

SPRINKLER FITTERS
LOCAL UNION 268



SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI



125th Anniversary
COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY

1901 - 2026

SPRINKLER
FITTERS
LOCAL 268
ST. LOUIS, MO

SPRINKLER
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LOCAL 268
ST. LOUIS, MO

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WE PROUDLY CONGRATULATE

SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268 125

YEARS · 1901 - 2026



For 125 years, the sprinkler fitters of Local 268 have protected St. Louis and the surrounding metropolitan area, its hospitals, schools, factories, and neighborhoods, with craftsmanship few ever see but everyone depends on.

For every one of our 20 years, Local 268 sprinkler fitters have been on our jobs. From our first new system in 2006 to every system we build today, we have never known a day without your skill.

Congratulations - and here's to the next 125.



PROUD PARTNER OF SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268 SINCE 2006

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Sprinkler Systems
Fire Pumps
Special Hazard Systems
Life Safety Systems
Hydraulic Calculations
Code Compliance
Building Integration
VDC/BIM
Drawing Submittals



CONSTRUCTION

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Design/Build
Construction Mgmt.
Procurement
VDC/BIM
Field Coordination
New Construction
Renovations
Self-Perform Work
Installation



SERVICE

Inspection & Testing
Preventive Maintenance
Fire Pump Testing
Backflow Testing
Deficiency Repairs
Emergency Service
System Retrofits
Compliance Support
Owner Training
24/7 Support

MEET OUR LEADERS!



TODD WEAVER

CEO
weavert@dgn-stl.com
314-575-5376



ANDY FRITZ

COO | PARTNER
weavert@fsi-stl.com
314-575-5376



RICH EISENHART

VP OF FIELD OPERATIONS | PARTNER
eisenhart@fsi-stl.com
636-222-7533



MATT VANDERKRAATS

VP OF DESIGN | PARTNER
vanderkraatsm@fsi-stl.com
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CONGRATULATIONS

Sprinkler Fitters

Local 268

125

YEARS

Some milestones are measured in years.
This one is measured in lives.

For 125 years, the sprinkler fitters of Local 268
 have protected St. Louis — quietly, skillfully,
 every single day.

Congratulations — and here's to the next 125.

WITH PRIDE AND GRATITUDE

**The Member Contractors of the
 National Fire Sprinkler Association**



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**SAVING LIVES AND PROTECTING PROPERTY ...
DAY IN AND DAY OUT!**

**U.A. LOCAL 281, CHICAGO, SALUTES OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS
OF U.A. LOCAL 268 ON 125 YEARS OF PERFORMING OUR SHARED
OCCUPATION, PURPOSE AND CALLING ...**

CONGRATULATIONS!



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*The General Officers
of the United Association
Congratulate the Members of
Sprinklerfitters Local 268
on Their 125th Anniversary.*

Mark McManus
General President

Derrick Kualapai
General Secretary-Treasurer

Michael A. Pleasant
Assistant General President





SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2026
HALF PAST FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

*The Royal Sonesta Chase Park Plaza
Saint Louis, Missouri*

5:30 PM | COCKTAILS + HORS D'OEUVRES

7:00 PM | DINNER + SPECIAL HONORS

9:00 PM | AFTER PARTY



OUR DEDICATION & SOLIDARITY HAVE BEEN PROVIDING PROTECTION ACROSS 125 YEARS

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Friends:

It is with great pride that I extend congratulations on the 125th anniversary of Sprinklerfitters Local 268. For more than a century, the members of this local union have safeguarded lives and property throughout the St. Louis region and beyond. The fire-sprinkler systems we install stand ready to protect our communities every day. Our work is often unseen, but the impact is profound.

From modest beginnings to the highly technical systems we install and service today, generations of sprinklerfitters have met the evolving demands of our trade with dedication to safety, craftsmanship and professionalism. The traditions, values and pride passed down from our founders and from those who came before us, are the foundation of our local union. Local 268 has persevered through economic challenges, technological change and shifting political climates because our members maintained a strong, united front.

I am honored to serve as business manager of our local and to witness, each day, the brotherhood and solidarity of our membership, on the jobsite, inside the classroom and within the community. Our apprentices and journeymen commit themselves to ongoing training so that Local 268 remains a leader in fire-sprinkler installation and service. Our officers and staff work diligently to negotiate and defend the wages, benefits and working conditions that provide our members and their families with stability, dignity and security. We also recognize the importance of our partnerships with contractors and owners, whose confidence in Local 268 is built upon our consistent delivery of quality and safety.

As we commemorate this significant milestone, we pause to honor the memory of the brothers and sisters who are no longer with us, whose labor and sacrifice helped to shape this local and the communities we serve. We extend our deepest appreciation to our retirees, whose experience and mentorship continue to guide future generations of sprinklerfitters. To our current members, I challenge you to carry this legacy forward by being a leader on every job, participating in union affairs and supporting the broader labor movement in our region.

Every building protected by a sprinkler system installed or serviced by Local 268 stands as a visible reminder of our collective contribution to public safety and welfare. As we look ahead, let us reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that this proud tradition not only endures but grows stronger. May future generations look back upon this anniversary as a defining moment when Sprinklerfitters Local 268 chose to advance with renewed unity, vision and purpose.

On behalf of the officers and staff of Local 268, I thank all who have contributed to the preparation of this anniversary book and to the success of our celebration. I extend my sincere gratitude to each member for your dedication, your pride in the trade and your unwavering support of this local.

Jason R. Olliges, Business Manager
U.A. Spinklerfitters Local 268, St. Louis



This book was proudly produced by

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The History of U.A. Sprinklerfitters Local No. 268

PROTECTING & SERVING GREATER ST. LOUIS For 125 Years



*The First Sprinklerfitters Local
of the United Association*

*“The announcement of the receipt of our charter and paraphernalia created an **outburst of applause** and a special vote of thanks was tendered to the officers of the U. A. for their assistance and encouragement.”*

The journey to the jubilation described in that passage from a letter to the United Association of Plumbers, Gasfitters and Steamfitters of the United States and Canada (U.A.) after it granted a local-union charter to sprinklerfitters and sprinklerfitters’ helpers of St. Louis, Missouri, as **Local No. 268** on **June 29, 1901**, actually began nearly seven years earlier. It was then when the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) chartered **Sprinklerfitters Protective Union No. 6479** on **December 24, 1894**, to represent union craftsmen of the trade in and around the “Gateway to the West” city.

The letter, penned by the new Local 268’s first-ever secretary, **Brother William A.**

Beckebred, who also was the former president of Local 6479, even prompted U.A. General Secretary-Treasurer Laurin W. Tilden to declare in the August 1901 U.A. *Journal*, the union’s monthly publication, “Our future relations (with Local 268) should certainly be pleasant if present indications mean anything.”

Previously, however, just one year after Local 6479 was organized on Christmas Eve of 1894 by the A.F.L., the major national confederation of labor unions in the United States (which would merge with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or C.I.O., in 1955), the local lost its charter in 1895 because of a lack of “sufficient members in the city to keep up the



proper interest.” But during a period when St. Louis was experiencing widespread commercial retrofitting of new automated sprinkler systems, the federation revived Local 6479 on April 28, 1897, with a reorganized membership of 14 union sprinklerfitters and helpers.

Two years later during its 19th Annual Convention, held in Detroit from December 11 to 20, 1899, the A.F.L. ordered Local 6479 and sister sprinklerfitters Local No. 6087 of Chicago and Local No. 6840 of New York – the other locals that had been organized in larger cities in which there was enough work to sustain a local – to join the U.A.-rival International Association of Steam and Hot Water Fitters and Helpers. Regardless, the locals instead lobbied the U.A. for membership, feeling that union – which would be renamed in 1947 as the current **United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada** – could better protect their autonomy.

(The International Association would eventually merge into the U.A. in 1912 after the A.F.L. ruled that a single union should represent all pipe trades and granted jurisdiction exclusively to the U.A. Prior to the merger, in May of that year Local 268 would join its sister U.A. locals in St. Louis in a general strike against the Master Heating and Power Contractors' Association after it hired steamfitters from the International Association to work on jobs already being manned by the city's U.A. steamfitters.)

After persistent negotiations with the U.A. Executive Board, 10 journeyman-level sprinklerfitters of St. Louis and their 12 “helpers” were finally granted the charter for Local 268 on the 29th of June 1901 after paying initiation fees of \$1 per member, a grand total of \$22. Subsequently, Local 268 became **the first U.A. local of sprinklerfitters**.

U.A. ORGANIZED 135 YEARS AGO

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

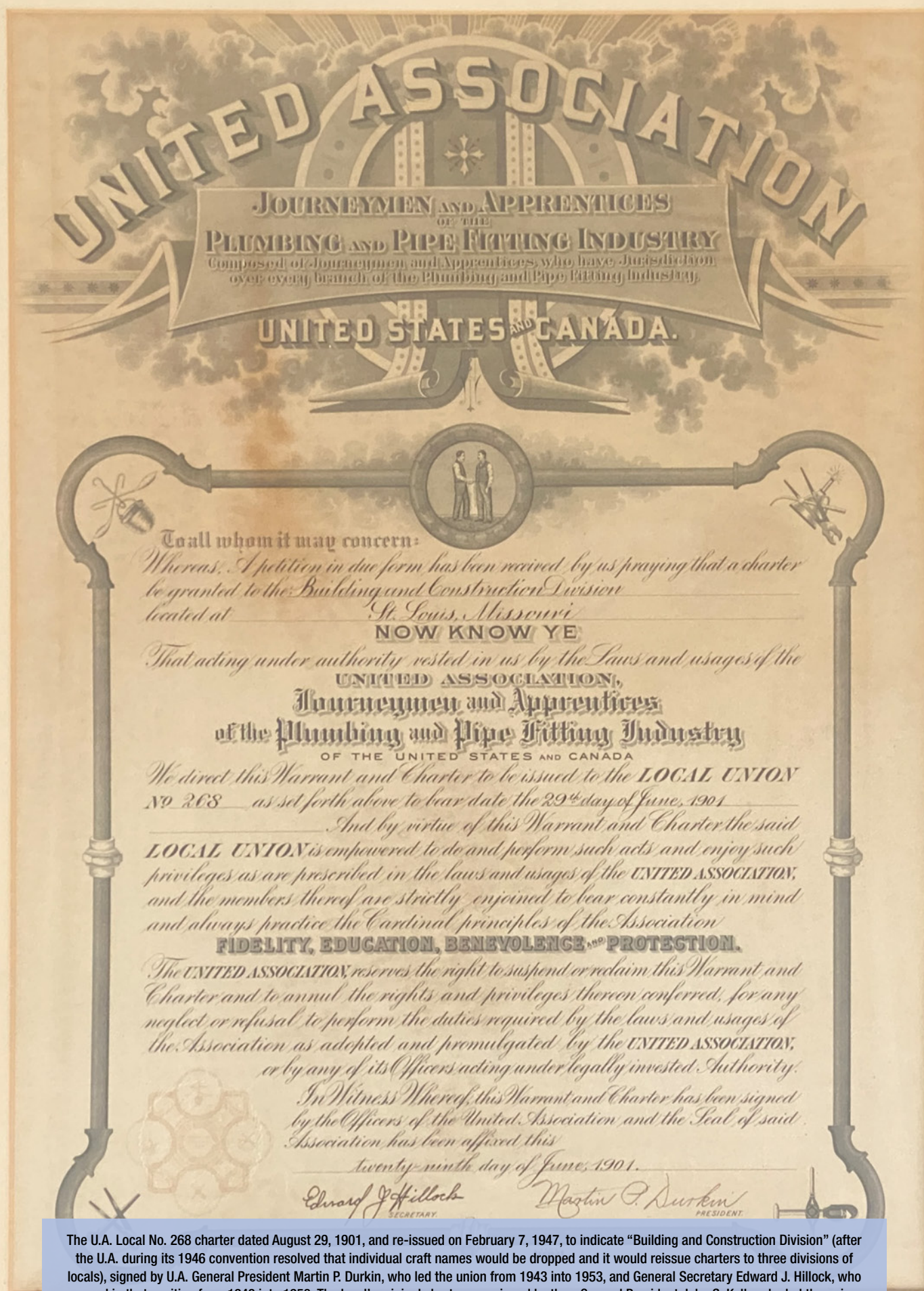
Four days later, the **United Association of Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada** (U.A.) was born on October 11, 1889. The U.A. selected Brother Quinlan as its president, Brother Henry Collins of New York City as its vice president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

Meanwhile, most steamfitters were attempting to sustain their own national union, the National Association of Steam, Hot Water and Power Piping Fitters and Helpers, that they had formed after breaking away from the violent Knights of Labor organization in 1885, soon after which it would become the International Association (I.A.). For two decades, however, the two piping unions clashed regularly over jurisdiction – before the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) ordered the I.A. to amalgamate into the U.A. in 1912.

