

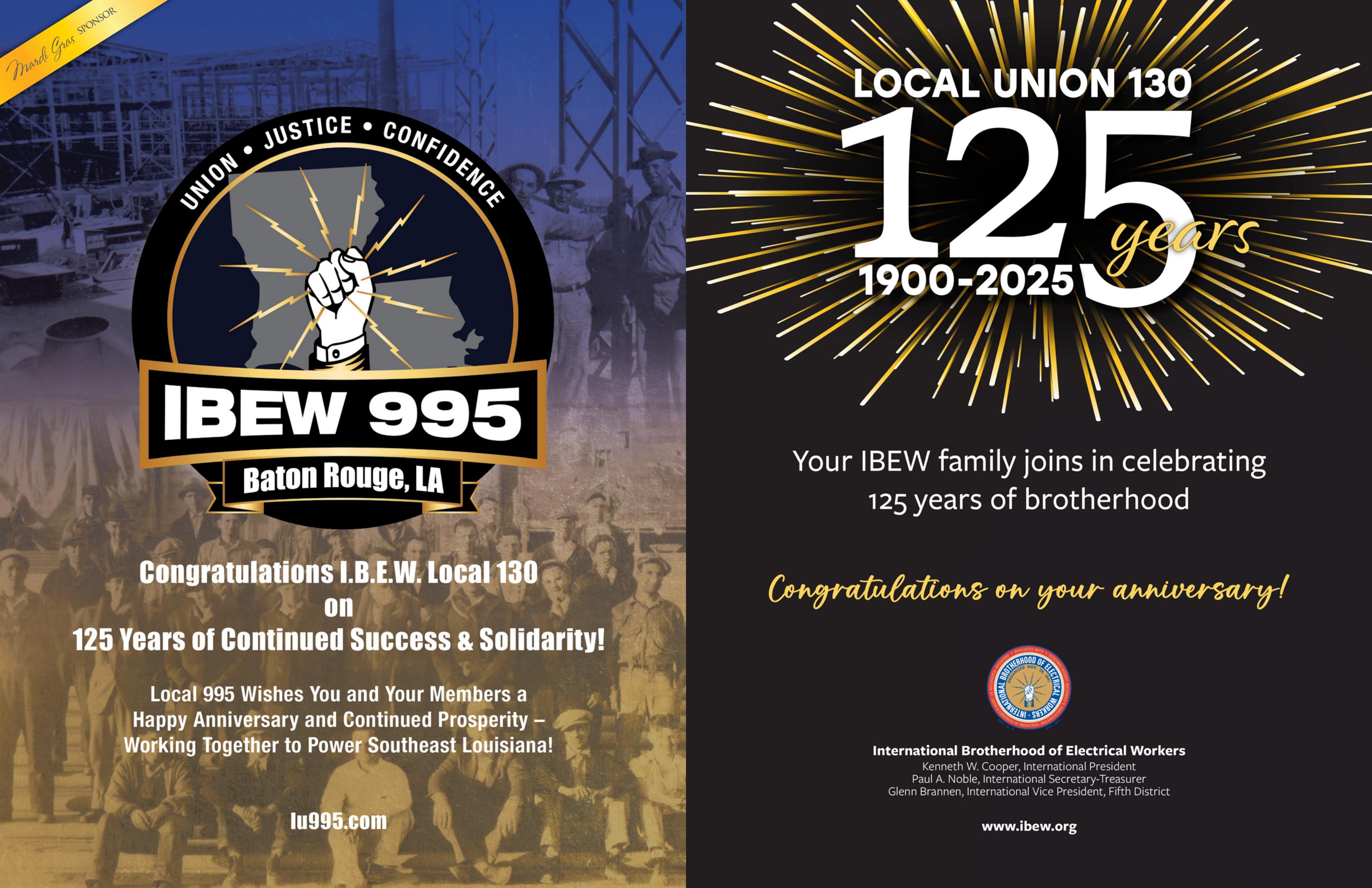
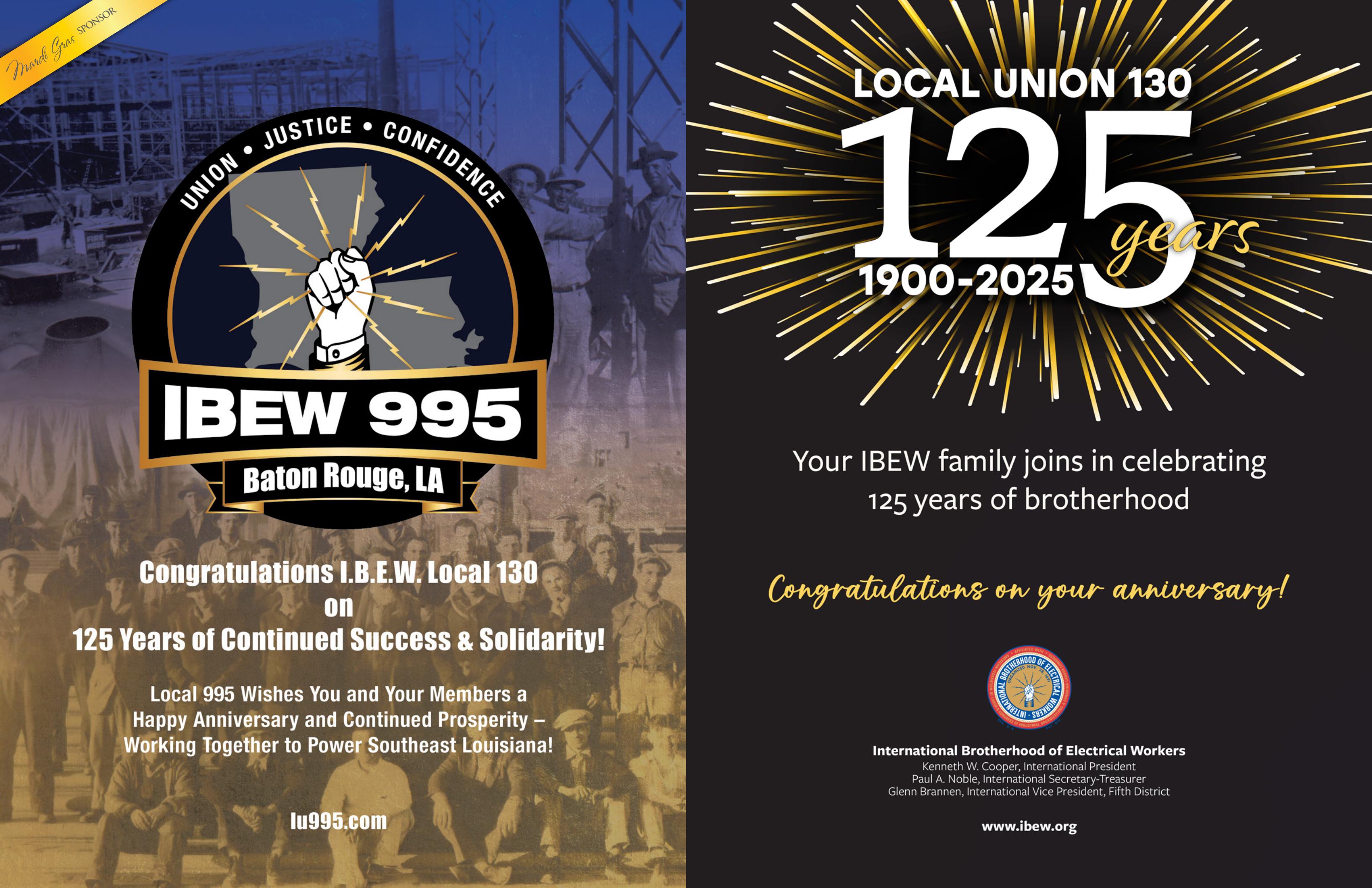
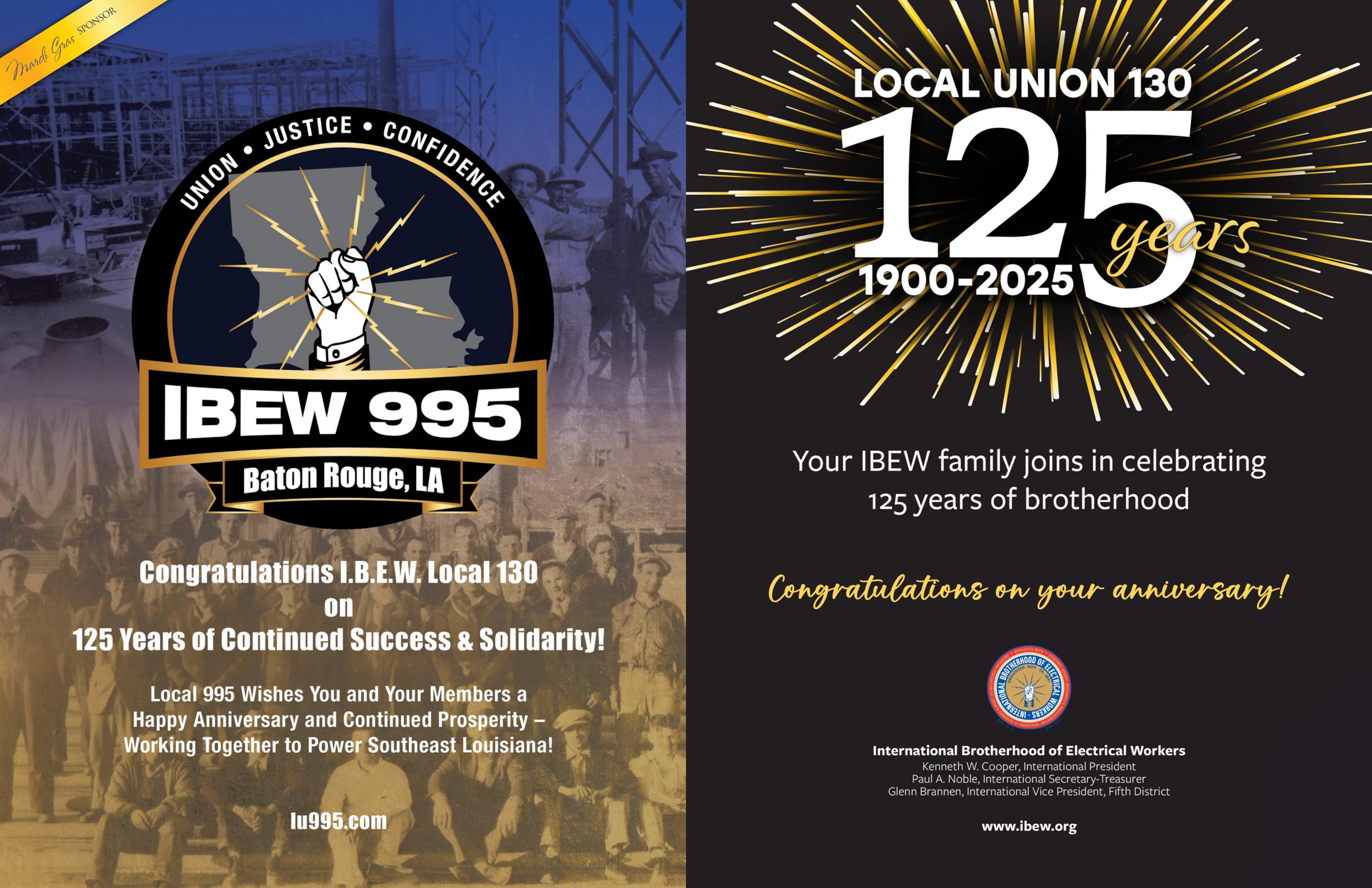
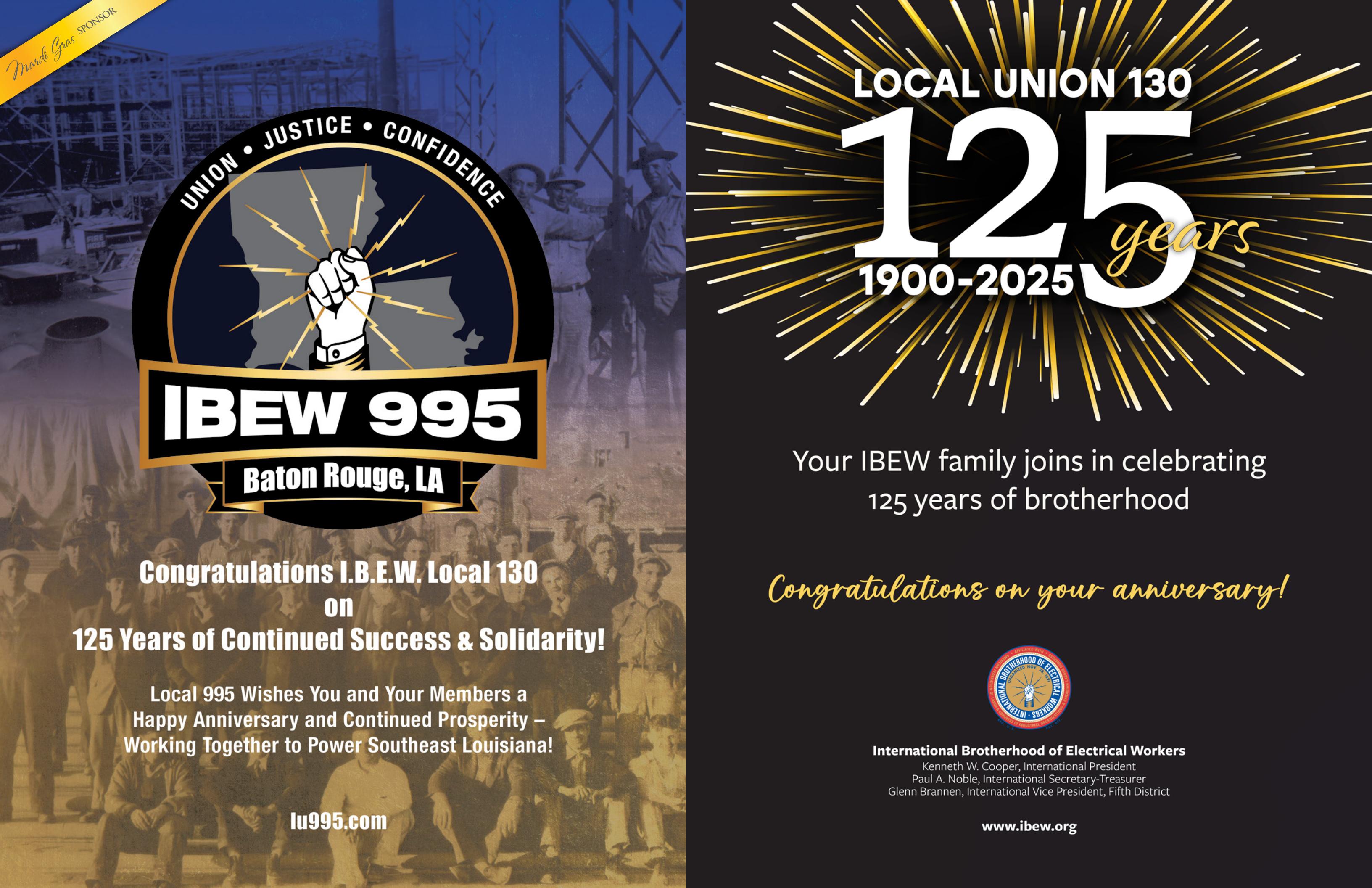
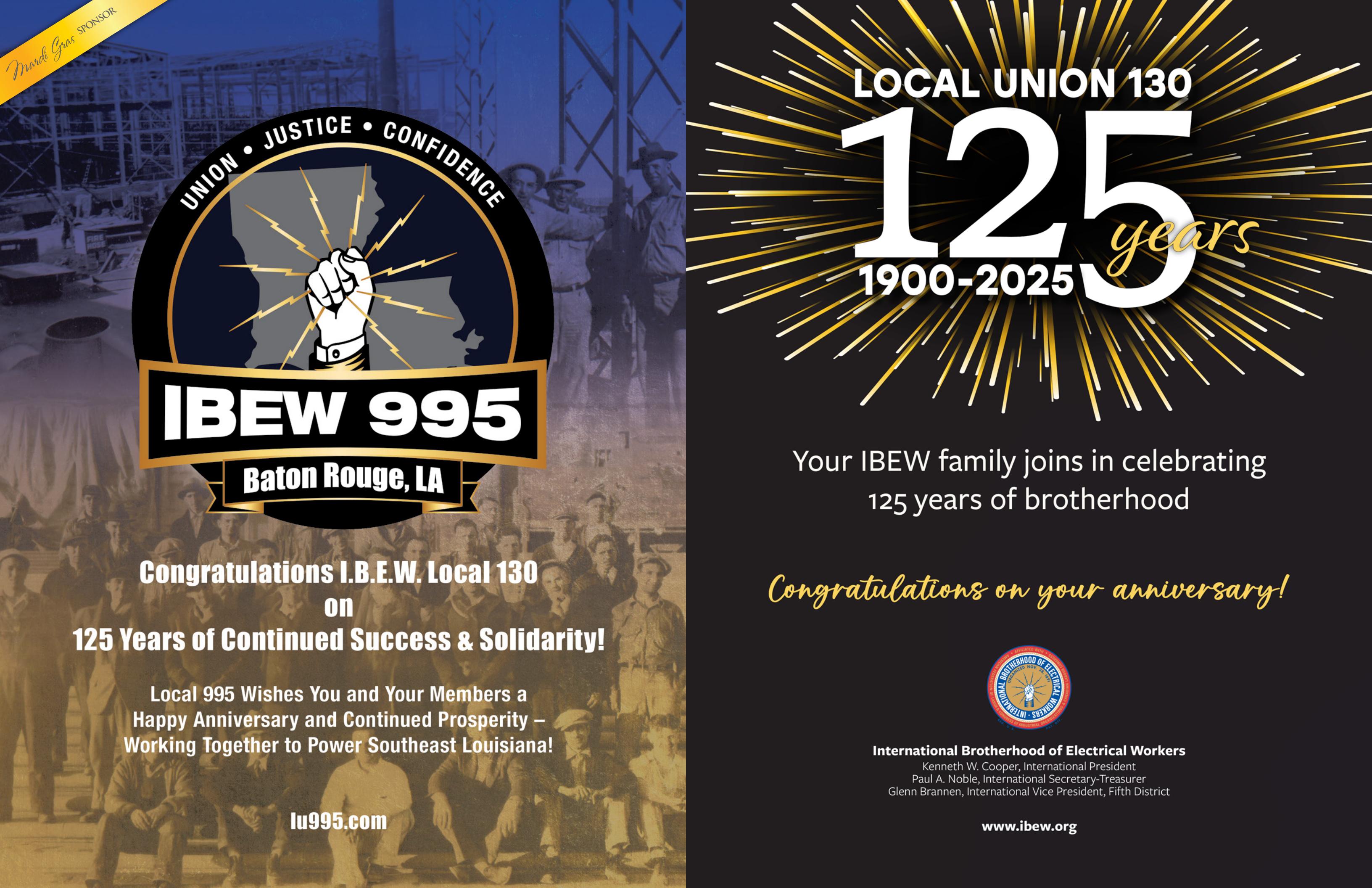
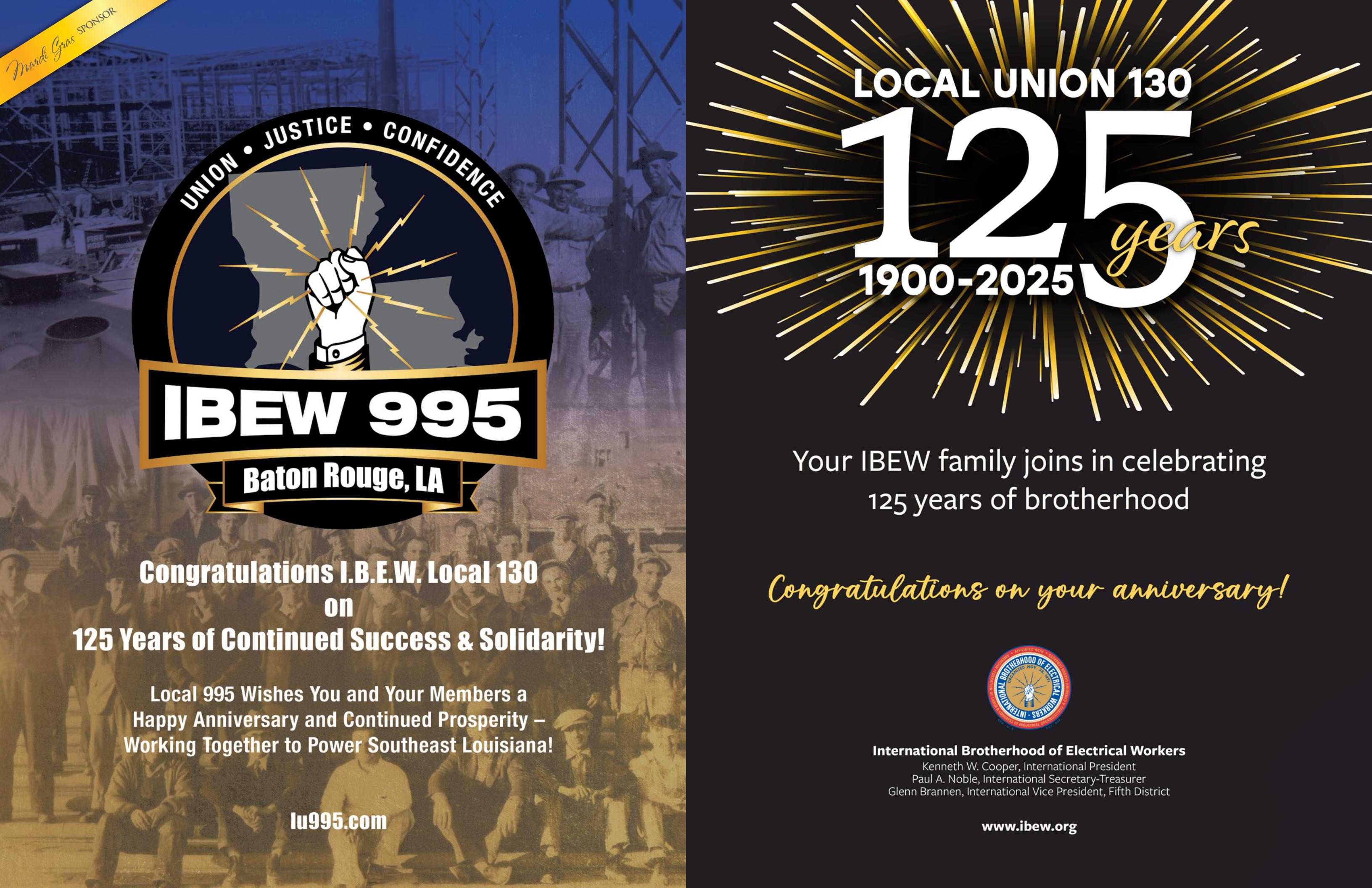
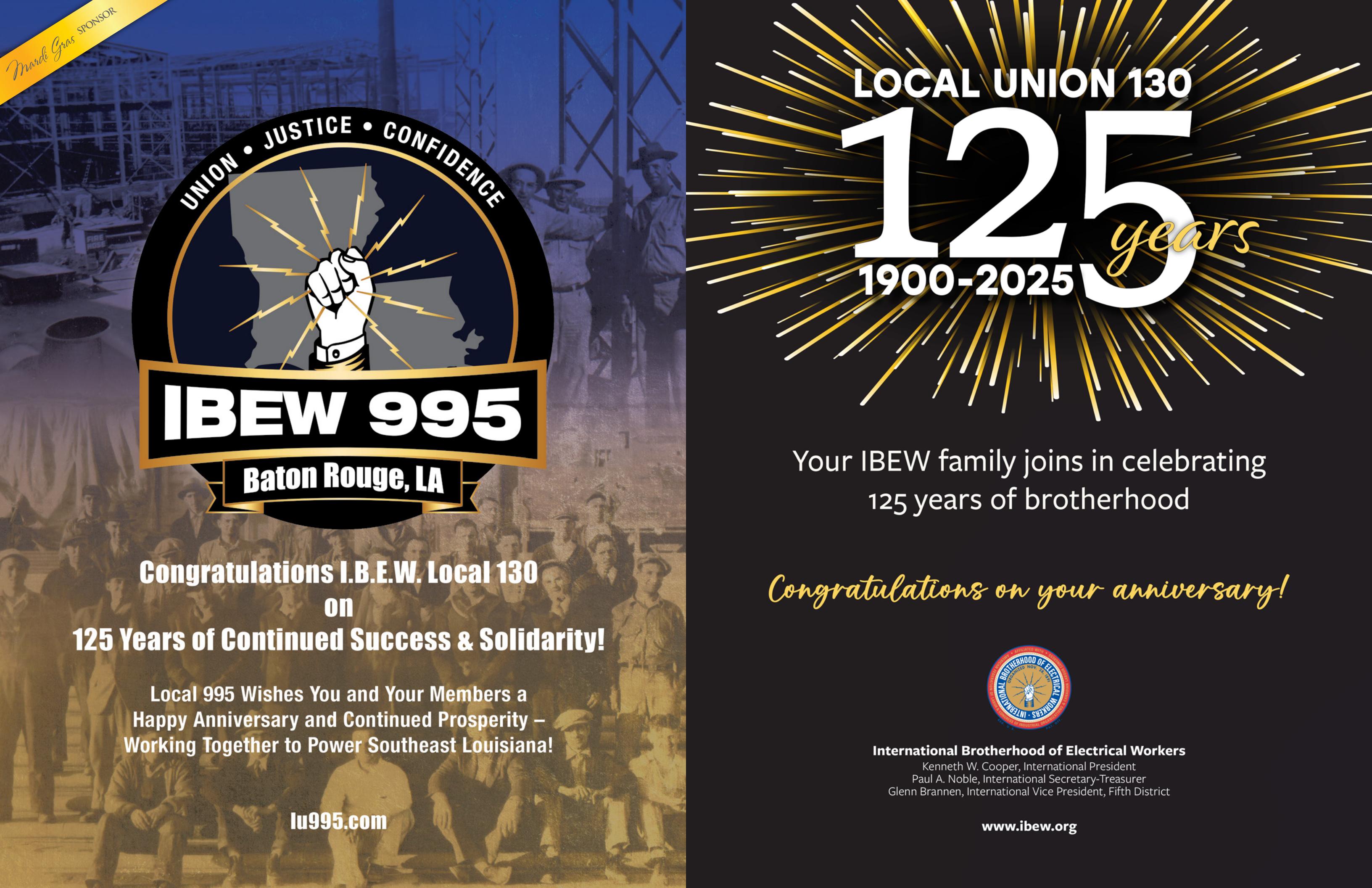
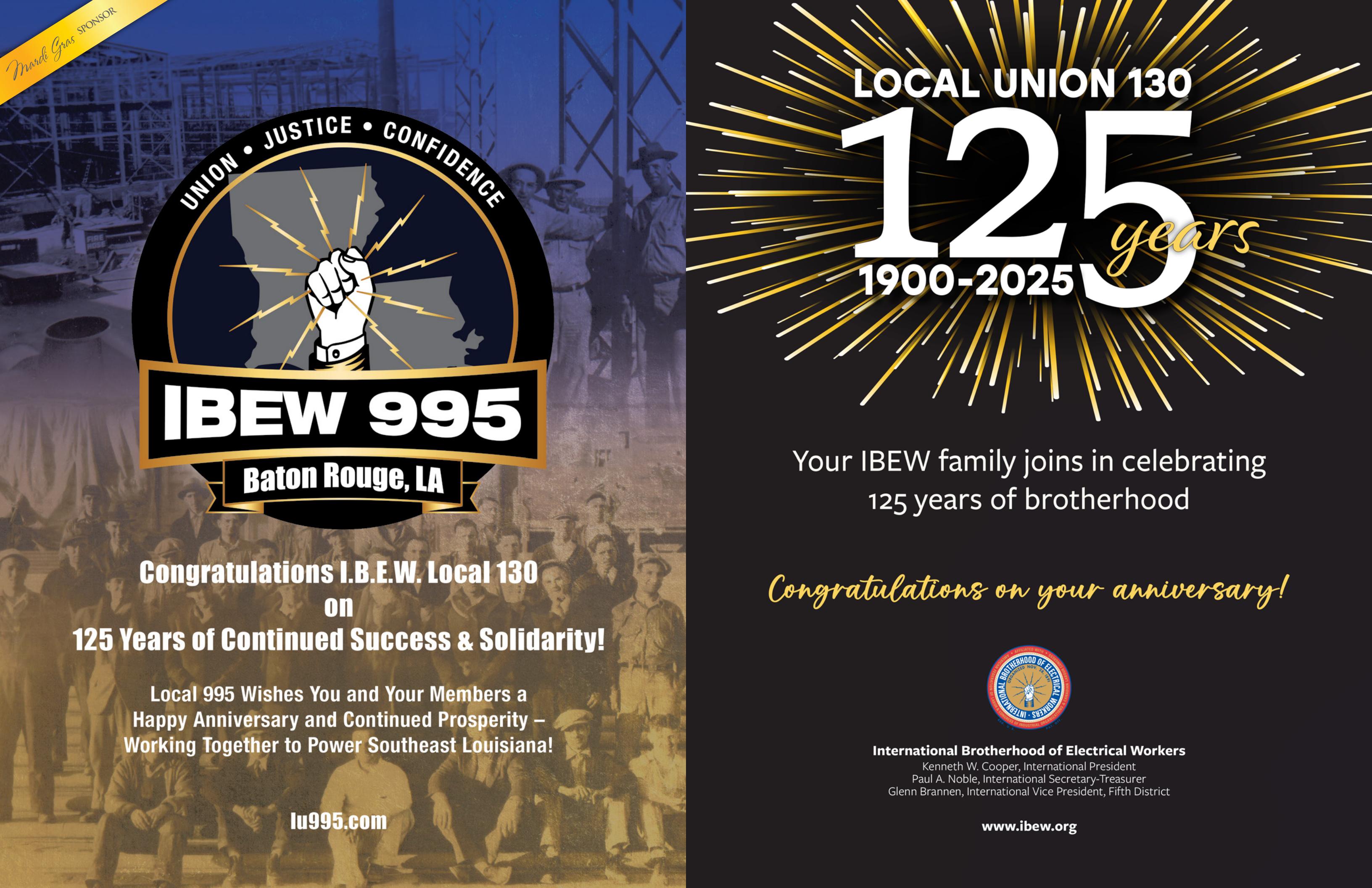
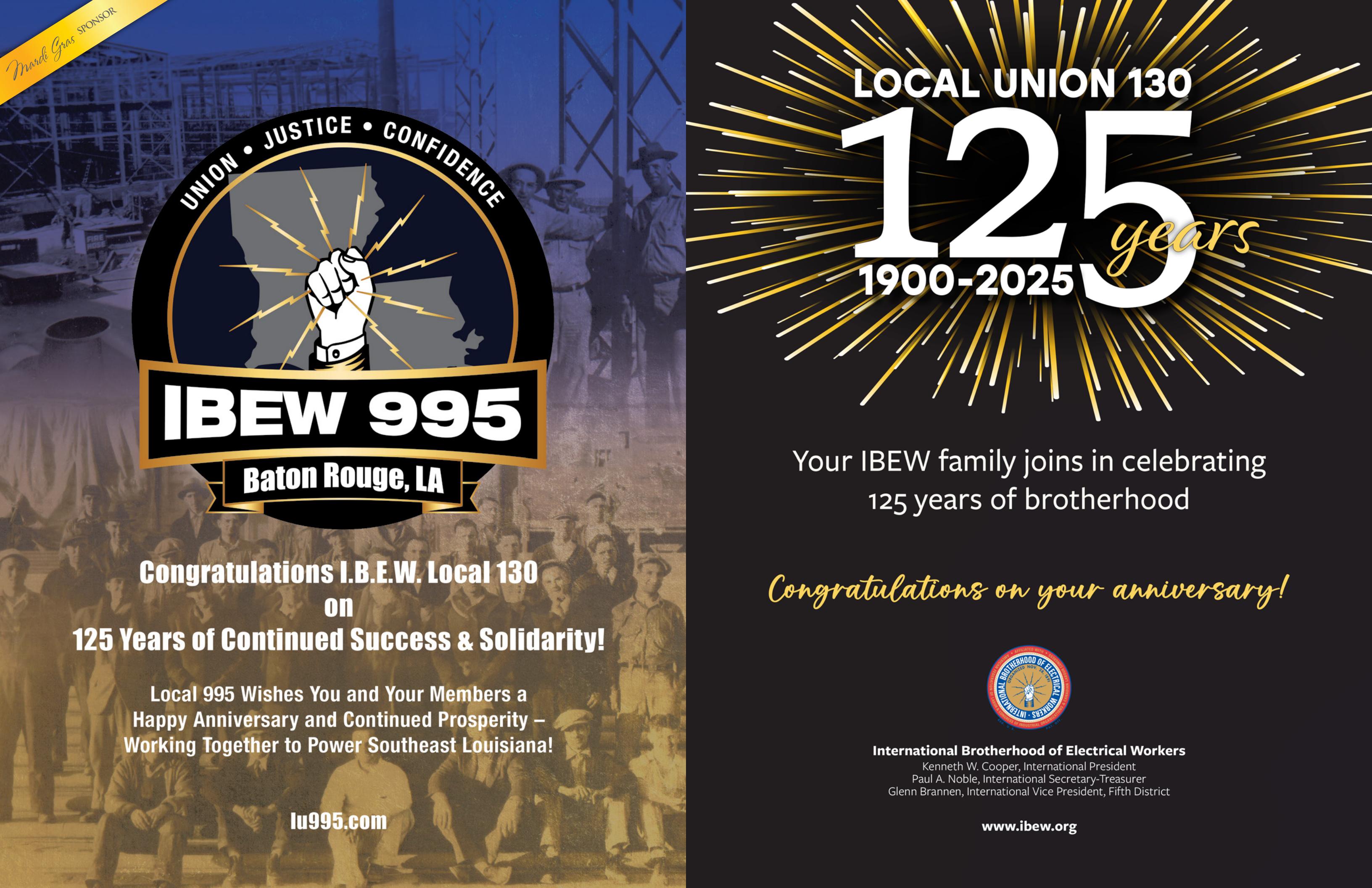
