by 1944, **fiberglass felt** was being looked at as a possible solution.

As the war drew nearer to a close, throughout 1945, Local 11 was able to report to the International union that its trade conditions were “fair.”





(Left to right) Chester Reed of Norton Sons Roofing and Local 11 members Donald Anderson, Leo Anderson and William Belice work on the roofing job on the Sanitary District Pump and Blower House in Chicago in 1948.

### LOCAL GAINS BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS ADVANCES FOR INDUSTRY, MEMBERS

Following the end of World War II in September 1945 and into the second half of the 1940s, progress in the roofing industry accelerated as construction around the nation boomed. Among those advances initially introduced during that period throughout the country were the use of Foamglas insulation and other fiberglass membranes, while fiberglass mops were already being used by many roofers

Of the dozens of Local 11 members who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II from 1941 until its end in September 1945, Brother Richard DeBeney was killed in action in Europe during the war, making the ultimate sacrifice on January 26, 1945, while serving as a private in the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division, 7th Infantry Regiment. He is buried at the American Cemetery in Epinal, France.



instead of cotton mops, the former of which lasted longer and made the spreading of asphalt and coal tar pitch more even and smoother.

An ensuing surge in housing construction and restaurant and commercial building into the 1950s would help provide improved employment for the local's members throughout much of the balance of the 1940s and the following decade. During that period, the Chicagoland roofing industry was completely unionized.

Compelled by the busy construction market, Local 11 in late 1945 implemented a new, formal and structured **apprenticeship training program** to grow its ranks of qualified composition and gravel roofing journeymen. Subsequently, the local was able to report to the International union that its trade conditions were "good."

Among the several other innovations in the industry at that time, which were also necessitated by the boom in building, Local 11 members working for Empire Roofing

Company in late 1946 implemented the use of a pump to get hot pitch from a kettle on the ground to the 1,100-square-foot steel roof deck of the new **General Motors parts warehouse** on which it was working at Cicero Avenue and Roosevelt Road in the city – thereby eliminating the hoisting of individual tar buckets. In Chicago and elsewhere, motorized hoists replaced hand hoists in getting materials to rooftops, and felt layers and roof scrapers were introduced to the industry, which, as the United Union's *A Brief History of The Roofing Industry and Our Union* declares, began "a mechanization of the roofing trade."

Local 11 members in December 1946 also began using a new felt-laying machine, which they implemented on construction of the roof on a plant for **Armour and Company**.

Meanwhile, Slate and Tile Roofers Local 17 members were installing precast concrete roof slabs made by federal cement tile on a new **Chevrolet Motor Company** building, a first of their kind.

The many significant projects on which Local 11 members worked throughout the second half of the 1940s included construction in 1947 of new airplane hangars for American Airlines at the Chicago municipal airport. The world's largest commercial hangars and the first buildings of that type in Chicago, their concrete decks were supported by concrete ribs and the total roof area was about 1200 squares which are covered with 1 inch of insulation, over which roofers laid Ruberoid asbestos felt on the oval sections and pitch and gravel on the flat sections.



Local 11 members working for Brown & Kerr Roofing Company install FoamGlas squares for a roofing project in January 1961.





Many Local 11 members have honorably served with the U.S. Armed Forces over the past century in defense of the country. Among those brave individuals, Brother William Carl Lipsch, a Local 11 member for more than 40 years before he passed away in June 2003, was awarded a Purple Heart in 1954 for combat injuries he sustained while fighting with the U.S. Marines in the Korean War.

By the 1950s, Local 11 was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, the Chicago Federation of Labor, the Chicago and Cook County Building Trades Council, the Lake County Building Trades Council, the DuPage Building Trades Council and the Illinois State Federation of Labor. Through its long-time affiliation with the **Illinois District Council of Roofers**, comprised of roofing locals across the state, Local 11 was one of the leaders in advancing health and safety regulations for the roofing industry in Illinois during the decade.

After a one-day strike of its 700 members on June 1, 1950, the local also finally gained

a **Health and Welfare Fund** benefit from the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association as part of its new contract signed the next day. The agreement provided a 7-1/2-cent-per-hour payment by employers into a welfare fund, in addition to a 5-cent hourly wage increase that raised pay for journeyman roofers to \$2.55 per hour.

A year and a half later in late 1951, Local 11 adopted a union label and embarked on an extensive campaign to promote its application on all jobs performed by union roofers. In a letter sent to union contractors in its jurisdiction, the local explained, "The membership of ... Local 11 of Chicago and vicinity has constantly striven to promote the ideals of unionism and to bring within the folds of its membership those individuals who are engaged in our craft. One of the methods used historically by labor unions to promote their aims and ideals has been the use of a union label."

As work remained strong for Local 11 into 1955, its nearly 800 members were compelled to

go on strike beginning August 10 of that year after negotiations on a new contract with the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association stalled after the employers balked at a proposed 30-cent raise over two years. The contractors noted in the August 10 *Tribune* that the increase to the current wage scale of \$3.35 per hour would make the roofers the highest-paid workers in the building industry.

After more than two weeks, the strike came to an end on August 26 when the two sides reached an agreement on a new, two-year contract providing 15-cent-per-hour wage increases effective August 10 and June 1, 1956.

Meanwhile, Local 11 members installed the roof on the new, 41-story **Prudential Building** (now One Prudential Plaza) in Chicago that was completed in 1955 – becoming the first skyscraper built in the city since the Great Depression.

Three years later, following a three-week-long strike beginning June 11, 1958, and a series of meetings with a federal mediator, the local and the contractors association reached an accord on July 2 for a new, three-year agreement. As part of the deal, the contractors agreed to give the roofers a raise to their \$3.82-per-hour wage and 10-cent-per-hour Welfare Fund contribution, and the union approved the contractors' demand that a dispute over work rules be sent to arbitration. According to the July 3 *Tribune*, the strike cost the contractors more than \$3 million, delayed construction on many buildings and "led to damage to buildings which developed leaks during the recent heavy rains."



#### INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS OF LOCAL No. 11

The Initiation Fee is \$\_\_\_\_\_ plus International Enrollment Fee. **\$30.00**  
You have **180** days in which to pay your Initiation Fee.

Payments on Initiation Fee are \_\_\_\_\_ per day for each day worked.  
Do not work after your receipt has expired.

If you get laid off or quit, report to the union hall the next day.

Receipts must be shown to stewards every Monday morning on the job.

#### APPRENTICE WAGE RATES EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 1962

1st 6 months	<b>\$2.94</b> per hr.	5th 6 months	<b>3.84</b> per hr.
2nd 6 months	<b>3.16</b> per hr.	6th 6 months	<b>4.07</b> per hr.
3rd 6 months	<b>3.39</b> per hr.	Journeymen	<b>4.52</b> per hr.
4th 6 months	<b>3.62</b> per hr.	Foremen	<b>4.77</b> per hr.

Office Hours 6 A.M. to 2 P.M. Closed Saturdays.