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

REALIZING INITIAL PROGRESS WITH DISPLAY OF SOLIDARITY

Just one year after being established, by June 1902 the fledgling Local 268 had grown to a membership of 60 union sprinklerfitting journeymen and helpers. Later that year, following just a four-hour-



The U.A. Local No. 268 charter dated August 29, 1901, and re-issued on February 7, 1947, to indicate “Building and Construction Division” (after the U.A. during its 1946 convention resolved that individual craft names would be dropped and it would reissue charters to three divisions of locals), signed by U.A. General President Martin P. Durkin, who led the union from 1943 into 1953, and General Secretary Edward J. Hillock, who served in that position from 1943 into 1958. The local's original charter was signed by then-General President John S. Kelly, who led the union from 1898 into 1901, and then-General Secretary Laurin W. Tilden, who served in that position from 1900 into 1906.



LOCAL 268 CHARTER MEMBERS

These 22 sprinklerfitters and sprinklerfitter helpers signed for the U.A. charter granted to Local 268 on June 29, 1901.

(Sprinklerfitters)

William Beckebud

William Duval

William Ellis

Emil Eckland

T. Harlan

John Hess

Richard Karr

William Lamb

J. W. Rode

J.P. Smith

(Helpers)

James Geary

John Gallagher

Edward Lohrenz

Edward Miller

J. Meyer

J. Ohsner

F. Rohlfing

Jonathan Smith

D. Sweeney

E. Stieber

Vidder, R.

Edward R. VanDike

long strike by the local, its employing firms granted it a 50-cent-per-day journeyman wage increase on September 8, prompting Brother Beckebud to conclude his report on the local in the October 1902 *Journal*, “I will add that Local No. 268 is progressing.”

The local would maintain a membership in the 30s and 40s throughout the 1900s and 1910s as St. Louis experienced a massive boom in population and industrialization that would

help the city maintain its status as the fourth largest in the United States. Minutes indicate that the local’s general-membership meetings during that time were well attended, even though members were required to work for four hours on Saturdays and meetings were held on Saturday afternoons in **Druid’s Hall** twice per month.

Local 268’s early advancements resulted in improved wages for its members, with the local gaining a pay scale for its journeymen fitters of \$4 per hour for eight-hour workdays by June 1905. What’s more, on November 22 of that year, a group of representatives from three sprinklerfitting companies formed the **National Automatic Sprinkler Contractors Association** (N.A.S.C.A.) and met in St.

Louis with Local 268 to negotiate wages in a first-ever written contract between the local and an association of its employing firms – which has been negotiating and partnering with the local ever since while ultimately being renamed the **National Fire Sprinkler Association** (N.F.S.A.) in 1983.

However, throughout 1908 the contractors “locked out” Local 268 members from their jobs, withholding employment from the union sprinklerfitters, after the N.A.S.C.A. attempted

to enforce an “open shop” (non-union) policy in their contractors’ shops and on their jobs throughout the city beginning early that year. But the lockout did not shake the local’s solidarity, as U.A. General Organizer Franklin C. Fay reported in the December 1908 *Journal* after visiting the local the previous month in an unsuccessful attempt to convince the employers to end the stoppage, “A great deal of credit is due to Local No. 268 for the stand they have maintained during the 10 months of this struggle. Not a man has been lost, and they are just as full of fight now as the day they laid down their tools.”

Consequently, more than a year since first being locked out, Local 268 members returned to their jobs on April 1, 1909, after the N.A.S.C.A. relented and granted the union full recognition as well as a new, two-year work agreement that included an increase to the local’s wage scale and “improved working conditions” and was “heartily indorsed by the local.” U.A. **General President John R. Alpine** further declared in his report in the April 1909 *Journal*, “The unionist has stood his ground and must and will continue to do so, proving to the world that the value of man was enhanced by his unionism and not only was organization beneficial to the organized, but that it was of undoubted value and benefit to those who employ.”

Wholly inspired by Local 268’s victory, “assuring absolute union conditions in St. Louis,” the general president went on to proclaim in the next month’s *Journal*:

“(The Local 268) settlement is the most important one in the history of our sprinklerfitters. ... This settlement is far-reaching in its effect, and I believe it will mark the advent of more complete organization among sprinklerfitters.”



NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION

THE N.F.S.A. AND LOCAL 268:

A VITAL PARTNERSHIP SINCE 1905

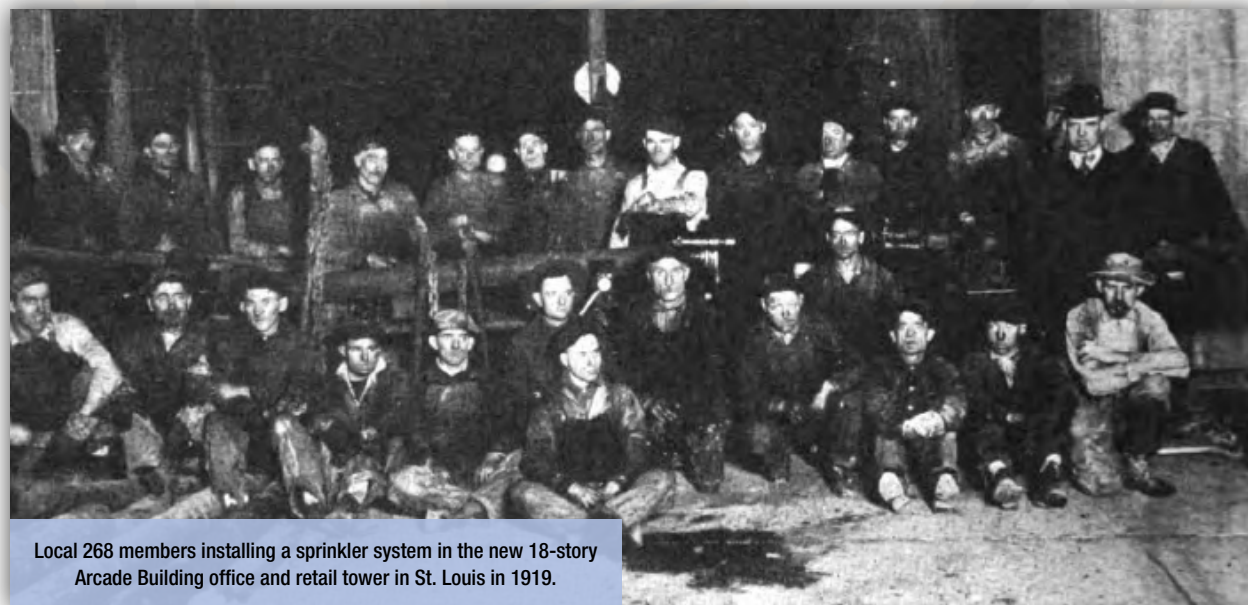
On November 22, 1905, three specialty contractors met in St. Louis to establish the **National Automatic Sprinkler Contractors Association** – which would become today’s **National Fire Sprinkler Association** (N.F.S.A.) – to promote the industry. The contractors also formed their association to work together to negotiate an employment agreement with Sprinklerfitters Local 268.



The association changed its name on May 6, 1914, to the National Automatic Sprinkler Association, and then in 1944 as it sought to include non-water fixed suppression systems within its range of activities, it changed its name again to the National Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Control Association. In 1952, the association hired Raymond J. Casey as its first executive director, which later became the position of president.

During the early 1980s, when manufacturers of non-water fixed suppression systems asked that the association increase its activities with regard to non-water systems, it decided instead to focus solely on water-based systems. As a result, the Fire Suppression Systems Association was formed in 1982, after which in 1983 the association again changed its name to the National Fire Sprinkler Association.

In 2026 as Local 268 celebrates its 125th charter anniversary, the local continues to bargain for its working agreements with the N.F.S.A. while also partnering to protect and improve the fire-sprinkler industry through advocacy, legislation and workforce training. The association itself continues to function as the “voice of the fire-sprinkler industry” as it has for more than 120 years.



Local 268 members installing a sprinkler system in the new 18-story Arcade Building office and retail tower in St. Louis in 1919.



BRIEF HISTORY OF OVERHEAD FIRE-SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS

“Automatic sprinkler systems have been used to protect lives and property in commercial and industrial buildings for more than a century. Originally introduced to protect property, sprinkler systems also have been adopted for life safety in hospitals, nursing homes, hotels and apartment buildings.”

– *Fire in the United States, 1989-1998, Federal Emergency Management Agency report*

The first “modern” fire sprinkler system had its start in 1812, when Architect William Congreve installed the first one in the Theatre Royal in London, which consisted of a series of pierced pipes below a large container of water that was tapped in the event of a fire. From 1852 to 1885, perforated pipe systems were used in textile mills throughout New England as a means of fire protection – but they needed someone present to turn them on.

Rapid industrial development in the United States following the Civil War spurred further development of the sprinkler industry. Subsequently, the first automatic sprinkler system was patented by Philip W. Pratt of Massachusetts in 1872.

Henry S. Parmelee of New Haven, Connecticut – who is considered the inventor of the first practical automatic sprinkler head – improved upon the Pratt patent and created a better, heat-actuated sprinkler system after the loss of two of his piano factories to fire. In 1874, he installed his fire-sprinkler system into another of his factories, after which between 1878 and 1882 some 200,000 Parmelee sprinklers were installed in mills throughout New England.

In 1881, Frederick Grinnell patented and began manufacturing an improved sprinkler head, part of the first practical automatic sprinkler system in the United States. Nine years later, he invented the glass disc sprinkler and eventually amassed 40 patents for improvements to his devices.

By 1895, the fire sprinkler industry had grown tremendously – but the lack of standards for hardware and installation was a problem. In response, a coalition of manufacturers and insurance-company representatives formed the **National Fire Protection Association** in 1896 to establish and disseminate fire-sprinkler installation standards.

Fire protection then started to become a part of national construction codes at the turn of the previous century.

CONTINUING ITS ‘GREAT FIGHT’ TO SECURE ADDITIONAL GAINS

Ongoing advancements through negotiations with the N.A.S.C.A. eventually increased the Local 268 journeyman-sprinklerfitter wage scale to \$5 per day by January 1912. At that time, the local was also levying assessments for union dues and fees of 5 percent of wages for its journeymen and 2-1/2 percent for its helpers.

But the local was forced to go on strike against its employers and the association beginning October 1, 1912, and again in late 1913, with the latter strike lasting for several months, to secure additional gains and protect their work during those periods. Following the successful conclusion of the 1913 strike, U.A. **General Secretary-Treasurer Thomas E. Burke** was able to announce in the February 1914 *Journal*, “Local No. 268 of St. Louis ... secured a great victory in the improvement of their conditions from the large sprinklerfitting establishments that they are employed with, and they have also maintained their principal contention in holding the amount of work that they previously held, and which the companies desired to take from them, namely installing all work with fittings made on at the factories. This question resulted in a bitter contest, but our local union was successful in maintaining this part of the work.”

The secretary-treasurer concluded his report by stating, “I desire to ... congratulate the members of Local No. 268 and their officers for the great fortitude and patience displayed in their great fight.”

Meanwhile, among projects on which the local’s members were employed during that time was construction of the new, 21-story **Railway Exchange Building** in downtown St. Louis, which when completed in 1914 was the first building in the city to surpass a height of 20 stories. The highly advanced, automatic

fire-sprinkler system installed by union fitters in the massive, 1.2-million-square-foot, steel-frame office tower as part of its fire-suppression scheme helped convince St. Louis officials to allow the builders to exceed the city’s previous height restrictions, according to the National Register of Historic Places, into which the building would be entered in 2009. (The Railway Exchange Building would serve as home to the flagship store of the Famous-Barr chain of department stores and the headquarters of its parent company, May Department Stores, for many years until Macy’s purchased the brand and later sold the building in 2008, since which it has been closed and vacant.)

Also during that period, the local continued to protect its work within its jurisdiction against numerous attempted incursions. In particular, in September and October 1914 the local staunchly rejected a bid by the Automatic Sprinkler Corporation to use pipe with pre-made sprinkler fittings on jobs in St. Louis.

*(Elsewhere around the country, after the U.A. signed a major, five-year working agreement with the recently renamed **National Automatic Sprinkler Association** {N.A.S.A., formerly N.A.S.C.A.} on April 6, 1915, the union then chartered **Road Sprinklerfitters Local No. 669** that May to represent sprinklerfitters and helpers throughout the country who were not members of U.A. locals. The new local was officially named as such because most sprinklerfitters were “road men” who continuously traveled from state to state for the larger sprinkler companies to maintain their employment. While the U.A. created auxiliaries of Local 669 in several major cities and the local directly took in fitters, Local 268 and other established sprinklerfitters locals maintained their autonomy and were not parties to the new national agreement. In 1946, the union approved the reorganization of Local 669 sprinklerfitter members and its auxiliary branches into chartered locals, after which Local 669 would function as an autonomous local of the U.A. beginning in 1972.)*



Local 268 officers (left to right, front row) Martin Craffey, C. W. Lennon, Edward Mahen, Frank Grabowski and John O'Brien Jr.; and (back row) J. Trowell, F. Silhavy, Leo Creamer, A. Liscombe and F. Harlan pose in 1946.