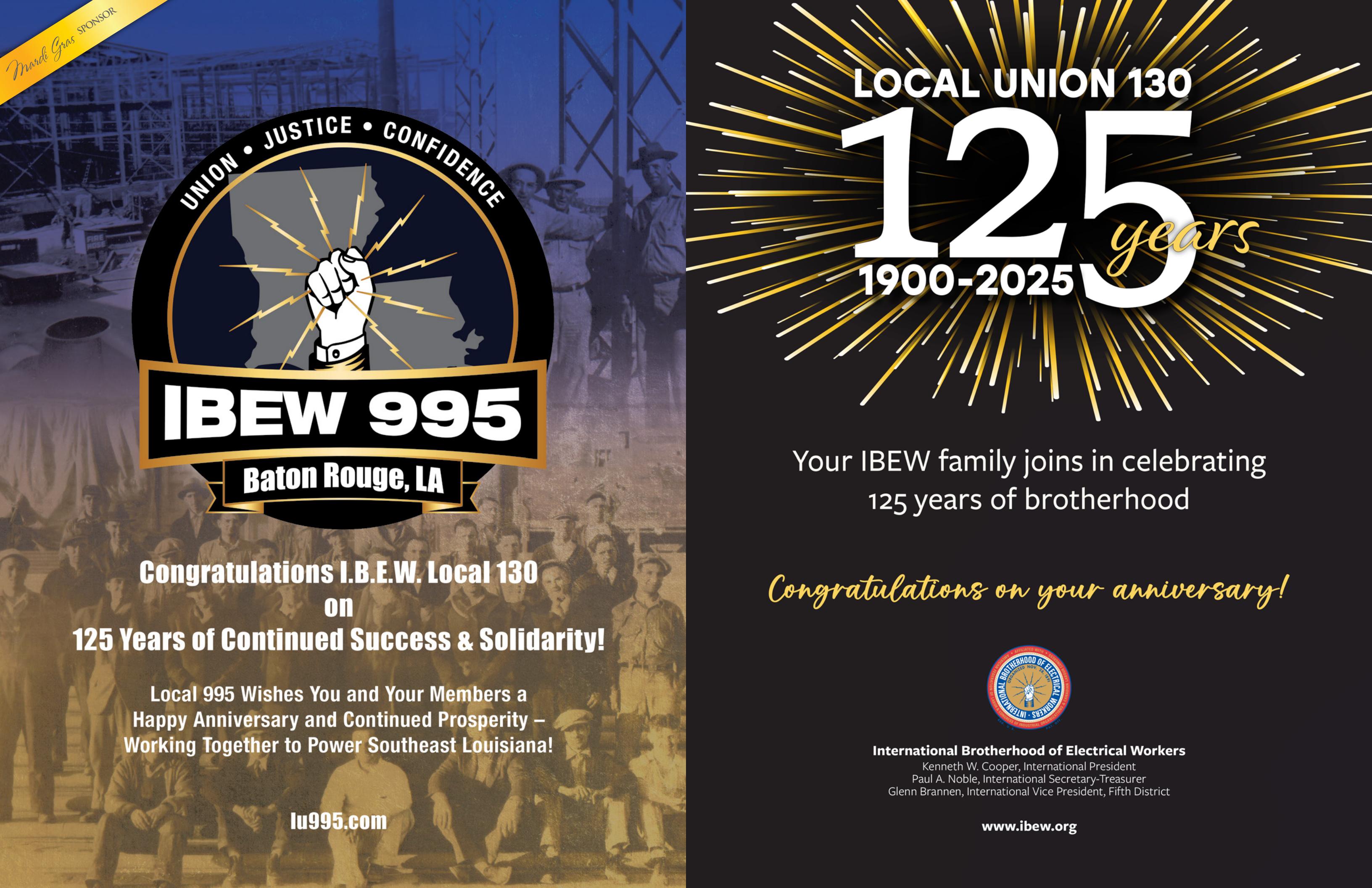
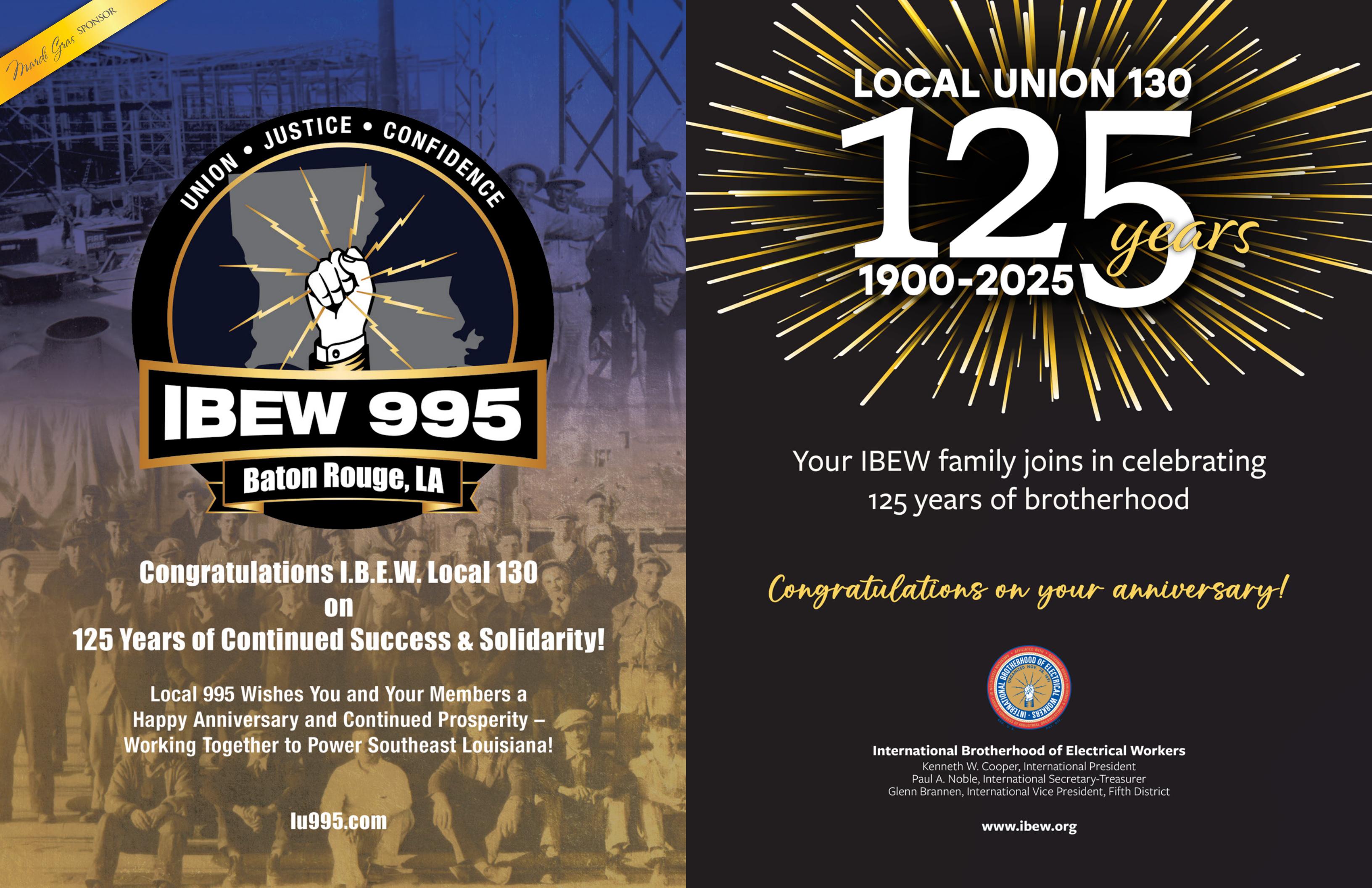
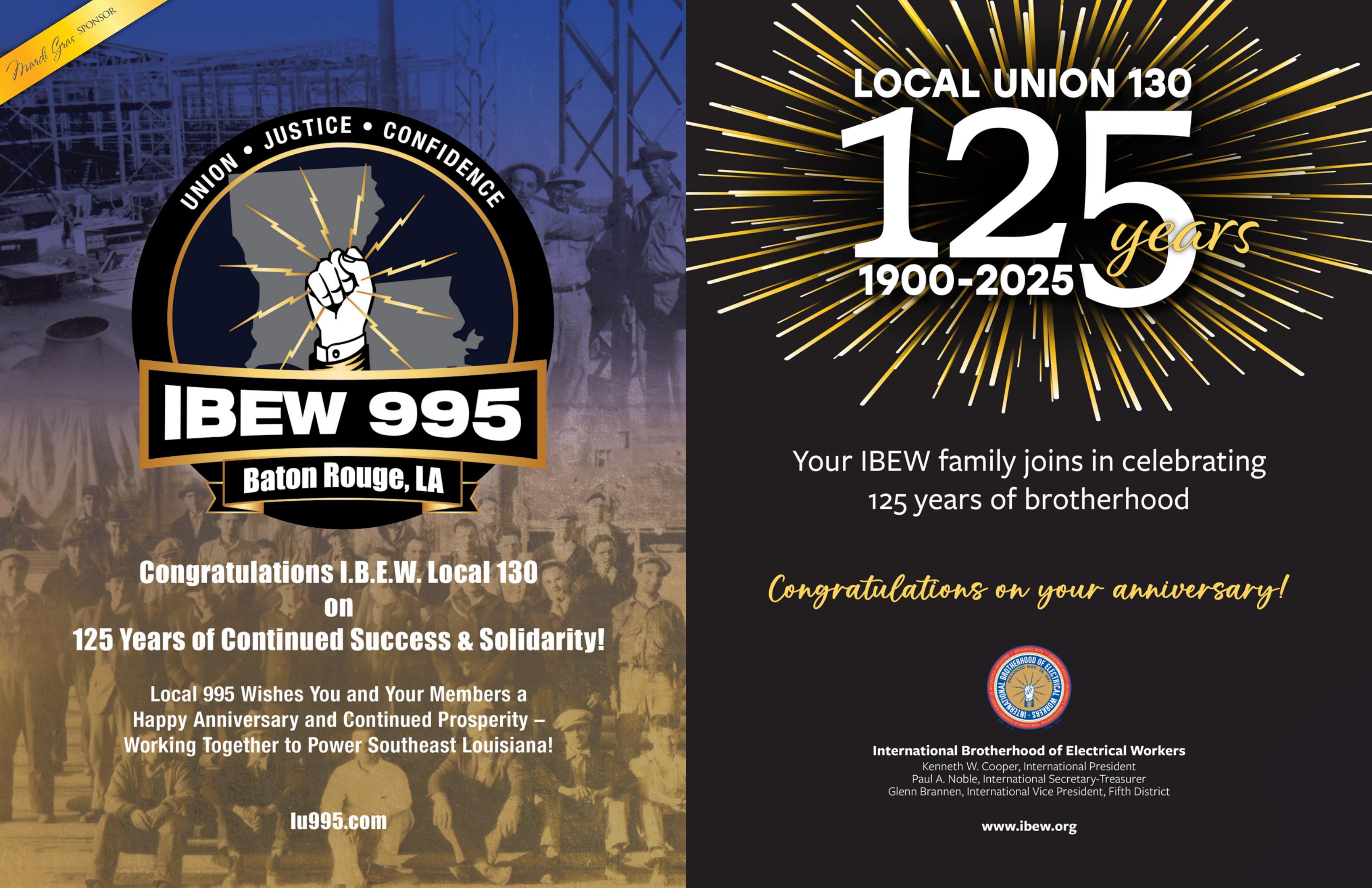
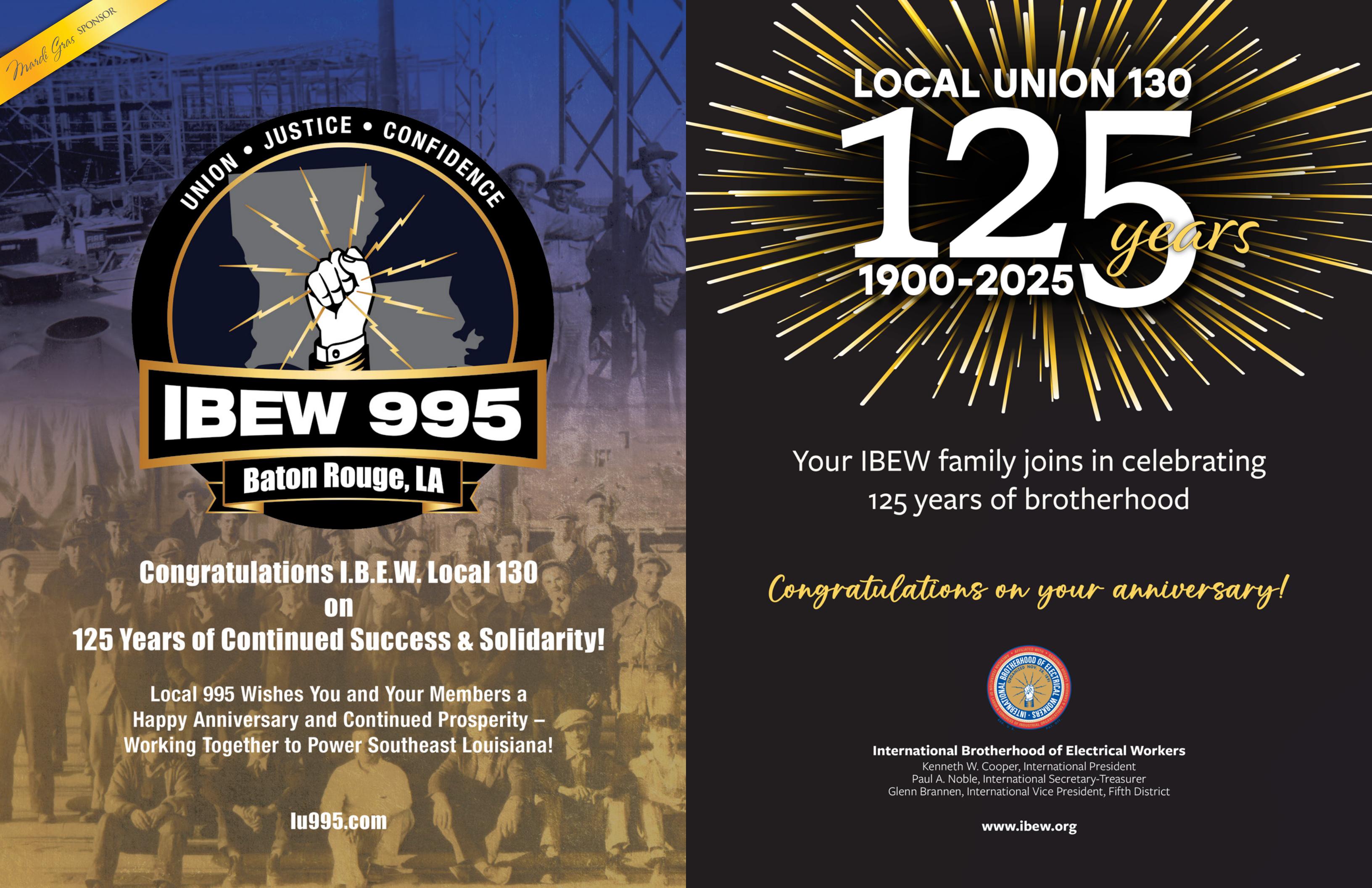
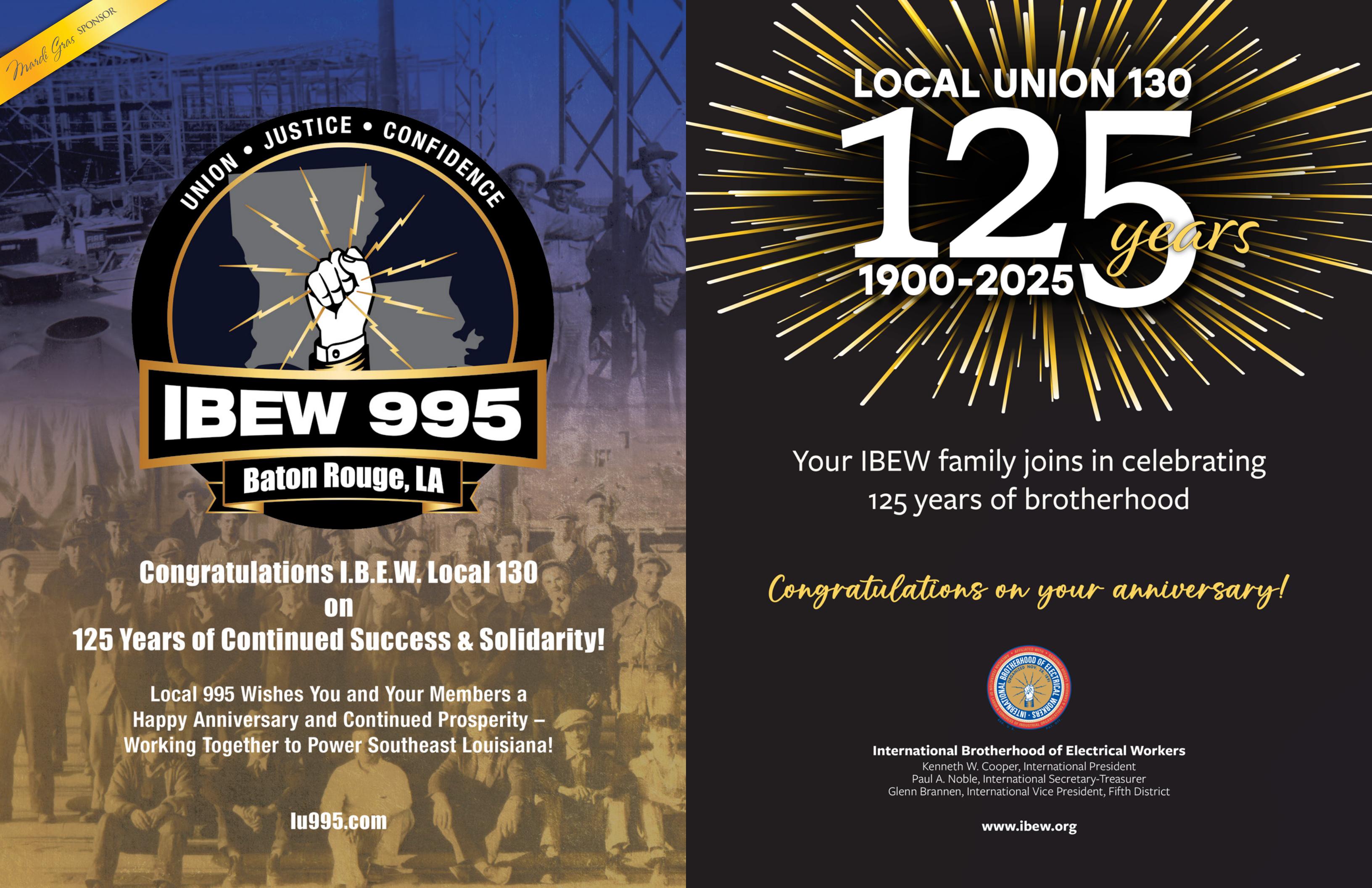
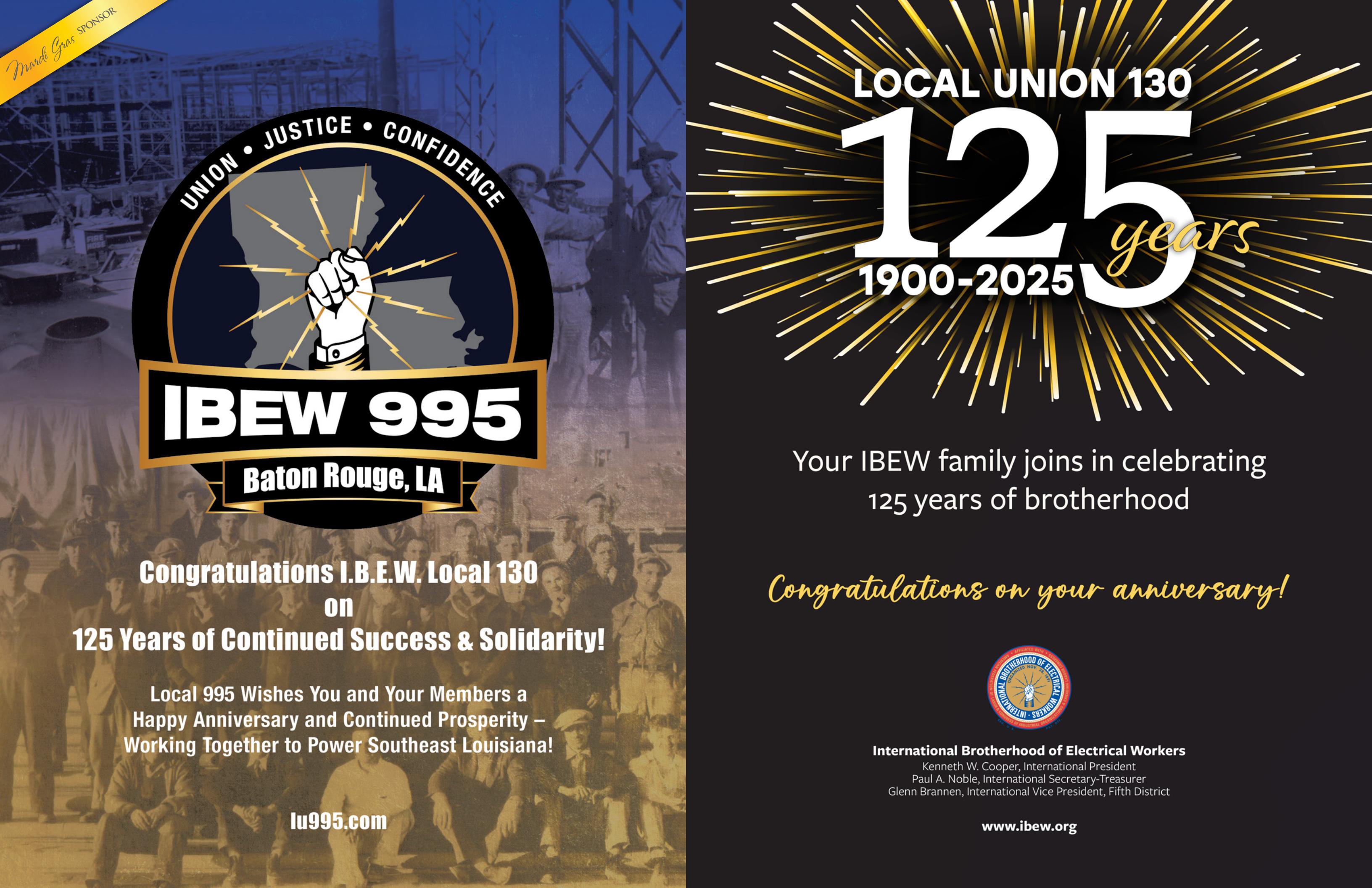
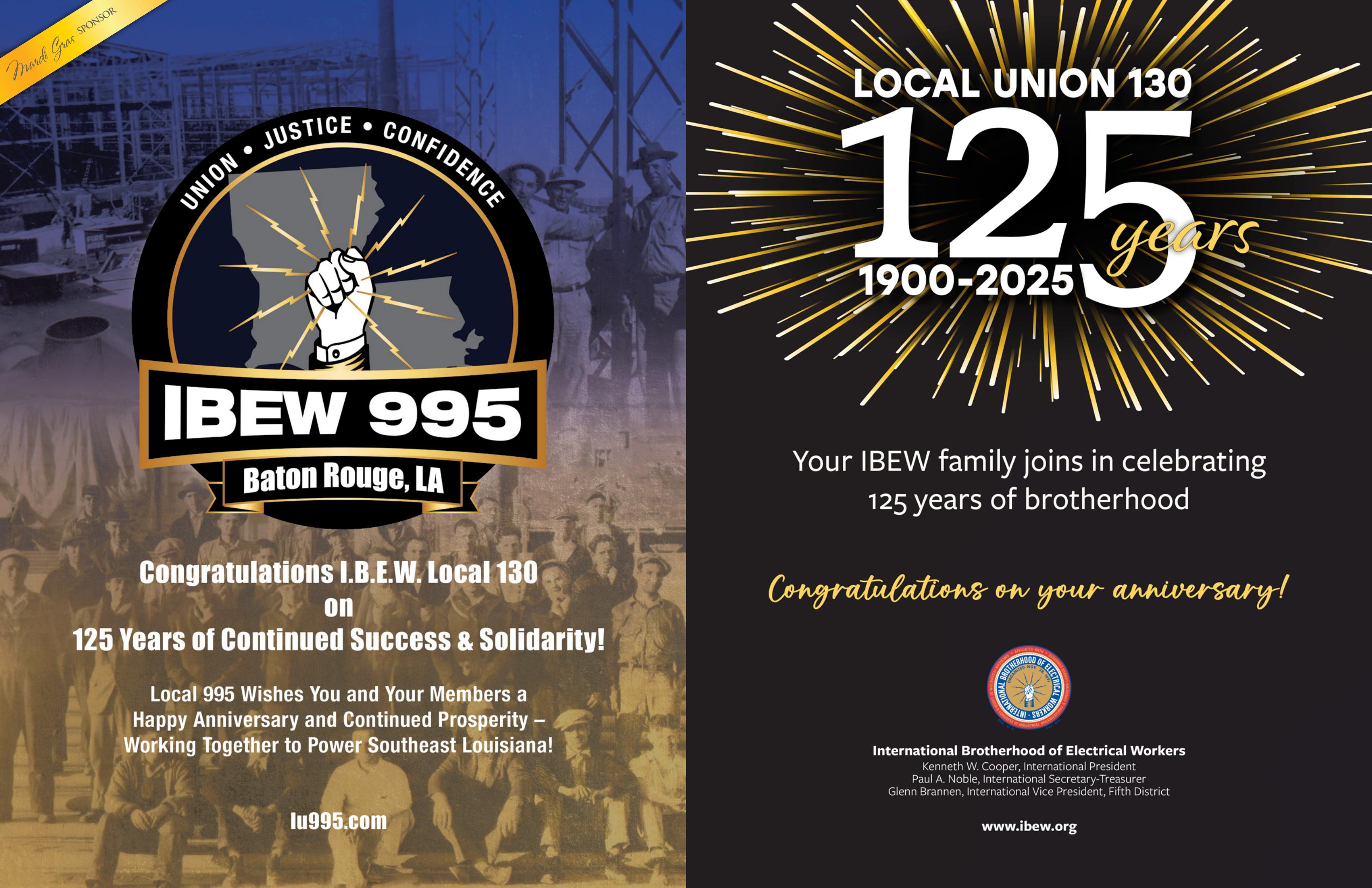
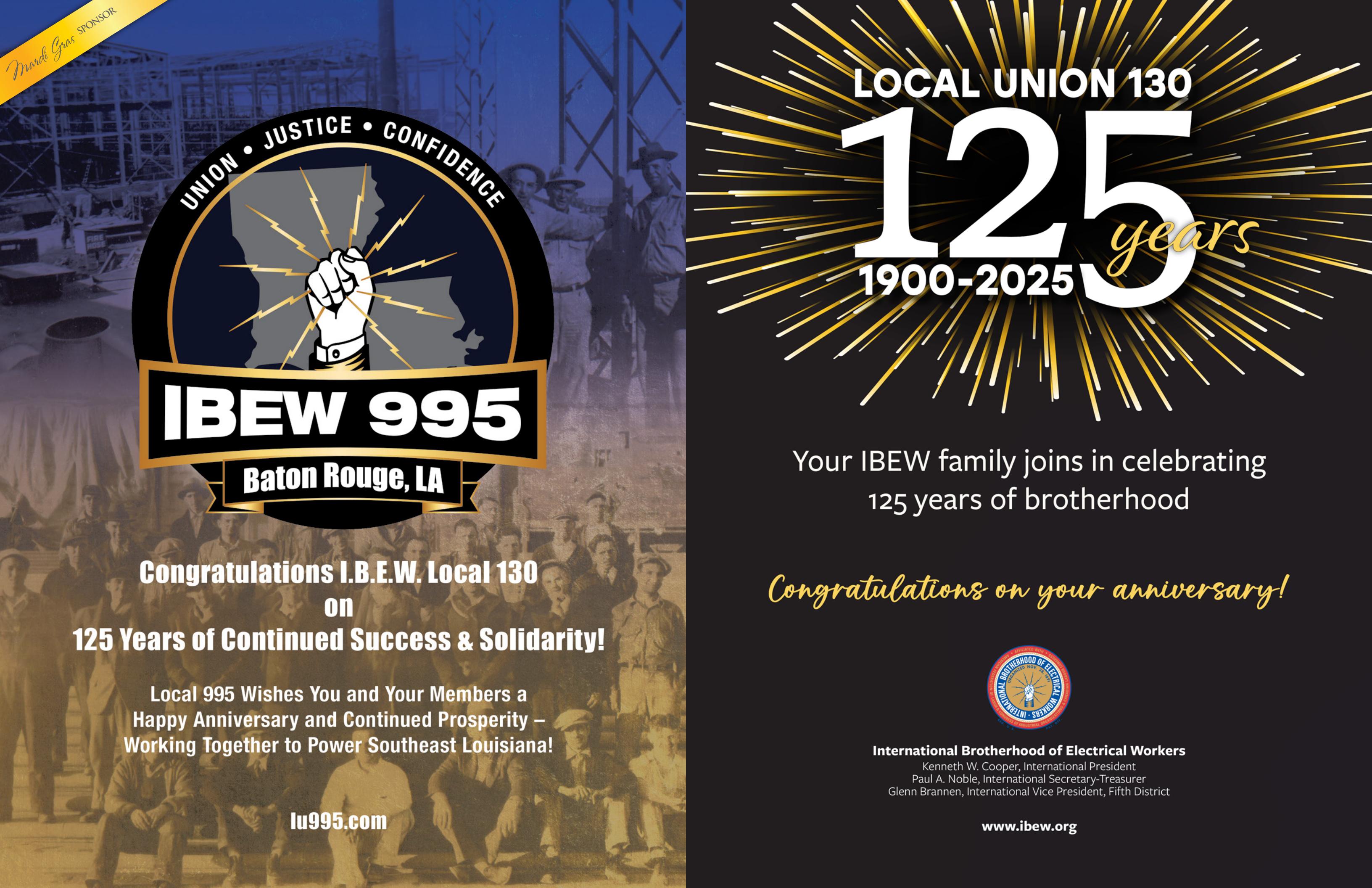
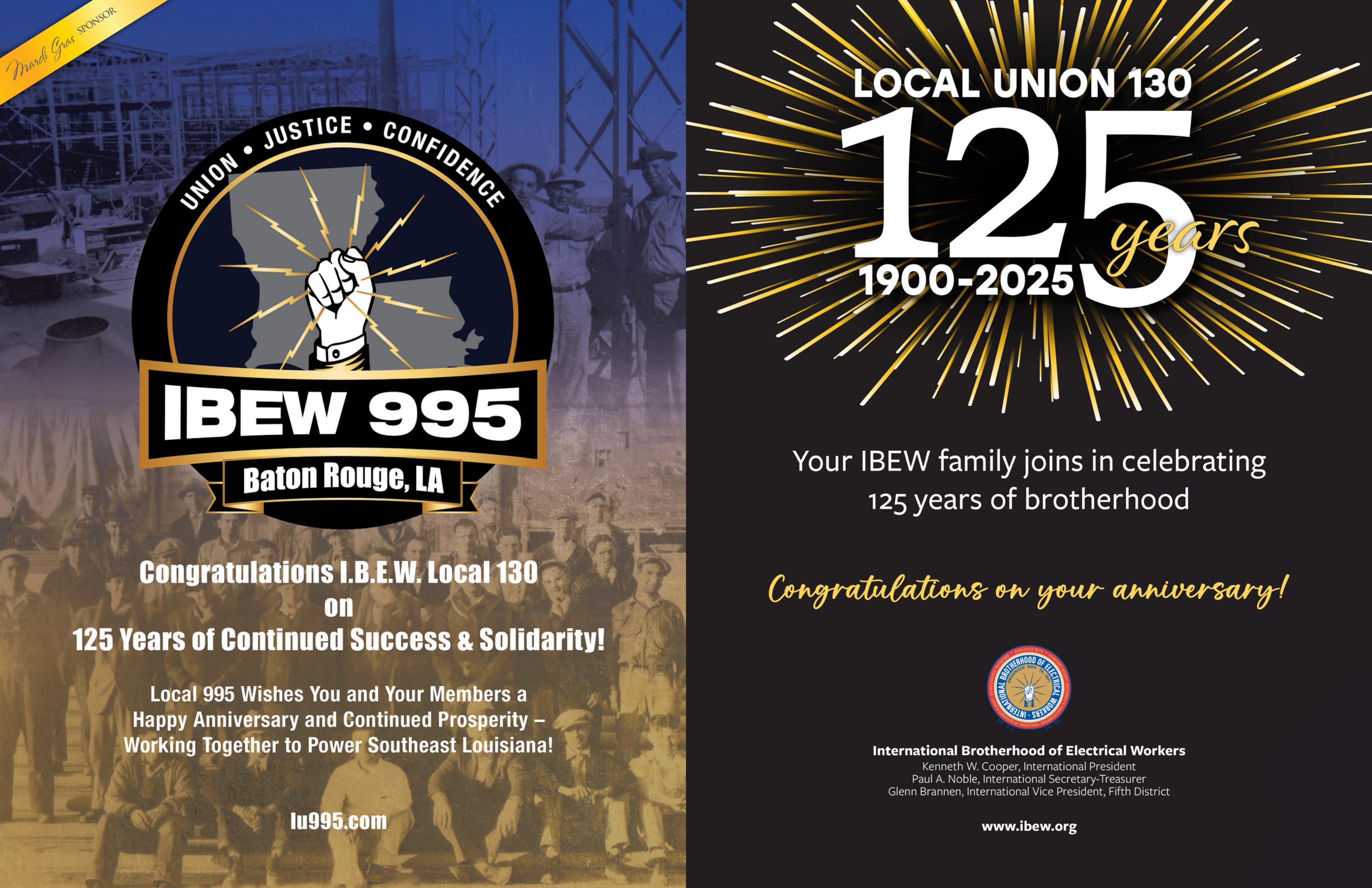