Mail Payments to **COMPOSITION ROOFERS UNION, 36 S. Peoria Street**

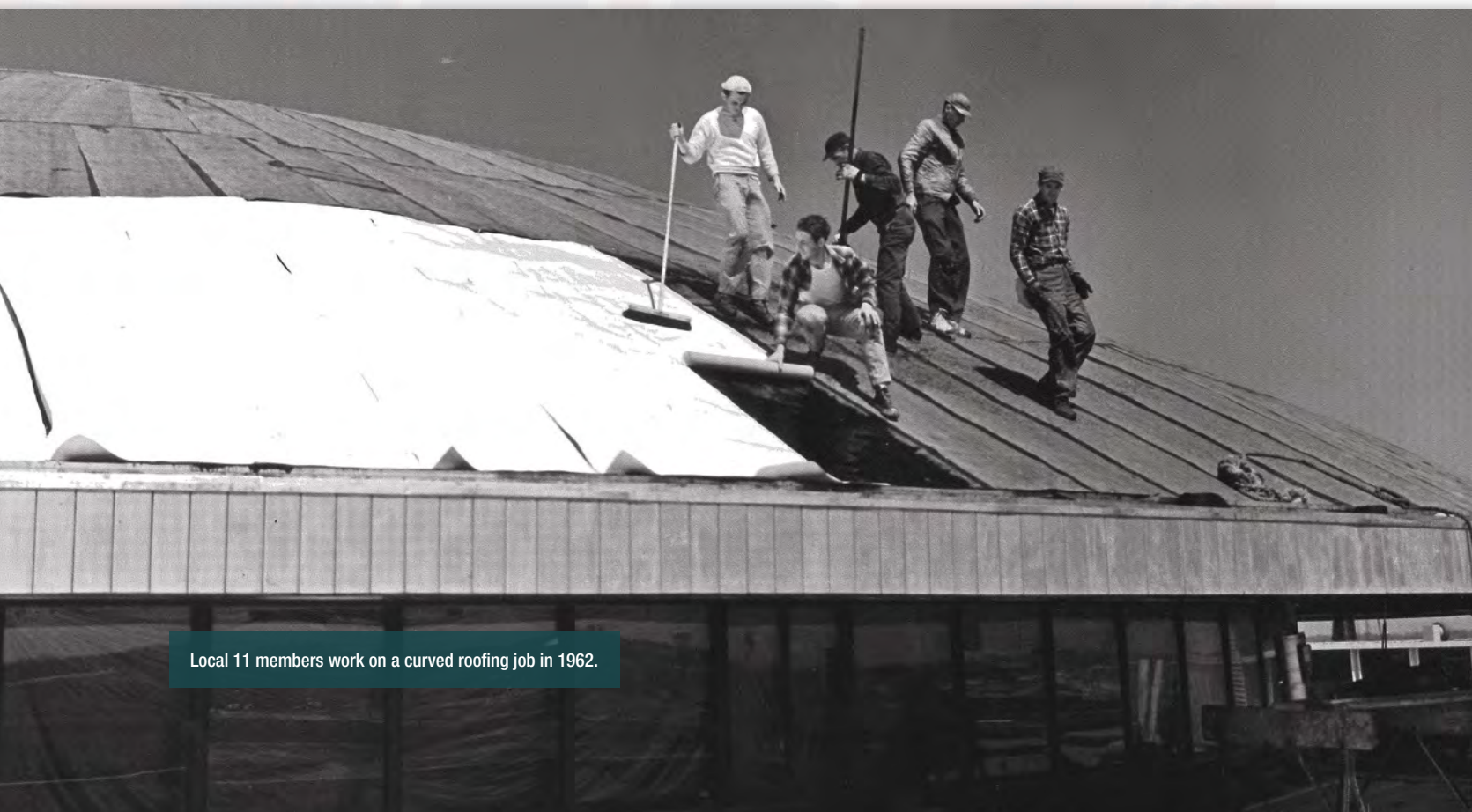
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Although contractors had objected to the pay demand, according to the newspaper, the main issue of the dispute centered on four working rules that contractors "contended were restrictive and obsolete." The rules required that two union members be sent on any job; that the contractors pay one hour of "free pay" for travel time when workers cross certain boundaries; that the contractors pay one roofer to stand on the ground when they have an automatic pitch pump in operation; and that a limit be set on weight to be hoisted to a roof.

Local 11 President Belles informed the *Tribune* that the union was "sticking to the work rules because of what it considers hazards to workers in the trade and that the contractors are attempting to take work away from them and give it to the teamsters."

Regardless, in an historic feature of the agreement, the local also won a new **Pension Fund** retirement benefit for its members in the new contract. That provision called for contractors to pay 5 cents per hour into the retirement fund beginning January 1, 1959, and an additional 5 cents per hour beginning January 1, 1960.



Local 11 members work on a curved roofing job in 1962.





Local 11 members, including officer Brother Neal Lowrey (center, in plaid), tear off materials to prepare a roof for a new installation in October 1967.

### STRIKES AND INDUSTRY CHANGES FIGHTING TO REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Yet another protracted strike by Local 11 over contract negotiations with the Roofing Contractors Association, which was representing 85 employers, beginning June 5, 1960, pulled the local's nearly 900 members off their jobs. According to the June 6 *Tribune*, the stoppage would affect millions of dollars' worth of construction on schools, churches and commercial structures and even hindered expressway work on which waterproofing members of the local sealed cement pavement.

Although negotiators had agreed on a 30-cent-per-hour wage increase over a two-year period, the union balked at a demand that the roofers give up a travel allowance that averaged about \$2 a day on jobs in DuPage and Lake counties. After a full month, the roofers and waterproofers returned to work on July 6 after negotiators reached an agreement on a two-year contract calling for a total 30-cent-per-hour raise to the current \$4.02 hourly wage and an increase in the pension payment from 10 cents to 15 cents per hour on January 1, 1961.

The contractors also dropped their demands to abolish travel allowances for carfare for the roofers. Additionally, the contractors agreed to drop all lawsuits started in the aftermath of the strike, including the contractors association's \$500,000 damage suit filed in Federal District court against the union for losses suffered by its contractors during the strike.

Out in the field in the 1960s and into the 1970s, roofing systems for low-sloped roofs changed dramatically. During that era, **cold-process systems**, **torch-applied modified bitumen** and many other methods were introduced to the roofing industry to replace hot-applied, built-up roofing, and the waterproofing industry also began using a number of those products.

Local 11 was again at the forefront of roofing innovation at that time when members working for union-signatory contractor the James Mansfield and Sons Roofing Company installed one of the first-ever **single-ply roofing** systems, which was assembled with a man-made synthetic rubber (E.P.D.M.), on the new, massive flat roof expansion of the **Chicago**

**O'Hare International Airport** in 1961. From there, the product would revolutionize the flat-roofing industry and be used on all types of flat roofs, from strip malls to rowhomes.

With ample work continuing to provide steady employment for Local 11 members, journeyman roofers base wages were up to \$4.32 per hour in 1962 and then up to \$4.67 per hour in 1963, plus fringe benefits. The following year beginning June 1, 1964, the union and its employing contractors established an **Apprenticeship Training Fund** into which contractors would contribute 10 cents per each hour worked by the local's members.

Another two-year contract beginning June 1, 1965, increased hourly wages for Local 11 journeymen to \$5.32 during the second year. They would also earn another 13 cents per hour for the Health and Welfare Fund, 15 cents for the Pension Fund, 30 cents per hour for the Training Fund and 15 cents per hour for a new **Vacation Fund**.

Local 11 Brother Ralph O. Bartleman was a professional wrestler for the World Wide Wrestling Federation known as "Mr. Clean," "Big Boy" and "Black Bart," fighting matches from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s. A wrestling star at Tilden Technical High School in Chicago and Iowa State University, he won a gold medal in the Greco-Roman wrestling heavyweight division at the U.S. Olympic Trials to qualify for the 1956 Olympics in Helsinki, Finland; however, the Greco-Roman team did not attend the games.

A veteran of the U.S. Army, serving from 1955 to 1961, Brother Bartleman passed away on January 23, 2012, at age 81.

Meanwhile, Slate and Tile Local 17 had a three-year contract that had gone into effect on October 1, 1964, and would raise its roofers' base pay to \$5.47 per hour beginning on October 1, 1966 for the final year of the pact.

Among the many activities in which Local 11 was involved during that time, the local launched a **Safety Campaign** in 1965. As



During a ceremony in 1974, Local 11 member John Lein (right) is congratulated by United Union of Roofers and Waterproofers International General President for his 50 years of service to the union.





International General President Roy Johnson (right) administers the oath of office to newly elected Local 11 officers (left to right) John Blake, Joe Sullivan, Harry Vopicka, George Stephen, Jerry Zourek, John Martini, (unknown), Fred Olson, Russ Bergman, Joe Miller, Earl Kruse and Neal Lowrey in 1974.

part of the effort, its roughly 125 union foremen attended safety presentations made by the National Safety Council in order to better identify safety hazards and take safety precautions on worksites.