LOCAL 268 LEADERSHIP THROUGHOUT 125 YEARS

Local 268 did not elect a fulltime business manager to handle the affairs of the local until the 1950s, before which business agents took on many of those duties.

Then in 2001 as the local was prospering and growing, it hired its first-ever fulltime business agent, *Brother Robert “Bob” Stuart*, to work alongside its business manager.

Business Managers

Richard Mussmann
1957 – 1968

Allen Love
1968 – 1971

Gordon A. Lundak Sr.
1971 – 1997

Michael R. Mahler
1997 – 2019

Robert M. Stuart
2019 – 2024

Jason Olliges
2024 – current

Business Agents

<none>
1901 – 1908

William H. Swingman
1908 – 1909

James Geary
1909 – 1911

John Smith
1911

Edward R. Germer
1911 – 1918

George W. King
1918 – 1919

James Geary
1919 – 1923

John J. Rickaby
1923 – 1931

Frank Wagner
1931 – 1943

Emmett King
1943 – 1944

Frank Grabowski
1944 – 1950

Charles E. Greene
1950 – 1954

Frank Grabowski
1954 – 1957

<none>
1957 – 1987

James E. McKeever
1987 – 1994

Michael R. Mahler
1994 - 1997

Fred W. Maslo
1997 – 2006

Robert M. Stuart
2001 – 2018

Dave Ferrario
2009 – 2013

Joseph Besmer
2018 – current

Financial Secretaries

<none>
1901 – 1903

Ora Cline
1903 – 1905

William H. Swingman
1905 – 1906

George Dahlgreen
1906 – 1908

Ora Cline
1908

William H. Swingman
1908 – 1909

James Geary
1909 – 1910

H. Fleisher
1910

William G. Bennett
1910 – 1911

John Smith
1911

Edward R. Germer
1911 – 1913

Edwin H. Roach
1913 – 1917

George Richards
1917 – 1918

Martin F. Craffey
1918 – 1921

John W. Armstrong
1921 – 1938

Joe Collins
1938

Martin F. Craffey
1938 – 1954

John Cleary
1954 – 1955

Gordon V. Silhavy
1956 - 1972

David Fitzgerald
1972 – 1975

Fred Maslo
1975 – 1986

James E. McKeever
1986 – 1995

Michael R. Mahler
1995 – 1997

Fred Maslo
1997 – 2006

Thomas F. Love
2006 – 2018

Jason Olliges
2018 – 2024

John R. Reiter III
2024 - current



However, by 1917 it had been several years since Local 268 had signed a new work agreement with the N.A.S.A., and after the employing contractors continued to balk at a new contract with a requested raise from \$5.50 to \$6 per day, the local went on strike beginning February 19 of that year. After two weeks, the local ended the strike in order to “continue friendly relations with all employers,” but it would be another nine-and-a-half months before the two sides finally ratified a new agreement on December 20, 1917, with new wage scales of \$6 per day for journeyman fitters and \$2.50 per day for helpers.

Key projects in which the local’s members installed fire-suppressing sprinkler systems during the balance of the decade included construction of the new, 18-story *Arcade Building* (now the Arcade Apartments) that when completed in 1919 was one of the most prestigious office and retail buildings in downtown St. Louis, was the tallest concrete structure in the world and was classified as a “fireproof” structure in large part because of its state-of-the-art built-in automatic sprinkler system.

Before the local concluded the decade, on August 14, 1919, it voted to strike against the N.A.S.A. again to secure a higher wage for members. However, because the U.A. international office opposed the strike since the active 1917 contract the local already had with its contractors had not expired, the strike eventually petered out.

TAKING ON THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE 1920s, 1930s

Following the Recession of 1920-1921, which severely affected industry-heavy St. Louis and, as a result, slowed Local 268’s progress, the city flourished throughout the remainder of the so-called “Roaring Twenties,” whose economic prosperity gave rise to rapid growth in the town. As such, St. Louis recovered as an industrial powerhouse and



Local 268 Business Manager Gordon A. Lundak Sr. served in the position for more than 25 years before retiring in 1997, during which time he helped shape the local and the entire fire-sprinkler industry while among his many other union and industry activities he served in the U.A. General President’s Sprinkler Advisory Committee.



Local 268 Business Manager Michael R. Mahler served in the position for more than 22 years before retiring in 2019 after having led the local during a period of tremendous growth and progress in training, which included building its current union hall and training center.



ALLIANCE AN ADVOCATE FOR SPRINKLER INDUSTRY

The [St. Louis Fire Sprinkler Alliance](#) of the National Fire Sprinkler Association (N.F.S.A.), the group that represents Local 268 employing contractors, is a regional advocacy and educational organization dedicated to promoting the importance of automatic fire sprinkler systems in protecting lives and property. It serves the St. Louis metropolitan area by bridging the gap between the fire service, community leaders and industry professionals including Local 268.

Along with the local, the alliance actively teaches the public, builders and policymakers about the life-saving benefits of fire sprinklers. It works closely with the union and local fire districts and departments to develop safety goals and enhance the professionalism of the fire-protection industry, while together they also regularly advocate for the broader acceptance, implementation, and code enforcement of fire-sprinkler systems.

experienced a period of extensive residential and commercial development that was fueled by an \$87-million public bond issue passed in 1923, which was the largest city debt issue in the United States at the time.

Conversely, because construction codes remained lenient on – if not outright devoid of – adequate fire-protection standards, Local 268 saw little growth during the decade as most all primary construction projects in St. Louis, including the 28-story Southwestern Bell Building, the 22-story Continental Life Building, the 16-story Paul Brown Building (now Paul Brown Loft Apartments) and the St. Louis Arena (demolished in 1999), were built without fire-sprinkler systems. Consequently, the local's membership remained below 50 fitters and helpers throughout that period, although U.A. sprinklerfitters from other locals traveled to the Local 268 jurisdiction at times to help handle manpower needs when there was an abundance of work, with about 250 total

The first-ever Local 268 class of apprentices (left to right) Kenneth Boswell, John Cleary, Robert Creamer, Donald DeGeare, Thomas Dooley, George Green Jr., Ben Kraichely, Joseph Kraichely, Allen Love, Edward Menderski, Albert Mundloch, Richard Mussmann, Richard O'Brien, Raymond Riegerix, Glennon Robinson and John Hartman attend class after they were initiated into the St. Louis Automatic Sprinkler Industry Joint Apprenticeship Committee (J.A.C.) on September 17, 1948.



Giving Back LOCAL 268 WITHIN THE COMMUNITY



Local 268 officers and members display the funds the local donated to the Missouri Children's Burn Camp and the Burns Recovery Support Group from the proceeds of its 16th annual golf tournament in 2008.

Seeking a cause with strong ties to the sprinklerfitting profession and, in particular, the unfortunate victims of fire, Local 268 has also sponsored children so they can attend the [Midwest Children's Burn Camp](#), a no-charge camp for children ages 6 to 17 who have experienced burn and smoke inhalation injuries. In 2002, the local sponsored its first [Burn Aid Classic Golf Tournament](#) along with the St. Louis Sprinkler Alliance of its employing contractors to raise money for the camp; following the 16th annual event in 2025, the local donated \$20,000 in proceeds to [Burns Recovered](#), which serves burn and smoke-inhalation survivors and their families, including through the Children's Burn Camp.

Even when the local was unable to host the tournament in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it still made that year's donation from the Local 268 charitable fund. Afterward, Local 268 Business Manager Bob Stuart noted, "We have been able to support the Midwest Children's Burn Camp because of our members' steadfast commitment to supporting the needs of burn survivors."

Minutes of Local 268 general membership meetings throughout its early years and first half-century often recorded the brotherhood and compassion of its membership, from paying hospital and funeral expenses and authoring "\$5 per week" sick cards for fellow members to approving countless loans to brothers in need. The local's generosity did not end within its ranks, as members often gave to other U.A. locals and unions that were engaged in a strike or lockout or a charitable organization or cause – and when a 1959 federal law placed restrictions on how funds from the local's general treasury could be spent, members continued their generosity from their own pockets.

As the local has continued to actively participate in a wide range of benevolent and fundraising activities throughout its 125-year existence, since 1991 those charitable efforts have included a [Toy Drive](#) through which the local collects toys during its December general meetings to distribute to children at area hospitals and other organizations during the Christmas season. More recently, among many other beneficiaries that the local has supported with volunteered time and donated funding, recipients of the sprinklerfitters' generosity have included [Giant Steps of St. Louis](#), which benefits children with autism; the [American Red Cross](#), and particularly in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York City, Washington, D.C. and over Shanksville, Pennsylvania; the [Multiple Sclerosis Society](#) and its annual MS Walk fundraiser.



Local 268 delivers toys for children at St. Louis-area hospitals after its annual Christmas Toy Drive in 2010.



U.A. members including “travelers” employed in St. Louis at one point in 1925.

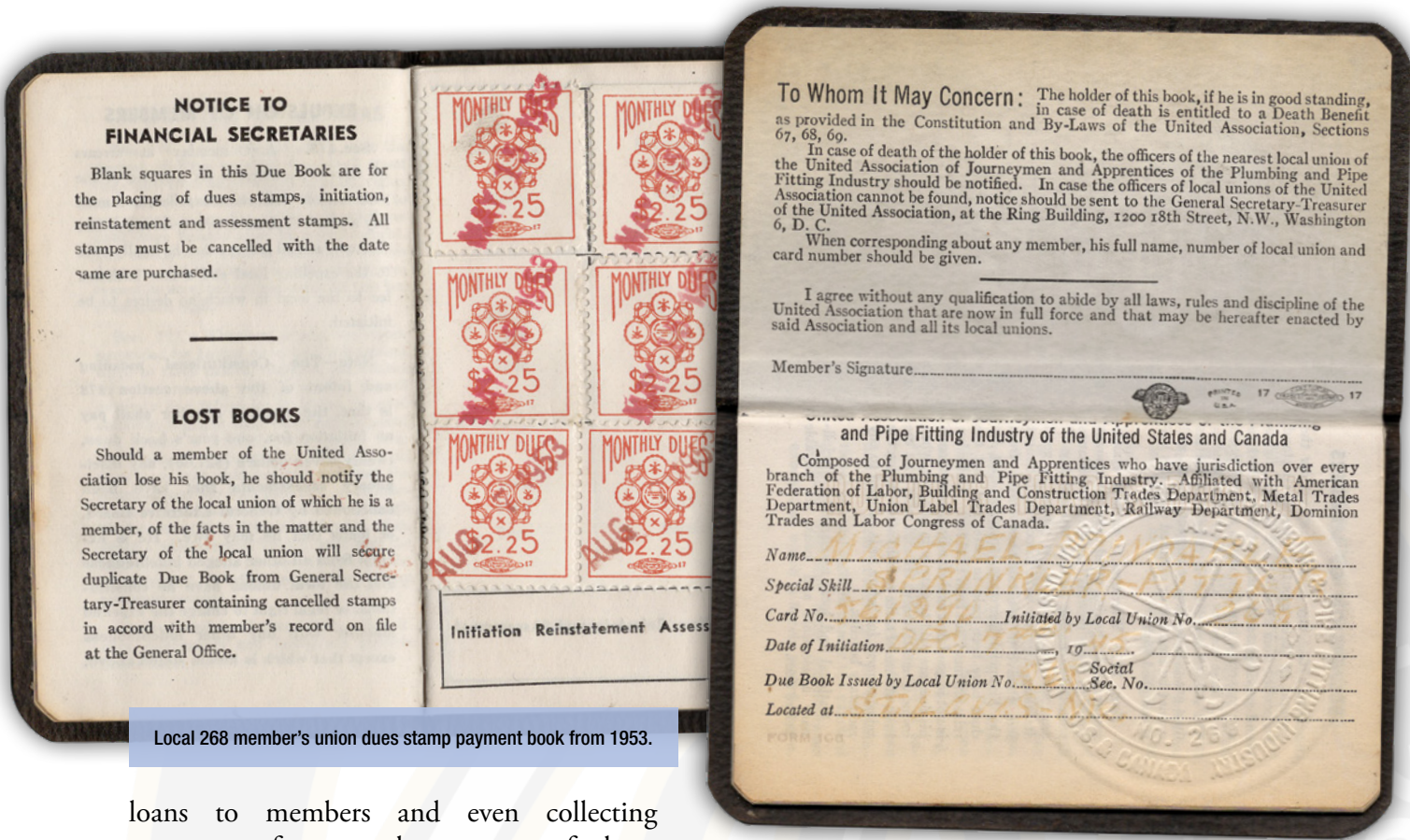
Nevertheless, Local 268 made notable gains during the 1920s that would influence its development well into the future. In particular, the local leveraged growing collective-bargaining power to secure significant advancements in its work agreement with the N.A.S.A.