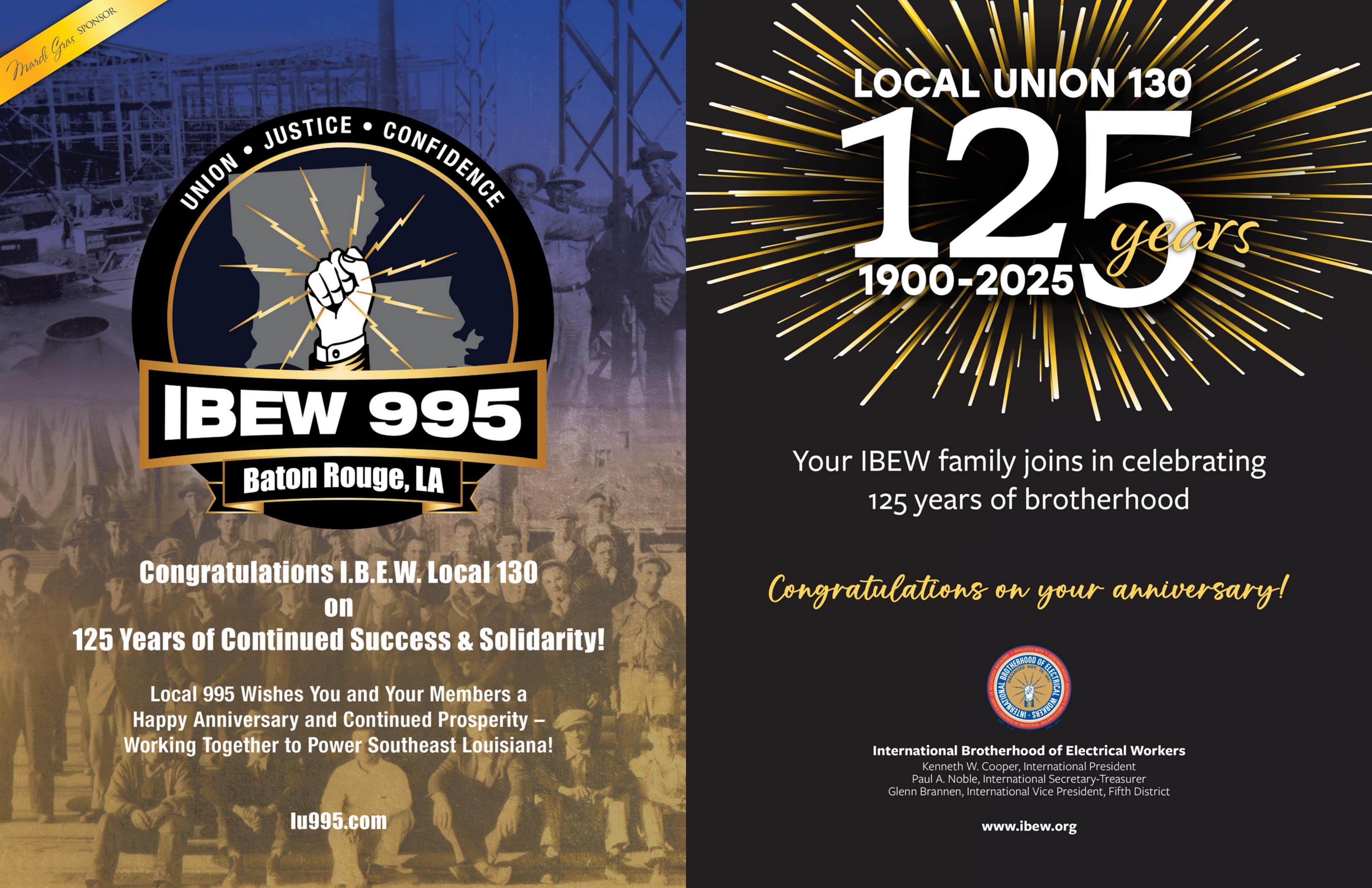
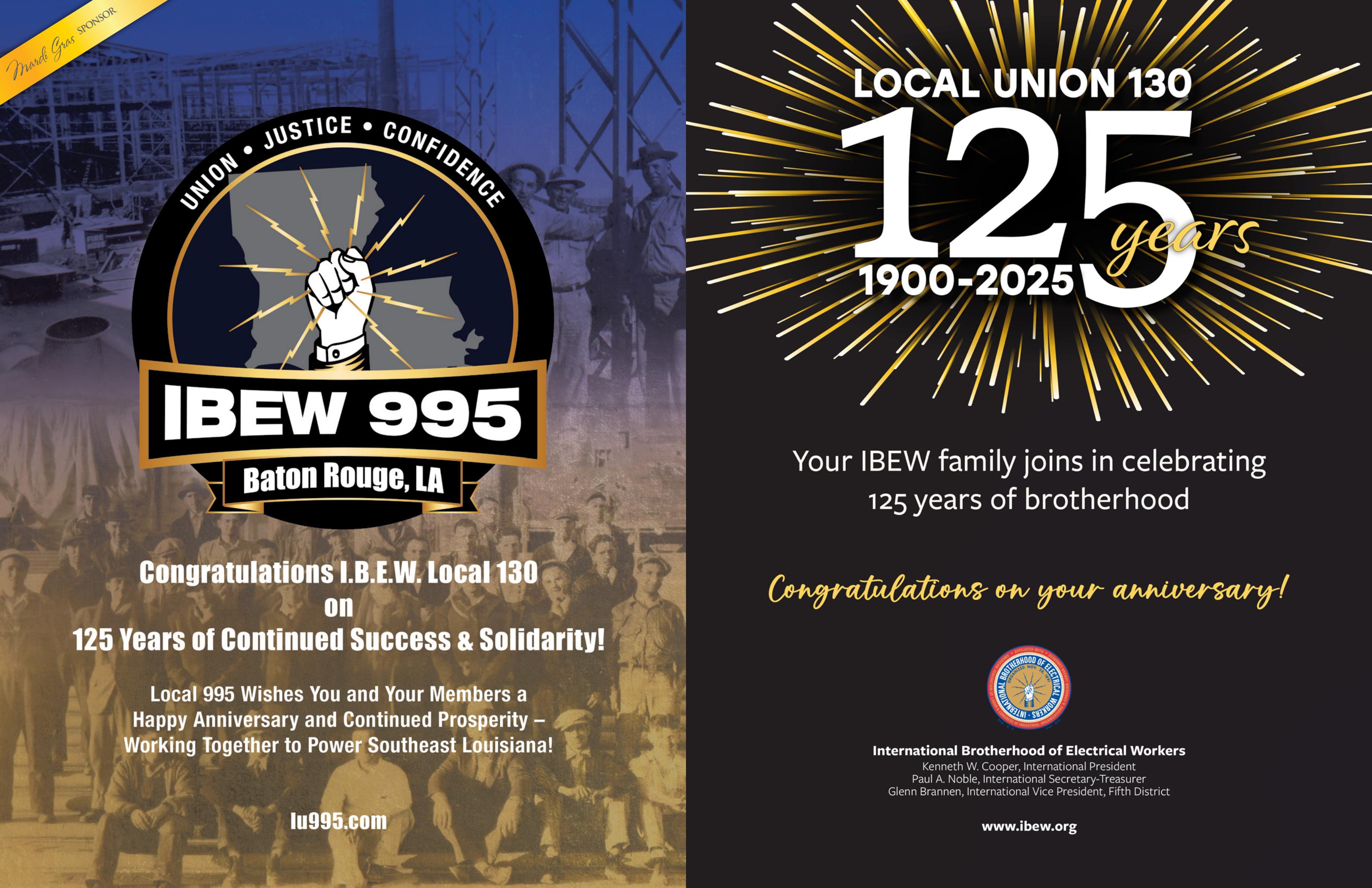
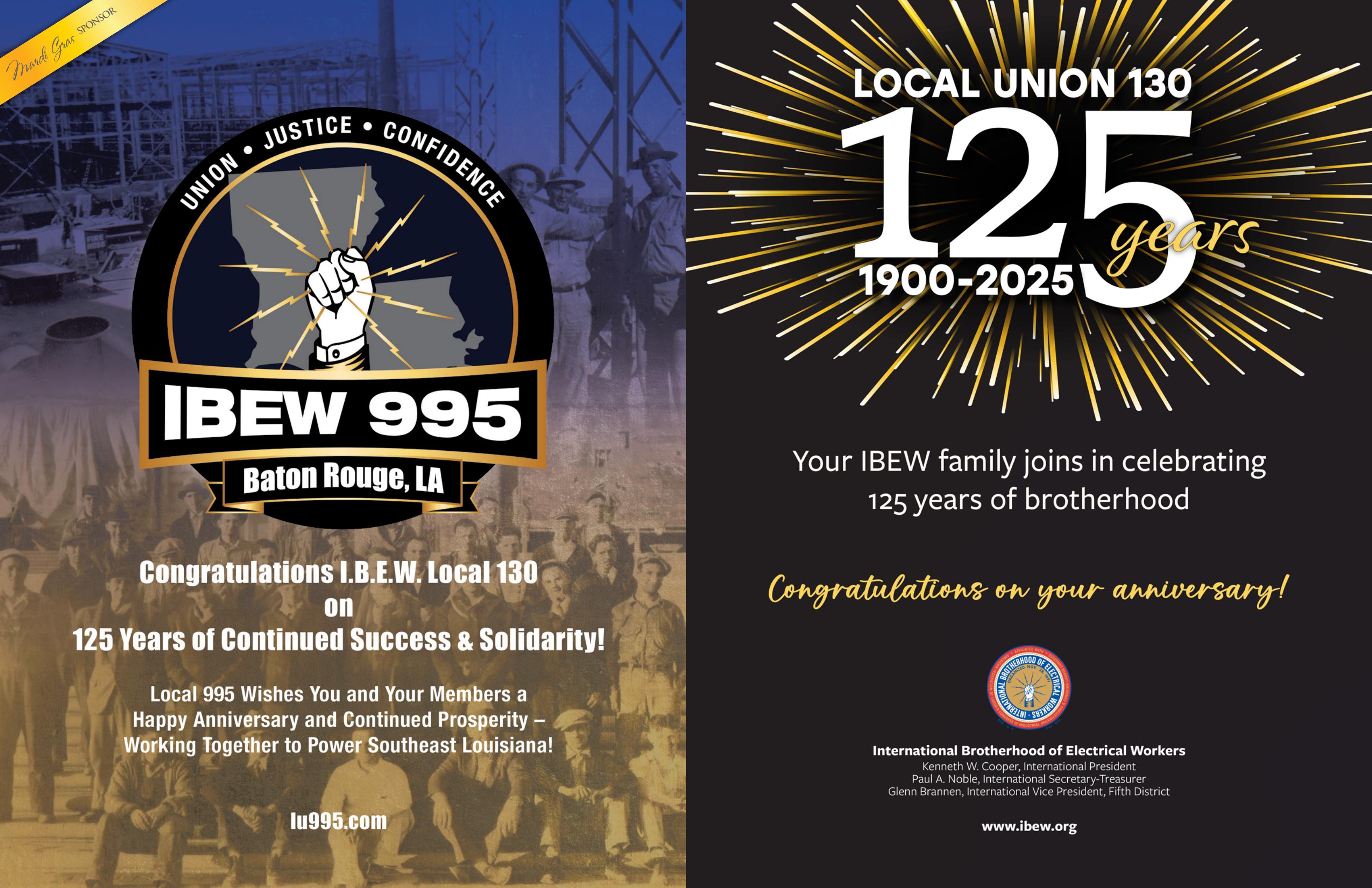
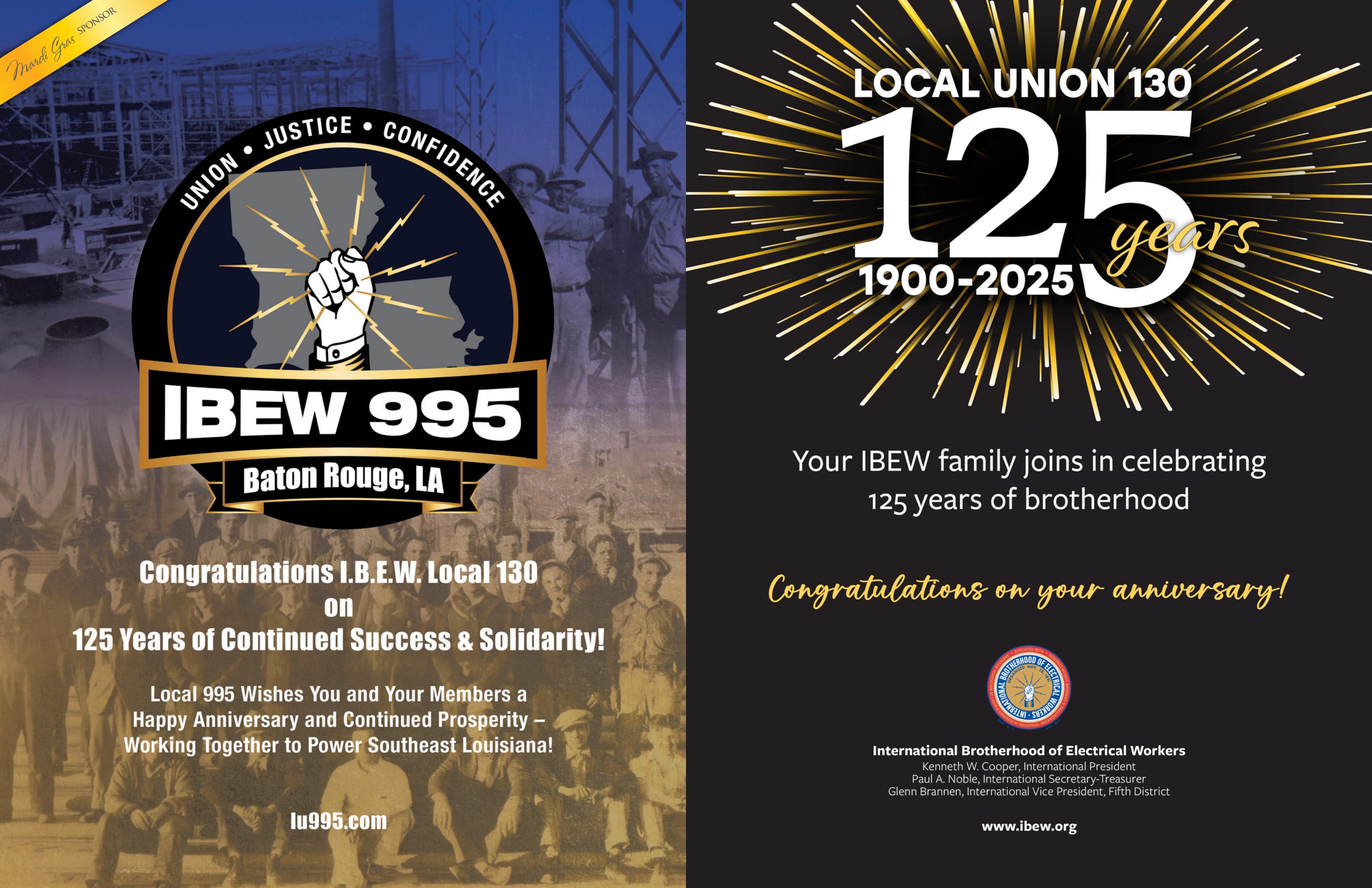
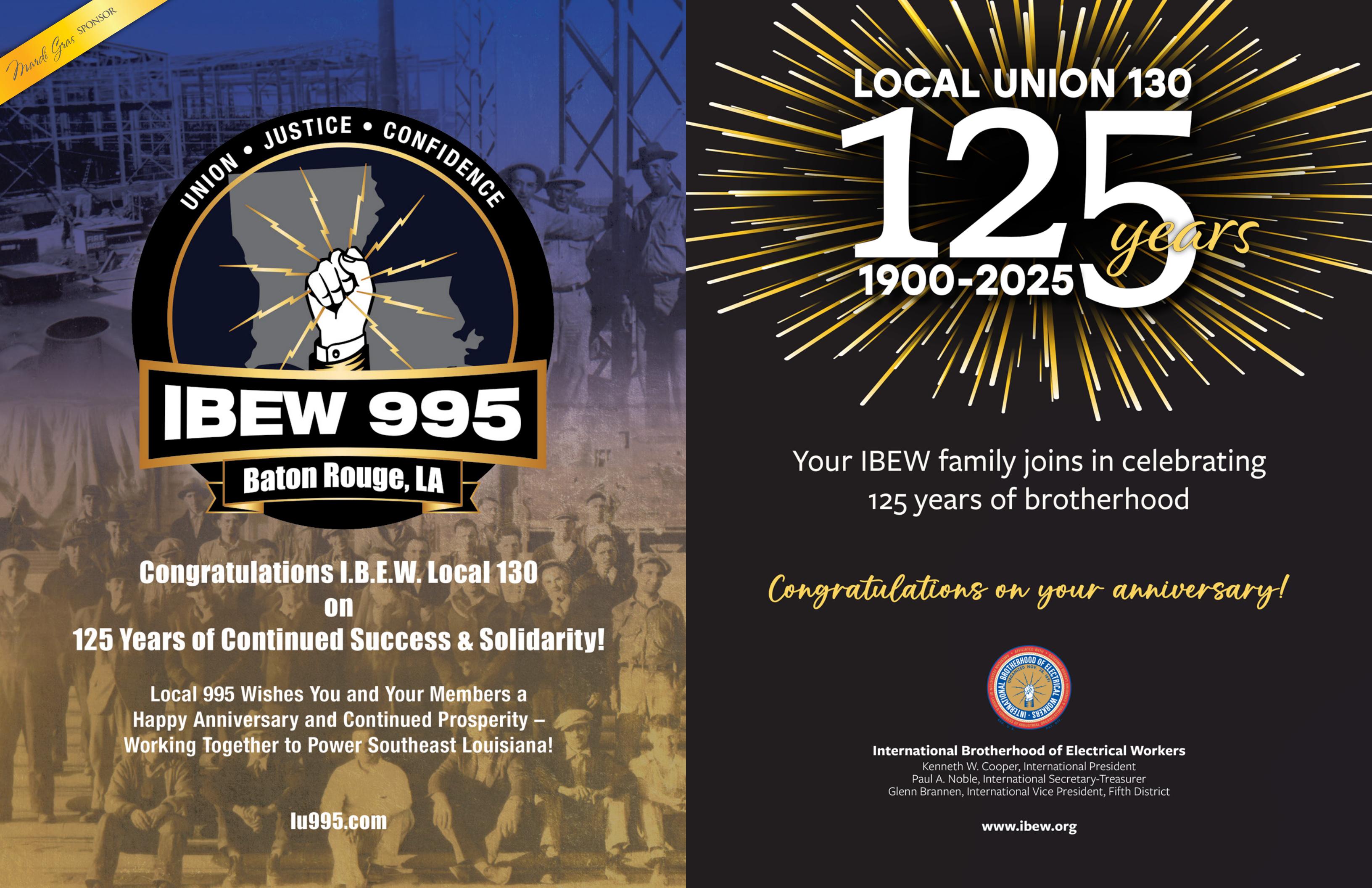
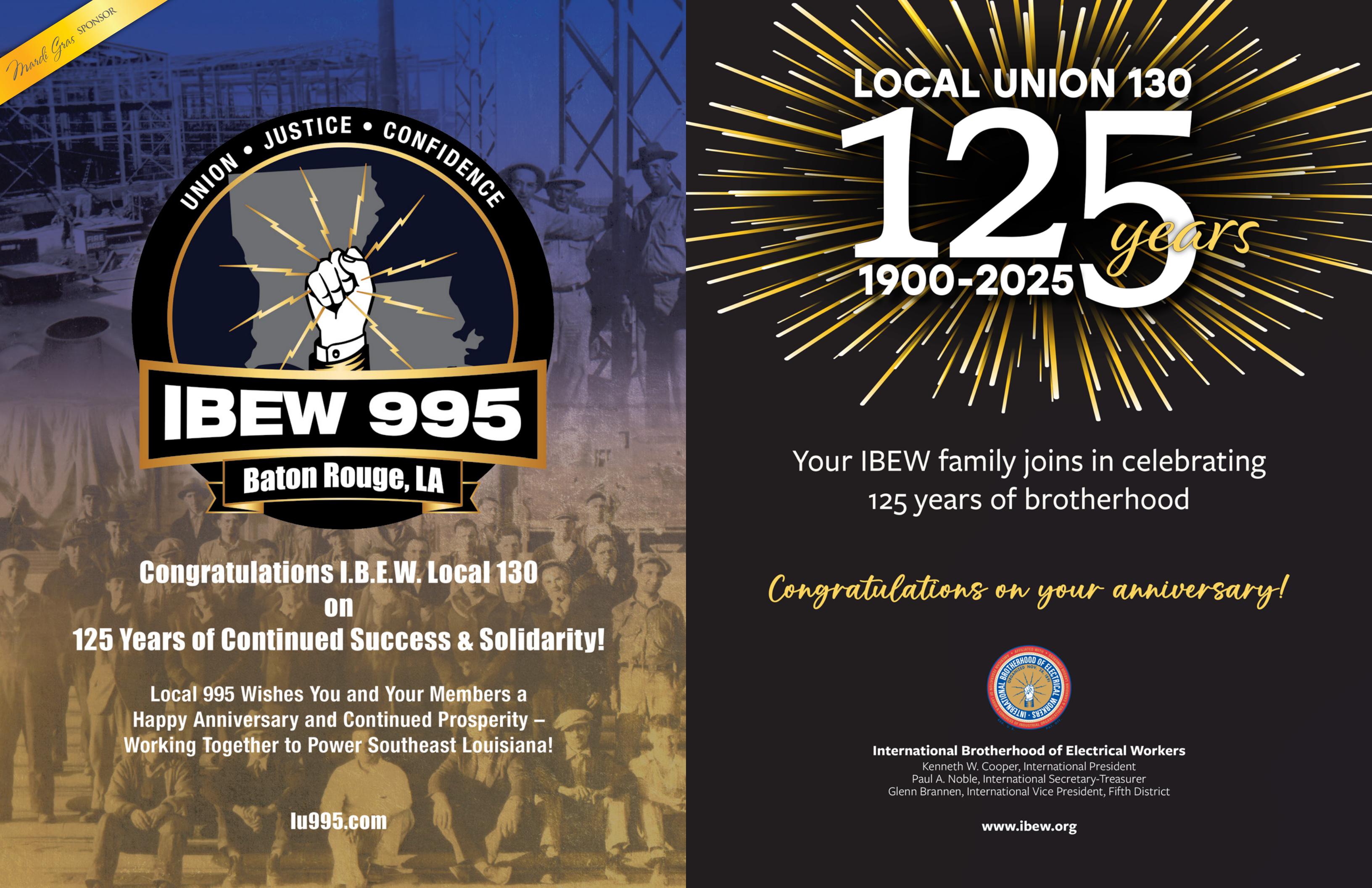
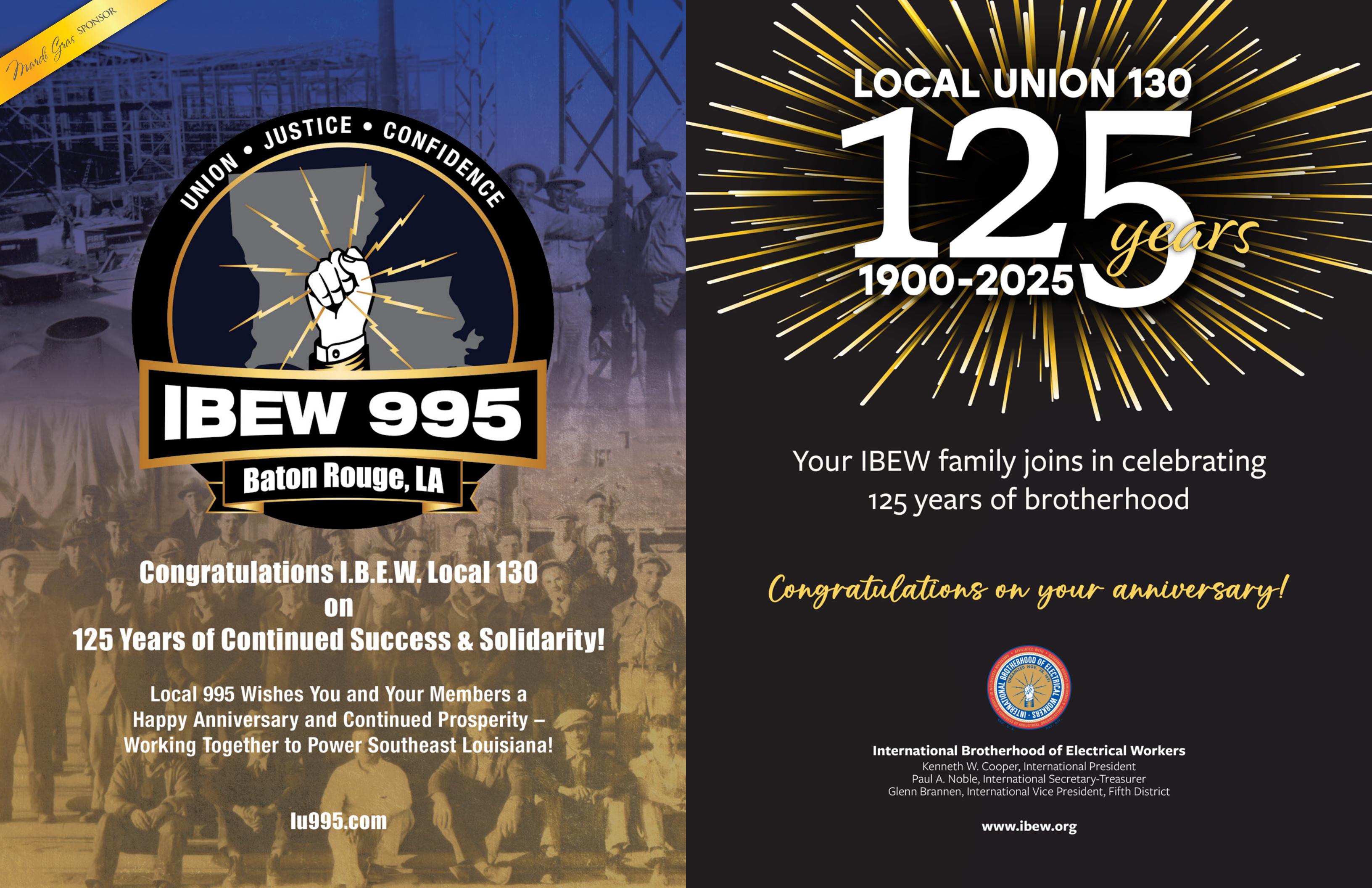
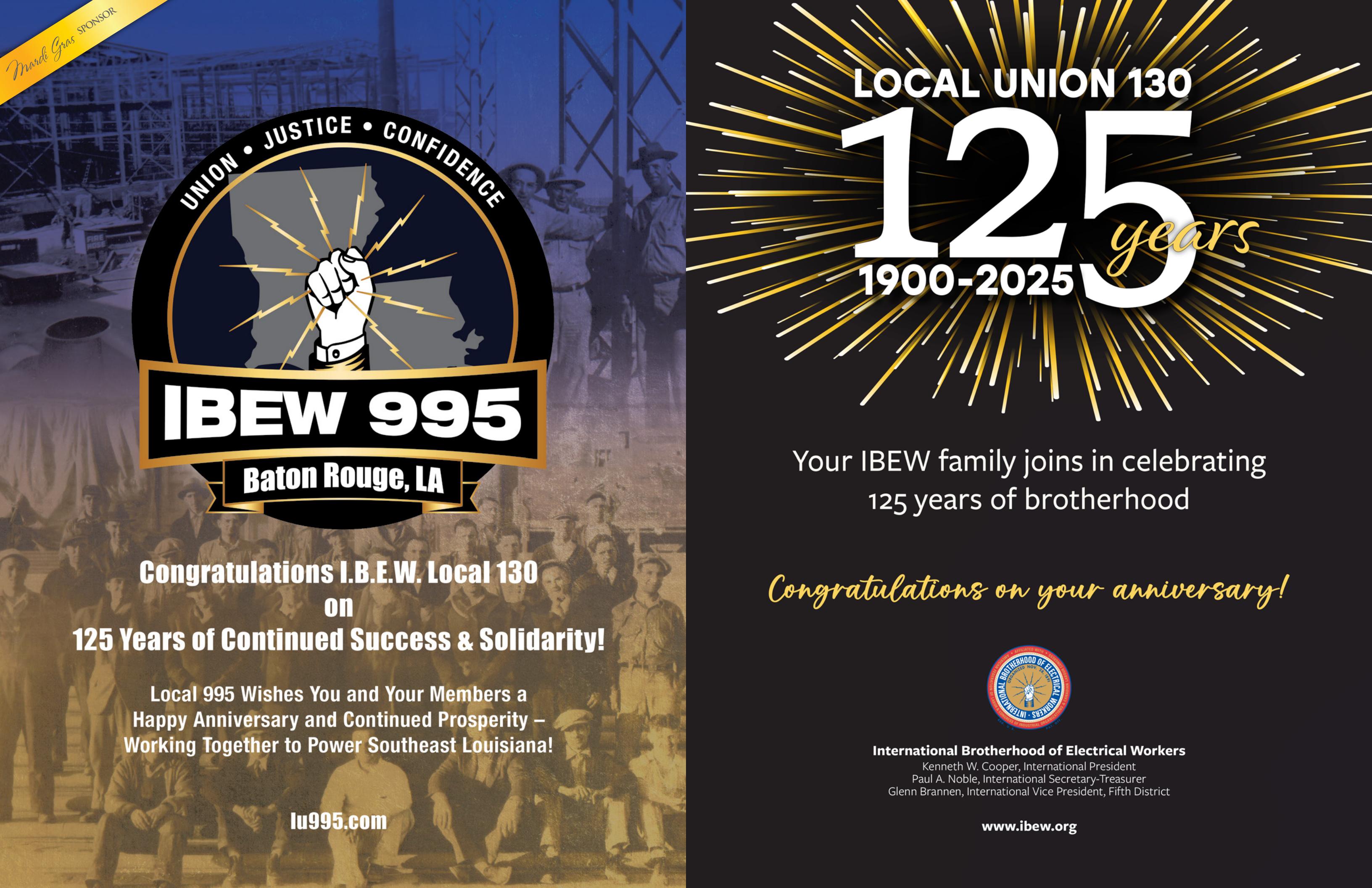
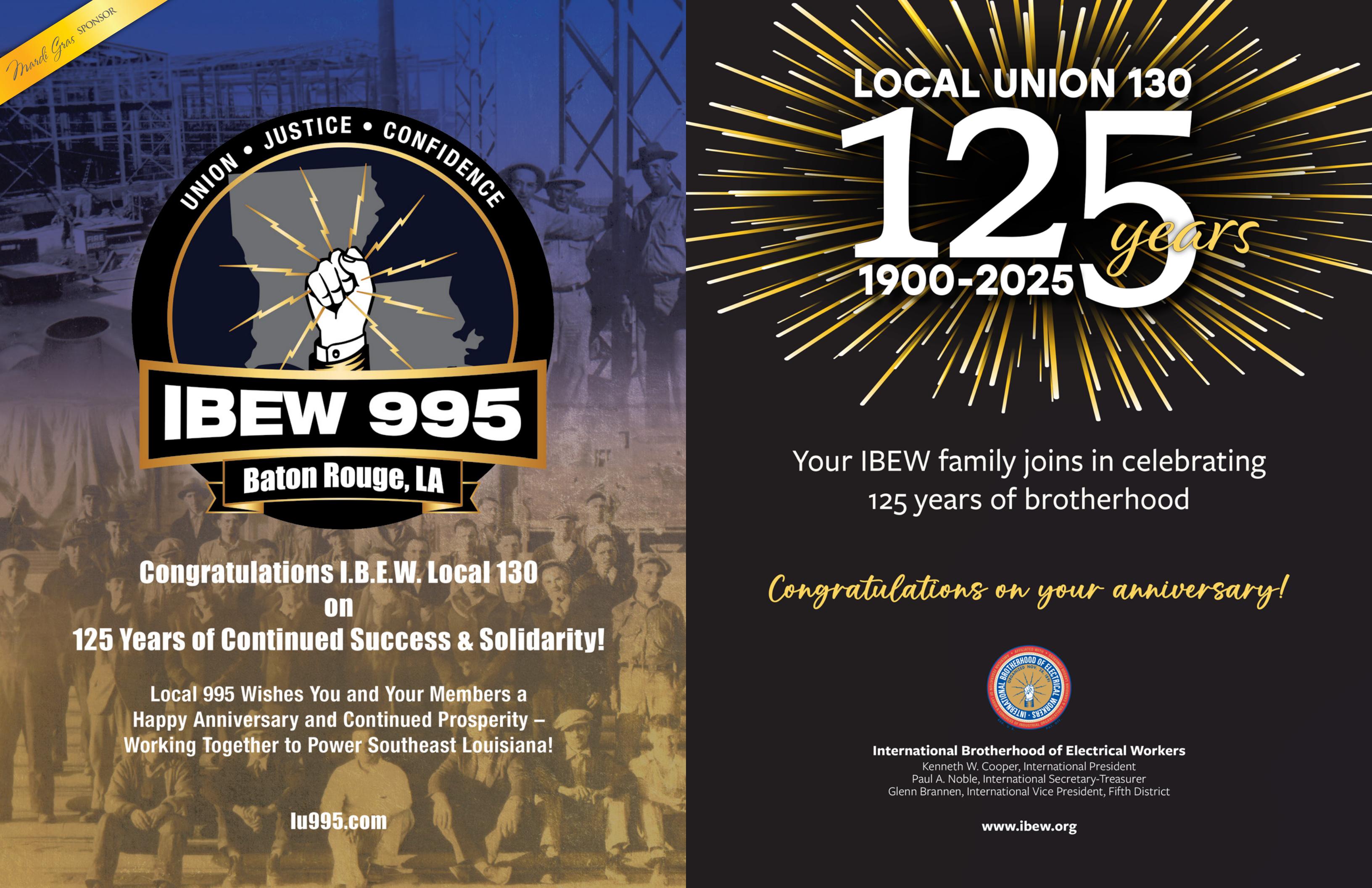