Wages also continued to escalate during the final years of the decade, and on June 1, 1969, the local's journeyman base scale reached \$6.32 per hour as part of a three-year contract initiated on June 1, 1967. The journeymen of Local 17 also earned \$6.32 per hour in the final year of their contract, which began October 1, 1969, and both local were receiving an additional 18 cents for health insurance and 15 cents for pensions, which Local 11 also made 2 cents per hour for training and Local 17 made 2 cents per hour for vacations.

Among its more significant jobs during that time was perhaps the most prominent job on which Local 11 members would work: construction of the **Sears Tower** skyscraper

in Chicago in 1972 and 1973. Upon its completion with a rooftop installed by the union roofers, the 110-story building (now the Willis Tower) surpassed the World Trade Center in New York as the tallest building in the world (a distinction it would hold for nearly 25 years). Over the ensuing decades, Local 11 roofers would also repair and update the tower's roof.

The union roofers also built the **Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab)** just outside Batavia, Illinois, during that time. The U.S. Department of Energy's national laboratory would famously specialize in high-energy particle physics – as it continues to do in 2019.

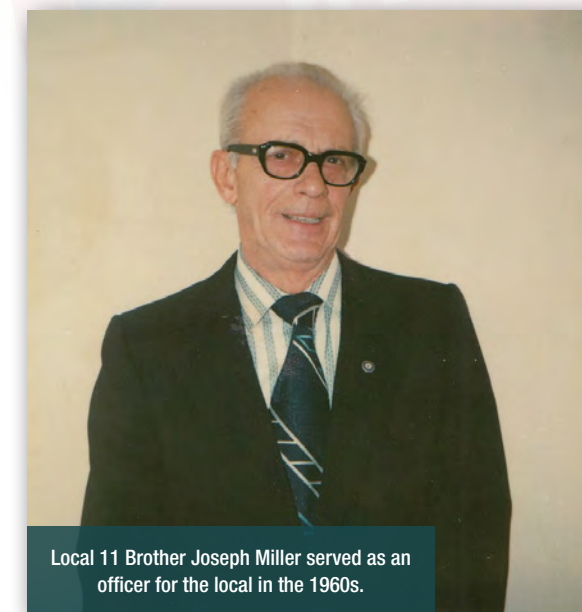
As good work persisted, another three-year contract put into effect on June 1, 1970, escalated Local 11's wage scale from \$7.72 per hour the first year, to \$8.60 per hour the second year and to \$9.50 per hour the third year. Each

year, the local's members additionally earned 18 cents per hour for the Health and Welfare Fund, 15 cents per hour for the Pension Fund and 2 cents for the Training Fund.

Local 11 also remained heavily involved in the Illinois District Council of Roofers during the early 1970s, whose discussions were largely focused on policing work throughout the state and on safety issues, including those related to the dangers of pitch pumps that are used on tar tankers.

The local was also keenly aware of its need to protect its jurisdictional work. In one such instance, the local did not submit in a dispute with the asbestos workers over jobs at a large **Bell Laboratories** jobsite in Chicago in 1973, for which the roofers refused to relinquish the work.

In another effort to protect the local's jurisdiction and gain jobs for its contractors, a new, two-year contract beginning Jun 1, 1974, established a **Roofers' Industry Advancement and Research Fund**, into which the contractors initially contributed 2 cents per hour worked by the local's roofers. That contract also initially raised the hourly wage rate to \$10.90 per hour and then provide a cost-of-living raise for the



Local 11 Brother Joseph Miller served as an officer for the local in the 1960s.

second year, plus fringe benefits totaling an additional \$1.22 per hour.

That year, the local's members also roofed the new **Standard Oil Building** (also the Amoco Building and now the Aon Center) in the Chicago Loop in 1974. The 83-floor modern skyscraper would be the fourth-tallest building in the city.

But when that previous contract expired, the union roofers walked off their jobs on the morning of June 1, 1976, after their contract expired and no new agreement was in place. The stoppage would curtail rehabilitation work at **Navy Pier**, the **Field Museum of Natural History** and O'Hare Airport, and pickets shut down construction on the new **LaSalle County Nuclear Generating Station** near Seneca, Illinois. Walkouts also took place in Will, DuPage, Grundy and Lake counties – although construction in Chicago was not interrupted because the union did not set up picket lines within the city.

The union eventually accepted the \$1.93-per-hour offer from the contractors association but refused to approve any changes to work rules.

### CONSOLIDATION WITH LOCALS 6 AND 17 GROWING AND GAINING STRENGTH

**B**ack in 1971, Michael Minnick, business representative of United Slate, Tile and Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers Association **Local No. 6** of Rockford, Illinois, had reported to the Rockford Building Trades Council that about 20 percent of the roughly 5,200 workers in that area's building trades were out of work. Half a decade later, as work remained slow for Local 6 into the second half of the 1970s, the International union merged the small local, which did not require its own administration, into Chicago Local 11 in 1976.

Employment was also depressed in Local 11's jurisdiction that year, and a marked downturn



## Chicago Roofers and Waterproofers' Charitable Foundation

## CONTINUING ITS LEGACY OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Local 11 members donate their time to install a new roof on the Garden School for the Handicapped in 1982 including Ron Boreman, Ken Gortowski, Pail Dell, Bob Spears, Jim Tookey, Jim Stadt, Bill Stadt, Frank Waller, John Blake, Alan Opyt, Will Blankenship, Frank Bilek, Ruben Klee, Bob Markey, Al Zarembka, Vic Peco, Rick Reed, Doug Huebner, George Horgan, Neal Lowrey, Bill Eppenstein Jr., Ron Szabo, John O'Connor, Carmen Apicell and Dale Shockley.

Throughout its century of existence, Local 11 and its membership have been involved in innumerable community-service and charitable activities in the Chicagoland region. Recently, those efforts have included projects such as installing a roof in 1992 on the new Wellness Community Center in Hinsdale, Illinois, a free facility that helps adult cancer patients recover. More recently, Local 11's donations of time, skills and resources have ranged from replacing the roof on the old building that would house the new Fire Museum of Greater Chicago in 2011 to installing a new roof on Shady Oaks Camp, a summer camp for people with disabilities, in Homer Glen, Illinois, in June 2014.

Perhaps as poignant as any donation made by the local, in 2008, Local 11 members joined other Chicago-area building trades unions to construct a brand new home for Gold-Star mother Lori Fraher of Dwight, Illinois, whose son, Lance Corporal Ray Holzhauer, was killed in Iraq in March 2007 while fighting in the War on Terror. As part of the Lori Fraher Project, Local 11, the Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program and a couple of its contractors and suppliers provided all materials and labor for the roof on the new house.

Seeking to make a more-direct impact with its charitable efforts, in 2015, Local 11 created its Chicago Roofers and Waterproofers' Charitable Foundation, through which the local raises funds to benefit veterans in need and pediatric cancer patients. These efforts have included \$10,000 donations in 2016 alone to the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans and to Salute, Inc., a non-profit organization that meets the financial, physical and emotional needs of service members and veterans. Subsequently, the foundation's several charitable events, including its annual golf outing, have permitted it to help homeless veterans, put roofs on the homes of veterans who could not afford the construction costs and donate to multiple causes that help combat pediatric cancer.



Local 11 members work on the new roof for the Garden School in 1982.



in the nation's economy stifled manhours for its members into 1977. Across the country, the economic slump, unemployment in the construction industry and the ever-increasing competition from non-union contractors and their groups, such as the Associated Builders and Contractors, began to take their toll on union roofing membership, and the number of dues-paying members in the United Union of Roofers dropped to 26,491 in 1977.

During that time, single-ply roofing and other roofing systems took hold and began to drastically change the roofing industry. According to *A Brief History of The Roofing Industry and Our Union*, by 1978, single-ply roofing comprised approximately 10 percent of the \$20-billion roofing industry, a percentage that would dramatically increase over the coming years.