What’s more, the U.A. during its 20th Annual Convention in Providence, Rhode Island, in September 1921 put its full support behind its member sprinklerfitters with the passage of a pair of key resolutions. Convention delegates approved a measure submitted by Local 268 that decreed that all “pipe work for fire-protection purposes” would only be “the work of the sprinklerfitter,” and they passed another resolution that endorsed the passage of national and local legislation to “provide for the installation of automatic sprinklers” and declared that the union would “use every effort and influence to assist in obtaining this much-needed legislation.”

At the bargaining table, gains made by the local included retaining its \$1-per-hour (\$8

per day) wage scale in 1922 over the previous year after all other 14 building-trades locals in St. Louis had accepted wage cuts in the wake of the recession. Then in June 1923 the local negotiated a new contract with the N.A.S.A. that provided a \$1.12-1/2 per hour wage for journeymen and an increase from \$5 to \$5.50 per day for helpers; after which another new contract signed on May 8, 1925, provided pay increases of 12-1/2 cents per hour for fitters and 6-1/4 cents per hour for helpers.

But the Great Depression, the devastating nationwide economic collapse and human catastrophe that began when the U.S. stock market crash of October 28 and 29, 1929 (history’s “Black Monday” and “Black Tuesday,” respectively) plunged the country into a decade-long period of despair, harshly impacted St. Louis, with manufacturing production dropping 57 percent by 1933 and unemployment peaking at over 30 percent. As the construction industry in its jurisdiction subsequently fell flat and Local 268 likewise suffered, during the 1930s the local often suspended initiating new members, making



Local 268 member's union dues stamp payment book from 1953.

loans to members and even collecting assessments from members – many of whom were often unemployed.

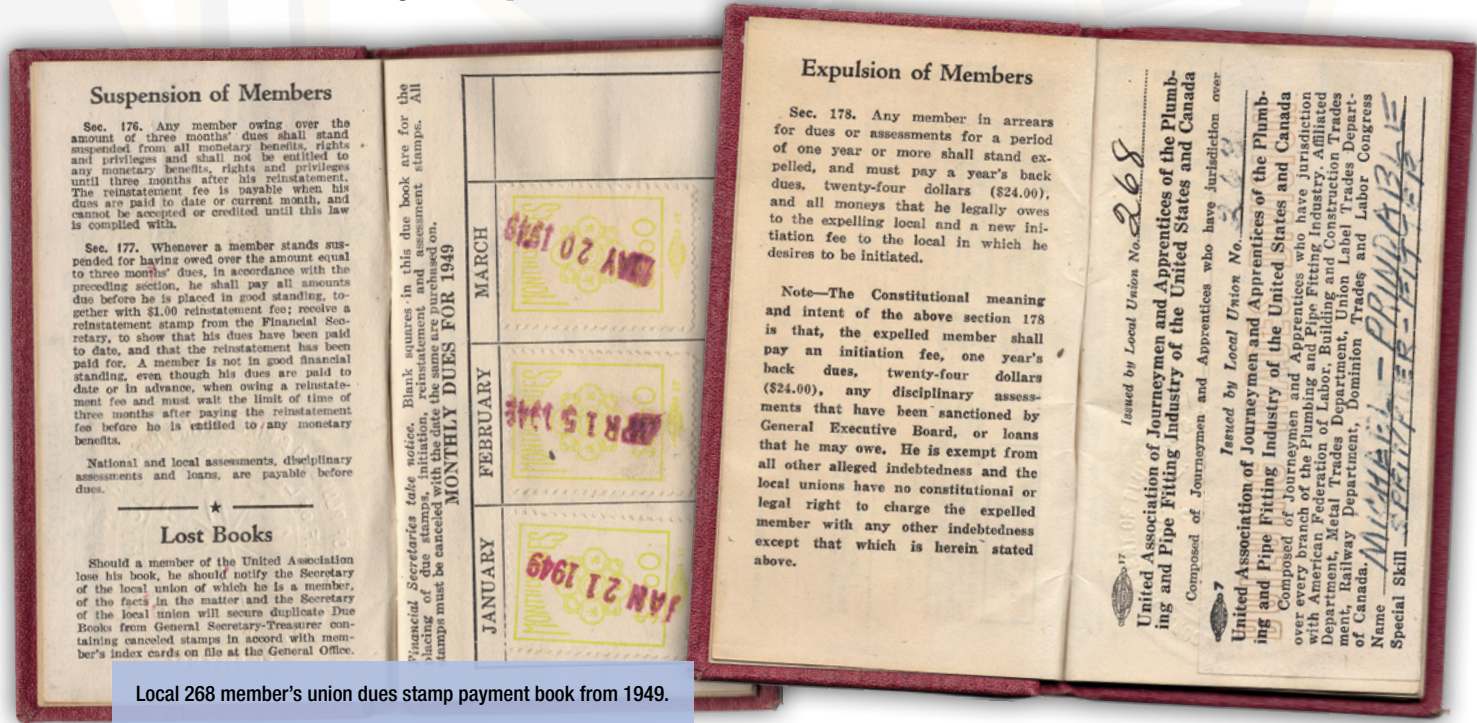
U.A. members across the country were also struck particularly hard by the Great Depression as unemployment among their ranks soared during the decade. “Construction all but stopped, and this led to a significant decline in manufacturing,” the union’s official international history recounts. “The economies of both (the United States and Canada) spiraled ever downward, until unemployment reached extremely high numbers and workers began to give up altogether.”

The U.A. history even notes that the *Journal* ran several issues during the early 1930s that offered advice on how members could stretch their wages as far as possible, although much of the focus of the articles was either on calling on the government to take action to help people or on trying to offer some hope and encouragement to the U.A. membership. Meanwhile, as its

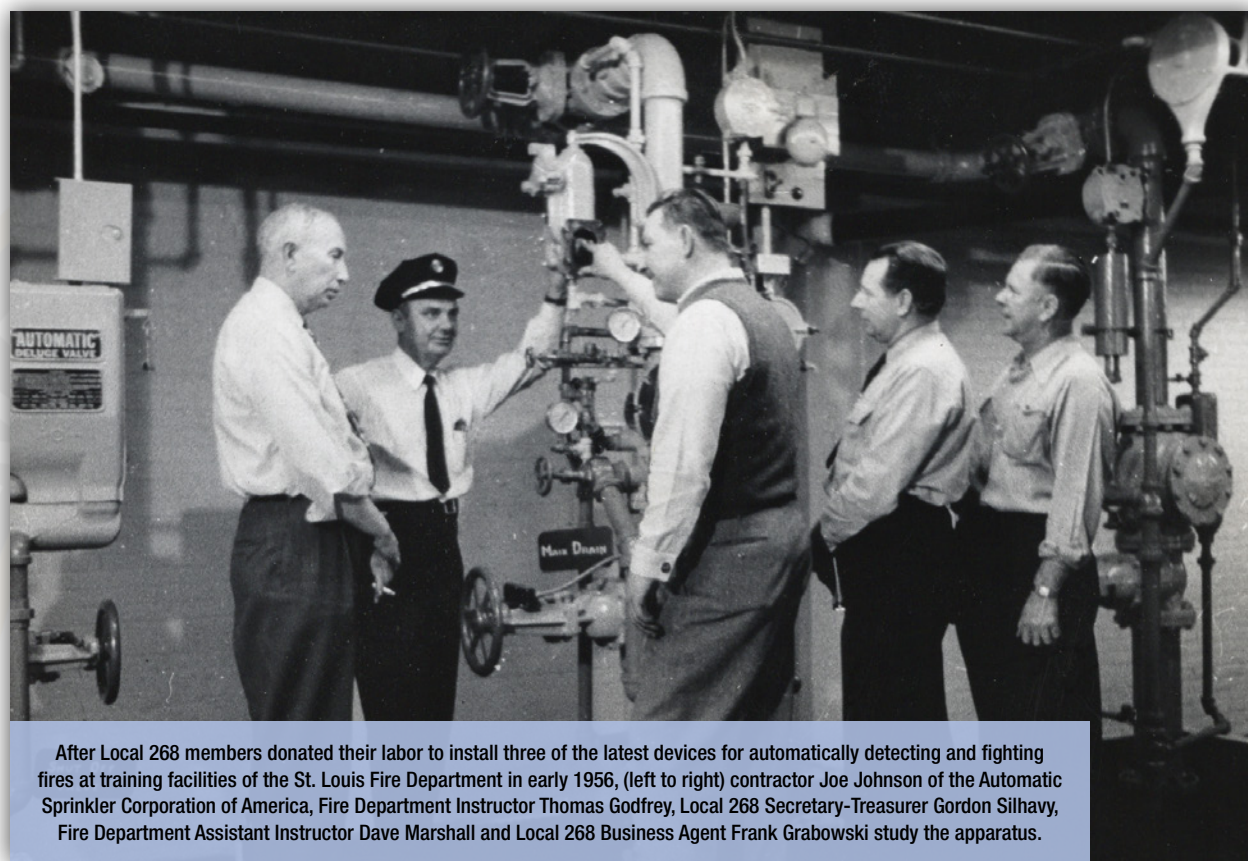
overall international membership declined and the U.A. held no conventions between 1928 and 1938, “the union held it together,” its history declares.

In St. Louis, even though Local 268 had recently negotiated a five-day workweek with no Saturdays, in the early 1930s employment was so scarce that the local’s membership passed a motion restricting its journeymen to no more than three consecutive days of work followed by at least three days off so that workhours could be better distributed among members. A motion passed in 1936 then allowed the local’s journeymen who had not been working to work five consecutive days if jobs were available so they could possibly earn adequate living wages.

With unemployment among the city’s construction unions as high as 75 percent, in April 1932 a building-trades-wide agreement



Local 268 member's union dues stamp payment book from 1949.



After Local 268 members donated their labor to install three of the latest devices for automatically detecting and fighting fires at training facilities of the St. Louis Fire Department in early 1956, (left to right) contractor Joe Johnson of the Automatic Sprinkler Corporation of America, Fire Department Instructor Thomas Godfrey, Local 268 Secretary-Treasurer Gordon Silhavy, Fire Department Assistant Instructor Dave Marshall and Local 268 Business Agent Frank Grabowski study the apparatus.

with construction contractors reduced wages of all locals by as much as 17 percent to help generate work opportunities. Although Local 268 initially rejected the cuts, as did the city's other U.A. pipe-trades locals, beginning April 15 its employers decreased journeyman sprinklerfitter pay from \$1.62-1/2 to \$1.23 per hour and helper pay from 87-3/4 to 78-3/4 cents per hour.

Federal "New Deal" legislation programs put in place by the U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt administration to create jobs and combat the destructive effects of the depression provided a measure of relief to the country and the U.A. membership. Additional labor-friendly federal legislation such as the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931, which gave workers prevailing wages when employed on public-works projects, and the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, which guaranteed employees the right to organize and bargain collectively, specifically

provided a measure of relief to and supported unions and their memberships.

In 1933, the New Deal established the National Industrial Recovery Act and its Public Works Administration, an employment program for federally funded projects, and the Civil Works Administration, whose mission was to rapidly create mostly manual-labor construction jobs. While the efforts created numerous projects in the St. Louis area that put labor to work during the remainder of the 1930s, including several public schools, scant work was created for sprinklerfitters as existing standard fire codes continued to rely on fire-resistive materials (such as masonry) rather than automatic overhead suppression systems.

(Regrettably, the federal government omitted sprinkler systems during New Deal-funded construction of the U.S. Court and Custom House {now the Mel Carnahan Courthouse}, whose original design flaw infamously mixed document

storage with active work areas without proper fire-containment walls, according to the U.S. National Archives. Without a sprinkler system in place either, a 1973 fire destroyed millions of military personnel records stored in the facility.)

As the decade was coming to an end, although the effects of the Great Depression continued to linger, Local 268 negotiated a new, four-year work agreement with the N.A.S.A. in July 1939. Reporting on the contract and a general-membership meeting he attended afterward, U.A. General Organizer Arthur Ferguson announced in the August 1939 *Journal*, "The membership of (Local 268) are to be congratulated for the interest and enthusiasm they showed in their affairs."

BATTLING ON THE HOMEFRONT BEFORE POST-WAR PROSPERITY

With the start of World War II in Asia and Europe in 1939 and the entry of the United States into the global conflict following the Imperial

Japan attack on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, and its declaration of war against Nazi Germany on December 11, elevated demands for military-materiel production pulled the country fully out of the Great Depression and created soaring employment. As a result, U.A. membership across North America swelled from 81,000 in 1941 to 210,000 members in just a couple of years, with many members working in shipyards, weapons plants, aircraft factories and other facilities to support the war effort of the U.S.-led Allies.