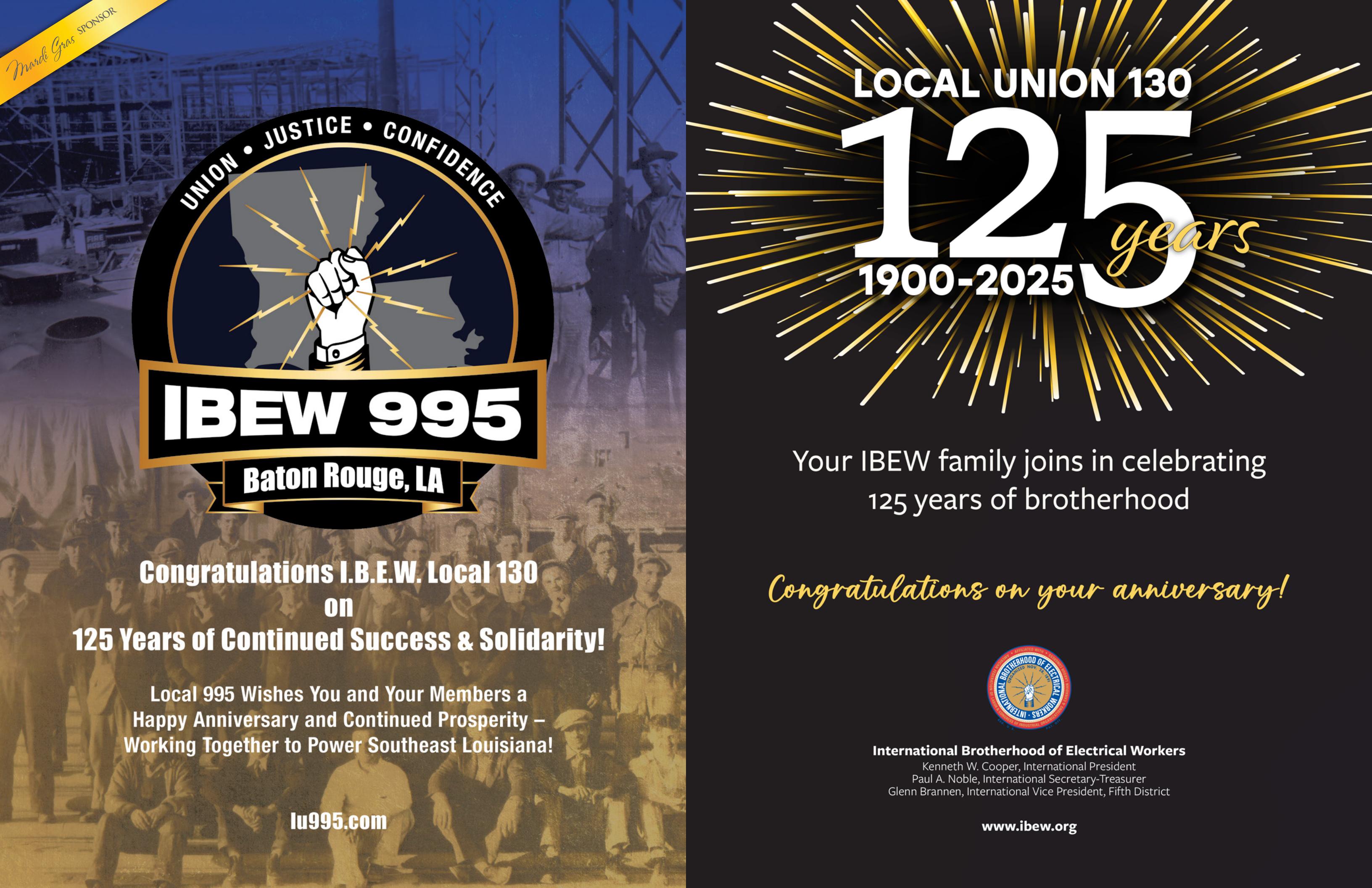
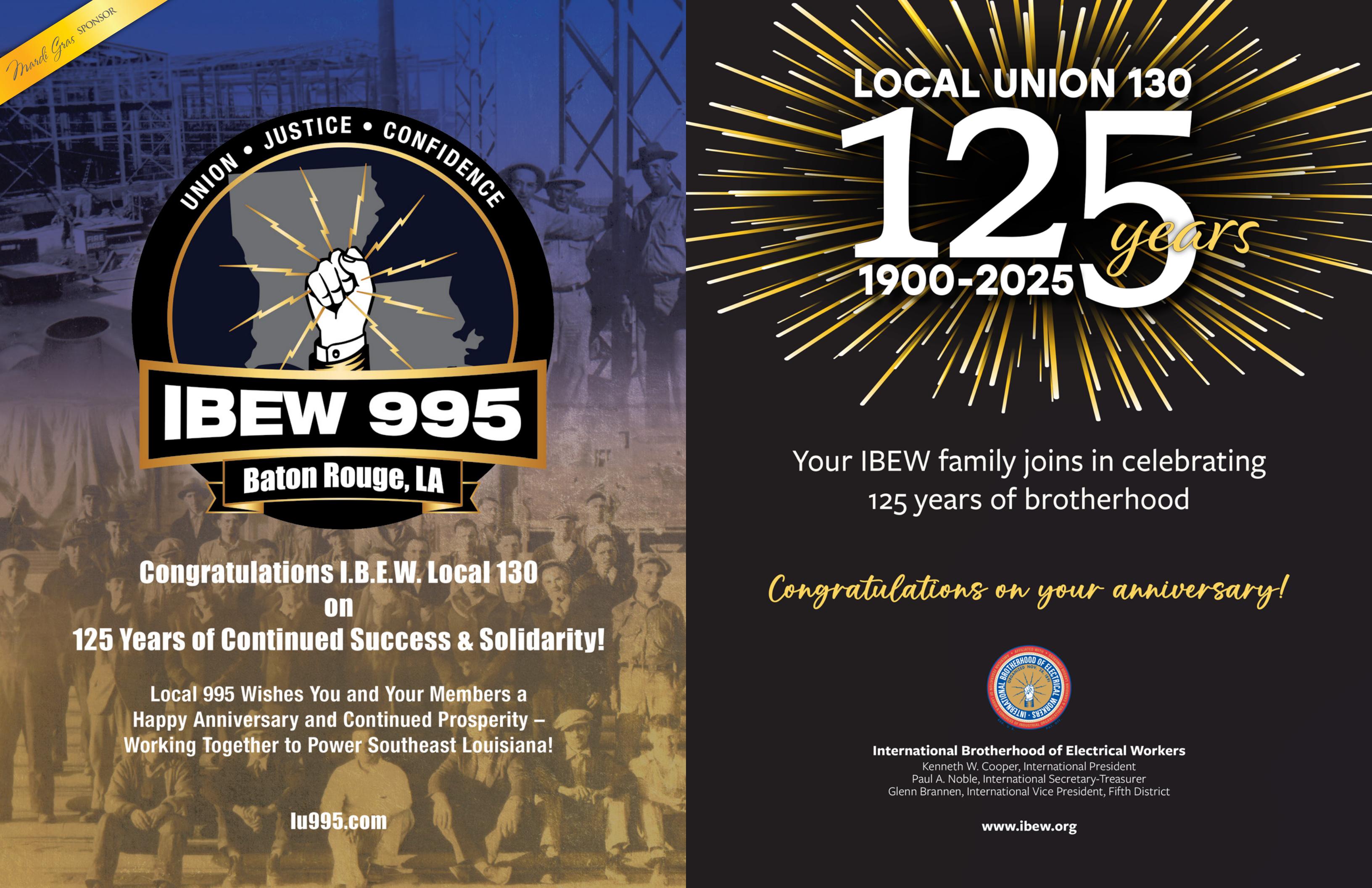
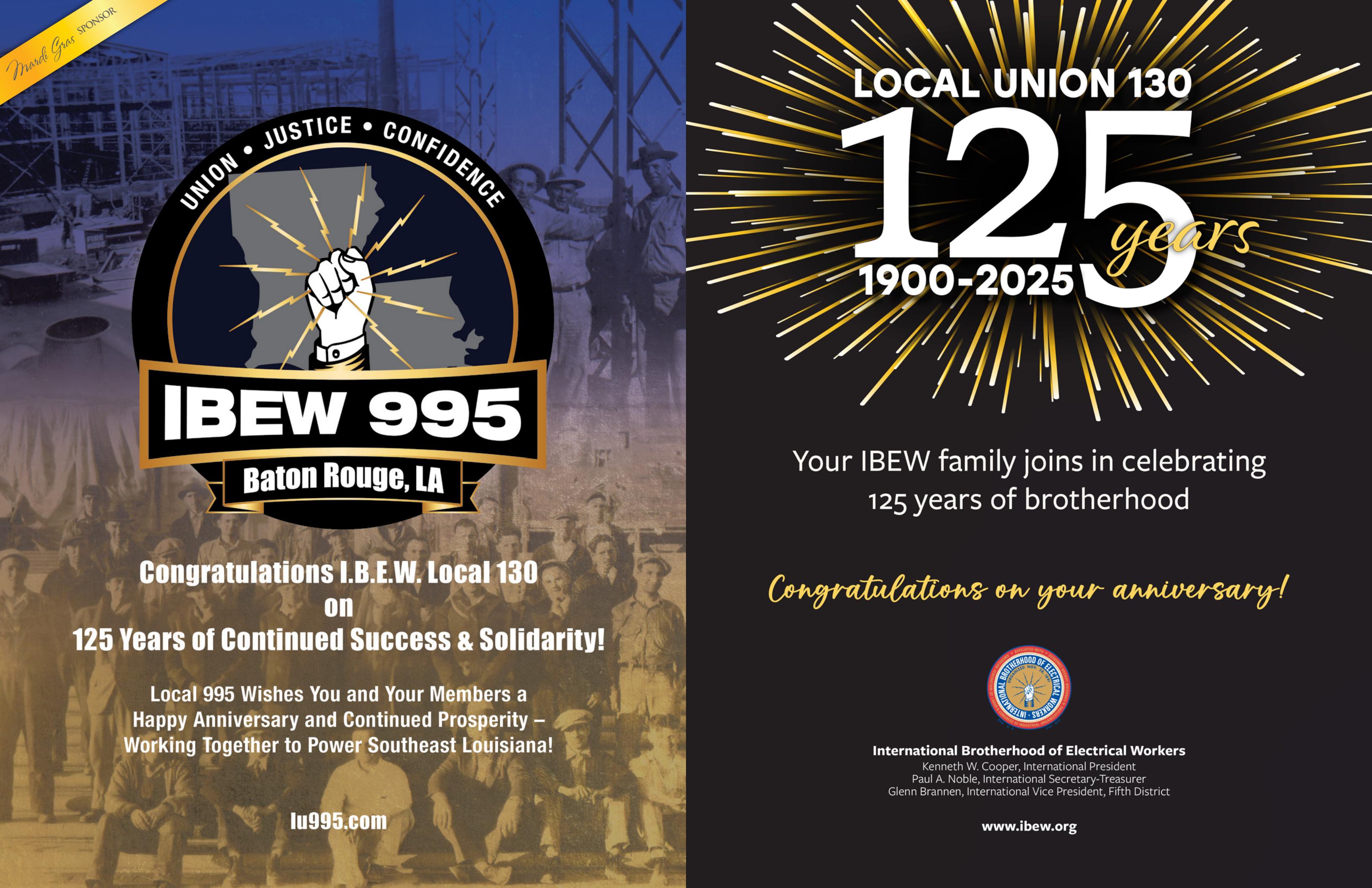
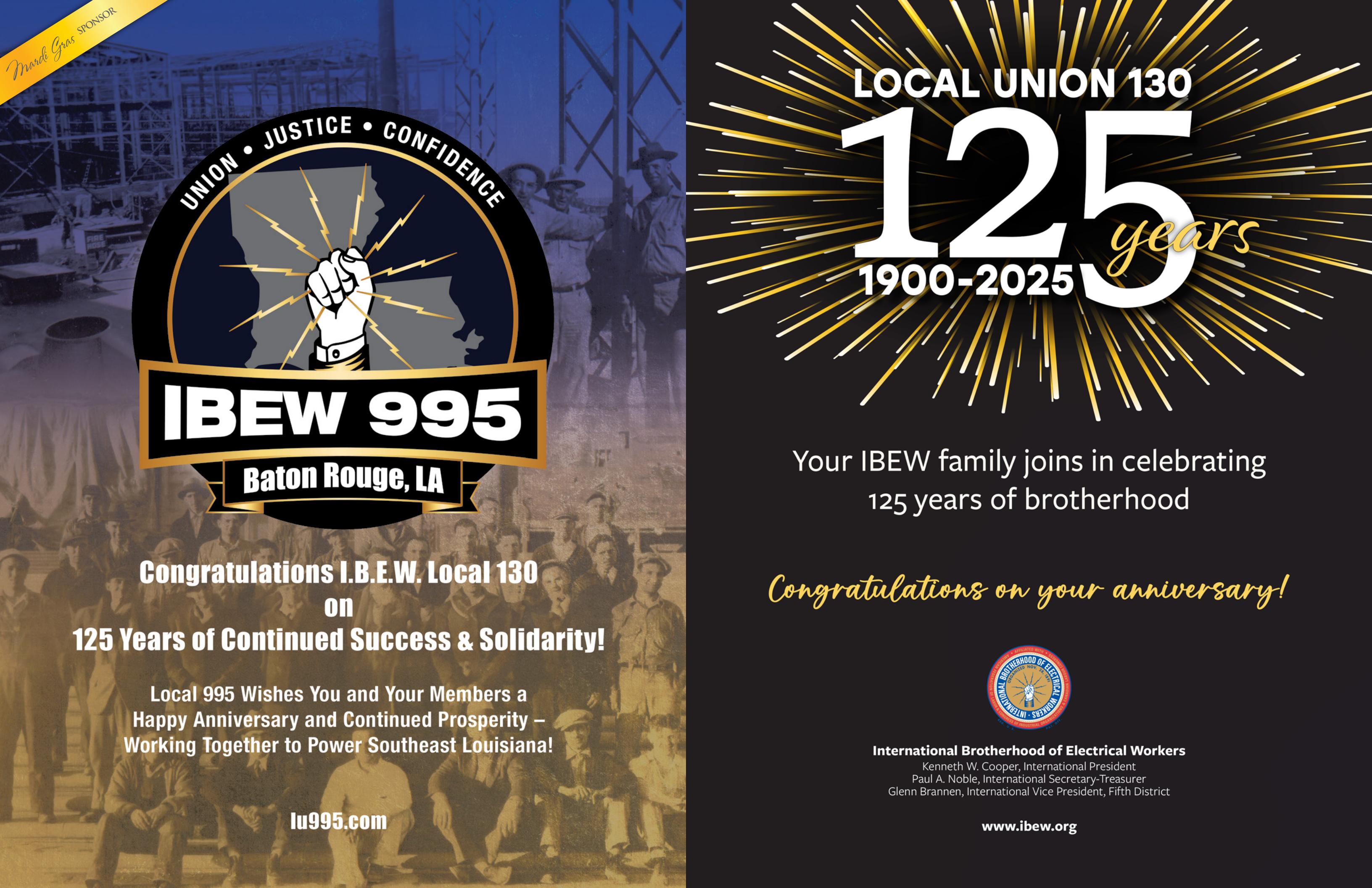
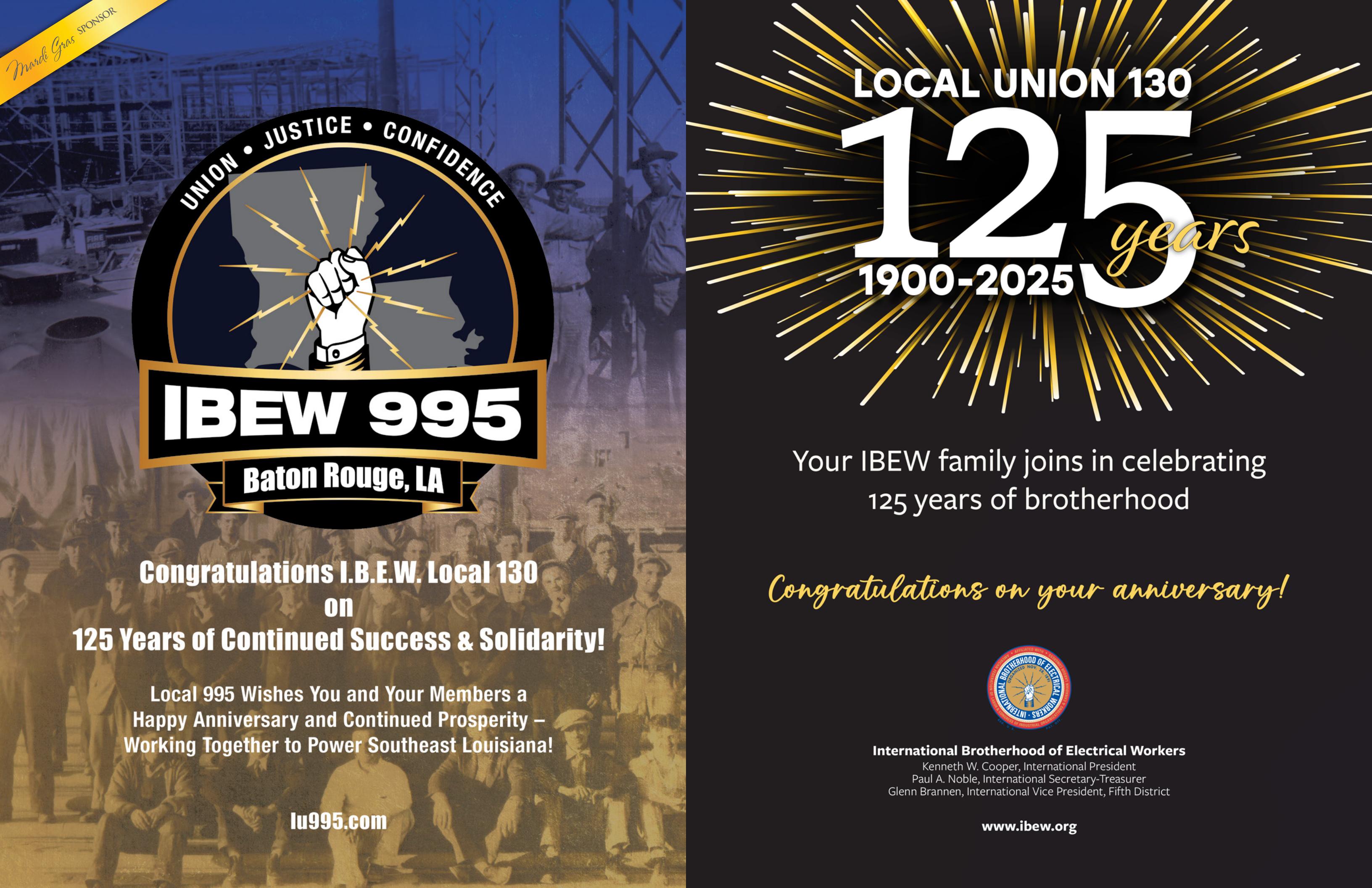
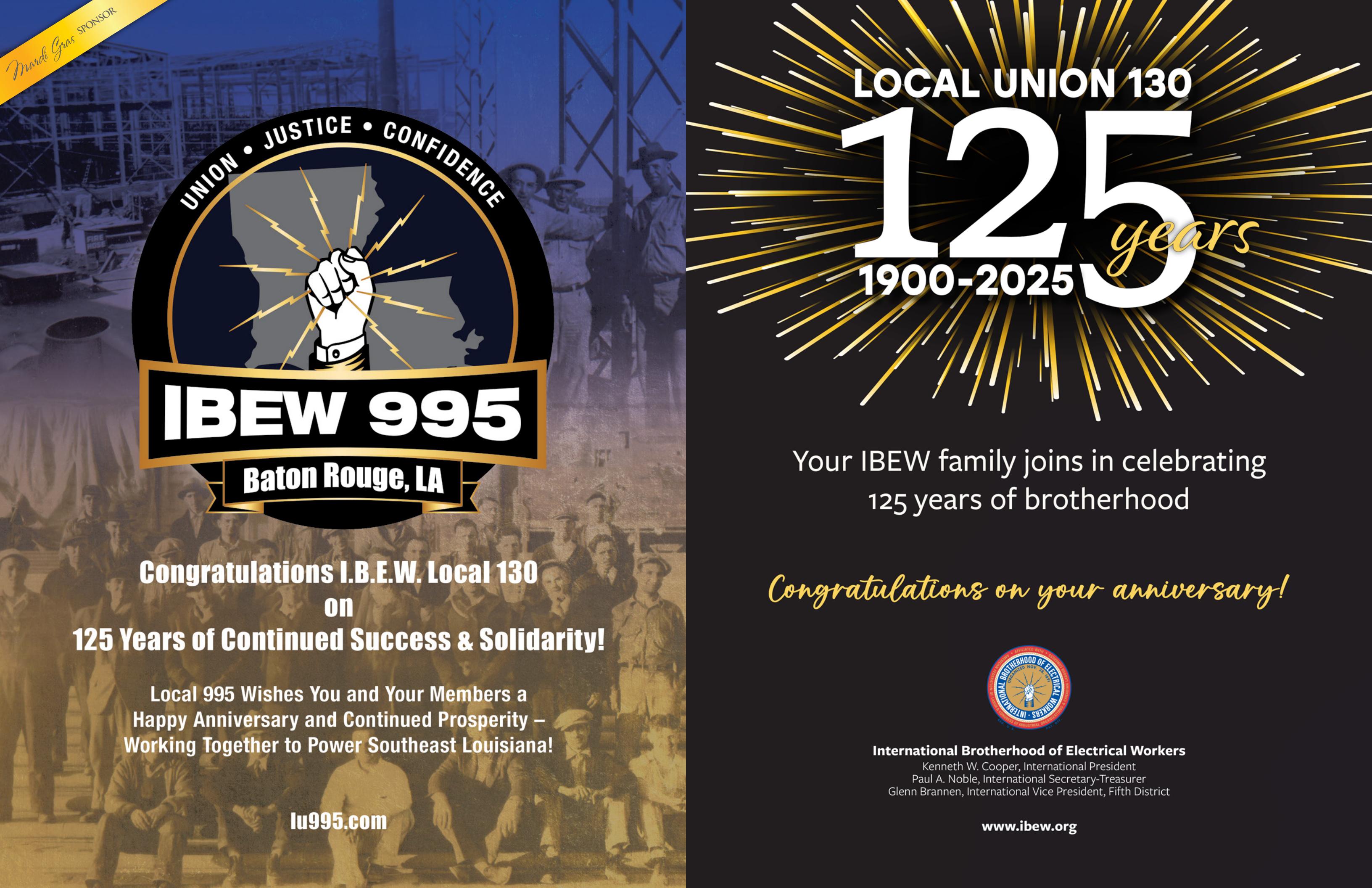
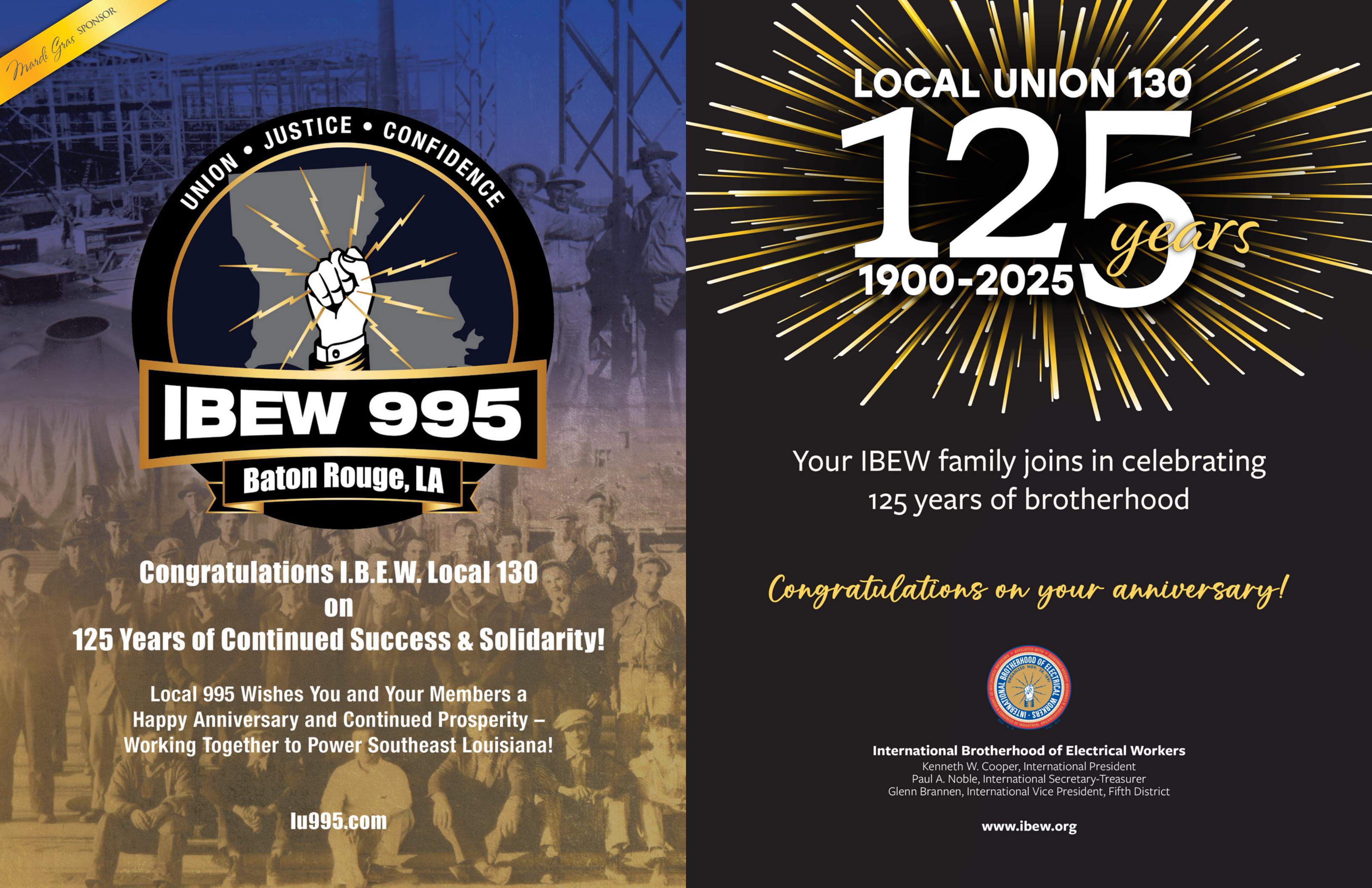
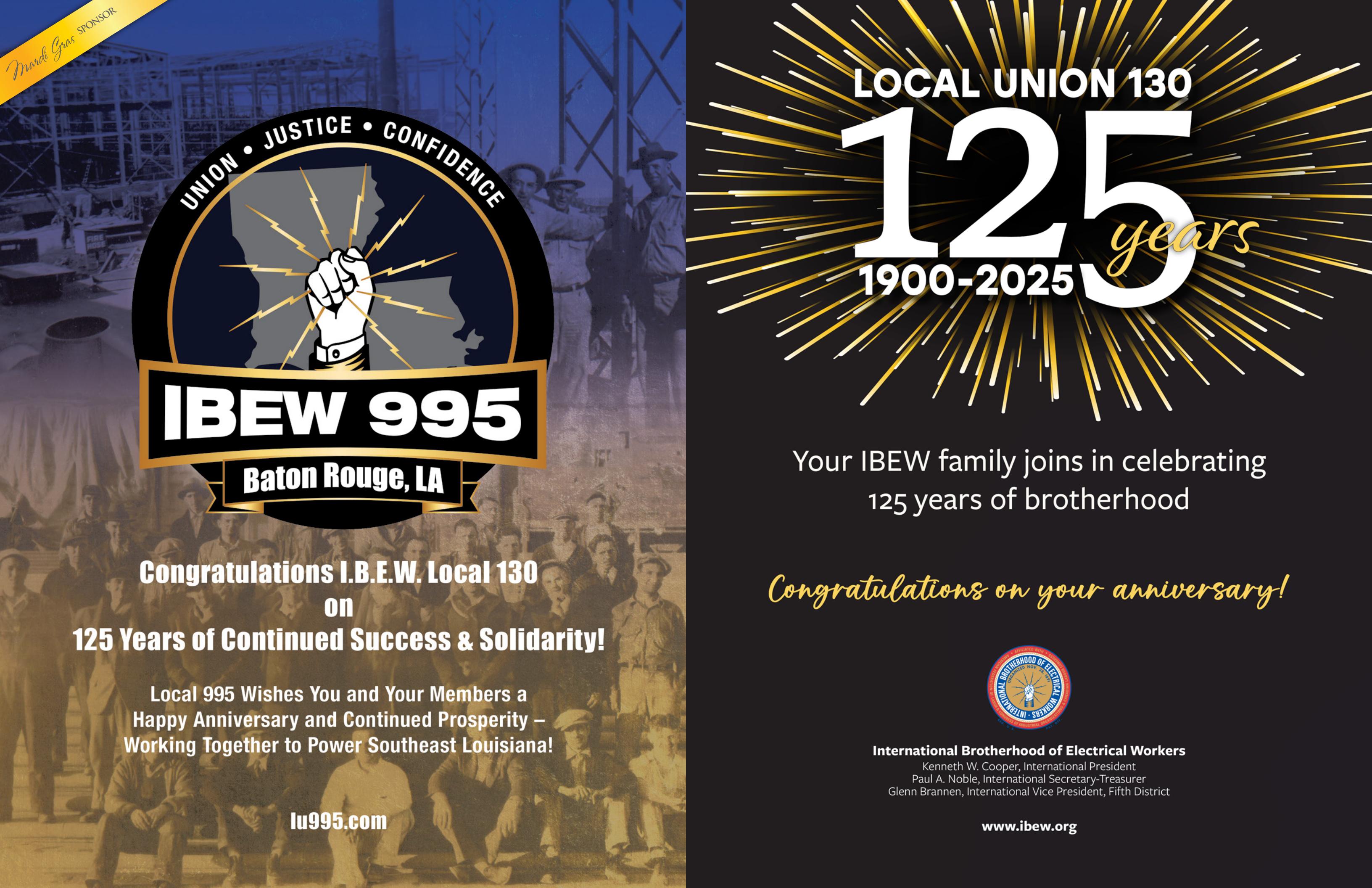
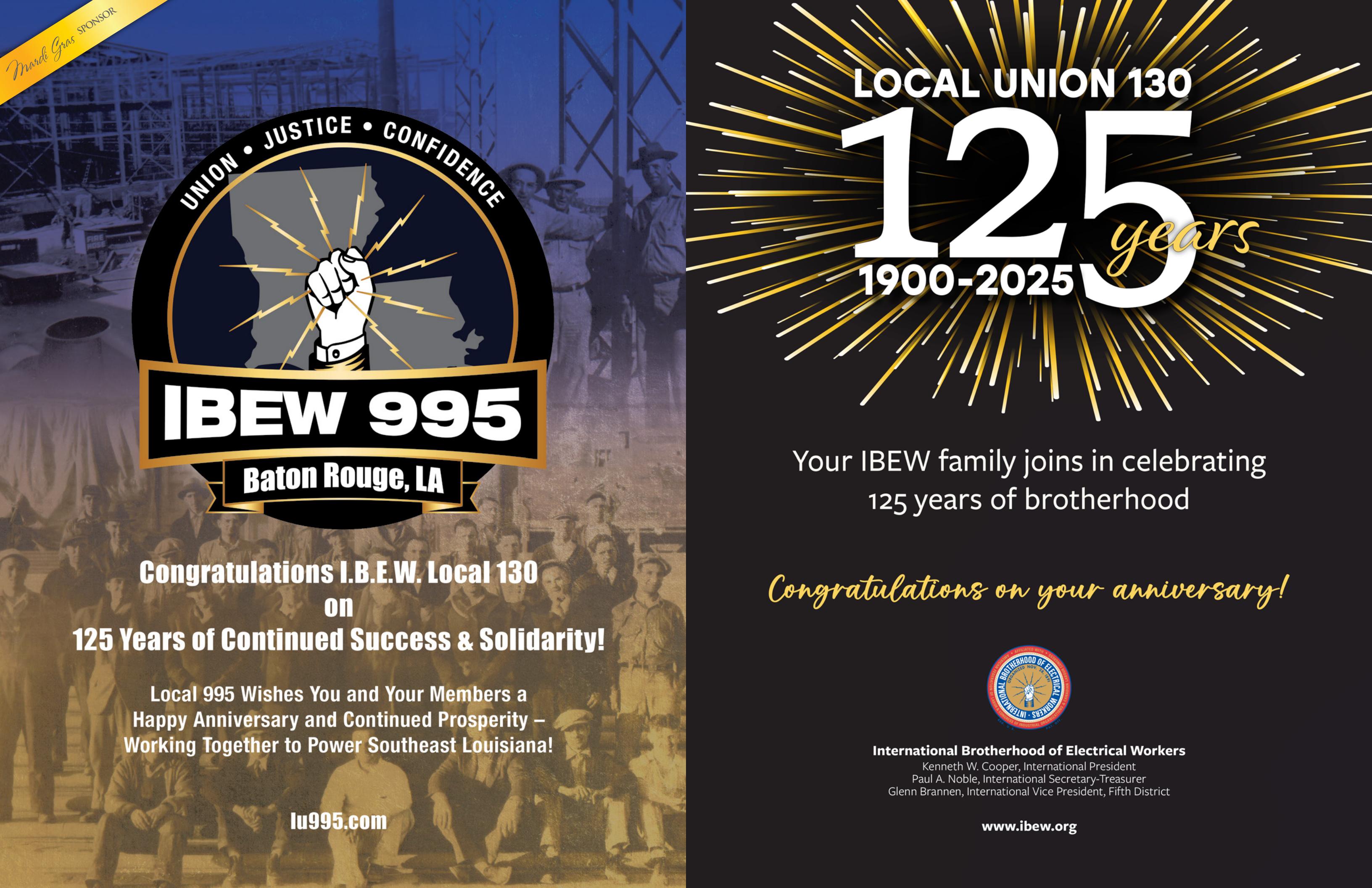
I.B.E.W. LOCAL NO. 130