The second half of the 1970s also saw the introduction of another one of the many innovative changes to roofing when roofers began to install Inverted Roof Membrane Assemblies (IRMA). Soon receiving the nickname "upside down roofs," the IRMA system was essentially a built-up roof membrane mopped directly to a substrate and covered by Styrofoam or other insulation that withstood environmental elements, and crushed rock or pavers would be used to ballast the insulation.

Even more significantly, roofing-industry worker safety continued to come to the

forefront. As highlighted in the United Union's history, "The year 1978 found the International Union partnering with the National Roofing Contractors Association to develop a safety standard to protect roofers from falls from elevations and through roofs. The **Warning Line System** was proposed as a means to protect workers."

Local 11 voted, 258 to 193, on June 11, 1978, to accept a new, two-year contract offered by 70 firms aligned with the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association, ending a walkout by the local's nearly 1,300 members



The Local 11 float makes an appearance in Chicago's 1988 Labor Day parade.



Local 11 President Neal Lowrey stands at the head of the local's float in Chicago's 1988 Labor Day parade.





Local 11 officers in 1988 are (front row, left to right) Carm Apicella, Neal Lowrey, Earl Kruse, Happy Vopicka, Bob Spears and Bob Allen; (second row) Bob Bludzius, Joe Sullivan and Jim Bednarek; (third row) Mac McBride, John Blake, Don Pomeroy, Doug Huebner and John Martini; and (top row) Russ Bergman and Ken Gortowski.

that had begun on June 1. The action had little impact on area construction, however, as the union did not picket jobsites.

The new agreement raised wages and fringe benefits by \$1.90 an hour over the two years, bringing the local's combined hourly journeyman rate to \$15.35. Under the contract, an additional 1 cent per hour would also be contributed to the training fund and a travel allowance ranging from \$2.50 to \$10 for work in outlying areas would be established.

Lingering stagnant employment especially hurt Local 17, which specialized in "steep" roofing and slate and tile applications whose uses were diminishing as they became costly and less practical in most modern construction and homebuilding. As a result, by 1978, the local's membership had dwindled to just 35, it had no full-time officers and could not police its work, and its treasury was nearly empty.

With Local 17's future uncertain, **the International union merged Local 17 into Local 11 in late 1978** to cover all roofing and waterproofing classifications throughout the Chicago jurisdiction. "The merger was a good thing ... although there was initially some hurt feelings," former Local 17 part-time officer **Brother Doug Huebner**, who would go on to serve as a business agent for Local 11 before retiring, recalled in 2019. "It helped us police our work and it strengthened Local 11."

Over the coming years and decades, several more smaller roofing locals would also be merged into Local 11 to help strengthen the union roofing industry in and around Chicagoland.

The International union's membership bounced back in 1980 from the previous decades' "hard times" and reached 31,341 dues-paying members nationwide. "All local unions are increasing their fringe

benefit contributions," *A Brief History of The Roofing Industry and Our Union* declares, "with health and welfare, pension, vacation, apprenticeship and other funds rounding out lucrative packages."

But another economic recession in the early 1980s, coupled with an ongoing intrusion of non-union competition and the impact of single-ply roofing systems on the market, which required less manpower to install, again stifled the United Union's membership, which fell to below 28,000 nationally in 1984. *(The international union would continue to embrace the single-play technology, however, and in 1992, it would develop its first Single-Ply manual and begin revisions to its built-up roofing manual.)*

Regardless, Local 11 reported in 1984 that all of the roofing contractors in its Rockford area, which it had been covering for eight years since the amalgamation of Local 6, were signatory to Local 11's union contract.

With the economy and construction work still slumping into the next year, Local 11 joined with United Association Plumbers Local No. 130 of Chicago and the Chicago District Council of Carpenters to launch a \$15-million mortgage program for new-home buyers in the Chicago area as a means of creating work for its members. The three unions each contributed about \$5 million from their pension funds to the **Union Built and Financed**

**Housing Program**, which would "provide union-built housing at reasonable interest rates, create jobs for tradesmen and ensure a good return for the unions' pension funds," according to an article in the August 6, 1985, *Tribune*.

Another strike by Local 11 took its roughly 1,600 members off of jobs for more than three weeks beginning June 1, 1988, before a new contract was ratified on June 23. But while the three-year pact provided 80-cent, 75-cent and 70-cent annual increases in the local's base pay of \$18.65 per hour, it cut the health and welfare

*Continued after following spread*



Local 11 members install a new roof on the AT&T administrative offices building in downtown Joliet in 1989.





## Apprentice & Member Education

# LOCAL 11 TRAINING PROGRAM ESTABLISHED NEARLY 65 YEARS AGO



Local 11 apprentice Michael Smith demonstrates hot air welding techniques with a handheld variant hot air welder and a silicon rubber roller during a class conducted by the Chicagoland Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program in 1995.

When Local 11 first registered its apprenticeship program with the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprentice Training Services in 1945, the Joint Apprenticeship Committee was comprised of Local 11 representatives Charles Cook, Harry Jester, James Lenzer, Dean Moore and Harold Wolnick and contractor representatives Ben Esko, George Hewitt, R. E. Mansfield, Wilson Pennock and Clyde Scott.

and the union to administer the new program. In developing its apprenticeship standards, the J.A.C. performed an extensive study of the work of the trade "in order to develop the necessary schedule of work processes" so that apprentices would receive "adequate experience during the apprenticeship term," and met with the Chicago Board of Education to make "arrangements for related and supplemental instruction" and to develop the program's new curriculum.

As part of that original program, Local 11 apprentices continued to receive hands-on, on-the-job, paid training on worksites while working with experienced journeymen — as they had since the local's inception in 1919. To supplement that training, the J.A.C. further required apprentices to attend school for at least 144

Responding, in large part, to the need for skilled building craftspeople created by the building boom at the end of World War II and the need to train veterans returning from the war in a trade, the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprentice Training Services brought together representatives from the Chicago Roofing Contractors' Association and Local 11 "to discuss the benefits and advisability of the establishment of apprenticeship standards" for Chicago's roofing industry. Subsequently, Local 11 registered its first formal, standardized apprenticeship program with the Department of Labor in 1945.

The Chicago Roofers Joint Apprenticeship Committee (J.A.C.) was formulated with equal representation of the contractors



Local 11 apprentices Mike Soja and Anthony James practice handheld hot air welding techniques during a class conducted by the Chicagoland Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program in 1995.



Local 11 apprentices learn to shingle around dormers during a class conducted by the Chicagoland Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program in 2004.

hours per year for "related instruction" while also being paid for attendance, funds for which would be provided by contractors employing the apprentices.

The Department of Labor lauded Local 11's apprenticeship program as "an outstanding example of what can be accomplished in apprentice training by joint cooperation of labor and management," Vernon Johnston, field supervisor for the department's Illinois Area Apprentice Training Service, soon after announced in *The Journeyman Roofer and Waterproofor*. He also pointed out the "outstanding" features of the J.A.C. program: Definition of a Roofer Apprentice, Qualifications of Apprentice Applicant, Supervision, Probationary Period, Term of an Apprenticeship, Apprenticeship Registration and Work Experience.

Local 11 and the Roofers Joint Apprenticeship Committee held its first annual Apprenticeship Graduation Dinner Dance for 1982 graduates on March 20 of that year to honor 78 apprentices who had graduated to journeyman status.

As Local 11 celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2019, its training has developed over the years into the Chicagoland Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program. Still jointly sponsored by labor and management, the program now operates a five-year apprenticeship that requires 5,500 hours of paid, supervised, on-the-job training and related classroom instruction and hands-on training, which are provided at the Chicagoland Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Facility on Roofers Road in Indian Head Park, Illinois.

Starting apprentices in 2019 earn \$20.07 per hour plus and union benefits such as healthcare insurance as they learn the roofing and waterproofing trades, during which they are also provided annual pay raises. Upon graduation, they become journeymen who are fully qualified to work for more than 130 union-signatory contractors, many of which belong to the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association, the Midwest Roofing Contractors Association and the National Roofing Contractors Association.

The Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program also offers upgrade training for Local 11's experienced journeyman roofers so that they stay up-to-date on the latest materials, technologies, techniques and safety requirements of the roofing industry.



contributions made by the employers, who had asserted that health-and-welfare funds were over-funded, from \$3.21 to \$1.50 per hour.

Notably, that would be the last major labor dispute between Local 11 and the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association to date as the local celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2019.

Vastly improved work among an explosion of downtown construction during the second half of the 1980s included one of the largest projects of its kind on which Local 11 members were employed: the massive North Building addition to the nation's largest convention facility, Chicago's **McCormick Place Center** in 1988. The new structure required more than 330,000 square feet of waterproofing, for which the union craftsmen applied Liquid Membrane 6125 and Liquid Membrane 6090 to the vast surfaces of McCormick Place.

### ORGANIZING BECOMES A PRIORITY SPREADING ITS MESSAGE OF QUALITY

The United Union made recruiting and organizing new members and contractors into the union a priority beginning in the 1990s, necessitating the assistance and cooperation of locals across the country, including Local 11, which would participate in organizing efforts during the coming years. **Construction Organizing and Membership Education and Training (COMET)** classes would be a significant feature of organizing campaigns in Chicago and throughout the nation.

Among the increasingly more abundant projects on which Local 11 members were employed throughout the busy decade, the union roofers helped build the second building as part of One Prudential Plaza in Chicago in 1990. They also replaced the old coal tar pitch roof on the 82-story **Amoco Building** downtown in 1991 and 1992 with a new, Sarnafli P.V.C. (polyvinyl chloride) single-ply

system, which was fully adhered and barred over a tapered roof insulation to assure positive drainage over the 400 squares of roof area.

Construction of the 33-story **Blue Cross Blue Shield Tower** on the north end of Millennium Park in Chicago provided more work for Local 11 members when it was built in 1996 and 1997. Additionally, the union roofers installed most all of the roofing and waterproofing work for the large number of big-box stores constructed in and around Chicago during the 1990s.

Wages similarly escalated for Local 11 in the 1990s, and a raise in the scale effective June 1, 1998, increased the journeyman base scale to \$27.05 for the coming year.

Into the new Y2K millennium, the shifting roofing market was experiencing a decline in hot built-up roofing and an increase in the installation of single-ply types of roofing systems, according to *A Brief History of The Roofing Industry and Our Union*. What's more, Thermoplastic Polyolefin (T.P.O.) single-ply roofing systems had the largest share of the market, followed by modified bitumens, E.P.D.M. and P.V.C. single-ply systems.



Local 11 President Neal Lowrey.



Local 11 members at work on a roofing job on a United Savings Bank of America building in February 1990.

Local 11 itself was also transforming, and by 2002 it had grown to more than 2,200 member roofers, waterproofers and apprentices. As the 2000s progressed, those members would be found working on most all significant projects in the Chicagoland area, installing various roofing and waterproofing systems.

By mid-decade, service agreements for roof repairs, upgrades and renovations were beginning to become a vital source of employment for Local 11. Subsequently, the local's service agreements would provide roughly 20 percent of the manhours worked by the local over the next decade and a half into 2019 while helping to keep the local solvent at times.

Local 11 members continued to see their wages increase as well, and in 2006 the scale for journeyman was at \$32.80 per hour and their total pay was \$42.42 per hour. As part of that package, they were earning \$5.93 for health and welfare, \$2.20 for pensions, 33 cents for

training, 11 cents for industry advancement and research, 11 cents for promotion and organizing, and 94 cents for the United Union's **National Roofing Industry Pension Plan**, which had been established in 1966 and Local 11 had since joined.



Local 11 apprenticeship supervisor Russ Bergman stands beside the Chicago Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee van that participated in the city's Labor Day parade in 1988.



Despite the relatively promising times, Local 11 did not curb its efforts to improve its standing in the construction market. To that end, for instance, in early 2008 representatives from the local hit the pavement around town in an effort to make union roofing a visible option for all. That January, local delegates made appearances at the Chicagoland Roofing Contractors Association Annual Trade Show as well as the Chicago Commercial Real Estate Forecast Conference & Expo.

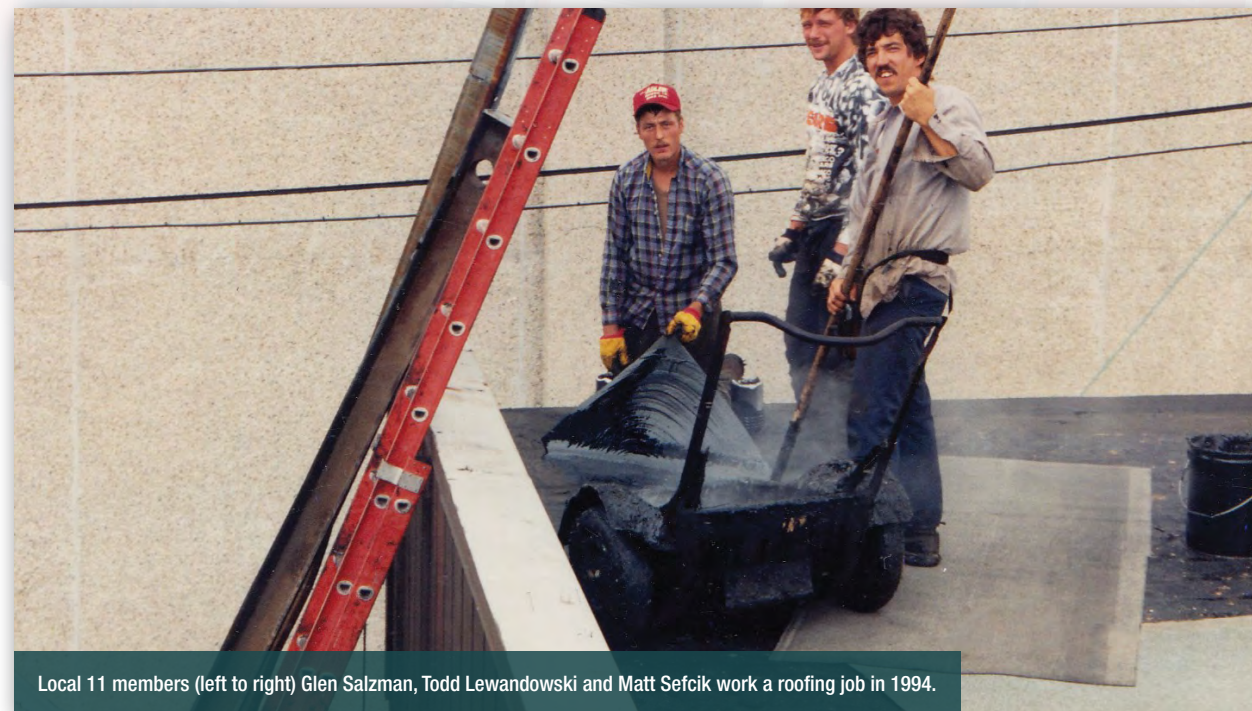
Meanwhile, Local 11 and the **Chicagoland Roofing Council** developed a joint-effort marketing program targeting firms such as property managers, designers and developers, architects, consultants and engineers with the union message of “Quality, Value, Service and Safety.” In reference to the effort, Local 11 Business Agent and future **Business Manager Gary Menzel** stated in the First Quarter 2008 *Roofer & Waterproofers*, “This is what professionals across the field can expect when hiring union contractors.”

The local also continued to take its message to the streets, staging informational pickets

throughout that time in various locations across its jurisdiction. In one such action, the local held a banner campaign against contractor Complete Building Maintenance, one of the local’s largest non-signatory competitors, at a Symons by Dayton Superior building in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, in 2008. Then in 2009, the local picketed in support of job actions against Wilmette School District 39 and its non-union roofing contractor and The Skokie School in Winnetka, Illinois, for also using a non-union construction company.