An industrial center throughout the war, St. Louis was unofficially dubbed "bomb city" with three-quarters of its factories shifting to war production while others were built to produce munitions for the U.S. Armed Forces. Among those manufacturing facilities, the **St. Louis Ordnance Plant** that was built in 1941 and 1942 as the country's largest ammunition factory was extensively equipped with fire-sprinkler systems as well as specialized fire-protection measures.



Local 268 apprentices (front row, left to right) unknown, John O'Donnell and Gordon Lundak Sr.; and Joint Apprenticeship Committee members (left to right, back row) Rich Mussmann, J. Johnson, unknown, Frank Grabowski and unknown, and Instructor Joe Karll are shown in 1957.

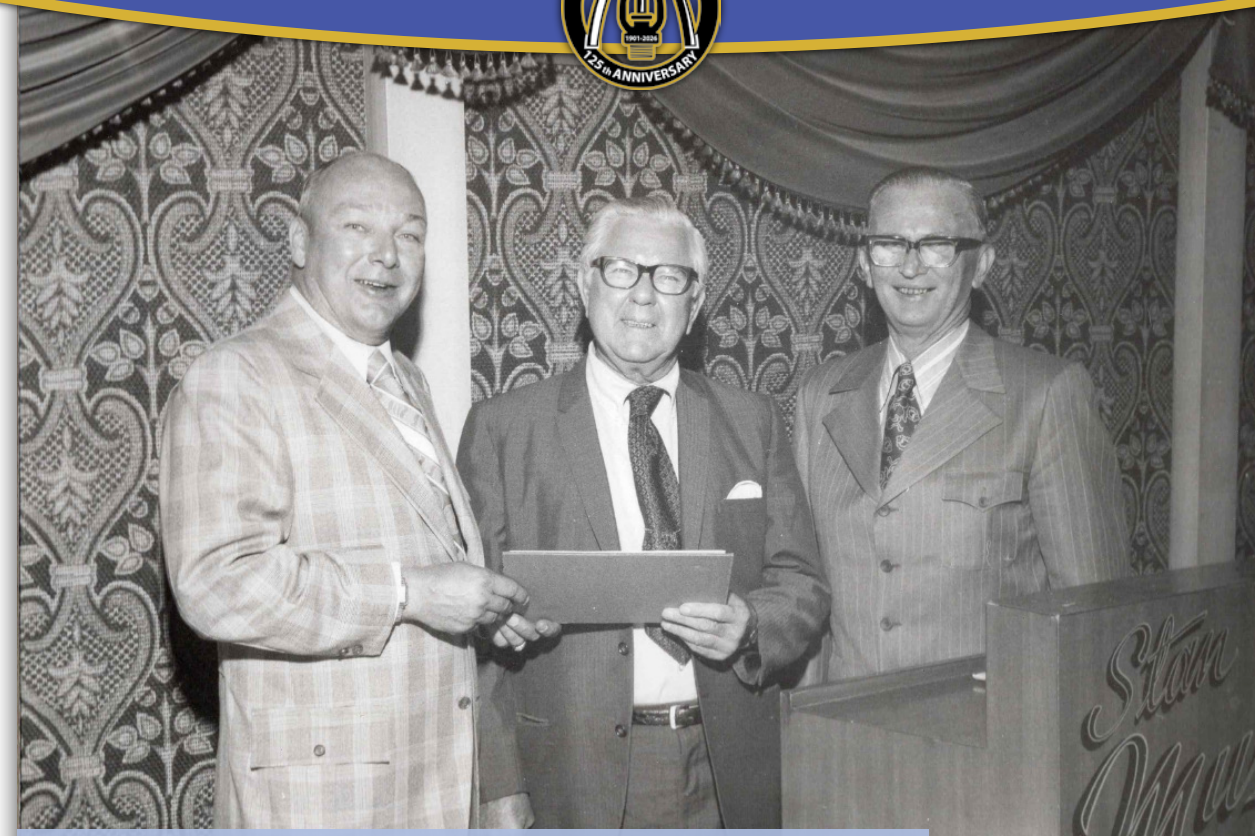


As the war neared its end with the surrenders of Germany on May 7, 1945, and then Japan on September 2, domestic construction in and around St. Louis and the country returned and Local 268 once again prospered. During that time, the local negotiated a new work agreement with the newly named **National Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Control Association** (N.A.S.&F.C.A., formerly the N.A.S.A.) that went into effect November 1, 1944, with an adjusted wage of \$1.70 per hour for fitters and \$1.10 per hour for helpers.

As the local also took in more new members, by the end of the decade it reached a total membership of 76 sprinklerfitters and apprentices. Meanwhile, as the U.A. beginning in 1946 reissued charters union-wide after dropping individual craft names from former charters, the union reassigned Local 268 as a **"Building and Construction Division"** local of sprinklerfitters and apprentices on February 7, 1947.

Notably, on September 17, 1948, 16 of the local's members became the first class of apprentices initiated into the local after it formed the **St. Louis Automatic Sprinkler Industry Joint Apprenticeship Committee** with its employing contractors. The committee had established the first training program for sprinklerfitters in the U.A., into which those Local 268 apprentices were enrolled to become journeyman fitters, and the following year the few helpers remaining in the local were given examinations to become journeymen.

Local 268 along with the union fire-sprinkler industry maintained a status-quo of sorts throughout the following two decades while sprinklers were primarily installed in industrial facilities, large warehouses and a few high-rises as building codes continued to lack sufficient provisions for overhead fire protection. As such, according to Society of Architectural Historians, St. Louis Chapter literature, many new commercial and residential high-



Local 268 retired member Brother Frank Grabowski (center) is honored with a plaque for his 49 years of membership in the local presented by former Local 268 officer and U.A. Special Representative Richard Mussmann (left) and Business Manager Allen Love during a testimonial dinner given by the local in 1971.



Local 268 retirees pose after being honored during a banquet in 1967.

rises erected in the city during that time initially relied only on enclosed stairwells and standpipes for fire protection, only retrofitting sprinklers decades later.

Accordingly, the Local 268 total membership count of sprinklerfitters and apprentices remained in the 90s during the 1950s and 1960s. By June 1969, the local consisted of 84 journeyman fitters and 12 apprentices.

But to begin the '50s, the local negotiated a new, two-year work agreement with the N.A.S.&F.C.A. that went into effect on January 1, 1950, with an increased wage rate for the local's fitters of \$2.50 per hour. When that contract expired, the local and its employing contractors signed a new, four-year work agreement that went into effect on January 1, 1952, and provided an initial wage scale of \$2.75 per hour for sprinklerfitters that would ultimately be raised to \$3.20 per hour.

Significant projects that supplied the local's members with substantial workhours during

the decade included construction of the massive **Mississippi River Fuel Corporation ammonium nitrate plant** near Festus and Crystal City, Missouri, beginning in 1954. When the 1,000-acre facility was completed two years later, it would produce up to 330 tons of fertilizer per day.

As employment conditions in Local 268 jurisdiction remained steady into the second half of the decade, Local 268 gained another new work agreement from its contractors that went into effect on January 1, 1956. The contract called for a 25-cent-per-hour raise that increased the local's journeyman-fitter wage scale to \$3.45 per hour.

Then in July of 1957, the local joined the new **National Automatic Sprinkler Industry Health and Welfare Fund** and **National Automatic Sprinkler Industry Pension Fund**, healthcare insurance and a retirement plan, respectively, established in 1957 with U.A. sprinklerfitters locals around the country, giving

Continued after following three spreads.



Local 268 Apprentice & Member Training PREPARING ITS INDUSTRY-BEST W

ORKFORCE OF SPRINKLERFITTERS

Local 268 sprinklerfitting training instructor Joe Karl (center) and apprentices (right) John O'Donnell and Gordon Lundak Sr. (a future Local 268 business manager) are joined by an apprentice from Kansas City at a St. Louis Automatic Sprinkler Industry Joint Apprenticeship Committee training class sometime during the 1950s.



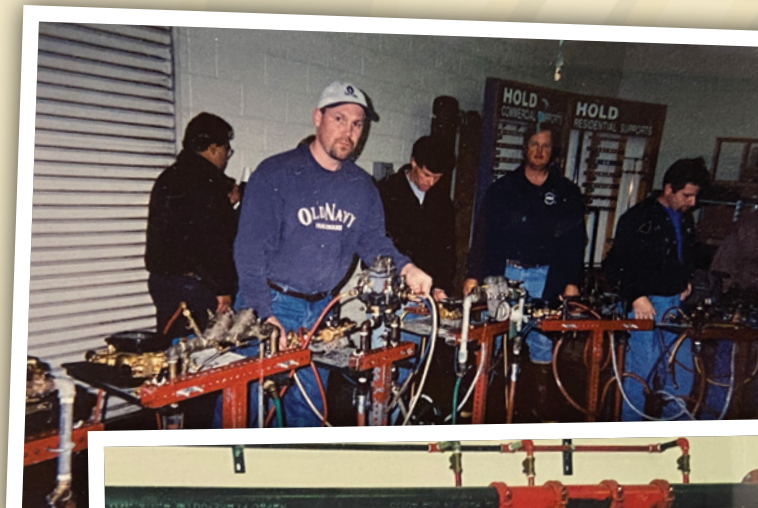
APPRENTICES EARN WHILE THEY LEARN

Local 268 apprentices are paid wages and are provided with healthcare and retirement benefits while they are enrolled in their apprenticeships and receiving “on-the-job” training while working on active jobsites. In 2026, apprentices earn increasing percentages of the journeyman sprinklerfitter wage scale in the local’s work agreement with the National Fire Sprinkler Association, based on their progress through the J.A.T.F. Apprentice Training Program.

Formed in early 1948 with three representatives each from Local 268 and its employing contractors, the [St. Louis Automatic Sprinkler Industry Joint Apprenticeship Committee](#) (J.A.C.) developed an apprenticeship training program for the local’s apprentices in collaboration with and registered by the Federal Committee on Apprenticeship, Bureau of Apprenticeship, U.S. Department of Labor on May 19, 1948. Those first representatives to the J.A.C. for Local 268 were members [Brother Charles Green](#), [Brother Charles Lennon](#) and [Brother Frank Silhavy](#), and the contractors’ first representatives were Baxter Crowder, James Flotron and Edward Turner.

Later that year on [September 17, 1948](#), the local and the J.A.C. initiated their very first class of 16 new apprentices, most of whom had been member “helpers” of the local. Classes for the new, three-year apprenticeship, which involved paid on-the-job training alongside journeyman sprinklerfitters that was supplemented by classroom and hands-on lab instruction, was initially held at [Herbert S. Hadley Technical High School](#) on Bell Avenue in St. Louis with Local 268 member [Brother John O'Brien](#) serving as the first-ever J.A.C. instructor of related training. (*Hadley Technical would become Vashon High School in 1963, and the building would be closed and demolished in January 2003.*)

After that first class of Local 268 apprentices completed their training, the J.A.C. held a banquet in 1951 in the Harmony Room of the Roosevelt Hotel in conjunction



Local 268 apprentices train at the former Local 268 Training Center in its former union hall on Broadway Street in South St. Louis sometime during the late 1990s/early 2000s.

LOCAL 268 BENEFIT FUNDS TRAINING

The Local 268 collectively bargained work agreement with its employing contractors, who in 2026 are represented by the National Fire Sprinkler Association, provides a fringe benefit that calls for employers to contribute into the [Sprinklerfitters Local 268 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Fund](#) based on hours worked by members. The fund provides the funding for the training of Local 268 members and the Local 268 Training Center.

As part of the current five-year work agreement that went into effect on September 1, 2025, employing contractors contribute \$1.20 per hour worked by a Local 268 member into the fund. Over the course of the contract, that contribution will increase to \$1.95 per hour on September 1, 2029, for the final year of the agreement.

with the local’s 50th charter anniversary celebration, at which each graduating trainee was presented with his Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship. The Local 268 group of sprinklerfitter apprentices was the [first in the country to receive completion certificates](#) since the adoption of the National Apprenticeship Program by the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry (the U.A.) and the National Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Control Association, which represented the local’s contractors (and became today’s U.A.-partner [National Fire Sprinkler Association](#)).

As the J.A.C. training program developed, it held classes in various locations that included [O’Fallon Technical High School](#) (now Gateway STEM High School) and classrooms built at the [St. Louis Automatic Sprinkler Company](#) (SLASCO). Then in 1980, the local purchased a building at 1519 South Broadway in South St. Louis that became its first-ever [J.A.C. Training Center](#) – the very first training facility owned by a sprinklerfitters local in the U.A.