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



125TH ANNIVERSARY
COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY

2025



Preserving the Proud Stories of Local Unions

Union Histories hails I.B.E.W. Local 130 for 125 Years of Service to Your Members, Contractors, Industry and Community!

We were honored to serve you in producing this book for your anniversary celebration.



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SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2025

CAESARS NEW ORLEANS • MANNING'S SPORTS BAR & GRILL

Registration Opens for Sign-in and Wristbands.....	5:00 p.m.
Event Begins; Registration, Open Bar, Photo Ops	6:00 - 6:45 p.m.
Welcome, National Anthem, Invocation.....	6:45 - 7:00 p.m.
Buffet Dinner, Live Music.....	7:00 - 8:15 p.m.
Remarks and Presentations.....	8:15 - 8:45 p.m.
Live Music, Dancing, Celebrating.....	8:45 - 10:00 p.m.

*Music will be provided by New Orleans' own
"Dwayne Dopsie & the Zydeco Hellraisers"*

This book was proudly produced by

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Preserving the Proud Stories of Local Unions
unionhistories.com

I.B.E.W. Local 130 and Union Histories give thanks to the following for their contributions to this book:

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Local 130 Retiree and former New Orleans E.J.A.T.C. Training Director Sandy Theriot

New Orleans E.J.A.T.C. Training Director David Crumb

The I.B.E.W. Museum and Museum Curator Curtis Bateman

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MADE IN USA

The History I.B.E.W. Local No. 130

A 125-YEAR SOURCE OF POWER AND PRIDE FOR SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA

"Our local is comparatively young, but the stock it is composed of is enthusiastic and will do its duty as union men and electrify those who have not come into the fold, and show them how capital is uniting and consolidating daily for the interest of capital. Why shall not labor also unite for the interest of labor?"

I.B.E.W. Local 130 Press Secretary Gus Bennett
February 1901 I.B.E.W. Electrical Worker Journal



Since nearly the time it was established on November 21, 1891, the **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers** (I.B.E.W.) – which at that time was the *National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers* – has had a presence in New Orleans. Shortly after it was founded, the N.B.E.W. chartered “mixed” trade-classifications **Local No. 4** on December 31 of that year to serve and represent the inside wiremen and outside linemen of “The Crescent City.”

Less than a decade later (by which time the national union had become the I.B.E.W.), the local’s wireman members and other non-affiliated electricians sought to have an “inside” local of their own. After a meeting of some of the city’s inside wiremen the previous evening, the May 31, 1900, issue of *The Times-Picayune* newspaper of New Orleans even reported, “An effort is being made by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers of this city

to embrace the inside electrical workers. Not a voice was raised in opposition to the extension of the organization as contemplated.”

Seeking to improve the lives and livelihoods of their fellow workers, their families and themselves by collectively working for the common good of unified workers in the electrical industry in and around New Orleans, 12 electricians applied to the I.B.E.W. for a new local in the city. Subsequently, the union granted them a charter on **June 11, 1900**, for “inside wiremen” **Local No. 130**.

The remaining members of the newly reclassified “outside linemen” Local 4 embraced the creation of the new local, even submitting in an article in the June 1900 *Electrical Worker*, the international union’s monthly publication, “The inside wiremen of this place have asked for and been granted a charter. We assure them No. 4 wishes them every success and will work in harmony with them at all times.”

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

GREETING:--This Charter, issued by authority of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, does grant to the following persons:

J. Ziegler
J. J. Dahill
A. D. Lindsey
P. O. Ryan

J. J. Hawkins
P. D. Abbs
Albert M. Monaghan
Geo. A. Kendall Jr.

M. J. Govera
Chas. Motzke
George Ferris
H. A. Dilzell

and to their successors, power to establish and hold a Union of the Brotherhood to be located at *New Orleans* in the *State of Louisiana* and to be known as Union No. *B-130* of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

This Charter grants to said Union all powers delegated by the Constitution.

The conditions of this Charter are such that it may be retained as long as Seven Members in good standing comply with all the requirements of the Constitution and General Rules of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, unless reclaimed by the International Union.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF we have hereunto set our hands and the seal of this International Union, this Eleventh day of June, in the year One Thousand Nine Hundred.

Charter amended to cover the
type of membership only effective
July 13, 1909.

J. Scott Miller

PRESIDENT.

H. W. Sherman
SECY-TREAS.

The original I.B.E.W. Local 130 charter, dated June 11, 1900, and signed by I.B.E.W. General President Thomas Wheeler, who served in that position from 1899 into 1901, and I.B.E.W. Secretary H. W. Sherman, who served in that position from 1897 into 1905.



GROWING THE ORGANIZATION, STRIKING FOR ADVANCEMENTS

The City of New Orleans was experiencing economic growth at the time Local 130 was chartered, as Louisiana and many of its parishes were rich with mineral resources and the Mississippi River greatly facilitated maritime commerce to make the Port of New Orleans one of the largest in the United States. In that setting, the fledgling local set out to organize, as Press Secretary Gus Bennett described in the February 1901 *Electrical Worker*, "a large field to work up in this city, as there are a great majority of the electrical workers not connected with the union."

To that end, immediately after it was chartered the local's members selected its first slate of officers, which was led by **President Thomas G. Ziegler** and **Financial Secretary George W. Kendall Jr.**, and over the course of the following year the membership regularly met twice monthly at the **Patriotic Order Sons of America Hall** on Carondelet Street in New Orleans. "These meetings are generally well-attended by our members," Press Secretary Bennett also announced, "who are all enthusiastic for the general success of the union, and our local in particular."

By May 1901, "one of the largest construction houses in New Orleans" was only using union workers, and new Local 130 Press Secretary George W. Kendall Jr. was also able to report in that month's *Electrical Worker*, "We are as well-organized as we ever hoped to be -- only two men are doubtful in the city."

But the local went on strike against the city's electrical contractors on July 1 of that year to gain a reduction in workdays from 10 hours to 8 hours, an increase in its electricians' wage scale from 25 cents to 35 cents per hour, time-and-one-half pay for overtime and double-time pay

MILLER, OTHERS FOUNDED I.B.E.W. 133 YEARS AGO

A small group of inside electricians and outside linemen, headed by founder and first president **Brother Henry Miller**, officially formed the **National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers** during a convention on November 21, 1891, in St. Louis. Brother Miller reportedly went without food and other necessities and instead used his earnings to travel the country to organize local unions in various cities into the new national union.

At its 1899 convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the union officially changed its name to the **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers** (I.B.E.W.) after it added a local in Ottawa, Ontario. The union's primary objectives remained improving safety, wages and working conditions for its members -- just as the modern-day I.B.E.W. continues to focus on organizing, collective bargaining and advocating for workers' rights.

Brother Miller passed away on July 10, 1896, while working as head lineman for the Potomac Electric Power Company after he was shocked, fell from a ladder and died the next morning from a concussion. He was only 38 years old.

for Sunday and holiday work. "Well, here we are with flying colors. Strike won, all working, all terms agreed to. Not a concession!" Brother Kendall announced in the July 1901 *Electrical Worker* after the strike ended after only a brief period with the local being granted its demands in a new contract. "Just 13 months old and we won the only complete victory in the history of the labor movement in New Orleans."

The local was then able to organize every electrician in New Orleans into the union over the ensuing months. Subsequently, former president and new Press Secretary Ziegler was able to declare in the December 1901 *Electrical Worker*, "Here is 130! She is in a flourishing condition, taking in new ones every meeting."



LOCAL 130 CHARTER MEMBERS

These 12 men signed the charter granted to Local No. 130 by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers on June 11, 1900.

(Names misspelled on the charter are correct in the following list.)

Thomas G. Ziegler
J. J. Cahill
Lawrence V. Lindsey
Patrick C. Ryan
Thomas J. Hawkins
Peter D. Abbo

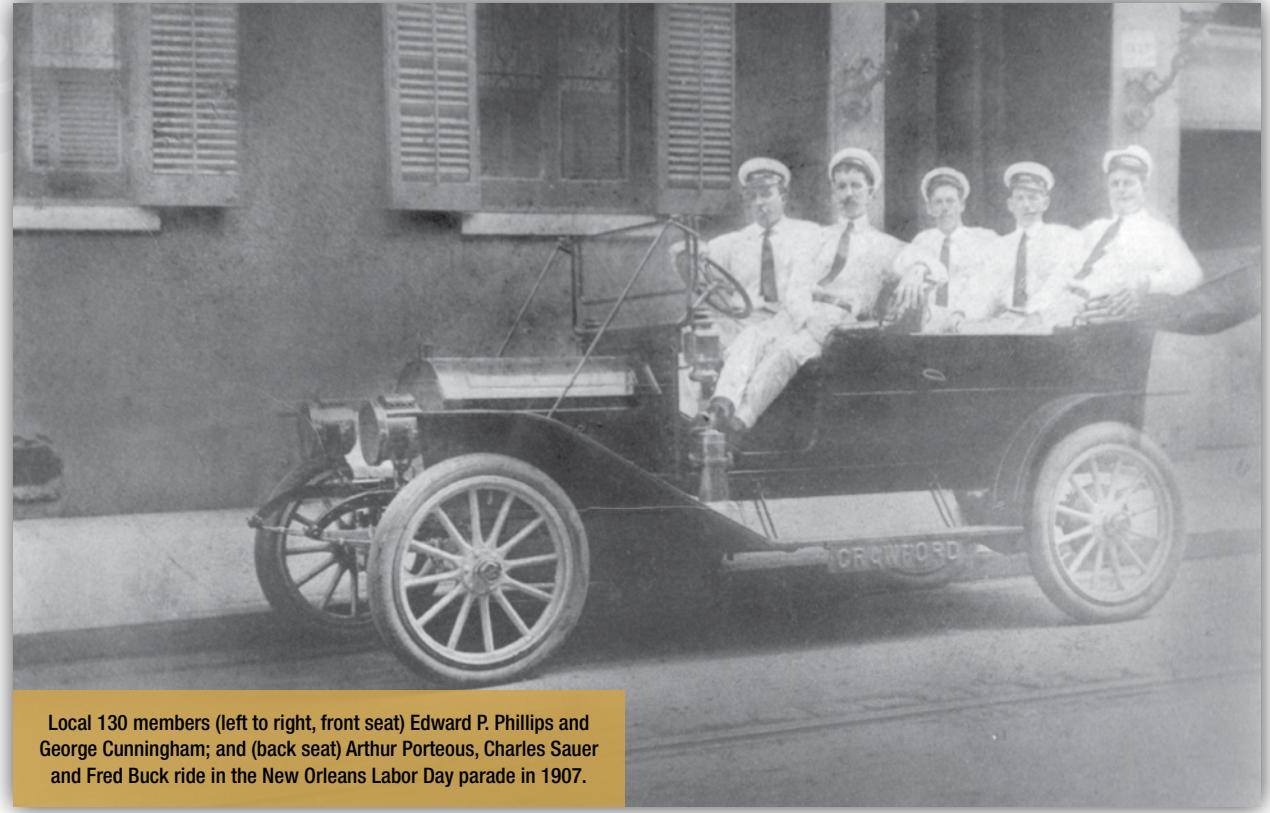
Albert M. Monaghan
George W. Kendall Jr.
Michael J. McGovern
Charles Motzke
George Ferris
Walter A. Dilzell

As Local 130 continued to grow, in early 1903 it elected its first **Examining Board** to test the abilities of potential new member electricians. Prominent projects on which the local's members worked that year included wiring a new annex on the grand **St. Charles Hotel** in New Orleans – although upwards of 70 members stayed off the job beginning

September 1 until the contractor agreed to pay the local's wage scale and removed non-union electrical workers from the project in early January 1904.

In an effort to ensure all electrical contractors in New Orleans were "closed-shop" union firms, the entire local went on a prolonged, eight-month strike beginning April 1, 1905, with Press Secretary A. V. Chisholm proclaimed in the October 1905 *Electrical Worker*, "We intend to stay out until we get what is justly and rightly ours." After all of the local's 115 members had walked off their jobs by May 8, *The (New Orleans) Times-Democrat* also reported that day that the local's objective was to "weed out the inefficient, incompetent hands who are working in the big shops in the city."

The newspaper further noted that the strike halted a majority of the construction work taking place in New Orleans, including "wiring the big buildings going up in the city." Those projects also included upgrades to the



Local 130 members (left to right, front seat) Edward P. Phillips and George Cunningham; and (back seat) Arthur Porteous, Charles Sauer and Fred Buck ride in the New Orleans Labor Day parade in 1907.

New Orleans Union Station train depot and construction of new warehouses for the **St. Louis–San Francisco Railway** system.

However, in December 1905 the local gave up the strike in the wake of several months of economic hardship as a result of its members not working, after which the contractors locked out the union electricians from their jobsites until the spring. During that time, the local reported in the February 1906 *Electrical Worker*, "Things are in very bad shape in New Orleans. Very few of the brothers are working, as scabs are doing all the work. ... We cannot get employment with our local contractors unless we tear up our cards and swear that we will have nothing more to do with our Brotherhood."

The union electricians' involvement "as an integral part" of the new **Structural Building Trades Alliance** of New Orleans and its campaign beginning May 1, 1906, to persuade the city's construction contractors to put in place "closed shop" union conditions – that is, employ only union building tradesmen – helped Local 130 recover from the lockout. What's more, the city was experiencing



Local 130 members pose after marching in the New Orleans Labor Day parade in 1919.

LOCAL 130 HELPED FORM BUILDING TRADES COUNCIL

Local 130 was one of the locals that re-formed the **New Orleans Building and Construction Trades Council** during the late summer of 1901 (after an original version had gone defunct). During its first meeting, delegates elected Local 130 President George W. Kendall Jr. as the new council's first-ever president.

The organization has since become the **South East Louisiana Building & Construction Trades Council**.

a building boom during that time that provided abundant employment for the local's membership, which began to grow again with the increased availability of work.

SPLITTING FROM THE UNION, MOVING AHEAD AFTERWARD

Local 130 joined Local 4 and numerous other mostly lineman locals that seceded from the parent international union in 1908 and formed their own I.B.E.W.



Local 130 and sister locals' delegates and I.B.E.W. international representatives and their guests pose during the I.B.E.W. Convention held in New Orleans from September 15 through 30, 1919.

electing James J. Reid as its president and James W. Murphy as its secretary during a special convention that year while refusing to recognize original I.B.E.W. President Frank J. McNulty and Secretary Peter W. Collins as the true officers of the union. The so-called **"Reid-Murphy Split"** was primarily driven by dissension between wiremen and linemen, disappointed international office-seekers and a former grand treasurer removed from office in 1907 because of "irregularities" in the union's finances, as described in *I.B.E.W.: History & Structure*, a chronicle of the union.

After two competing conventions were held in 1911, a court decision in February 1912 declared the 1908 "Reid-Murphy" convention was illegal and its actions void. Subsequently, nearly all of the locals that had broken away attended the original I.B.E.W.'s 12th convention in Boston in 1913, including Local 130, which was reinstated back into the I.B.E.W. as an inside-wiremen local that numbered more than 100 members by that time, and Local 4, which returned as an outside-linemen local.

Local 130 held a brief strike in September 1913 against a "few" electrical shops that would not sign a new work agreement with a journeyman-electrician wage scale of \$4 per day (or 50 cents per hour) after most of the contractors had signed the contract. Although the local had just recently returned to the

I.B.E.W. after the split, the union's international office sent a telegram to the local during the strike that gave its support to the New Orleans electricians' demands.

Meanwhile, the local's ongoing efforts to organize the city's electrical workers and contractors were making gains as it entered the second half of the decade, despite a slack period of construction in the local's jurisdiction during which as many as one-third of the local's membership was unemployed at times. In fact, Press Secretary Alphonse "A. M." Hull even announced in the March 1915 issue of the I.B.E.W. *Journal* (which the union had renamed from *The Electrical Worker* in 1914) that the local was recently able to close 15 non-union shops in large part because of the "continual agitation" by the local's members against non-union firms.

"The brothers here are beginning to realize that they cannot get anything without organization, so we are going right ahead and bringing in new members," he continued to explain. "I am going to tell you, brothers, that all you want to do is to keep up that continual agitation, and you will find it does some good, as it sure has done some good here."

The following year, Local 130 put a plan in place whereby any contractor who was not signatory to the union's work agreement

would pay an additional 10 percent in wages for the local's members. A "strikeless strike" on September 27, 1916, during which the local's members left their jobs for just a few hours, also resulted in additional employers signing the local's contract.

Strong employment continued throughout the remainder of the decade with the local's members working on major projects that included installing all of the electrical work in the buildings of the new Broadway Street campus of **Newcomb College** in New Orleans that opened in 1918. The school's new facilities included custom-designed classroom and art buildings and a larger dormitory.

World War I, which had been raging in Europe since July 28, 1914, also provided an increasing amount of work for the local's members during that time. Local 130 members wired an array of government military facilities and factories even before the United States entered the war on April 6, 1917, as the country supplied its allies, headed by England and France, with war materiel.

Perhaps most prominently, Local 130 electricians helped expand New Orleans' port facilities, which facilitated the movement of troops and supplies, and build three new shipyards where military vessels were constructed. Those included the yard of **Higgins Industries**, which

played a vital role in the war as it produced boats used in every major American amphibious operation before the war ended with an armistice on November 11, 1918.

As the local continued to experience stable employment, Press Secretary James Rippard was able to write in the December 1917 *Journal*, "I am very glad to be able to state at this time that the progress of our local in regard to the increasing of our membership as reported in the last edition of the *Worker* abated very little."

By 1920, the local's journeyman wage rate had increased to \$1 per hour and it had grown to about 300 members. While the membership was enjoying full employment that year, new Press Secretary Theodore E. "Ted" Todd rightfully boasted in the September 1920 *Journal*, "Our local has been built up gradually along sound conservative lines until we are today enjoying the reputation of being the best organized, best financed and having the best conditions which were obtained with the least friction of any labor organization in this locality."