### AT THE FOREFRONT OF SUSTAINABLE ROOFING GOING GREEN, STAYING BUSY TO 100

**A**s the first decade of the new millennium progressed, Local 11 became a leader in environmentally friendly construction and roofing systems, which were widely being used in Chicago, one of the leading “green” cities in the United States. Additionally, the Chicagoland Roofing Council, the union contractors of the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association for which Local 11 members work, was becoming more committed to sustainable



Local 11 members (left to right) Glen Salzman, Todd Lewandowski and Matt Sefcik work a roofing job in 1994.



Chicagoland Roofing Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (J.A.T.C.) Chairman Jay Refieuna (left) presents Local 11 member and J.A.T.C. Trustee Aubrey “Mac” McBride with a plaque honoring his many years of service to the committee as he retires on December 1, 2004.

design and energy-efficient products and was even an underwriter of the second annual Building Green Chicago Conference in 2008.

With environmentally friendly, sustainable roof systems being used as one of the leading products in green-building design by that time, Chicagoland Roofing Council contractors and Local 11 were at the forefront of green roofing design since its inception. By that time, union roofers had completed several green roofs – roof membranes that are partially or totally covered with vegetation and growing medium such as soil. Among several advantages, green roofing absorbs and filters rainwater; provides insulation to a building; provides in a statically pleasing landscape; and helps lower urban air temperatures and improve air quality.

Local 11’s most prominent green project was the 500,000-square-foot roof on McCormick Place, which included installing 40,000 plants in roofing modules on about 15 percent of the convention center’s 1-million-square-foot rooftop. One completed in 2006, the McCormick green roof was the second-largest

in the United States and the largest modular green roof in the world.

But in 2009, the union became involved in a “turf battle,” as that year’s October 23 *Tribune* described it, with commercial landscapers over the “booming market to install green roofs on public and commercial buildings in the Chicago area.” The conflict pitted Local 11 against Teamsters Local No. 703 and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local No. 150, which were representing landscapers, over the right to install green roofs.

In a green-roofing case involving the Roosevelt Collection loft and retail development in the city’s South Loop, the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B.) ruled in September 2009 in favor of Moore Landscapes of Northbrook and its employees, who were represented by the Teamsters and Operating Engineers. Then that December, the Board again ruled against Local 11 in another jurisdictional conflict between the unions involving green roofing on two Chicago public schools. In both cases, the December 1, 2009, *Tribune* reported, the





(Left to right) Local 11 members Ruben Barbosa, Jeff Eppenstein, Gary Menzel, Gerard Morales, Rich Coluzzi, Jim Querio and an unidentified brother, with the backing of a 12-foot Mother Jones inflatable from the Mother Jones Heritage Project, attend a rally protesting a "right to work" speaker at an event in Elgin, Illinois, in 2018.

N.L.R.B. found that fact that landscapers had installed more green roofs than union roofers "more compelling" than any argument the roofers had presented.

But at its core, according to the newspaper, the labor conflict was a sign of tough times for building trades locals in a recession that had nearly ground construction to a halt, "putting pressure on unions to preserve jobs by finding new work for members."

Since its founding, Local 11 had been headed by a president, with business agents also handling much of the administrative workload. When Local 11 Brother Gary Menzel took over leadership of the local in 2013 from retiring President Richard Mathis, he consolidated the positions of president and business manager into a single office. Brother Menzel then became the local's first president and business manager/financial secretary in 2016 when former financial secretary Brother Jim Querio gave up the post.

As work picked up in all classifications of the roofing industry, the Local 11 also gained more green roofing work into the 2010s. For instance, in 2010 and 2011, it roofers and waterproofers topped the new **Silver Cross Hospital** in New Lenox, Illinois, which would replace the original Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet, with energy-efficient and heat-reducing roof systems. And then in the summer of 2011, Local 11 put a modular green-roof system on a new **DePaul University** building, installing a live vegetation tray system on top of a GAF Energy Cap torch-applied modified membrane roof.

Elsewhere, the local's non-green roofing activities were also picking up as the 2010s advanced. In addition to various construction and maintenance projects that were already beginning to stretch the local's manpower, the local was keeping watch over unwanted incursions into its jurisdiction.

In one such case, Local 11 members joined hundreds of union supporters in 2012 to protest the construction of a new Dave & Buster's entertainment venue in the Chicago Suburb of Orland Park that was built with a non-union, out-of-town workforce. As the Fourth Quarter 2012 *Roofer and Waterproofer* noted, the protest's message was loud and clear: "Make sure you don't spend your hard-earned union wages at this place of business."

Out in the field at that time, the local's increasingly busy roofers and waterproofers worked on the world's largest water-treatment plant, the **James W. Jardine Water Purification Plant**, from 2012 to August 2014 to replace the roof on the Chicago facility, which processes and average of one billion gallons of water a day. Roofing the structure required "the successful execution of a complex procedure that is as efficient and effective as possible, which is why Chicago Local 11 roofers and waterproofers ... stepped up to the job of replacing its 448,250 square foot roof," the Third Quarter 2014 *Roofer and Waterproofer* declared.

The existing roof on the Jardine plant was a gravel coal tar pitched roof that was over 50 years old and was actively leaking, which posed a threat of contamination to the city's drinking water, and much of the structural steel inside the building was in need of repair. The project consisted of removing gravel, coal tar, FoamGlas insulation and over 30,000 precast concrete roof deck panels from the existing roof. The slabs were grouted at the seams with asbestos-containing roofing mastic, so crews receive asbestos training and certification through Local 11's Chicagoland Roofers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Program.

The union roofers next installed 30,000 new concrete roof deck panels, two plies of Type IV felt; 1-1/2-inch FoamGlas insulation; and Flex Membranes 90 mil Elvaloy KEE fleecebacked membrane, set in hot asphalt and heat-welded at

the seams. All of those phases of roofing operations were performed each day by a crew of about 35 Local 11 members, who boasted a 98-percent attendance record through one of the coldest winters on one of the toughest jobs in Chicago, according to the *Roofer and Waterproofer*.

Among the mounting projects on which the local continued to work, members in 2017 roofed the \$173-million **McCormick Place Events Center** sports venue (now Wintrust Arena at McCormick Square) in Chicago's Near South Side community that opened in October



Local 11 members install a green/vegetative roof at Columbia College in Chicago in 2009.







Local 11 members install the roof on the McCormick Event Center Wintrust Arena in 2016.

of that year. Local 11 roofers and waterproofers could also be found working on three large **Amazon** distribution centers that were recently built in the Chicagoland region.

Meanwhile, to further give its members opportunities in the housing market, in 2016, Local 11 and its contractors established a new residential wage rate that would help gain more homebuilding work.



Local 11 members and families march in the City of Chicago's St. Patrick's Day parade in 2018.

While Local 11 members were historically busy with work as the local approached its 100th anniversary in 2019, the local has not let down its guard or rested on its laurels. In fact, in 2019, Local 11 joined other Chicago and Cook County Building Trades affiliates in throwing their support behind approval of **Lincoln Yards**, a 55-acre development expected to transform vacant, industrial land along the Chicago River's North Branch – and create scores of construction jobs. With the unions' backing, the \$6-billion project was approved by the Chicago Plan Commission.

As it reaches its 100-year milestone anniversary, Roofers and Waterproofers Local 11 is this country's largest roofing union, with more than 2,200 skilled craftsmen and craftswomen who professionally install various roofing and waterproofing systems. Keeping an eye on its future and remembering the century that has passed, the local is experiencing unprecedented employment in 2019 throughout its jurisdiction of Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin, including the Chicago, Joliet, Kankakee, Rockford and Aurora regions. ■



Following the dedication ceremony for the Kruse Martini Office Center on May 1, 2019, (left to right) United Union International General President Kinsey Robinson, Local 11 member and International President Emeritus John Martini and International Union of Elevator Constructors General President Frank Christensen, a Chicago native, stand beneath the plaque honoring Brother Martini and Brother Earl Kruse.