While the apprenticeship program continued to grow, in 1998 the J.A.C. appointed Local 268 member [Brother Tom Love](#) as its first fulltime



Local 268 Apprentice & Member Training PREPARING ITS INDUSTRY-BEST W

ORKFORCE OF SPRINKLERFITTERS

Local 268 member and former **Training Coordinator Ken Schneider**, who served in that position from 2004 to 2015, joined the U.A. International Education and Training Department that year as a sprinklerfitter training specialist and retired in 2025. During his time in that position, Brother Schneider was instrumental in building relationships with U.A. industry partners, manufacturers and vendors; he was responsible for developing training modules with mobile trailers (classrooms on wheels) and Sea Cans; and under his leadership and guidance, many technology courses were implemented at the U.A. Instructor Training Program.



Local 268 Brother Ken Schneider

Over the ensuing years, sprinkler manufacturers have even utilized the Local 268 training center to train their employees. Local 268 **Business Manager Bob Stuart** even noted in 2022, “We have opened our doors to manufacturers, and they have brought people from all over the world,” while the local’s leadership has capitalized on this to organize more members and has continually used the training center to their advantage.

As Local 268 celebrates its 125th charter anniversary in 2026, the J.A.C. has evolved into the **Sprinkler Fitter 268 Joint Apprentice and Training Fund (J.A.T.F.)** and its apprentice training is now a five-year program that produces some of the best sprinklerfitters in the industry. Apprentices attend day school one day

every other week while switching contractors for which they work every six months to gain new experiences and see different aspects of the industry in the field, and they are paid by their contractors for their work through the “earn-while-you-learn” apprenticeship – which remains fully funded by the local and its employing contractors so that there are no costs to the students.

The 12,500-square-foot Training Center now has two classrooms, which are both computer labs, one of which is equipped with 14 CAD/REVIT computers that are used to draw two- and three-dimensional systems. The other classroom has 14 basic computers, with which apprentices perform their school-day lessons.

Among many other features, the Training Center also contains:

- 14 welding booths, seven of which are equipped with MIG (GMAW) machines and the other seven of which are equipped with stick (SMAW) & TIG (GTAW) machines; and a NAP machine (which was donated by the Ferguson Fire Department) that is used for training people on how to run the NAP machines that are used to weld the outlets on the pipe installed in fabrication shops.
- 36 system valves in its “wet lab” from all of the various manufacturers (Gem, Globe, Tyco Viking, Victaulic, Reliable) that can be trip tested and reset with functional fire alarm system, simulating what is done in the field for quarterly, semi-annual and annual testing; and the



Local 268 apprentices take part in the local’s 2007 Apprentice Competition in the local’s current Training Center on South Third Street just south of downtown St. Louis that was opened in 2005.

training coordinator while the committee also accepted a large number of apprentices into the program that year. But the Broadway location soon after became inadequate (in no small part because it was unable to provide water hookups for valve training), and in 2003 the local and the J.A.C. began searching for a location for a new, modern union hall and training center.

Local 268 and this J.A.C. built and moved into the new, 25,000-square-foot **Sprinklerfitters Local 268 Union Hall and Training Center** at 1544 South Third Street just south of downtown St. Louis in 2005. After hosting an open house on August 30, 2006, the very next year the state-of-the-art training facility, which featured 14 welding booths, hosted the state’s U.A. apprentice competition.

J.A.T.F. FULLTIME TRAINING COORDINATORS

Tom Love 1998 – 2005	Mark Ronecker 2015 – 2022
Ken Schneider 2004 – 2015	Kevin Convy 2022 – current

school can also teach various troubleshooting scenarios with the valves.

- Both electric- and diesel-driven fire pumps that are used for training on ITM and fire-pump rebuilds.
- Both wall and yard PIV training modules that are used for training on how to set “OPEN & SHUT” sights and properly set tamper switches.
- Accelerator and pressure maintenance device-training modules that are used to train on how different manufacturers’ accelerators operate; how to rebuild

each one; and how to adjust, set and rebuild each manufacturers’ pressure-maintenance devices.

- Three fire-hydrant training modules (Clow, Mueller, AVK) that are used to train ITM on hydrants, how to turn hydrant outlets in the desired direction, add extensions and completely rebuild each hydrant.
- A confined-space training module that is used to simulate the procedure for properly and safely lowering workers into a confined space using a tripod and retrieving workers after performing work in confined spaces. The program



Local 268 Apprentice & Member Training PREPARING ITS INDUSTRY-BEST WORKFORCE OF SPRINKLERFITTERS

MANY APPRENTICES HAVE COMPETED IN U.A. INTERNATIONAL APPRENTICE CONTEST

The skills and dedication of Local 268 training instructors and journeyman sprinklerfitters and the capabilities of the Local 268 Apprenticeship Training Program and Training Center, in conjunction with the local's employing contractors of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, have enabled several of the local's apprentices to win local and state apprenticeship contests and advance to the [U.A. International Apprentice Contest](#), including those listed below.

Daniel Messmer
Brad Ohmart
J.C. Russell

Keith Drew
Chris Trueb
Jason Olliges

also teaches how to use a 4-gas air monitor and how to introduce clean air into a confined space if necessary.

- An ASSE-approved Backflow School with a backflow wet lab in which the program certifies Local 268 members on backflow testing for the State of Missouri.
- A Victaulic Vortex hybrid water mist system that is a specialty system used for protecting sensitive electrical equipment, servers and historical archives.

In 2026, Local 268 and the J.A.T.F. has 98 apprentices, which is about the average in the training program over the

In 2015, Local 268 introduced the first-of-its-kind “[classroom on wheels](#)” – a 53-foot sprinkler fire-suppression training trailer that would train union sprinklerfitters across the United States. Created and built in St. Louis by members of Local 268 and U.A. road sprinklerfitters Local No. 669, the trailer featured 12 portable training stations, allowing training to be conducted both on and off the converted tractor-trailer rig, allowing training to be brought to union sprinklerfitters (and firefighters) who need it but whose locals don't have the essential equipment or training facilities.

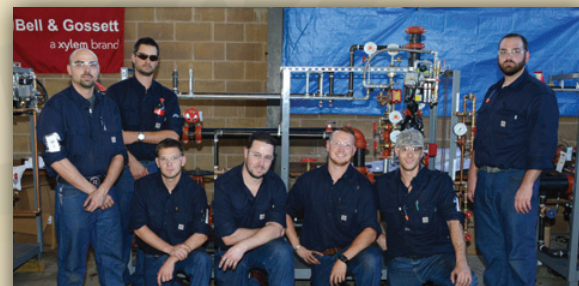
previous seven years, while individual class sizes tend to be anywhere from 22 to 28 apprentices. Meanwhile, the J.A.T.F. is working to bring in apprentices at a rate to stay ahead of and at least keep up with the number of members retiring each year.

What's more, the training department is constantly working to keep up with the latest technologies in the sprinkler industry. In doing so, that J.A.T.F. sends its instructors each summer to the [U.A. Instructor Training Program](#), and it also works with manufacturers to train members on the newest products and systems.

For instance, the J.A.T.F. recently signed a contract with Tech Electronics to furnish a VESDA detection system to be used as the detection for the Training Center's Victaulic Vortex system. VESDA systems are used throughout data centers – and there is currently a large amount of data center work in the Local 268 territory that will continue for at least the next several years.

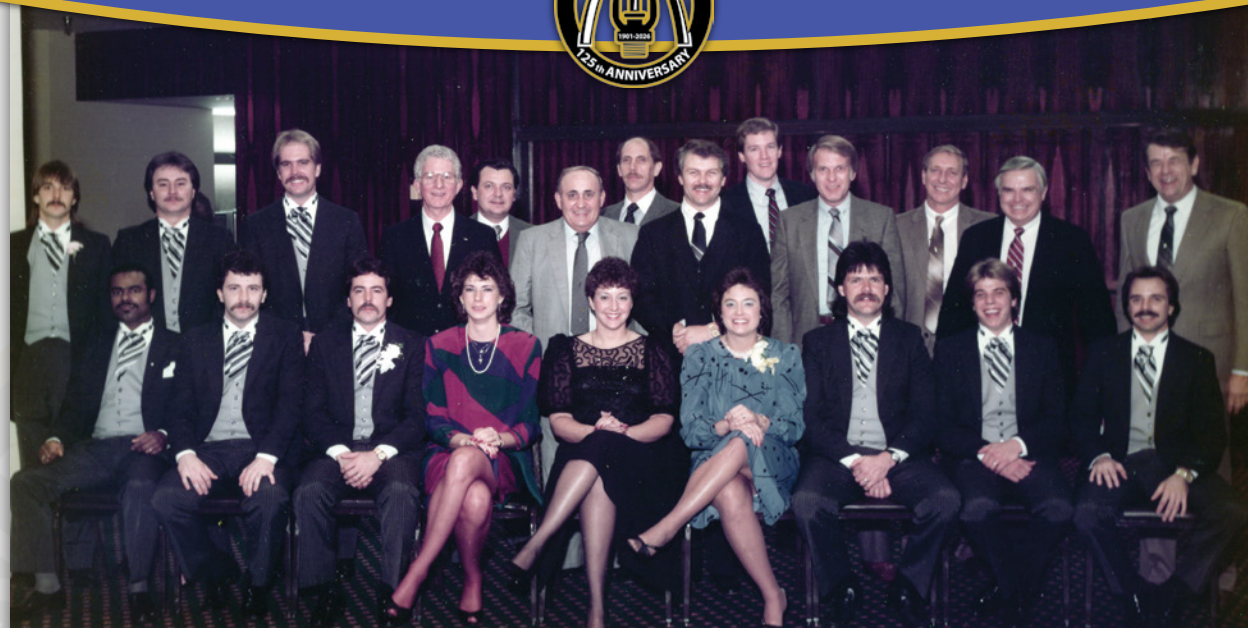
The J.A.T.F. Training Center also provides [Continuing Education Training](#) for the local's journeyman sprinklerfitters. This “upgrade training” allows the local to provide its signatory contractors with a productive, highly skilled workforce that is able to keep pace with ever-changing technologies.

Foremost, at the core of the unsurpassed J.A.T.F. training are its highly knowledgeable and dedicated instructors, as Local 268 [Training Coordinator Kevin Convy](#) attests: “I am very thankful to all of our instructors; they work very hard to make our training second to none!”



Local 268 apprentice (and current business manager) Jason Olliges (far right) stands with other sprinklerfitters contestants during the 2014 U.A. International Apprentice Contest, which Brother Olliges won that year.





Local 268 officers and the graduating apprenticeship class of 1980 (left to right, front row) M. Hite, J. Hynes, J. Creamer Jr., S. Kenkel, V. Rhodes, T. Ritzheimer, M. McKenzie, T. Riegerix and D. Russell Jr.; and (back row) B. Lundak, J. Rayner Jr., D. Friese, unknown, D. Gagan, G. Tasch, R. Weinshenker, T. Pruitt, D. Coleman, F. Maslo, G. Lundak Sr., F. Riegerix, J. McKeever Sr. pose during completion ceremonies.

Local 268 members their first-ever employer-funded fringe benefits. The Health and Welfare Fund and the multi-employer, defined-benefit Pension Fund were – and continue to be – subsidized by employer contributions based on hours worked by members. *(Local 268 and its employers remain signatory to both funds in 2026 as the local celebrates its 125th charter anniversary; while the Pension Fund pays more than \$200 million in pension benefits to retired U.A. sprinklerfitters and their surviving beneficiaries each year).*

Also during that period, manufacturing in the local's jurisdiction continued to provide steady employment for its members, particularly within the automotive industry as St. Louis was the second-largest automobile producer in the nation (behind only Detroit) with Chrysler Corporation, General Motors and Ford Motors operating large assembly plants in the region, as staunchly reinforced industrial building codes and insurance requirements increased installations of fire-suppressing sprinkler systems. Among industrial jobs on which union sprinklerfitters were employed was construction of the **Chrysler St. Louis Assembly South Plant** and **North Plant** in Fenton, Missouri, that were completed in 1959

and 1966, respectively, with modern, overhead wet-pipe sprinklers.

However, throughout the 1960s St. Louis went through the prototypical transition of a “Rust Belt” city, with downtown development offset by a shrinking manufacturing base. Although the opening of Busch Memorial Stadium as the home field of Major League Baseball's St. Louis Cardinals and the National Football League's St. Louis Cardinals sparked urban renewal projects that completely reshaped the downtown area, most all of that development did not incorporate sprinkler systems, while escalating deindustrialization slowly reduced workhours available in the manufacturing sector.

Regardless, industrial-production and -warehouse facilities that were built in the 1960s to support urban renewal were outfitted with automatic sprinklers installed by union fitters, enabling Local 268 to maintain steady employment and membership. What's more, the U.A. gave the local jurisdiction over sprinkler work in the **Labadie Power Station** (now that Labadie Energy Center) being erected in Franklin County, Missouri, that would be completed in 1970 as the largest power plant in the state.