But after government work returned to pre-war levels in late 1920, employment declined for Local 130. As such, some members even had to "travel" to the jurisdictions of other I.B.E.W. locals around the state and country for work.



LOCAL 130 UNION HALL AND OFFICE LOCATIONS

(All locations are in New Orleans unless otherwise indicated.)

Patriotic Order Sons of America Hall

407 Carondelet Street
1900 – 1902

Finnan Hall
635 Gravier Street
1902 – 1903

Carpenters' Union Hall
423 St. Charles Street
1903 – 1904

Castle Hall
626 Commercial Place
1905 – 1906

Pencz's Hall
419 St. Charles Street
1906 – 1907

Local 130 Union Offices
407 Carondelet Street
1907 – 1913

Local 130 Union Offices
612 Gravier Street
1913 – 1919

Local 130 Union Offices
715 Union Street
1919 – 1921

Local 130 Union Offices
822 Union Street
1921 – 1926

Local 130 Union Offices
815 St. Charles Street
1926 – 1927

Local 130 Union Offices
606 Common Street
1927 – 1929

Electrical Workers Home Association Building
528 Bienville Street
1929 – 1964

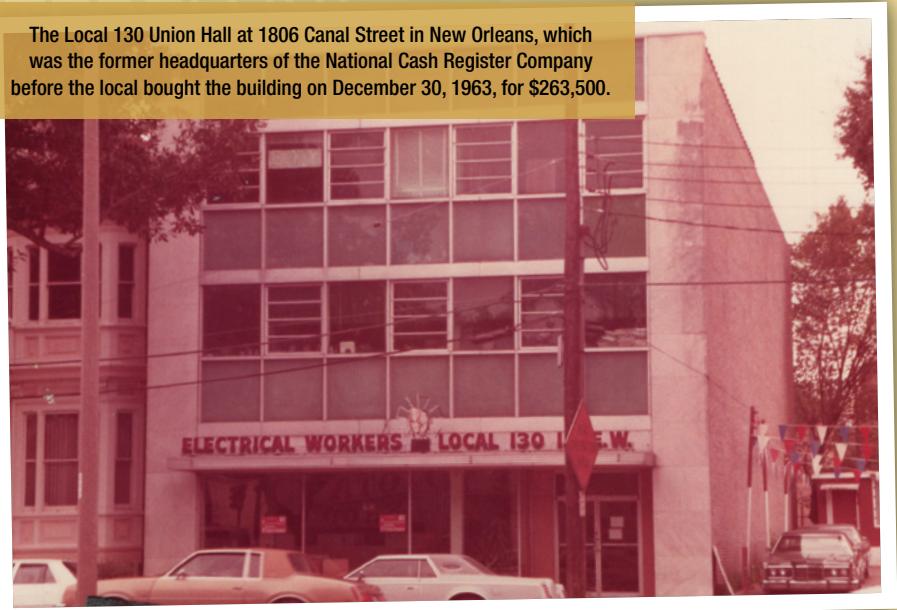
Local 130 Union Hall
1806 Canal Street
1964 – 1984

Local 130 Union Hall
3200 Ridgelake Drive, Metairie
1984 – current

The Electrical Workers Home Association Building at 528 Bienville Street in New Orleans, which was the first union hall ever owned by Local 130 after it purchased the building on January 17, 1929, for \$37,500.



The Local 130 Union Hall at 1806 Canal Street in New Orleans, which was the former headquarters of the National Cash Register Company before the local bought the building on December 30, 1963, for \$263,500.



As the difficult conditions continued, on June 6, 1922, Local 130 agreed to a 10-cent-per-hour wage cut in a new, two-year work agreement with the **New Orleans Chapter, National Electrical Contractors Association** (NECA), which by then was representing its employing contractors. The pay reduction, which was set by an arbitrator after the contractors locked out the local from their jobs for four days when a new contract could not be settled, dropped the local's journeyman-electrician wage scale from \$1 to 90 cents per hour.

The “Roaring Twenties,” a period of significant social advancements and economic prosperity in the United States and especially in New Orleans, whose trade flourished as activity in its port facilities saw substantial increases compared to national averages, pulled the Local 130 out of its employment stagnation. As a result of the increased work, the local was able to negotiate a new, two-year work contract with NECA in 1926 that eventually raised its wage scale to \$1.20 per hour in 1927, where it would hold throughout the balance of the decade.

Local 130 was also able to purchase the four-story brick building at 528 Bienville Street in New Orleans for \$37,500 on January 17, 1929, to serve as its union hall – the first the local ever owned. The local would operate from and hold its meetings in the **Electrical Workers Home Association Building** for the next 35 years.

Also in 1929, the local was able to keep about 90 percent of its membership working at all times, while it also signed 29 new contractors to its collective-bargaining work agreement. “We think (signing 29 shops) is a record in this locality, where wiring conditions among small contractors ran amuck with unfair wiremen,” Press Secretary Emile B. Barris declared in the January 1930 *Journal*, “and we think the (Local 130) officers deserve a great deal of credit for bringing these conditions to exist.”

ENDURING HISTORIC TRAGEDY, FIGHTING ANOTHER WORLD WAR

Unfortunately, Louisiana was deeply affected by the **Great Depression**, the decade-long economic and human



Local 130 members pose during a break while working on construction of a new Sears-Roebuck department store on Baronne Street in New Orleans on August 24, 1931.



disaster that began with the U.S. stock market crash of October 29, 1929 (history's "Black Tuesday"), which caused the value of the state's trade staples, cotton, sugar, oil and timber, to drop precipitously. Likewise, the port of New Orleans and, as a result, the city's construction industry experienced swift declines in activity.

Consequently, the depression severely affected Local 130, as it did most I.B.E.W. locals throughout North America. As the United States and Canada experienced unprecedented economic stress as a result of the depression, more than 50 percent of the union's membership was idled and wages for members who were able to work plummeted, according to *I.B.E.W. History & Structure*.

As the economic despair not only persisted but escalated, Local 130 Press Secretary

Lucien J. Joseph was left to report in the May 1931 *Journal*, "We have a large number of members unemployed with no substantial relief in the offing."

The following year, with the destitute employment conditions continuing the local accepted a wage reduction from \$1.32 to \$1.25 per hour for its journeymen. To further help its unemployed members, on December 17, 1932, the local held a benefit show and dance in its union hall with proceeds used to provide them with Christmas baskets.

Then in April 1933, the local went on strike against NECA after the contractors asked the union to accept another reduction in wages. In the end, the local was able to maintain its wage scale at \$1.25 per hour.



Local 130 members posing while on a break from working on the new Charity Hospital in New Orleans in 1938 include Fred Lyndsay, general foreman (top row, far left); Harry Nunez, foreman (top row, far right); William "Slim" Ferguson, foreman (second row from top, far right); and Otto Kempf, foreman (second row from bottom, second from left).



Local 130 members pose during a break while working on construction of the new Magnolia Public Housing project in New Orleans on February 13, 1940.

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" legislation in 1933, which included a series of economic measures designed to alleviate the worst effects of the Great Depression, revived the national economy and put in place worker-friendly measures that assisted unions. "Organized labor was especially affected by a series of laws concerning workers' rights enacted by Congress during the early New Deal," *History & Structure* recounts. "For example, the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 established the Public Works Administration, provided for collective bargaining, and included wage and hour standards."

In addition to federal legislative action, Local 130 and other I.B.E.W. locals – and especially those in industrialized areas such as along the Gulf Coast and Mississippi River in the Local 130 jurisdiction – benefited from the international union's **Supplemental Maintenance Agreement** with NECA that went into effect on October 1, 1935. Formulated

to help locals regain work in factories they had lost to non-union labor while focusing on the flourishing construction industry of the 1920s, the supplemental agreement established certain working and wage conditions for maintenance of plants and factories, including a lowered wage scale.

A number of New Deal projects in New Orleans provided workhours to the Local 130 membership, as well, including construction of the **F. Edward Hebert Federal Building** that was built from 1935 to 1939 and several public housing projects. Member electricians also wired the new, \$12-million **Charity Hospital** that was erected through New Deal programs between 1936 and 1940 and was the second-largest hospital in the United States when it was completed.

"We have been going along with more or less prosperity for the past year," Press Secretary Harry L. Lloyd reported during that time in



LOCAL 130 LEADERSHIP

Part-time presidents, financial secretaries and – after about 13 years – business agents were the primary officers of Local 130 during the first nearly 29 years of its existence after being chartered on June 11, 1900. Local 130's first officers after it was founded were headed by [President Thomas G. Ziegler](#) and [Financial Secretary George W. Kendall Jr.](#).

In 2008, Local 130 combined the offices of business manager and financial secretary following the retirement of [Financial Secretary Roger May](#). Subsequently, then-current [Business Manager Robert F. Hammond III](#) was the first Local 130 officer to hold the newly combined post of business manager/financial secretary.

(Prior to 1929, “business agents” performed many of the functions and duties of business managers but in a part-time capacity. Business agents who served Local 130 prior to 1929 are not documented in I.B.E.W. records; those shown below were collected from various resources but likely do not constitute all of the agents before 1929.)

Business Agents

Theodore E. Todd
1913

Alphonse “A. M.” Hull
1917 – 1918

Oran P. Bates
1918 – 1919

Alphonse “A. M.” Hull
1919 – 1920

John Nunez
1921

Business Managers

Mark M. Mandot
1929 – 1931

Theodore E. Todd
1931 – 1933

Charles R. Tschirn
1933 – 1939

Charles Schreiber
1939 – 1942

Herbert C. Fisher
1943 – 1945

Steve G. Dobson Sr.
1945 – 1950

George B. Muller Jr.
1950 – 1956

Lloyd T. Garcia
1956 – 1960

Anthony R. Ziegler
1960 – 1962

Sincay F. Baxter
1962 – 1965

Melbourne E. Joseph Sr.
1965 – 1972

Michael J. Emig
1972 – 1976

Lloyd Garcia Sr.
1976 – 1978

Gabriel Alexander
1978 – 1982

Alfred “Al” W. Bostick
1982 – 1987

Joseph G. Pardo Sr.
1987 – 1991

Donald B. Bolling
1991 – 1994

Robert F. Hammond III
1994 – 2008

Business Manager/Financial Secretaries

Robert F. Hammond III
2008 – 2009

Clay J. Leon III
2009 – 2013

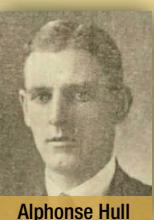
Chet R. Held
2013 – 2014

Paul J. Zulli II
2014 – 2024

Rodney Wallis
2024 – current



Theodore Todd



Alphonse Hull



Charles Tschirn



Charles Schreiber



Herbert Fisher



Steve Dobson Sr.



George Muller Jr.



Lloyd Garcia



Anthony Ziegler



Sincay Baxter



Melbourne Joseph Sr.



Michael Emig



Lloyd Garcia Sr.



Gabriel Alexander



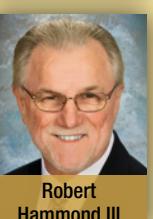
Alfred Bostick



Joseph Pardo Sr.



Donald Bolling



Robert Hammond III



Clay Leon III



Chet Held



Paul Zulli II



Local 130 Business Manager Steven G. Dobson Sr. (left) receives his I.B.E.W. Years of Service Award from I.B.E.W. International Vice-President G. X. Barker (center) as some of the other 73 members who received service awards of 25 years of more watch during the local's first-ever service-awards recognition banquet on December 20, 1946.

the March 1937 *Journal*, “and the coming year shows promise of being a fair one also.”

Before the conclusion of the 1930s and what would be the tail end of the Great Depression, Local 130 was able to grow and prosper. By 1940, the local's wage rate was up to \$1.40 per hour and it had a membership of approximately 340 members.

Already underway in Europe and Asia in the late 1930s, [World War II](#) and its demand for defense manufacturing finally extracted the nation and Local 130 completely from the depression. Even before and particularly after the United States officially entered the war following the surprise attack by Imperial Japan on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, the federal government administered the construction of numerous

hospitals, training camps, airfields, shipyards and other military facilities throughout southern Louisiana and Local 130's jurisdiction – providing an abundance of employment for the local's members.

“From boats to planes to anti-aircraft shells,” a November 17, 2011, *Times-Picayune* article recalled, “tens of thousands of workers churned out war supplies across the city.”

Local 130 electricians helped build, retool and maintain the defense industries that supplied critical materiel for the U.S.-led Allies in their fight against the Axis powers of Japan and Nazi Germany. Those included Higgins Industries, which by 1944 expanded to seven plants around New Orleans and built more than 10,000 landing craft for the U.S. Navy that were vital to the war effort.



MERGERS THAT GREW LOCAL 130

Marine Local No. 1237 of New Orleans was merged by the I.B.E.W. into Local 130 on [May 1, 1941](#). The union had chartered Local 1237 just five months earlier on December 16, 1940.

Radio-Television Broadcasting and Radio-Television Service Local No. 1139 of New Orleans was merged by the I.B.E.W. into Local 130 on [March 1, 2024](#). The union had chartered Radio-Broadcasting Local 1139 on November 27, 1939.

Elsewhere, the local's members also worked on and in the factories of the **Delta Shipbuilding Company** in New Orleans, which constructed 187 "Liberty" ships that transported vital supplies across the oceans. Other key wartime employers of the union electricians included construction of the Higgins Industries facility in Michaud, Louisiana, that was to build C-76 cargo planes but never commenced production; the **Consolidated Aircraft Company** factory in New Orleans that built PBY Catalina seaplanes for the U.S. Navy; and the **Canouette Shipbuilding Company** shipyard and drydock that played a significant role in the war effort by building and repairing military vessels; and other massive ship-repair yards on the Mississippi River.

With the war supplying scores of jobs for electricians, by 1943 Local 130 numbered more than 1,000 members. As the conflict

FIRST TO CELEBRATE LONGTIME MEMBERS

In 1947, Local 130 honored its members who had **25 years or more of membership** in the I.B.E.W., becoming the first local in the I.B.E.W. to do so. Today, it is common practice throughout the union to recognize longtime members with banquets and awards.

continued, the local boasted a membership of 1,800 before the surrender of Germany on May 7, 1945, and then Japan on September 2 of that year brought the war to an end.

After the war, construction work and, as a result, employment for Local 130 members slowed correspondingly as the city previously had no real wartime enterprises. As such, throughout the remainder of the 1940s the local's employment conditions remained steady though not flourishing.

Additionally, Local 130 grew when the I.B.E.W. added the "**outside-lineman**" trade classification to the local's jurisdiction in May 1946, after which it would represent all linemen in and around New Orleans after Local 4 went defunct in 1950. (Fifty-seven years later in December 2007, however, the I.B.E.W. would place all outside jurisdiction in the entire State of Louisiana under **Local No. 995** of Baton Rouge.)

The local was able to gain increased wages with new contracts, however, securing new pay rates for journeymen of \$1.75 per hour in 1946 and \$2 per hour in 1947 after its wartime hourly scale had reached \$1.50 and then \$1.63 in 1945. Then in 1948, the local's wage rate was boosted to \$2.30 per hour for its nearly 900 journeyman members.

ENJOYING GOOD TIMES, SECURING CONTRACT GAINS

Another raise in 1950 through its work contract with NECA pushed the Local 130 journeyman pay scale to \$2.40 per hour. Subsequent increases boosted the rate to \$2.50 per hour in 1951 and then \$2.65 per hour in 1952.

Among projects providing an escalating number of workhours for the local's membership during the early 1950s was the retooling of the former Higgins Industries facility in Michaud by the Chrysler Corporation to produce

engines for U.S. Army tanks and construction of an **American Cyanamid Company** petrochemical plant in Avondale, Louisiana, to produce chemicals including acrylonitrile for manufacturing various plastics and other chemicals. More than 1,075 union electricians were also wiring a massive new aluminum-reduction plant for **Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation** in Chalmette, Louisiana, which once completed would be the largest such facility in the United States, and steam- and radial gas-fueled power plants with a capacity of 473,000 kilowatts to supply electricity to the factory.

At the same time, a five-week strike that began June 1, 1953, against 64 NECA contractors netted the local's 1,500 members a new, two-year contract with a total 27-1/2-cent wage increase to \$2.92-1/2 per hour for the second year and a new **Local 130 Health & Welfare Fund** fringe benefit to provide

CREDIT UNION SERVING FOR 52 YEARS

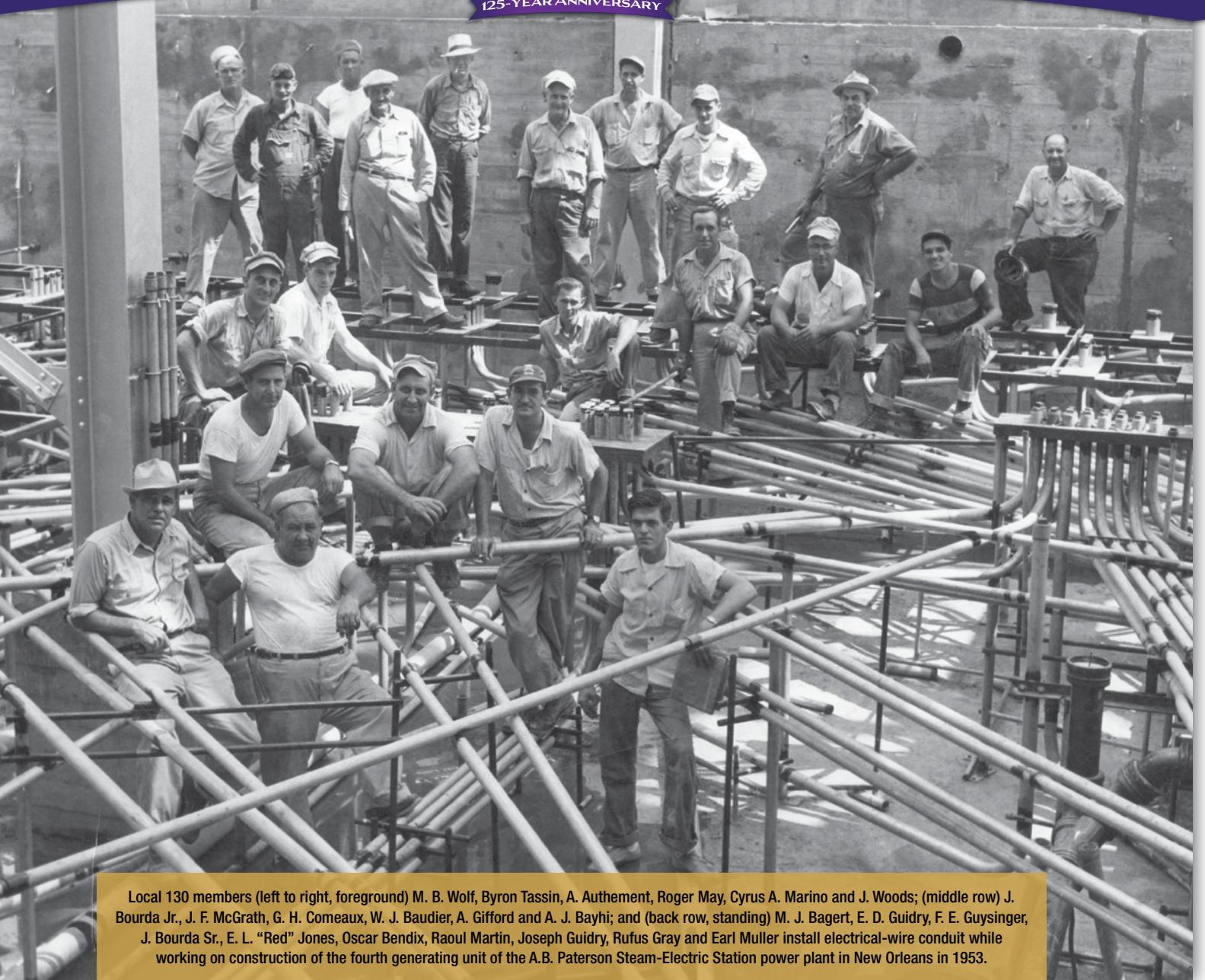
The **Electrical Workers Local 130 Federal Credit Union** was established and chartered on June 16, 1955. The member-owned and administered financial institution continues to provide the local's members and their immediate family members with financial services such as savings and checking accounts; auto, personal and home loans; and credit cards.

additional healthcare insurance to members. The fund was initially financed with 7-1/2-cent contributions from employers for each hour worked by members after it went into effect on May 15, 1954.

Following the completion of those larger projects and others, employment in the Local 130 jurisdiction slowed beginning in late 1954. But employment conditions improved during the late 1950s with the start of several new



Local 130 members and retirees posing after receiving their 25-, 30-, 35-, and 40-year I.B.E.W. service awards in January 1952 are (left to right, bottom row) L. J. Joseph, W. Benson, M. Zirkenback, Al Maestri and Charles Potier; (second row) Ted E. Todd, Fred Lindsey, P. Guerrera, G. Ormond Sr., S. E. Hanssen, B. Raynol, H. J. Laborie, P. Digeorge, F. J. Ziegler Sr. and I. E. LeBlanc; and (top row) J. Gray Jr., Charles Boudreaux, Ralph Morgan, Assistant Business Manager A. Tramontana, J. Weber, Lloyd T. Garcia, Mel E. Joseph Sr., Financial Secretary H. L. Lloyd, E. Larmann, President Victor Welker, B. A. Wilson, Business Manager George B. Muller Jr., R. Viener, Assistant Business Manager Anthony R. Ziegler, L. Barback, Charles Pecot, Dave Schwartz and Earl Pecot.



Local 130 members (left to right, foreground) M. B. Wolf, Byron Tassin, A. Authement, Roger May, Cyrus A. Marino and J. Woods; (middle row) J. Bourda Jr., J. F. McGrath, G. H. Comeaux, W. J. Baudier, A. Gifford and A. J. Bayhi; and (back row, standing) M. J. Bagert, E. D. Guidry, F. E. Guysinger, J. Bourda Sr., E. L. "Red" Jones, Oscar Bendix, Raoul Martin, Joseph Guidry, Rufus Gray and Earl Muller install electrical-wire conduit while working on construction of the fourth generating unit of the A.B. Paterson Steam-Electric Station power plant in New Orleans in 1953.

projects on which Local 130 members worked, including construction of the 345-room **Royal Orleans Hotel** in the French Quarter section of New Orleans that was completed in 1960; renovation of the historic **Whitney National Bank building** on St. Charles Avenue in the Central Business District; construction on the campus of **Tulane University**; and electric and light installations for the new **Moisant New Orleans International Airport** (now **Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport**) terminal that was completed in 1959.

Before the decade was out, however, Local 130 went on strike for 45 days beginning July 1, 1959, after negotiations failed to produce an agreement with NECA on a new work contract. The strike ended August 14 when the local secured a new, two-year contract with the (renamed) **South Louisiana Chapter, NECA** and the **Association of Independent Electrical Contractors of New Orleans** that provided a total 45-cent wage-and-benefits increase, including raises for the wage scale to \$3.78 per hour for the second year of the pact beginning June 1, 1960.

The agreement also established a new **Local 130 Pension Plan** to provide the local's members with employer-funded retirement benefits when it went into effect on June 1, 1961. Additionally, as part of the contract the local was one of the first in the I.B.E.W. to negotiate a paid vacation benefit for its members.

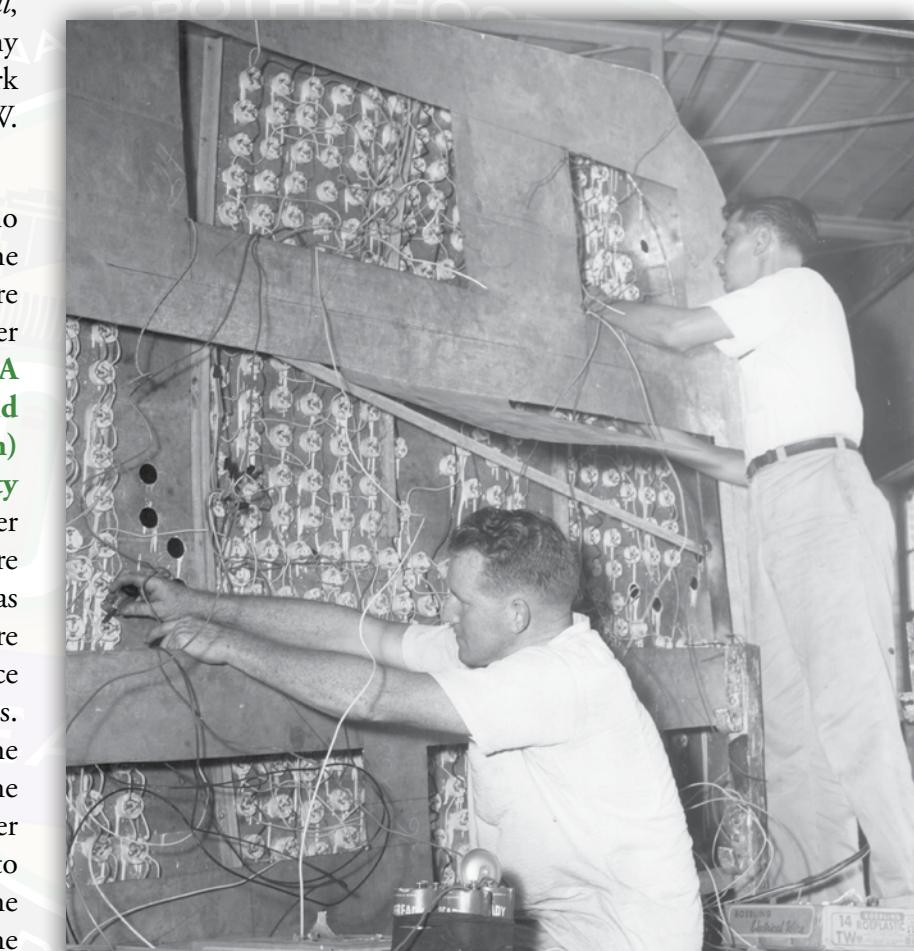
But soon after Local 130 electricians helped complete one of the largest coffee-bean roasting plants in the world for **Folgers** in New Orleans in 1960, employment conditions declined for the local's roughly 1,150 members. While its jurisdiction remained "troubled by unemployment," as Press Secretary George T. Fiegenschue described in the November 1962 *Journal*, during the early 1960s many members traveled to work through other I.B.E.W. locals around the country.

Many of the members who were able to work within the Local 130 jurisdiction were employed on scarce larger jobs that included the **NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Michoud Assembly Facility** in the former Chrysler Corporation's 832-acre industrial complex that was converted to manufacture and assemble aerospace vehicles and components. In particular, at that time and into the early 1970s the facility was used by Chrysler and Boeing Corporation to build the first stages of the Saturn rockets used in the NASA space program.

But after the Local 130 work contract with NECA was terminated on July 1,

1963, and the two sides were unable to reach a new agreement, the local went on a 48-day strike beginning that day. More than 600 of the local's members returned to the jobs, including those at the NASA Michoud plant, on August 19 after the union and the contractors submitted their negotiations to an arbitrating committee in Washington, D.C., which ultimately set the local's journeyman wage scale at \$3.85 per hour and then \$4.40 per hour beginning in 1964.

Meanwhile, just before the end of 1963 Local 130 purchased the former National Cash register Company building at **1806 Canal Street** on December 30 for \$263,500 to use as its next union hall. After moving the following



Local 130 members Gerald J. Tonglet (left) and Frank A. Baiamonte install some of the 20,000 feet of wiring used for the Falstaff Brewing Company's new, 100,000-watt electric sign on Canal Street and University Place in New Orleans in 1955 that depicted giant hands pouring "America's premium quality beer" from a 30-foot bottle into an 18-foot glass using 5,000 electric bulbs and a quarter-mile of neon-light tubing.



spring into the new facility, in which the local's headquarters would remain for the next 20 years, Press Secretary Fiegenschue cheered in the May 1964 *Journal*, "I must say, it surely is a great improvement."

Eventually at one point that year, nearly all of the local's members were employed as work in the area steadily increased. Stable when not strong employment conditions continued throughout the mid-1960s as construction boomed in and around New Orleans, even enabling the local to host about 150 traveling I.B.E.W. members in its jurisdiction in late 1964 to help handle all of the jobs – which ran the gamut of heavy industrial, industrial, office buildings, commercial and some residential work.

Among the more prominent projects that employed union electricians during that time

were high-rise towers that would successively exceed each other as the tallest building in downtown New Orleans. First of the new skyscrapers to be wired by Local 130 members was the 28-story **225 Building** that was built on Baronne Street, after which the 30-story **International Trade Mart Tower** was erected at the foot of Canal Street before the 45-story **Plaza Tower Building** office and luxury complex was constructed from 1964 to 1969.

During that period, the local's members voted on July 1, 1965, to accept a new contract offer from its NECA contractors that called for a 15-cent-per-hour wage increase effective that day to bring the local's journeyman wage scale to \$4.55 per hour. The agreement then provided raises of 10-cents-per-hour on March 1 and November 1, 1966.



Local 130 members and guests celebrate during the local's annual Halloween Masquerade Ball at Municipal Auditorium in New Orleans on October 31, 1955. The local hosted the popular costume gala from 1928 into the late 1960s.



Local 130 members and former longtime officer Ted R. Todd (center, left) receives his 50-year I.B.E.W. Service Award from I.B.E.W. International Vice-President G. X. Barker during a testimonial dinner and dance in 1956.

The local's membership also continued to enjoy full employment into and throughout the second half of the 1960s in large part because of the general economic growth of the New Orleans area. What's more, before the end of the decade the local's journeyman wage scale reached \$5.45 per hour through collective-bargaining negotiations with NECA.

The 1960s ended on a sour note for Local 130, however, when in September 1969 a trial examiner for the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B.) decided that the local was guilty of "unfair labor practices" against six men who were part of the Union Square Labor Movement in Norco, Louisiana, that was trying to compete with Local 130. The examiner's decision called for the men to be awarded damages for loss of wages, as in 1967 and 1968 they were "threatened and later fired because they belonged to the Union Square

Labor Movement," according to an article in the September 15, 1969, *Times-Picayune*.

After being hired out through Local 130 because the local could not supply enough electricians from its own membership for all of the work in its jurisdiction, in 1968 the men attempted to form their own I.B.E.W. local within the Local 130 territory after they were denied membership into the local. During an ensuing feud between the local and the Union Square movement, the examiner ruled, the men "were discriminatorily transferred and then discriminatorily discharged in direct violation of fair labor practices" because of their association with the rival union, the newspaper reported.

Union Square later became an organized local of the Allied Federation of Unions, a relatively loosely knit association of independent locals encompassing workers in all trade crafts, on



The New Orleans Recreation Department 12-year-old Little League baseball team Local 130 sponsored in 1961.

RETIREES CLUB IS 54 YEARS YOUNG

The Local 130 Retirees Club was formed in May 1971 when about 50 of the local's more than 100 retirees attended the club's initial meeting, during which the attendees selected retiree **Dick Wagner** as the club's first president among other officers. The I.B.E.W. chartered the club the following year on November 12, 1972.