During the May 1, 2019, dedication of Local 11's union hall as the Kruse Martini Office Center, (left to right) United Union International General President Kinsey Robinson, Local 11 Business Manager Gary Menzel, Brother John Martini and the sons of deceased Brother Earl Kruse, Tom Kruse and Bob Kruse, cut a ceremonial dedication ribbon.



Local 11 officers and staff and attendees gather on the steps of the re-named Kruse Martini Office Center during its dedication ceremony on May 1, 2019.



100 Year



Anniversary



100 Year



Anniversary





Congratulations to  
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# Happy 100th Anniversary Local 11!

**From Officers, Staff and Members of  
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***Congratulations  
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# Congratulations Roofers Local 11 on your 100th Anniversary!

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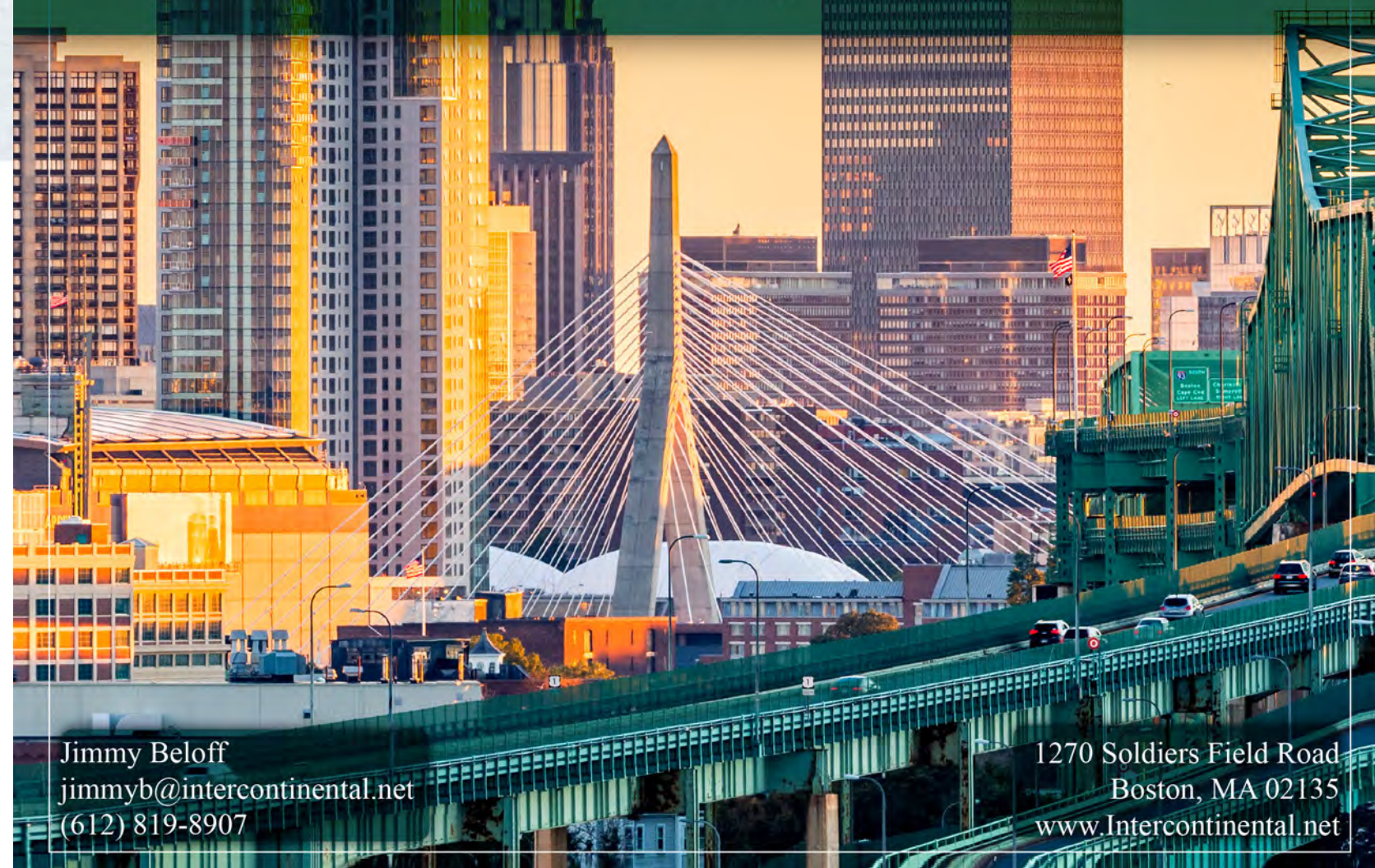