SHIFTING WITH NEW INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND FIRST HOME

Suburban expansion around St. Louis that came in the wake of downtown redevelopment beginning in the late 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s eventually created a large amount of work for Local 268 sprinklerfitters throughout the local's jurisdiction. Initially, however, the construction of numerous new public grade schools to accommodate significantly increased student enrollments in the suburbs caused by the so-called “sprawl” as well as the “baby boomer” generation (children born in the aftermath of World War II) did not largely employ fitters as building codes still did not require fire-sprinkler systems in schools – although retrofitting and upgrading those schools years later as codes required would provide the local with a strong stream of work.

But devastating high-rise and hotel fires around the world in the early 1970s finally exposed fatal flaws in building codes, shifting sprinkler

laws from voluntary property protection to mandatory life-saving measures. Those lethal disasters forced a complete overhaul of fire-safety mandates and several critical changes in fire-sprinkler regulations across the United States after the landmark U.S. government-commissioned **“America Burning” Report** by the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control was released in 1973, leading to the passage of the **Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974** that established a federal framework for fire prevention through which subsequent amendments would require automatic fire-sprinkler systems.

Meanwhile, in December 1971 the Local 268 membership elected **Brother Gordon A. Lundak Sr.** as the local's new business manager. Beginning in January 1972, he would serve the next 25-1/2 years in the position until his retirement in June 1997, during which time the local would make significant advancements – and surpass a total membership of more than 200 fitters and apprentices for the first time in 1996.



The first-ever Local 268 Union Hall located on Broadway Street in South St. Louis and named the Richard J. Mussmann Building after the local's former business manager – the first hall ever owned by a U.A. sprinklerfitters local – in which the local resided from 1980 into 2005.



Construction of the 100-acre, **General American Life Insurance Company Headquarters** in South St. Louis County during that time would go on to provide the local with a steady source of workhours even after it was completed in 1974. The 600,000-square-foot corporate complex, which would be acquired by MetLife in 1999, would be retrofitted and updated with new sprinkler systems that the local members would also maintain until the campus was redeveloped in the 2020s into the Tesson Ridge residential community.

Ongoing suburban growth also furnished the local with more work, in particular in new shopping malls such as **St. Clair Square** in Fairview Heights, Illinois, that opened on



Local 268 members Gordon Lundak Jr. (left) and Michael Mahler, the local's future business manager, work on a job sometime during the late 1980s or early 1990s.

October 31, 1974, as a regional shopping destination. As it was standard practice for major shopping centers of that era to include fire-suppression systems, St. Claire Square's developer accordingly incorporated fire protection, including wet-pipe sprinkler systems, as a core safety component during its construction.

As they constantly have, Local 268 members during the late 1970s also displayed their solidarity in protecting their industry and jurisdiction when in September 1978 they voted to work at election polls rather than at their jobsites to help defeat a so-called "right-to-work" state legislative measure on ballots. The proposed law that would strip away union protections by not requiring union membership in organized workplaces was defeated by voters in November – only to resurface a couple years later in the Missouri Legislature before members again took a day off work to join thousands of other union members in a "March on Jefferson City," the state Capitol, to keep the anti-union statute from appearing on the Missouri ballot. (*The "Show-Me State" remains a "union shop" state in 2026 after Missouri voters overwhelmingly again rejected the measure in an August 2018 referendum, negating "right-to-work" legislation that was passed in 2017.*)

Then in January 1979, the local realized a major milestone when its Building Committee was authorized to purchase a lot on South Broadway in St. Louis and shortly after was commissioned to build a union hall for the local on the land. One year later, the new **Richard J. Mussmann Building - Local 268 Union Hall** was dedicated in honor of the local's former business manager, marking the first time any U.A. sprinklerfitters local owned its own headquarters building.



Local 268 members participate in the 1996 annual Labor Day parade in St. Louis.

Also, by 1979 an "extraordinary era of building-code gains for sprinklers in commercial and institutional occupancies had come to fruition," as the **National Fire Sprinkler Association** (N.F.S.A.), the former N.A.S.&F.C.A. after it would change its name for good in 1983, describes in its history. Additionally, a series of deadly fires in 1980 in hotels that did not have sprinklers or in which systems were inadequate, including the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino (now Horseshoe Las Vegas) fire on the Las Vegas Strip on November 21, 1980, that killed 85 people as the blaze spread rapidly through areas with no sprinklers, further increased advocacy for fire sprinklers, which revolutionized local laws and led to the creation of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990.

The heightened call for the inclusion of sprinkler systems in buildings, which coincided with a surge in office high-rise construction in downtown St. Louis, naturally increased work

opportunities and employment for Local 268 members in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. As a result, during that time the local's membership increased from 113 journeymen and 15 apprentices in December 1979 to 150 journeymen and 27 apprentices in December 1989 – nearly a total 40-percent growth in just 10 years.

Among major projects on which the local's member fitters worked during that time was construction of the new, 21-story **St. Louis Place** prominent office building located in the heart of St. Louis that was completed in 1983. Also downtown, union sprinklerfitters were also employed on construction of the 44-story, 1.4-million-square-foot **One Bell Center** (now 909 Chestnut Street), the new Southwestern Bell Telephone Company headquarters that when opened in 1986 was the largest office building in Missouri by area.

Regional manufacturing industries also continued to provide Local 268 members with



workhours as well, including construction of the new, 3.7-million-square-foot **General Motors Wentzville Assembly Plant** that was completed in 1983 originally to manufacture full-size Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac sedan-style automobiles. Elsewhere, the local's fitters also installed sprinkler systems in the new **Monsanto Company Chesterfield Village Research Center** in Chesterfield, Missouri, that opened in 1984 as the premier life-sciences research facility of the agrochemical and agricultural biotechnology company (which was acquired by Bayer AG in 2018).

However, with a basic hourly wage, excluding health and pension benefits, of \$18.86 per hour in a contract that was about to expire, beginning on September 1, 1983, Local 268 went on strike against the N.F.S.A. for 30 days in a dispute over foremen's hourly pay and daily travel pay in a new work agreement. The fitters returned to work on October 1 after accepting a new, three-year agreement with total wage and benefits increases of \$4.20 per hour, while foremen would be paid an additional \$1 per hour but travel pay was reduced from \$5 to \$5 per working day.

Key jobs that continued to supply the local's members with employment included installing a sprinkler system in **Crestwood Plaza** in Crestwood, Missouri, the first major regional shopping mall in the St. Louis area, which was enclosed in 1984 (after which it was closed in 2013 and demolished in 2017). Significant conversions for new automobile lines and maintenance "shutdowns" at the **Ford St. Louis Assembly Plant** in Hazelwood, Missouri, and Chrysler's St. Louis Assembly plants also provided employment for union fitters during the 1980s – as they would until the Ford facility was closed in 2006 and the Chrysler factories were shut down later that decade.

As the local continued its growth through the 1980s with stable employment conditions, its expanding membership required additional administrative attention. Subsequently, in June 1986 the local made



Local 268 members participate in the 2000 annual Labor Day parade in St. Louis.



Local 268 members pose with the sprinkler valve training display they designed and installed in 2003 for fire departments in southwestern Illinois. The display was installed on a trailer so that it could be transported between departments.

Brother James E. McKeever its first-ever fulltime financial secretary-treasurer.

Capping off the period of accelerated work, which was punctuated by high-rise construction in downtown St. Louis, Local 268 members worked on the new, 42-story **One Metropolitan Square** office tower. When completed in 1989, the skyscraper became the tallest habitable building in the city and second tallest in Missouri, distinctions it still holds in 2026 – while the famous St. Louis Gateway Arch that was completed in 1965 remains the city's tallest structure.

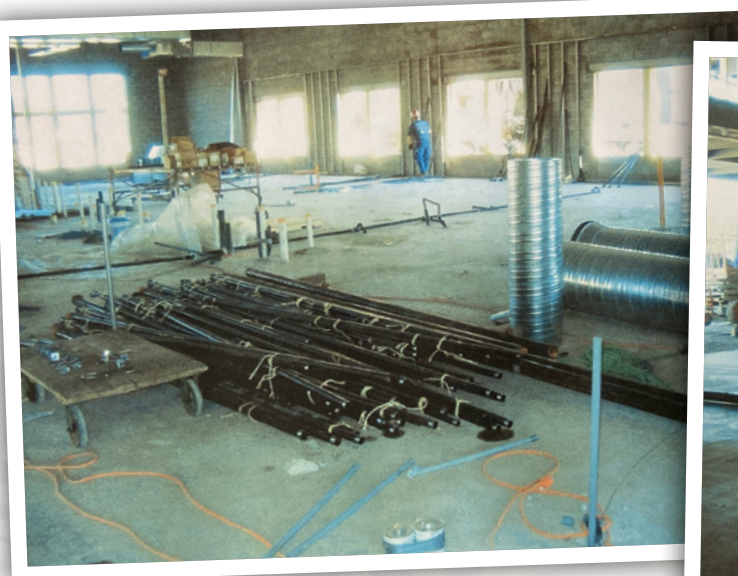
ADVANCES INCLUDE MODERN, NEW TRAINING CENTER & HALL

Local 268 entered the 1990s signatory to a three-year work agreement with the N.F.S.A. that had gone into effect on September 1, 1989, and would ultimately raise the sprinklerfitter wage rate from \$24.71 to \$25.16 per hour before it expired on August 31, 1992. The contract also called for employer

contributions that by its final year would increase to \$2.65 per hour for the National Automatic Sprinkler Industry Health and Welfare Fund, \$2 per hour for the National Automatic Sprinkler Industry Pension Fund and \$1.10 per hour for the recently established **National Automatic Sprinkler Industry Supplemental Pension Fund**, giving the local's journeyman fitters a total compensation package of \$30.91 per hour.

Out in the field, throughout the decade the local's member fitters and apprentices gained increasing when not steady employment performing **service work** – a trend that continued into the local's 125th anniversary in 2026. In fact, as the local focused more and more on service jobs, maintaining, upgrading and replacing existing sprinkler systems would often help maintain the local throughout the 1990s, 2000s, 2010s and 2020s.

Further helping the local's signatory contractors gain work, in 1990 in an industry effort supported by County Councilman James



The new (and current) Sprinklerfitters Local 268 Union Hall and Training Center at 1544 South Third in South St. Louis under construction in 2005 before the local moved into the facility late that year.



During the open house for the new Local 268 Union Hall and Training Center held August 30, 2006, (left to right) Business Manager Michael R. Mahler, U.A. International General President William P. Hite, Training Instructor Brent Collins, Training Coordinator Ken Schneider and St. Louis Mayor Francis G. Slay cut a ceremonial pipe to officially open the facility.

O'Mara, a friend of Local 268 and a member of U.A. plumbers and pipefitters **Local No. 562**, St. Louis County reinstituted licensing laws relating to the registration of process-piping installers, irrigation-system installers and backflow preventer testers registration, as well as the installation of backflow preventers. As the N.F.S.A. workforce of union fitters was trained in these disciplines, the contractors were better able to secure projects that now required those licensing regulations.

Recognizing the need to provide better training for an expanding workforce, in April 1991 Local 268 purchased a building on North Broadway for use as a training center. When the local opened that first **Local 268 Training Center**, it was the first training facility ever owned and operated by a U.A. sprinklerfitters local.

As the local's membership remained busy with work into the mid-1990s, a large number of traveling members from sister U.A. sprinklerfitters locals from around the country were employed within the Local 268

jurisdiction, in which the local was in control of nearly all of the market share within the sprinkler industry. Among notable projects on which union fitters were employed at the time was construction of the new, 19,000-seat **Kiel Center** (now the Enterprise Center) multi-purpose sports and entertainment arena that opened in downtown St. Louis in 1994 as the home of the St. Louis Blues of the National Hockey League.

The local's fitters and apprentices also installed sprinkler systems in the new **Trans World Dome** (now The Dome at America's Center) multi-purpose, 67,000-capacity indoor stadium in the city's downtown area that was completed in November 1995 primarily to lure a National Football League team to St. Louis, with the Rams relocating to the city in 1995 (before returning to Los Angeles after the 2015 season) and to serve as a convention space. The new, 220,000-square-foot **East Terminal** (Terminal 2) at **St. Louis Lambert International Airport** would also be equipped with fire sprinklers installed by union fitters when it opened in 1998.



Although downtown St. Louis saw minimal ground-up skyscraper construction during the late 1990s, Local 268 members installed a sprinkler system in the most significant addition during that time, the large **Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse** that spans the full block encompassed by 10th, 11th, Spruce and Market streets. Construction of the 29-story, 1.2-million-square-foot facility began in 1995 and the courthouse officially opened in 2000 with modern fire-suppression capability.

Despite the lack of substantial high-rise work, the local's workhours increased exponentially during that period as its membership quickly grew and it also hosted sizable numbers of U.A. travelers. Consequently, the local expanded to 204 total members including 31 apprentices in June 1996 and to 255 total members including 76 apprentices in December 1999.