In 2025 as Local 130 celebrates its 125th charter anniversary, the Retirees Club provides retired members with the opportunity to keep in touch with each other while attending events such as quarterly meetings, an annual crawfish boil and regular trips to places such as the Hollywood Casino. The club's 2025 officers are **President Sandy Theriot**, **Vice-President Anthony Macaluso**, **Treasurer Harold "Barney" Ryan** and **Secretary Durel Legendre**.

October 16, 1969. The Allied Federation designated the Norco electricians and other craftsmen as Local No. 102.

However, in February 1971 the N.L.R.B. rejected the rulings of its examiner in the case against Local 130 and instead declined most of his recommendations. Local 102 of the Allied Federation of Unions ceased to exist sometime in the mid-1970s for unknown reasons.

BUILDING A SUPER STADIUM, FUELING NUKE CONSTRUCTION

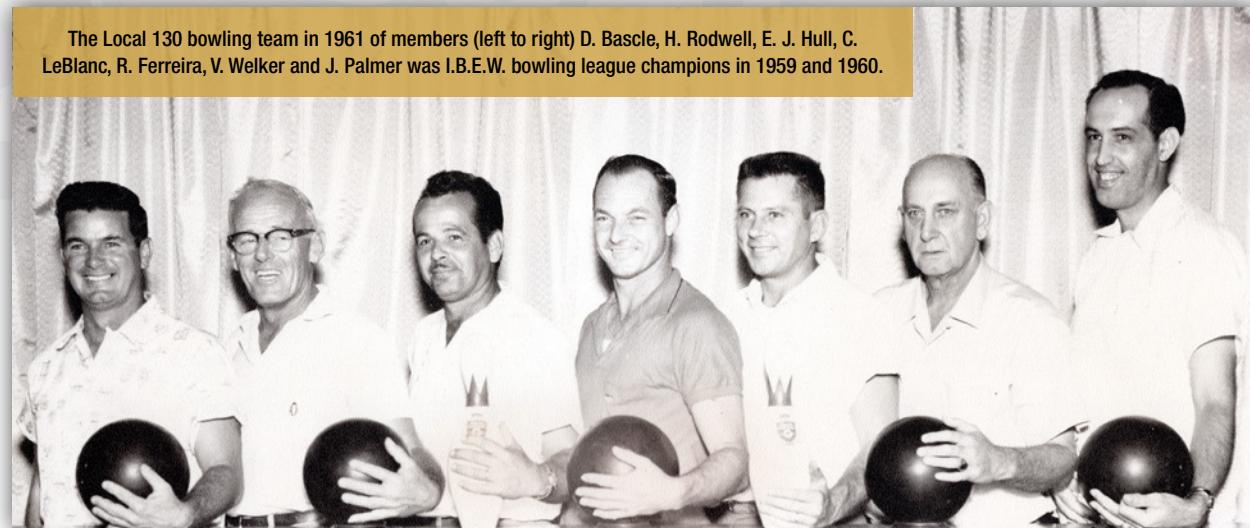
Employment slowed for Local 130 in the early 1970s after a massive, automated grain-unloading facility for **Continental Grain** at the New Orleans port, which was the largest such facility in the world, was completed in early 1970. What's more, the August 1971 start on construction of the **Superdome** indoor

stadium in New Orleans, which would be the largest covered building in the world once completed, did not initially provide substantial work for electricians.

In fact, despite construction of the 51-story **One Shell Square** office skyscraper (now the Hancock Whitney Center) that would be home to Shell Oil Company when finished in 1972, at which time it was the tallest building in the Southeast; and a job at the **Gulf Oil Refinery** at Donaldsonville, Louisiana; and the 24-story office building on Canal Street now known as 1440 Canal, which would be completed in 1972, unemployment hung over the local well into that year. The lack of industrial-plant expansion and little other new construction in the local's area kept the local's employment conditions stagnant, and as a result, at one point in late 1971 about 300 members were out of work at one time.

But after the bulk of the electrical work was finally available on the Superdome project, Local 130 members and I.B.E.W. travelers would work for two-and-a-half years on the \$134-million (\$783 million in 2025) facility. More than 175 union electricians were on the job at one time, installing its main power, lighting and scoreboards before the 76,000-seat stadium was completed and opened on August 3, 1975.

The Local 130 bowling team in 1961 of members (left to right) D. Bascle, H. Rodwell, E. J. Hull, C. LeBlanc, R. Ferreira, V. Welker and J. Palmer was I.B.E.W. bowling league champions in 1959 and 1960.



Away from the jobsites, new one-year work contracts with NECA in 1971 and 1972 were followed with another one-year agreement in 1973 that provided the local's journeymen with a 30-cent-per-hour increase in wages and a 20-cent increase in fringe benefits, setting the local's pay-and-benefits package at \$8.18 per hour from July 1, 1973, through June 31, 1974. Another agreement in July 1974 then boosted the local's total hourly compensation by 72 cents to \$8.90 per hour for the ensuing year ending June 31, 1975.

During that time, beginning in early 1974 more than 100 Local 130 members and several travelers from other I.B.E.W. locals worked on revitalizing and updating the **Amax Port Nickel Plant** in Braithwaite, Louisiana, which union electricians had wired in the 1950s but had been dormant for 14 years before a new source of raw nickel was discovered in West Africa. "A small number of us experienced some old memories working on the plant," Press Secretary Ashton Young recalled in the July 1974 *Journal*, "as we had worked on the original job in the '50s."

The local gained another boon for employment with the start of construction on the **Waterford Steam Electric Station, Unit 3** (also known as "Waterford 3") nuclear power plant in Killona, Louisiana, in November 1974.



Local 130 retiree George C. Obitz (second from left, seated) receives the very first payment from the new Local 130 Pension and Retirement Fund from Business Manager Anthony R. Ziegler during a presentation in 1962, while President George Landwehr (far left) and Financial Secretary John A. Guiroovich Jr., and (standing, left to right) contractors E. N. Brignac Sr., Michael Elgutter and Walter J. Barnes and Local 130 trustee P. St. Philip watch. The Pension and Retirement Fund was established on June 1, 1961, for Local 130 members as a fringe benefit in their work contract with South Louisiana Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and Association of Independent Electrical Contractors of New Orleans employers.

Hundreds of union electricians would work on the 1,157-megawatt plant for Louisiana Power and Light (now Entergy) before it was commissioned in September 1985.

Work in the Local 130 area remained stable into the second half of the decade, with construction of the 200,000-barrels-per-day **ECOL Oil Refinery** in Garyville, Louisiana, providing workhours for the \$10-million electrical portion of the project that began in 1973. After it was completed in 1976, the refinery was sold to Marathon Oil Company (which expanded it several times since and in 2025 is the fourth largest American oil refinery with a capacity of 597,000 barrels per day).

An abundance of manhours was then also made available through Local 995 of Baton

Rouge after construction began in March 1977 on the **River Bend Nuclear Generating Station**. Over the course of the next nine years, scores of Local 130 members traveled to the project for work until it was completed in June 1986.

Work on a new, \$23-million sewage treatment plant for the City of New Orleans that also began in 1977 likewise became another source of work for Local 130 members (although much closer to home than the River Bend power house). Along with the treatment plant – which was the largest single contract ever let by the City of New Orleans at the time – **Shell Oil Company** was building two polypropylene plants in Norco that likewise furnished employment to Local 130 members at that time.

The local was also able to conclude negotiations with NECA on a new, two-year work contract in early June 1977 when the Council on Industrial Relations rendered a decision on the unresolved issues of the local's collective bargaining with the contractors. The package awarded to the local included a total \$1.40 increase in wages and benefits over the two-year period, at which time the total journeyman compensation would be \$13.01 per hour, including \$12 per hour in base pay.

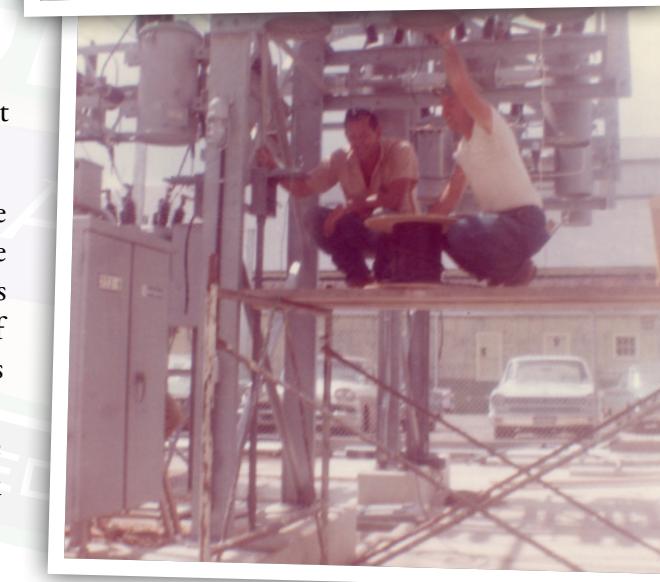
However, the passage by the Louisiana State Legislature two years earlier of an anti-union so-called "right-to-work" law, which prohibits employers from requiring mandatory union membership as a condition of employment even in a unionized workplace, began to have an effect on Local 130 and the union construction industry by late 1977. As a result, into 1978 the more than 100 of the local's members were not working as non-union activity in the Southern Louisiana construction industry proliferated.

"Unemployment has plagued every local in Louisiana this year, and is the direct result of the passage of 'right-to-work' legislation," Press Secretary Young lamented in the April 1978 *Journal*. Indeed, by June 1978 employment had not escalated as the local had expected, leaving about 200 members without work at the time.

Nevertheless, Local 130 recovered once again and its membership closed the decade under strong employment conditions throughout 1979, buoyed by construction of the two nuclear-powered generating plants in Louisiana. New Press Secretary Alfred W. Bostick was even able to announce in the January 1980 *Journal* while looking back over the previous year, "Work in our area remains plentiful."



Local 130 members work on construction of the New Orleans Public Service 115,000-kilovolt electric substation at Dublin and Willow streets in 1965.



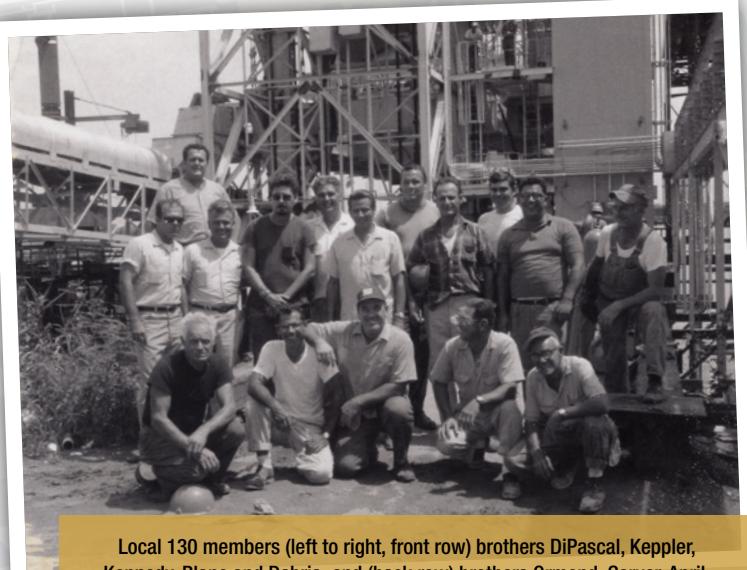


RAISING ITS NEW HOME, BATTLING FOR ITS SURVIVAL

The large amount of work in its jurisdiction continued to provide abundant when not stable employment for Local 130 members into 1982, during which the local's membership surpassed 1,600 electricians, linemen and apprentices. What's more, that year the local hosted as many as 2,000 I.B.E.W. travelers at times to fill the manpower needs of its contractors.

At the center of the strong employment conditions that persisted throughout the first half of the 1980s was the transformation of the **Poydras Street Corridor** in New Orleans into a major corporate hub as the result of the decade's "oil boom," with the construction of numerous high-rise office buildings for oil-industry companies. Local 130 members working for various contractors installed the electrical systems of every major building constructed along Poydras Street during that time, including the 22-story **Exxon Building** (now 1555 Poydras) and the 29-story **Gulf Oil Building** (now 1515 Poydras).

"The oil boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s changed the New Orleans skyline drastically when some of the city's tallest buildings were constructed," a commemorative article in the September 1, 2011, issue of *New Orleans Magazine* recounted. "With the opening of the Superdome in 1975, the corridor along Poydras Street became a target for construction, transforming it from a dilapidated area into a bustling land of high-rises."



Local 130 members (left to right, front row) brothers DiPascal, Keppler, Kennedy, Blanc and Dabria; and (back row) brothers Ormond, Carver, April, Casse, DeRocha, Wolfe, Meyer, Klein, Riggelman, Michel and Garcia Sr. pose during a break while working on construction of the new Continental Grain Company grain unloading facility in New Orleans in 1970, which when completed would be the largest automated grain-unloading dock in the world.



Local 130 members (left to right, kneeling) Morris Dugas, Fred Zimmerman, Tony Felix and Raymond Landry; and (standing) Rudy Ormond, Charles Brown, Roy Detillier, Nolan Hebert, Durel Legender, Jessie Bergeron, Eddie Hamburger, Al Belcher, James Whitney, Joe Stanley, Roy Desselle and Lloyd Garcia Sr. pose during a break while working in 1971 on construction of the first high-rise apartment building in Houma, Louisiana, a 300-unit complex to house senior citizens.

As the local's employment situation remained positive, in May 1981 it signed a lucrative new two-year work agreement with NECA before their active contract expired. The agreement ultimately brought the local's journeyman wage scale up to \$16.65 per hour before it expired in June 1983.

Elsewhere within the Local 130 jurisdiction, members also helped build the new **University of New Orleans Lakefront Arena** beginning in 1982. The 8,933-seat multi-purpose arena would serve as the home court for the school's men's and women's basketball teams after it was completed in 1983.

Meanwhile, union electricians continued to work on the Waterford 3 nuclear power plant as well as a range of other projects that included preparations for the **1984 World's Fair** in New Orleans. The glut of employment opportunities prompted Local 130 Press Secretary Phil Saladino to announce in the August 1982 *Journal*, "The work we have spans the spectrum of the industry. We have a nuclear power plant. We have industrial work in both the refineries and the chemical plants. We have large commercial work, office buildings, hotels and shopping centers. We even have a World's Fair for 1984."

The year 1982 ended on a sad note for Local 130, however, when **Business Manager Gabriel "Gabe" Alexander** succumbed to an extended illness on December 13. In the local's top office since 1978, Brother Alexander was 48 years old when he passed away.

Another two-year work contract, secured after weeks of meetings, discussions and debates, was approved by the membership in June 1983 even though it only contained a modest wage-and-benefits package – to help counter non-union competition in its jurisdiction – that reached \$19.43 per hour. "This (contract) should be a



Local 130 members and guests enjoy the local's annual picnic in 1977.



FIRST FEMALE JOURNEYMAN

Itera McLaughlin became the first female journeyman wireman of Local 130 when she graduated from the local's apprentice training program in October of 1982. She had been indentured into the local in August of 1978 and successfully completed four years of apprentice training at Delgado Junior College.



Local 130 members Ralph Zulli (left) and Donald Chawvin install 2,400-volt motors in a new sewerage treatment plant in New Orleans in 1978.

clear indication that this local is determined to do what it can and must do to recover work lost to the non-union element," Press Secretary Saladino declared in the July 1983 *Journal*. "Local 130 and the fair contractors in the area are serving notice that we are ready to fight back to ensure that organized labor will be the dominant force in the construction industry in Southeast Louisiana and we are resolved to preserve the ideals of unionism."

With the World's Fair, titled "1984 Louisiana World Exposition," in full swing and employing about 150 Local 130 members from May 12 to November 11, 1984, the work scene in the local's area remained good. Additionally, jobs such as a **Tenneco Oil Company** refinery upgrade, which at peak employed more than

200 members, and construction of the new Humana Hospital in eastern New Orleans put many more union electricians to work.

The local also moved into its new union hall and headquarters it had built at **3200 Ridgelake Drive** in Metairie on March 9, 1984. Initially, the local occupied the ground floor of the \$4.5-million office building and meeting hall while renting out the remaining 23,000 square feet before moving its offices to the fourth floor in 1994 to accommodate a new tenant and keep the building fund in the black, while also booking its profitable Alexander Room Terrace hall for dances, parties and weddings.

But Local 130 crashed back down to earth, along with the construction industry and the general economy of the nation, in late 1984, beginning an extended period of high unemployment among the local's membership. Throughout the remainder of the decade, many members remained out of work for long periods of time while others were forced to travel for jobs, working through sister I.B.E.W. locals that often included **Local No. 3** of New York City.

To help counter the deplorable employment conditions, Local 130 agreed to hold its wage scale at \$16.45 per hour for 1985, 1986, 1987 and into 1988, with the local's total compensation package remaining at \$19.53 per hour. The local and its NECA contractors also set up a **Market Recovery Fund** in late 1984 that was subsidized with members' wages and would be utilized to help signatory employers bidding against non-union contractors.

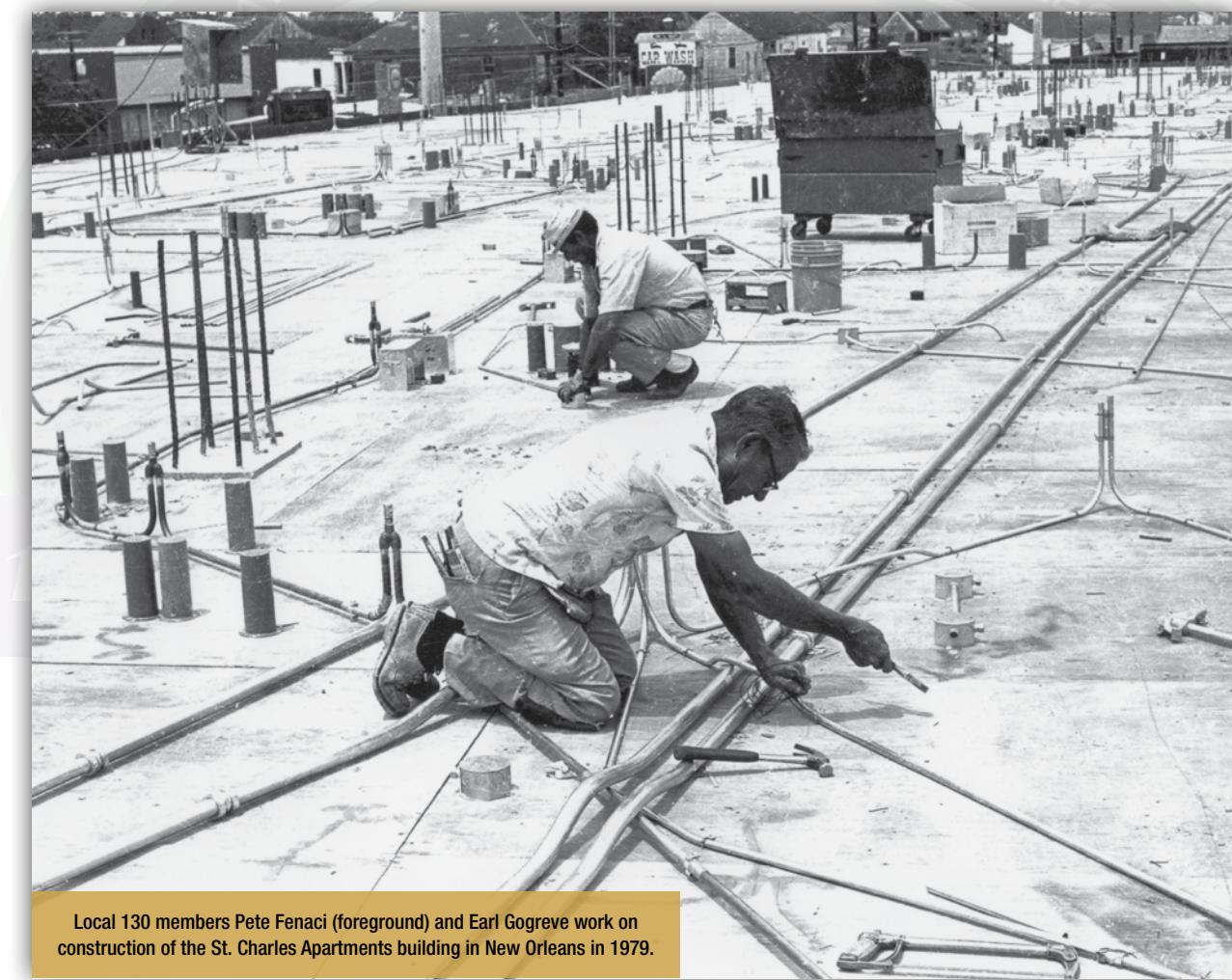
To exacerbate the local's situation, the non-union expanding incursion into its territory continued, including petrochemical industries up and down the Mississippi River turning to non-union construction and maintenance workers. Accordingly, Local 130 Press Secretary Dave A. Nicholson declared in the June 1985 *Journal*, "After 85 years, this local is in a big fight with the anti-union forces for its survival."

Occasional respites from the poor conditions were provided to the local's membership while its market-recovery efforts also picked up some larger jobs. For instance, a \$100-million expansion and renovation to the **Southern Baptist Hospital** (now Ochsner Baptist Medical Center) in Uptown New Orleans beginning in 1985 put members to work, as

did construction of the 21-story **Galleria** office tower in Metairie that was completed in 1986.

But after those projects and others were completed and no other significant sources of manhours for the local's members materialized, by September 1987 more than 60 percent of the local's journeymen were unemployed at one time. Meanwhile, 75 percent of the jobs targeted with the local's Market recovery Fund had been awarded to non-union contractors.

As the local's work picture remained stagnant into 1988 and only showing occasional spurts of employment on a temporary basis, the local and its NECA contractors extended their market-recovery efforts for another year through May 1989. They also agreed on a new work contract in 1988 that increased the local's



Local 130 members Pete Fenaci (foreground) and Earl Gogreve work on construction of the St. Charles Apartments building in New Orleans in 1979.



LOCAL 130 TRADE CLASSIFICATIONS

Local 130 was designated an [Inside Wiremen](#) local when it was chartered by the I.B.E.W. on June 11, 1900.

On May 17, 1946, the I.B.E.W. added [Outside Linemen](#) to Local 130's trade classifications (although it did not represent linemen until after outside Local No. 4 went defunct in 1950).

In December 2007, the I.B.E.W. removed [Outside Linemen](#) from Local 130's trade classifications when all [Outside jurisdiction](#) in the State of Louisiana was given to [Local No. 995](#) of Baton Rouge that month.

In 2021, the I.B.E.W. added [Professional Technical](#) and [Clerical](#) to Local 130's trade classifications.

In 2024, the I.B.E.W. added [Radio-Television Broadcasting](#) and [Radio-Television Service](#) to Local 130's trade classifications with the merger of Local No. 1139 into Local 130.

As of June 11, 2025, the 125th anniversary date of its charter, Local 130 represents the following trade classifications within its jurisdiction:

- [Inside](#)
- [Professional Technical and Clerical](#)
- [Radio-Television Broadcasting](#)
- [Radio-Television Service](#)

wage scale for the first time in three years to \$17.44 per hour and its total package including benefits to \$19.56 per hour.

Regardless, by the end of the 1980s unions in general were struggling after the state repealed its Prevailing Wage Law in 1988, allowing companies to pay lower wages than the union scale on public-works projects, and the continued drop in construction and the state's economic decline cut thousands of union building-trades jobs. Greater New Orleans A.F.L.-C.I.O. Vice-President Peter Banin even stated in the September

4, 1989, *Times-Picayune*, "Organized labor is at its lowest ebb ever."

Likewise, Local 130 Press Secretary Joseph J. Carambat reported in the August 1989 *Journal*, "Our work situation remains slow." What's more, while Local 130's membership had only dropped by 100 members over the previous five years, that year 400 of its 1,300 members were working out of the state while traveling to other I.B.E.W. locals for jobs.

RECOVERING FROM TRAGEDY, WIRING A LANDMARK CASINO

Work and employment remained sluggish for the Local 130 membership into the 1990s, and the poor conditions would continue throughout the first half of the decade as no large jobs got underway during that time. However, the



Local 130 members attend the very last local meeting held at its former Union Hall on Canal Street in March 1983.



local was able to increase its wage scale to \$17.54 per hour and its total package including benefits to \$20.06 per hour in 1990 – although over the next three years, wages remained at that level and the local only gained a 20-cent increase in benefits as the economy and work were so weak.

Then in January 1991, the local's membership approved [Office and Clerical Workers, Supply-House Workers, Electrical Inspectors](#) and [Cable-TV Workers](#) as new trade classifications under the local's jurisdiction to be added to its bylaws. "Organizing these workers will take a lot of effort on our part," Press Secretary Paul J. Zulli Jr. explained in the April 1991 *Journal*, "however, it will make the local stronger."

Tragically, Local 130 lost both [President and Assistant Business Manager Arthur "A. J." LaVie IV](#) and [Business Manager Joseph G. Pardo Sr.](#) on April 5, 1991, when the commuter plane in which they were traveling to an I.B.E.W. Fifth District progress meeting crashed in eastern Georgia, killing all 23 passengers and crew onboard. Brother Pardo was 44 years old and Brother LaVie was 34 years old when they perished.

"At a time when it's difficult to find members



The current Local 130 Union Hall building at 3200 Ridgelake Drive under construction in 1983 and 1984 before the local moved into the new facility on March 9, 1984.





Local 130 Assistant Business Manager Eddie Cretin (left) assigns the very first job referral out of the local's new (and current) Union Hall at 3200 Ridgelake Drive to member Jack Bailey after the local moved into the new facility on March 9, 1984.

to step up and become strong union leaders," Local 130 Press Secretary Zulli wrote in eulogizing the two officers in the August 1991 *Journal*, "we had the privilege of having two men whose dedication and commitment will be unsurpassed for years to come."

During a special Local 130 Executive Board meeting on April 12, **Financial Secretary Donald B. Bolling** was appointed Local 130 business manager and **Executive Board member Donald Meyer** was appointed president. Each would serve out the remainder of the term of his respective predecessor.

Local 130 then turned its focus to increasing its organizing efforts in order to extract itself from the employment doldrums it had been experiencing for some time. To that end, in the spring of 1992 the local hired former Press Secretary Carambat to serve as its organizer.

Also that spring, the local hosted the first I.B.E.W. COMET (Construction Organizing Membership Education Training) seminar ever

held in the Fifth District (to which Local 130 belongs). The training program focuses on educating members about organizing workers and employers in the non-union sector.

Before the end of that year, for the first time in 10 years Local 130 members were working at a **Bunge Corporation** agricultural-oil plant. The \$1-million electrical job to upgrade the company's Avondale, Louisiana, palm-oil refinery with a state-of-the-art computerized control system ultimately employed 136 members.

Less than two years later and after more than a decade of planning, construction of the new **Harrah's New Orleans Casino** near the foot of Canal Street began in 1995 and would eventually provide a steady source of workhours for Local 130 members. But first, 120 of the local's electricians were employed on transforming the city's Municipal Auditorium into a temporary casino under the first all-union project agreement signed by the Building and Construction Trades Council in more than 20 years.

The council had also signed a union-friendly agreement for the construction of the permanent casino as well. However, its original owner, a partnership named "Harrah's Jazz," halted construction on the facility the day before Thanksgiving 1995 and laid off 1,600 construction workers, including 140 I.B.E.W. members, and 2,500 casino employees before it filed for bankruptcy.

Harrah's took over the project on its own and soon after restarted construction on the 115,000-square-foot casino. Local 130 members then played a vital role in completing the facility, which opened in late October 1999 with one of the largest gaming floors in the United States outside of Nevada – and 25 years later it would become **Caesars New Orleans** in May 2024.

Also during that time, a host of new significant projects that boosted employment for the local included construction of the third phase addition for the **Ernest N. Morial Convention Center** in downtown New Orleans, which had originally been built as part of the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition. The \$200-million expansion, which included \$28-million in electrical work, created the largest single-floor convention center space in the world when it was completed in 1998.

Meanwhile, the previous year the Building and Construction Trades Council

signed an agreement with the convention center for its maintenance contract. With that, Local 130 members have been employed in the facility since it was opened.

Construction of the **New Orleans Sports Arena** next to the New Orleans Superdome beginning in November further added to the growing employment opportunities for the Local 130 membership. Now the Smoothie



Local 130 members (left to right, top photo) Mark Songy, John Bruno, Philip Dell'Orfano, Ursin Hebert, Eddie Cretin and Joseph Pardo; and (bottom photo) Eric Viering, Roger May and George Cusachs picket the construction site of a new Macy's store being built at the Esplanade Shopping Mall by non-union workers in 1986.



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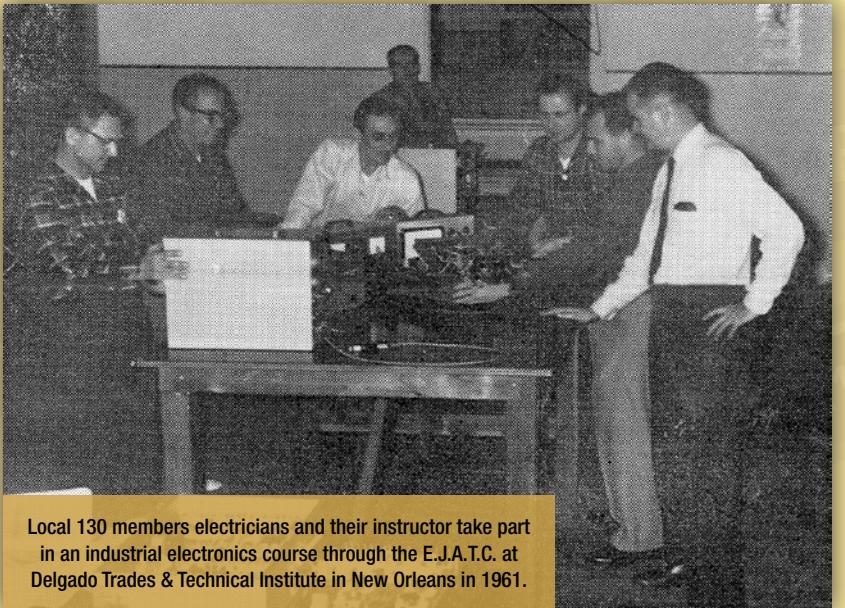


Local 130 Apprenticeship and Training

PREPARING ITS HIGHLY SKILLED ELECTRICAL WORKFORCE

"If we are to continue to recognize all electrical work as part of the industry and in order that we may maintain our proprietary interest in all electrical work, it becomes evident that we must train men to do every job in the electrical industry not only for today but for the years ahead."

I.B.E.W. Local 130 Business Manager Anthony Ziegler
The E-JAC News; Volume One, Issue One; July 1961
(Newsletter of the New Orleans Electrical Joint
Apprenticeship and Training Committee)



Local 130 members electricians and their instructor take part in an industrial electronics course through the E.J.A.T.C. at Delgado Trades & Technical Institute in New Orleans in 1961.