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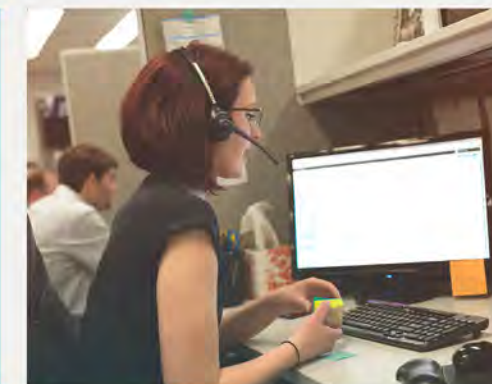
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UNITED UNION OF ROOFERS, WATERPROOFERS  
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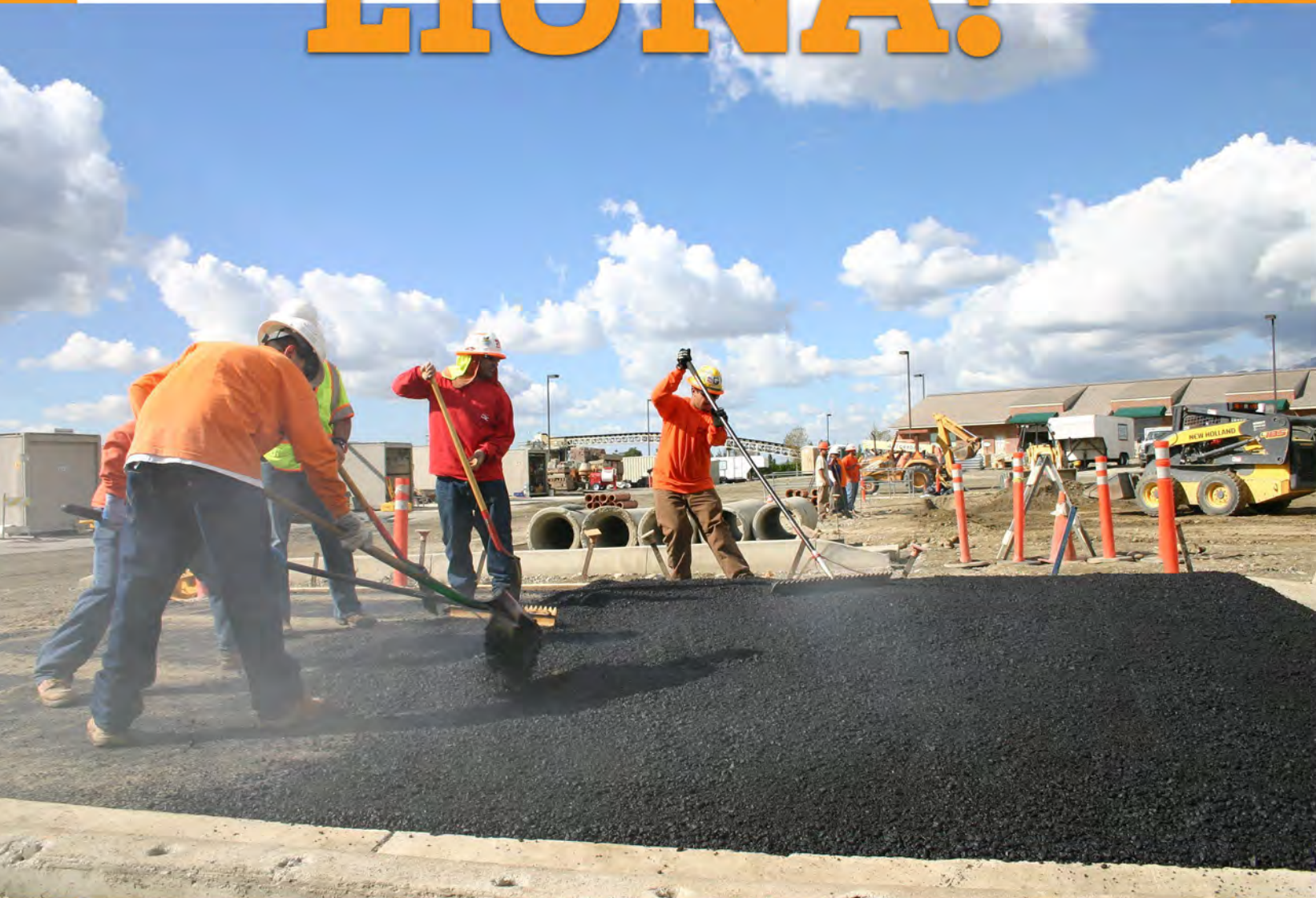
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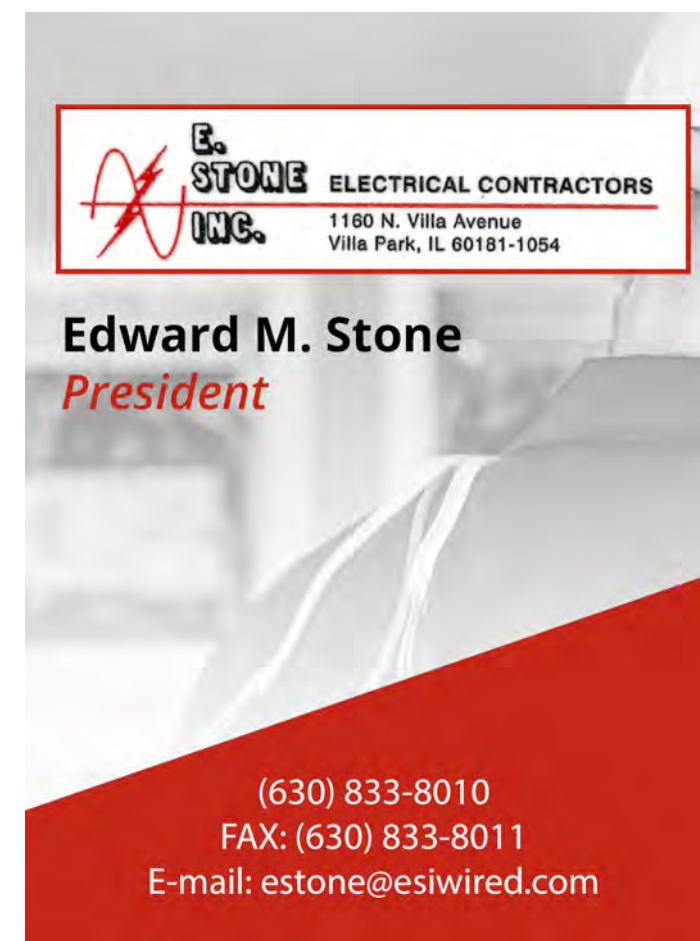
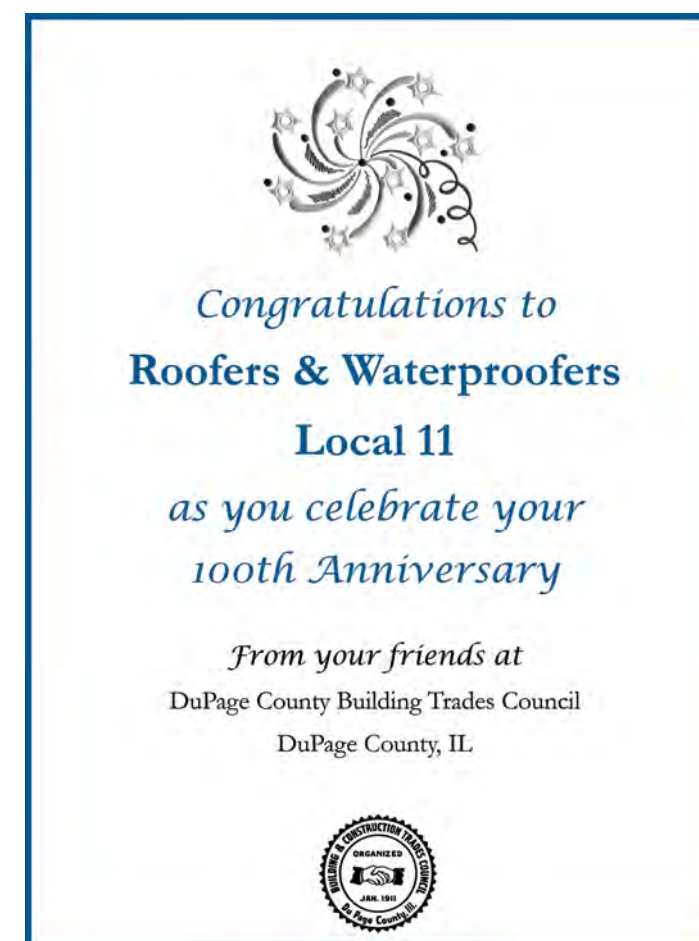
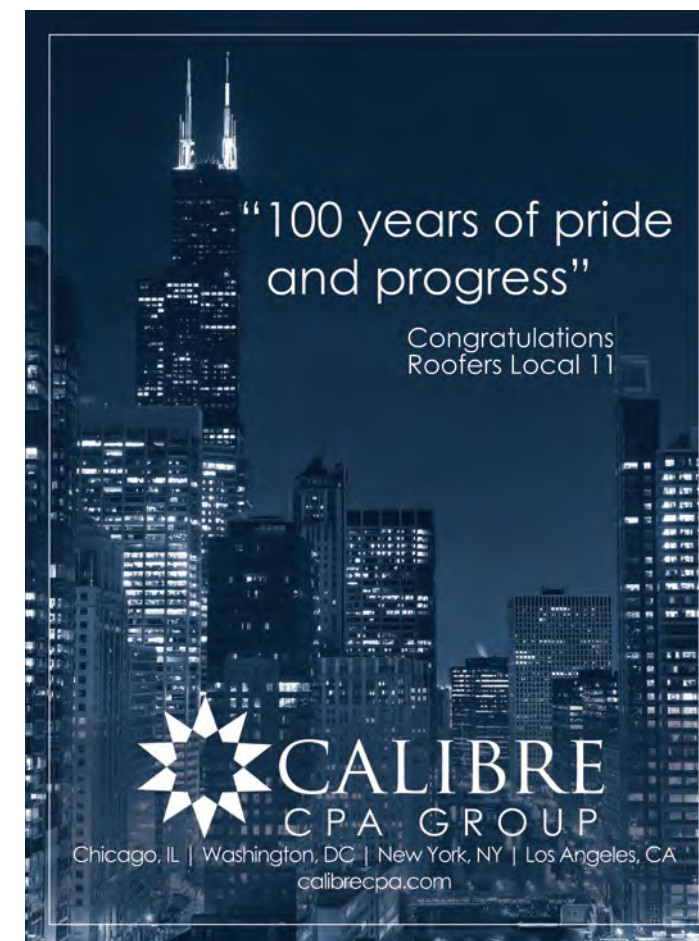
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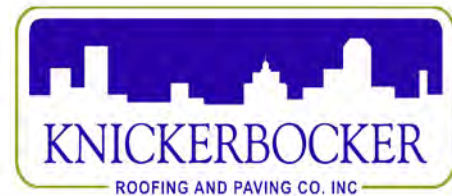
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