Since it was first established in June 1900, I.B.E.W. Local 130 has prepared potential union electricians through the system of [apprenticeship](#), by which apprentices learn the electrical trade through on-the-job training alongside experienced, journeyman-level Local 130 member electricians. As always, apprentices are paid while being educated on worksites.

To enhance its apprenticeship program, around 1950 Local 130 and its employing contractors with the New Orleans Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) formed the [New Orleans Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee](#) (N.O.E.J.A.T.C.)

to administer, improve and fund its training. Nationally, the parent I.B.E.W. and NECA organizations had formed the National J.A.T.C. in 1941.

Holding related classes for apprentices at the [Delgado Trades and Technical Institute](#) in New Orleans to supplement on-the-job training, the E.J.A.T.C. held its first graduation ceremonies for apprentices who completed its five-year training program in December 1956. The following year, in January 1957 an official trust was set up for a [Training Fund](#) to subsidize the E.J.A.T.C. program with contributions from the union and contractors based on hours worked by Local 130 members.

The training program took a tremendous step forward in 1999 when Local 130 and the E.J.A.T.C. built a new [Training Center](#) in the Local 130 Union Hall at 3200 Ridgelake Drive in Metairie, which the local had built in 1984. With that, apprentices have had the convenience of having their classes and labs on-site in the program's own facility, which has been expanded and updated over the ensuing years as well.

Always seeking to improve its training, in early 2012 the E.J.A.T.C. started a day school for apprentices. However, the program reverted back to evening classes in 2019 to enable the E.J.A.T.C. to re-evaluate how it combines the on-the-job and classroom training – which allowed the

program to hire additional instructors while the local also renovated the training space that year and purchased and set up new equipment and tools.

With those and other upgrades, the accredited E.J.A.T.C. program has continued to adapt to changes in technology in the electrical industry, allowing it to provide unmatched apprentice training as well as vital [continuing-education courses](#) for Local 130 journeymen. As such, Local 130 is able to provide apprentices and members with the knowledge, skills and technology needed to be the best electrical workers in the construction industry so it can supply its employing contractors with the most-capable electrical workforce available in the industry.

"Like the electrical industry, the apprenticeship is forever evolving," E.J.A.T.C. [Training Director David Crumb](#), who has headed the program since 2022, explained, "and with continued support from the I.B.E.W. and NECA, we will be around for another 75 years."



Local 130 apprentices train at the E.J.A.T.C. Training Center in the Local 130 Union Hall in Metairie in 2025.



New Orleans E.J.A.T.C. Training Director David Crumb stands with Local 130 apprentice Tony Nguyen after he won the Louisiana State United Association Apprenticeship Competition in June 2024.





King Center, the \$114-million multi-purpose indoor arena opened in October 1999 after union electricians installed its power, wiring, lighting and scoreboards.

The local's negotiating team also secured a new, four-year work contract with NECA in 1997. The pact provided member electricians and linemen (who in 1999 would no longer be members of Local 130 and instead would be transferred into Local 995) with a 26-1/2 percent wage increase over the life of the pact.

As work remained steady, for the most part, most of the local's members were gainfully employed into 1998. Among the jobs many of those electricians had completed by that time was the grandstand at the **New Orleans Fairgrounds**, on which members worked over the previous year and a half after it had been nearly destroyed by fire.

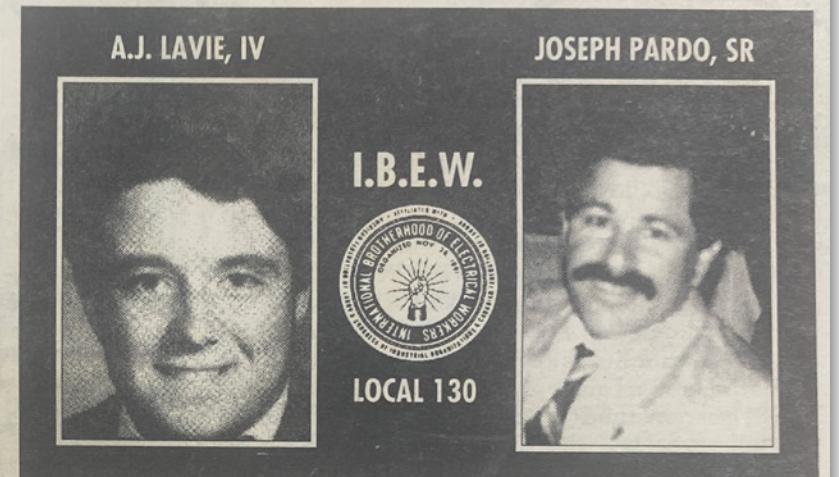
IBEW Local 130 leaders 'AJ' LaVie and Joe Pardo killed in plane crash

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 130 and the New Orleans labor movement were stunned by the loss of two of their leaders in a plane crash in Georgia on April 5.

IBEW Local 130 President and Assistant Business Manager A.J. LaVie IV and Local 130 Business Agent Joseph G. Pardo, Sr. were killed in a commuter plane crash in eastern Georgia. They were travelling to an IBEW convention when they were killed.

Statements issued by New Orleans organized labor leaders reflect the sense of loss brought to the movement by the deaths of LaVie and Pardo.

"Joe Pardo and 'AJ' LaVie were



'AJ' since the day they became apprentices. We will all miss them

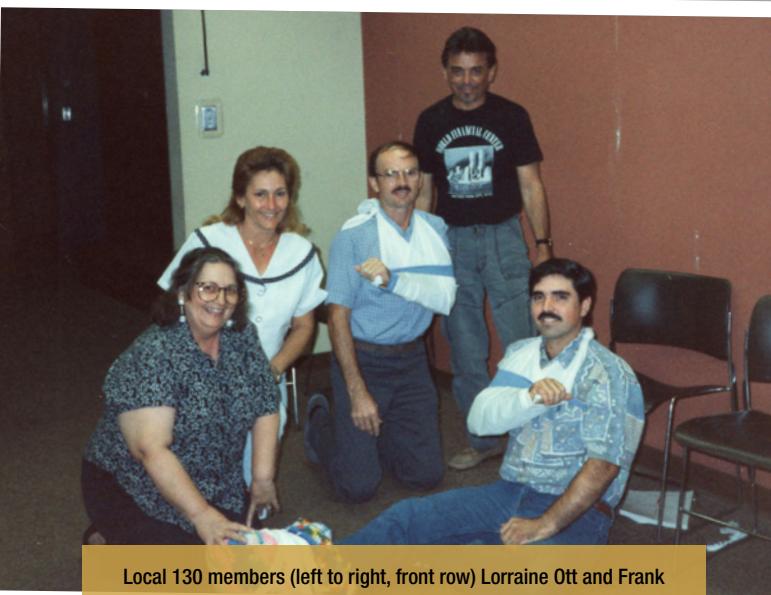
Additional survivors include his parents Carol and Arthur LaVie

The top of the article in the April 1991 issue of the Greater New Orleans AFL-CIO Labor Links newspaper announcing the deaths of Local 130 President and Assistant Business Manager A.J. LaVie IV and Business Manager Joseph G. Pardo Sr. in a plane crash in eastern Georgia on April 5, 1991, that also killed 21 others. LaVie and Pardo were traveling to an IBEW Fifth District progress meeting.

Still determined to win back market share and membership, in 1998 Local 130 put together a team of organizers who would work exclusively on "organizing every aspect in affiliation with our jurisdiction," Press Secretary Charlene A. Butler announced in that year's June *Journal*. She further proclaimed, "These members ... have committed themselves to a very challenging goal. These efforts, in such a large scope, will better communicate the common needs and benefits ALL workers can receive."

CELEBRATING ITS CENTENNIAL, FACING A HOST OF SETBACKS

Local 130 celebrated the 100th year since it was chartered back in 1900 with a dinner-dance at the Superdome on June 11, 2000. While the local was able to pause and reflect on its many triumphs as well as the trials and tribulations it had overcome up to



Local 130 members (left to right, front row) Lorraine Ott and Frank Pursell, and (back row) *<Instructor Karen Riggelman>*, Larry Boteler and President Donnie Meyer take part in an American Red Cross First Aid and C.P.R. class provided by the local's training program in 1992.

that point in time, the new "Y2K" (Year 2000) Millennium initially brought with it some of the most difficult challenge with which the local has ever had to contend.

But first, the local began the new decade, century and millennium with many of its members completing work on the new **National World War II Museum** in New Orleans (initially known as The National D-Day Museum) for its opening on June 6, 2000 (the 56th anniversary of the D-Day Allied invasion of Nazi Germany occupied France.) The museum, initially built into part of the former Weckerling Brewery in the Central Business District of New Orleans with the help of the local's union electricians, has since expanded into a 7-acre campus of multiple buildings.

Local 130 also secured a new, three-year work agreement with the South Louisiana Chapter, NECA, that went into effect on September 1, 2000, with an increased initial base journeyman wage of \$20.14 per hour. Before the contract expired on September 1, 2003, it eventually raised that base pay to \$23.39 per hour and included employer benefit contributions of

\$1.80 per hour for the Heath & Welfare Fund and \$1.35 per hour for the Local 130 Pension Fund.

However, the remainder of the decade would be one of the most challenging periods for the local in its existence. Essentially bookended by two recessions and interrupted in the middle by a historic natural disaster, the 2000s presented Local 130 with a host of potential setbacks that produced extended high unemployment as well as many personal obstacles for its membership.

Following the completion of major jobs in its jurisdiction such as Harrah's Casino and the World War II Museum, a major recession in 2001 marked by a steep decline in economic activity throughout the country during much of that year hindered construction in the Local 130 jurisdiction. Subsequently, work slowed and employment conditions for the local's membership deteriorated once again.



Local 130 retiree August Melito receives his 70-year I.B.E.W. Service Award from Local 130 President Donnie Meyer in June 1993.



Local 130 president Donnie Meyer stands (far left) with retirees (left to right) Lloyd Roundtree, Weldon Bossier, Doug Ehrensing, Anthony Tramontano, Frank Nicosia, Cluis Siener, Ed Deubler Jr., W. Church and Joseph Pregeant after they received their 50- and 55-year I.B.E.W. Service Awards in June 1993.

While the locals' precarious situation persisted, the catastrophic Category-5 **Hurricane Katrina** plowed into New Orleans and the Gulf Coast in August 2005, leaving extraordinary levels of death and destruction in its wake. All told, approximately 4,000 active and retired I.B.E.W. members, including many Local 130 members, lost homes and jobs to the storm.

As always, the I.B.E.W. and its locals across North America helped Local 130 and its city and state recover and rebuild, arguably none more so than Local 995, whose efforts Local 130 recognized in a letter in the January 2006 *Journal*: "Local 995's Business Manager Mike Clary, staff, officers and members opened their hearts and their offices to Local 130 the day after Hurricane Katrina. Their generous assistance allowed us to keep Local 130 operating during devastating conditions. Their great gifts of support will never be forgotten."

I.B.E.W. members across the United States and Canada made generous contributions to the union's Hurricane Relief Fund, which was administered from the Local 995 union hall, where an I.B.E.W. team oversaw the union's largest-ever aid effort and distributed more than \$2 million in assistance. What's more, with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Red Cross overwhelmed, the I.B.E.W. provided crucial relief to I.B.E.W. members even before many others received help from the government or other organizations.

Still recovering from the hurricane of nearly three years earlier – whose aftermath clean-up efforts ironically created employment for union electricians – Local 130 was confronted with yet another setback when the "Great Recession of 2007" began. The severe economic and financial collapse that sank the country into its worst period of job loss and job creation since the Great Depression resulted in mass

unemployment among the local's membership during the next few years.

Also in 2008, Local 130 combined its offices of business manager and financial secretary so that its administration could operate more efficiently. The local officially established the new position following the retirement of **Financial Secretary Roger May**, after which **Business Manager Robert F. Hammond III** became the first Local 130 officer to hold the combined post.

BOUNCING BACK AGAIN, GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

Employment – once again – picked up as Local 130 moved into the 2010s, with work at the Waterford 3 nuclear power plant and preparations for the 2013 National Football League's **Super Bowl** in the Superdome

keeping many members busy into that year. But after the completion of those two projects, work for the local – once again – slackened.

Construction of two hospitals in the local's jurisdiction spiked employment, beginning with the **University Medical Center New Orleans** that had started in April 2011 to replace Charity Hospital, which had been closed after being severely ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. The \$1.1-billion, 446-bed, research and academic hospital located in the Tulane-Gravier neighborhood of New Orleans employed a large number of Local 130 members in the years before it was completed and opened on August 1, 2015.

Just across the street, union electricians – including several I.B.E.W. travelers from other locals – also wired the nearly \$1-billion **New Orleans Veterans Affairs (V.A.) Medical**



Local 130 members pose during a break while working on construction of the Harrah's New Orleans Casino (now Caesars New Orleans) in 1995 before it opened in October 1999.



Center while it was being built from 2012 to November 2016 to replace the former Hurricane Katrina-damaged V.A. hospital. The complex project, which involved nine buildings that consist of approximately 1.7-million-square-feet of space to serve more than 70,000 veterans, was one of the largest projects in which Local 130 was ever involved and was secured through the instrumental efforts of **Business Manager Clay Leon III**, who was the first Black person to hold that position in the local.

(Local 130 had lobbied extensively for the V.A. to award the work on the medical center to union contractors, as the Federal department did not usually give contracts to the organized building trades. "We have spent much time with our political allies and contractors," 130 Press Secretary Chad Lauga had reported in the April 2013 issue of the re-named I.B.E.W. *Electrical Worker*, "and will continue to try everything we can to make V.A. work a reality for our union brothers and sisters.")

By early 2013, Local 130 contractors were also beginning to pick up more work as a result of **market recovery** efforts by the union and NECA and the use of the I.B.E.W. **Construction Wireman/Construction Electrician program** in their work contracts. With the program, the local supplied signatory contractors with entry-level "construction wiremen," who had electrical-construction work experience but were not part of the local's apprentice-training program, at lower pay rates to help the contractors be more competitive in their project bidding.

"WE, the I.B.E.W., are now doing the jobs that non-union contractors were typically doing just a year ago," Press Secretary Lauga exclaimed in the June 2013 *Electrical Worker*. Indeed, as a result of the local's contractors using those tools, from 2010 through early 2013 the local and its employers took 394,696 workhours from the non-union sector and paid over \$3.5 million in members' benefits.



Local 130 members and guests enjoy the local's 100th Anniversary Celebration Dinner-Dance Gala at the Louisiana Superdome on June 11, 2000.



Local 130 members pose during a break while working on the Louisiana Superdome in 2006 to repair damage caused by Hurricane Katrina the previous year.

As the local's efforts to gain employment opportunities for its members continued to produce positive results, by March 2014 Local 130 had increased its market share of the work it was performing in its jurisdiction to 29 percent – up from just 19 percent from three years earlier. At that time, the local had full employment of its membership and was even hosting some I.B.E.W. travelers.

Following negotiation that began in the summer of 2015 on building-trades contracts for projects at Harrah's, the Superdome/New Orleans Sports Arena and the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, the local succeeded in negotiating raises and needed language changes on the Harrah's and Superdome jobs. While the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center initially appeared to be a losing battle, as management had begun an incentive program offering immediate wage increases if the crafts gave up union representation before negotiations took place, Local 130 stood strong and, in the end, earned members a \$2.48-per-hour wage increase while becoming the sole referral system for electricians at the facility for the next three years.

The following year, the local's progress continued with a new, two-year collective-

bargaining work agreement with NECA that was in effect through December 2018. The local's negotiating team worked diligently in negotiations to settle all issues locally, although a few were presented to the Council on Industrial Relations for decisions.

Out in the field, employment activity continued to improve in 2016, with members working on an increasing number of significant projects such as jobs at Waterford 3; the **PBF Energy Chalmette Refinery**, which processes 185,000 barrels of heavy crude oil per day into gasoline, distillates and specialty chemicals; and many more – including the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport.

A \$1.3-billion addition to the airport that included a new 35-gate terminal employed many Local 130 members after work on it began in January 2016 and through its completion in November 2019. In addition to supplying an abundance of workhours for the local's electricians and apprentices, the project also brought several much-needed new contractors to the area.

With those jobs and others continuing to provide workhours for union electricians,

the local's employment remained steady throughout the remainder of the decade. In fact, in 2018 the favorable employment conditions allowed the local and the **New Orleans Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee** (E.J.A.T.C.) to indenture 70 new apprentices into its training program, the largest first-year apprenticeship class it had enrolled in many years.

Even as the airport project was winding down toward completion in 2019, the local's employers were still providing work to its members. Commercial build-outs continued to offer workhours, many of which were supplied by the local's smaller signatory contractors, and additional work at the PBF Refinery was one of the rare industrial construction jobs obtained by the local's employers.

Another new work contract negotiated in 2018 that was overwhelmingly ratified by the Local 130 membership called for wage increases that initially set the local's

journeyman electrician rate at \$31.65 per hour and increased contributions to the Pension and Health & Welfare funds. New language in the contract also eliminated local market-recovery stipulations, especially multiple pay scales, that had been part of agreements since they were first introduced in the 1980s, allowing the local to allocate future raises as it wanted, be it on paychecks or into benefits.

ENDURING AN EPIDEMIC, GOING STRONG TO YEAR 125

Local 130 reported in the February 2020 *Electrical Worker* that it had “jobs on the books ready to start in the new year” and that “there are also some large projects our contractors anticipate getting.” However, those plans were derailed after the global **coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic** struck the United States in early 2020, after which it would claim the lives of more than 1 million Americans over the next three years.



Local 130 apprentice Kristen Cortez (second from right) stands with (left to right) apprentice Alex Holmes, Training Director Sandy Theriot, apprentice Sean Calloway and apprentice Jeff Faulstich after Sister Cortez won the New Orleans Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (N.O.E.J.A.T.C.) Apprentice of The Year competition in 2021, after which she won the Louisiana State Apprentice of The Year competition in June of that year.



The Crescent City Connection bridges over the Mississippi River in New Orleans lit up for Mardi Gras 2024 by Local 130 members.

The pandemic subsequently suppressed construction in Southeastern Louisiana and initially sharply curtailed employment for the Local 130 membership. Meanwhile, the local practiced safety precautions such as social distancing, canceling meetings and training, and closing its hall temporarily to help stop the spread of the virus.

Regardless, in 2020 the Local 130 negotiating committee was able to secure a wage increase in a new, two-year work contract with NECA of \$2.45 per hour. The raise would ultimately

take the local's total journeyman wage-and-benefits package to \$47.23 per hour beginning in December 2022.

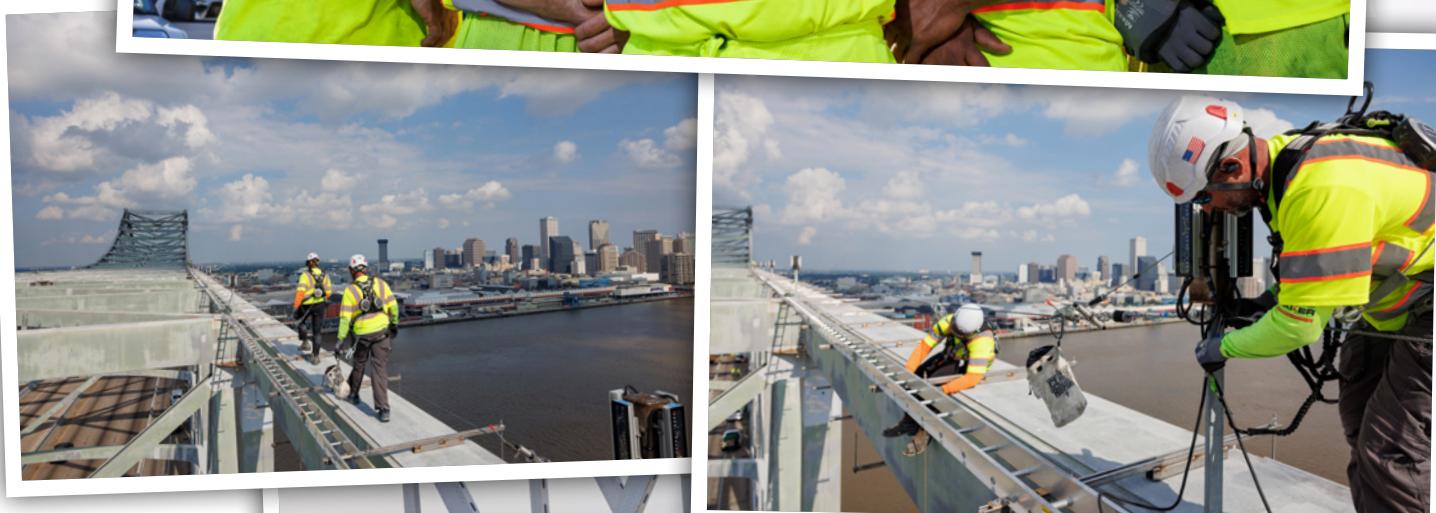
Once its members were able to return to jobsites, they experienced a surge in employment beginning in 2021. By May of that year, although COVID-19 was still present and the local had about 100 members working in various states across the country, it was able to report in that month's Electrical Worker, "The work picture in our area is picking up."

As the pandemic continued to slowly subside, among the steady work underway for the local's membership by early 2022 was a refueling outage at Waterford 3. Elsewhere that year, members also worked on a "turnaround" shutdown for maintenance, repairs and upgrades at the PBF Energy refinery and prepared for a major expansion there as well; a project at the **Domino Sugar Chalmette Refinery** on the Mississippi River, the largest cane-sugar refinery in the Western Hemisphere; and the start of the former Charity Hospital

redevelopment into mixed-use medical space and apartments (which has since stalled).

The local also reached an agreement that year for its members working at the Convention Center. The new, three-year contract included a 3.5-percent wage increase each year in October and transitioned each employee to the Local 130 Health & Welfare Plan beginning March 1, 2022.

With employment conditions continuing to improve throughout the balance of 2022



Local 130 members (left to right) Jeffery Faulstich, Alexander Holmes, Travis Jacob, Kenneth Mercadal and John Bilich wired and installed the lights on the Crescent City Connection for the 2024 Mardi Gras illumination.

and 2023, on October 26, 2023, the local's membership approved a new (*and current*) three-year work agreement bargained by the local's negotiating team with NECA that went into effect December 4, 2023, and would continue through November 30, 2026. For its first year, which ended December 1, 2024, the contract raised the journeyman inside-electrician wage rate to \$34 per hour and hourly employer benefit contributions to provide the local with a total compensation package of \$49.20 per hour, after which increases for the years 2025 and 2026 would be negotiated in the future.

But also during that period, **Business Manager/Financial Secretary Paul Zulli Jr.**, who had been serving in his position since being elected by the local's membership in 2014 (after having served as the local's press secretary), resigned effected July 12, 2024, to become an international representative for the I.B.E.W. Fifth District. The local's Executive Board subsequently appointed board **Chairman Rodney Wallis** to fill the remaining two-year term as the local's new business manager/financial secretary.

The local then negotiated the second year of its active work agreement with NECA, after which the membership voted on October 10, 2024, to set its new (*and current*) journeyman inside-electrician wage rate at \$35 per hour, effective December 2, 2024. The contract also increased hourly employer benefit contributions to \$2.30 for the Pension Fund, \$6.10 for the Health & Welfare Fund, \$6 for the **Local 130 Annuity Fund**, 3-percent of wages paid for the **I.B.E.W. National Electrical Benefit Fund** and 58 cents for the **E.J.A.T.C. Apprenticeship Fund** – for a total (*current*) package of **\$51.03 per hour** through November 20, 2025.

Leading up to the June 11, 2025, 125th anniversary of receiving its charter from the I.B.E.W., Local 130's 850-strong membership remained very busy with construction work throughout its jurisdiction, including an

expansion to the Folgers coffee plant warehouse. Among other jobs, some of the local's members had the privilege of illuminating the iconic **Crescent City Connection** bridge connecting New Orleans to the West Bank across the Mississippi River in anticipation of the Super Bowl being played in the Superdome on February 9, 2025.

"For our members, it was more than just a job," Local 130 Recording Secretary Butch Naquin described in the February 2025 *Electrical Worker* while detailing the intricate wiring and deep understanding of safety protocols involved in the bridge lighting. "It was a point of pride to showcase their capabilities and a testament to the skills and dedication of our I.B.E.W. sisters and brothers."

Like the monumental bridge illuminating, at its 125th charter anniversary the pride, skills and dedication of Local 130 and its membership have spanned the years since the local was established on June 11, 1900. As it has demonstrated throughout those 125 years, those attributes will carry Local 130 into and through the future as well. ●





I.B.E.W. LOCAL 130 • E.J.A.T.C. • CREDIT UNION • BENEFITS OFFICERS AND STAFF, 2025



Local 130 office staff: (left to right) Kasey Cummings, bookkeeper; Calvin Lawrence, organizer; Kelley Perdomo, administrative assistant; Ernest "Corky" Cortez II, president/organizer; Rodney Wallis, business manager/financial secretary; Travis "Butch" Naquin, dispatcher; Stacey Rupp, administrative assistant; and Keith Black, building manager



The REAL crew running Local 130!



Local 130/New Orleans Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (N.O.E.J.A.T.C.) board: (left to right) Ernest "Corky" Cortez II, Rodney Wallis, Travis "Butch" Naquin, Quincy Cummings and David Crumb

N.O.E.J.A.T.C. instructors: (left to right, front row) Chester Williams, John Bilich Jr., Ronald Wolf Jr., Christopher Rideaux and Andrew Miller Jr.; and (back row) Arasimo Geraci III, Ricky Salathe, Daniel Berlier and Rene Reeb Sr.



Local 130 Credit Union staff (left to right) Victor Crespo Jr. and Norman Miller IV



Patti Neal, Southern Benefit funds administrator



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125 YEARS AND COUNTING

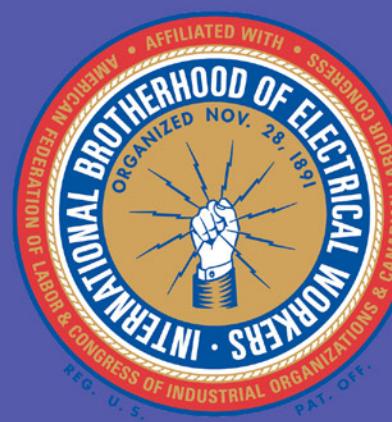
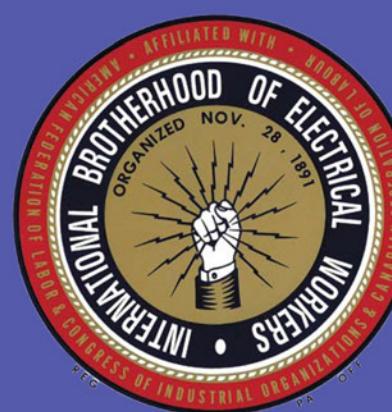
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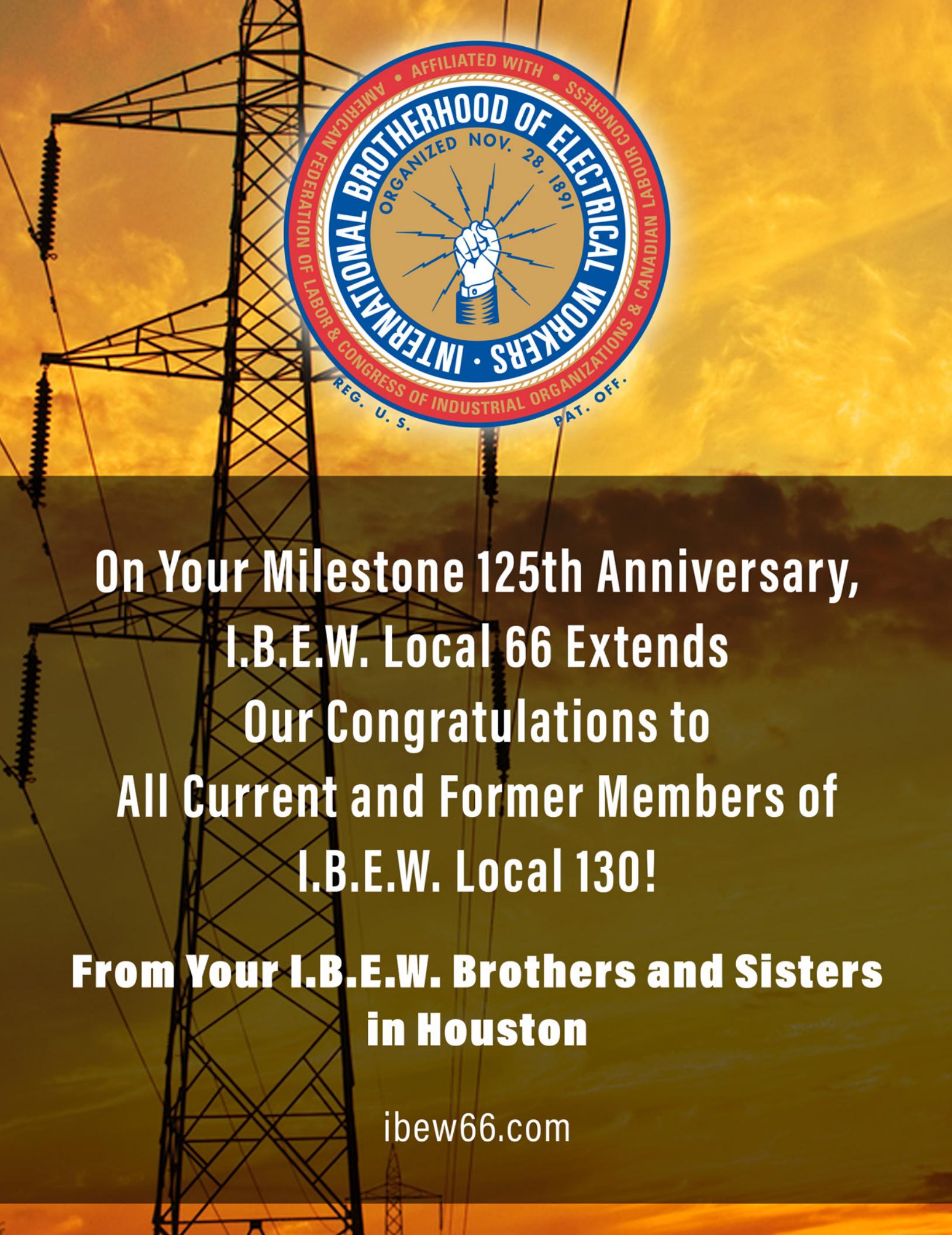
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Members, Officers and Staff

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to **IBEW Local 130** on
reaching an incredible
milestone of **125 years!** May
this anniversary serve as a
reminder of the impact and
legacy that IBEW Local 130
has had on its community
and the industry. Keep
shining bright for many
more years to come!



We congratulate
the International Brotherhood
of Electrical Workers, Local 130
New Orleans on 125 years!



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