The local also made substantial gains during the 1990s and into the new "Y2K" (Year 2000) Millennium bargaining for its work agreements with the N.F.S.A. As a result, a three-year contract that went into effect on September 1, 1992; and five-year contracts that went into

effect September 1, 1995, and September 1, 2000, eventually set the local's journeyman fitter base wage at \$32.58 per hour and total benefit contributions at \$10.25 per hour beginning January 1, 2005 – a total package of \$42.83 per hour.

With a large amount of work as the millennium got underway and despite a brief slowdown caused by a national recession in 2001, the local's membership continued to expand while it also celebrated its **100th charter anniversary** with a dinner-dance at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis on June 30, 2001. As such, throughout the decade the local grew by nearly **70 percent**, reaching a total of 276 members including 98 apprentices in June 2000; a total of 400 members including 117 apprentices in June 2005; and a total of 469 members including 102 apprentices in September 2007.

Among the work keeping the local's sprinklerfitters and apprentices busy during the early 2000s was construction of the new, 1.2-million-square-foot **West County Center** shopping mall in Des Peres, Missouri that would open with a fire-suppressing sprinkler



In one display of the many political activities in which Local 268 regularly participates, some of the more than 300 local members who took a day off work and traveled to Jefferson City, the capital of Missouri, in April 2006 to speak to state legislators about issues that would affect working families make their presence known in front of the State Capitol building.



Local 268 members participate in the 2017 annual Labor Day parade in St. Louis.

system on September 20, 2002, to replace a former mall that had been built in the same location in 1969. The current **Busch Stadium** (or Busch Stadium "III") home baseball park of the Cardinals also was built with comprehensive fire sprinklers installed by fitters throughout the facility before it opened in 2006.

As the local and the sprinkler industry itself was continuing to flourish and grow, in 2003 the local's officers and members decided to invest in their future and find a modern new union hall and training facility. After a lengthy and at-times harrowing search for an existing building and reviewing several proposals for new construction, the membership voted to erect a new building that "they would be proud of," after which the new (and current), 25,000-square-foot **Sprinklerfitters Local 268 Union Hall and Training Center** at 1544 South Third Street just south of downtown St. Louis was dedicated during an open house on August 30, 2006, after the local had moved into the facility in 2005.

Spearheaded by **Business Manager Mike Mahler**, the process that eventually culminated in the local's new headquarters required its officers to do their due diligence, including addressing environmental concerns as the location was formerly the site of a battery factory. What's more, to fund the \$3-million project, the Local 268 membership overwhelmingly voted for a 1/2-percent increase in their dues to pay for the land and the construction of the building.

Soon after the local opened its new union hall, however, the "Great Recession" that began in late 2007 and continued well into 2009, which was considered the worst economic downturn in the United States since the Great Depression, harshly impacted the construction industry and drastically throttled Local 268's employment conditions. As work for its membership severely diminished and the local experienced one of the worst periods in its history into the 2010s, workhours among its membership decreased by nearly half to about



Local 268 has been undefeated since 2010 in the annual **St. Louis Labor Tug-Of-War** competition, a highly popular event held as part of the annual Greater St. Louis Labor Council Labor Day Parade and Festival. The spirited contest pits local trade unions, local officials and community teams against one another during the celebration of working people.

500,000 whereas they had previously reached 1 million, and the local would not matriculate a new apprenticeship class again until 2017.

But as always, the local and its membership responded to the hardship with solidarity, as members split time on jobs to help spread out the available work. Additionally, the sprinklerfitters set up the **Local 268 Assistance Fund** into which members who were working could donate money for the local to purchase food cards for members who were out of work, while the local also approved using money from vacation accounts to also subsidize the fund.

Service work helped the local survive during that period as more than half of the workhours performed in that time were generated by service jobs. Accordingly, the local actively pursued, prepared for and gained service work throughout that challenging stretch in its history.

STILL MOVING FORWARD WHILE APPROACHING ITS 125TH YEAR

When construction in the Local 268 jurisdiction finally escaped the effects of the recession in the early 2010s, the local's employment conditions improved. As the decade progressed, the local again flourished as members as well as U.A. travelers were busy with service work and installations for schools, apartment buildings and numerous other structures, allowing the local to maintain a membership above 450 sprinklerfitters and apprentices before reaching 475 total members in December 2019.



The Local 268 team that won the annual St. Louis Labor Tug-Of-War competition during the Greater St. Louis Labor Council Labor Day Parade and Festival in 2024.

The escalating number of significant projects on which the local's union fitters and apprentices were employed included construction of the **Aberdeen Heights** senior living community at Kirkwood, Missouri, in 2010 and 2011. Before the 326-unit facility was opened that fall, more than 45 of the local's members installed a water-sprinkler system, a dry-suppression system and a fire pump to protect its residents, staff and visitors.

Construction of the new main **Pfizer St. Louis Research and Development Center** in Chesterfield, Missouri, that officially opened on May 30, 2019, was among many jobs that kept union sprinklerfitters in-demand during the second half of the decade as well. The 295,000-square-foot facility built to consolidate the biopharmaceutical company's older facilities in the area would operate as a major biotherapeutics and vaccine research, development and manufacturing hub for the company.

Also during that time, Local 268 and other labor unions spearheaded the **"Proposition A"** state referendum ballot measure held on August 7, 2018, to determine whether to uphold or overturn the right-to-work law passed by the Missouri General Assembly in 2017. After labor successfully got the proposition



Local 268 first entered a softball team in the **U.A. National Softball Tournament** (which held its 47th annual competition in 2026) in 2018. The local's squad won the tournament's B-Division championship in 2024.



The Local 268 softball team that finished in second place B-Division of the 2022 U.A. National Softball Tournament.

before voters through initiative petitioning, gathering enough signatures to force the veto referendum, and then educated the public about the damaging effects of right-to-work, voters overturned the law through Proposition A and it was repealed.

Sadly, Local 268, the State of Missouri and the entire United States were suddenly and gravely disrupted with the onset of the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that began to spread throughout the country in early 2020, after which it would claim the lives of more than 1 million Americans over the next three years. The outbreak initially forced the local to cancel meetings and training and curtail services out of its union hall in order to keep staff and members safe, while out in the field construction sites implemented safety measures including social distancing and reduced staffing, while sprinklerfitters were eventually deemed "essential workers" to keep important projects moving forward.

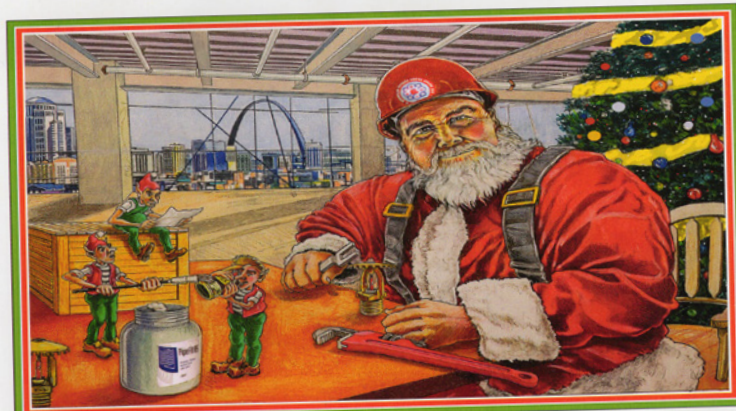
With the support and assistance of the U.A. International Officer and International General President Mark McManus, Local 268 and the entire union came out of the pandemic well prepared to move forward, while construction work in the Local 268 jurisdiction and employment for its

membership soon both simultaneously soared again. Subsequently, the local's membership would continue to increase to 516 total members in June 2022 and to 554 total members in December 2023.

An ongoing wave of work installing sprinkler systems and other fire-suppression mechanisms in grade schools throughout the local's jurisdiction – especially during the summer months when schools are out – has especially provided a stream of work for the local's members as growing awareness and evolving fire safety codes have made adding sprinkler systems to schools a safety initiative. Specifically in one such instance, the passage of a bond funding measure in the **Parkway School District** in St. Louis County in 2022 targeted the installation of fire suppression in its aging existing schools, including 1970s-built North and South high schools.

Elsewhere, leading up to the local's 125th anniversary in 2026, a multitude of other jobs on which its fitters and apprentices worked included a government job for the **National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency** in 2022, work involving a good amount of welding at **Anheuser-Busch Brewery** and construction of the new **CityPark** (now Energizer Park) 22,423-seat soccer-specific stadium in the Downtown West neighborhood that would be completed in November 2022 for the St. Louis City SC team in Major League Soccer.

Meanwhile, **Mercy Hospital** in St. Louis provided continuous work for the Local 268 membership as well. In particular, union fitters installed sprinklers in the new, five-story,



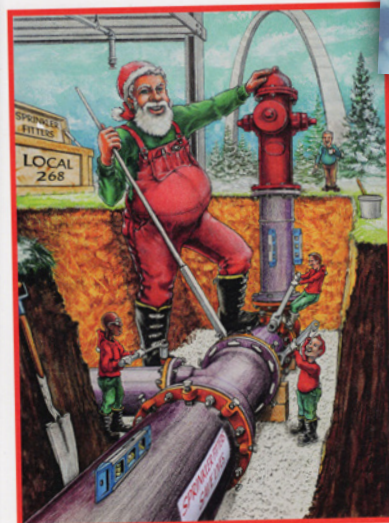
SEASONS GREETINGS

HAPPY



HOLIDAYS

Season's



Greetings



Some of the Christmas Cards designed annually over the past 22 years for Local 268 by retired member Brother Sean O'Connor, who each year features the likeness of a local member or officer on the cards.

employed on construction of its 300,000-square-foot facility at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in Mascoutah, Illinois, that is dedicated to manufacturing the U.S. Navy's MQ-25A Stingray, the world's first operational carrier-based unmanned aerial refueling drone. With Boeing

also moving its Defense, Space & Security headquarters back to the St. Louis area in February 2026, where it was located from 1997 to 2017, union sprinklerfitters are also equipping the company's under-construction, 1.2-million-square-foot facility near Lambert International Airport that will manufacture the U.S. Air Force's highly classified F-47 sixth-generation fighter jet when it is completed in 2028.

At the bargaining table, the local negotiated its current, five-year work agreement with the N.F.S.A. that went into effect on September 1,

272,000-square-foot **Mercy Ballas Multispecialty Building** and its 1,000-space parking garage located across from the hospital, which when completed in 2023 was one of the largest outpatient surgery centers in the country.

As Local 268 has also benefited from the presence of **Boeing** within its jurisdiction, where several of the leading aerospace company's manufacturing facilities have been located since it purchased McDonnell Aircraft Corporation in 1997, many of the local's members were

2025, with a new journeyman base wage scale of \$54.23 per hour and improved employers' fringe-benefit contributions of \$12 per hour for the N.A.S.I. Health and Welfare Fund, \$7.40 per hour for the N.A.S.I. Pension Fund, \$10.75 per hour for the N.A.S.I. Supplemental Pension Fund and \$1.30 per hour (\$1.20 to the Local 268 fund and 10 cents to the U.A. fund) for training – giving the local's journeyman sprinklerfitters a current total compensation package of **\$85.68 per hour**. The local's fitters will ultimately receive hourly pay raises of \$2.55 each for the second and third years, \$2.65 for the fourth year and \$2.70 for the fifth year beginning September 1, 2029, while benefits will also be regularly increased.

As sprinklerfitters Local 268 has grown to more than 570 member fitters and apprentices while continuing to serve the St. Louis Area with dedication and expertise in fire protection as it celebrates its 125th charter anniversary in 2026, it handles a **99 percent market share** of the sprinkler industry within its jurisdiction, which has come to encompass the St. Louis Metropolitan area on both sides of the Mississippi River (Missouri and Illinois). The

membership has also been further bolstered over the previous few years by several improved and new benefits programs instituted and advanced by the local, such as the local's new **"Sick Club"** that supports members in need as a result of health issues, life insurance improvements, pension improvements, access to a financial advisor, local-funded short-term disability insurance, health fairs and no-cost health clinics.

Through those and other ongoing efforts of the local as well as its world-class vocational training programs, the Local 268 membership enjoys safer workplaces, excellent hourly wages, superior health and welfare benefits, and a generous pension. The first sprinklerfitters union to affiliate with the United Association, 125 years later Local 268 is therefore prepared to continue setting the standard of excellence in its industry as it embarks on its next 125 years of safeguarding lives and properties – while relentlessly pursuing an even higher standard of living through better wages, benefits and working conditions for its skilled and dedicated union members. ●



The Sprinklerfitters Local 268 Union Hall and Training Center.



IN MEMORY OF
LOCAL 268
BROTHERS
AND
SISTERS
WHO HAVE PASSED
SINCE OUR 100TH
ANNIVERSARY



Watson Gadd
1913-2002



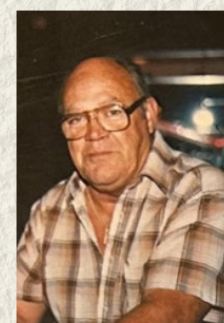
Michael Kinealy
1928-2002



John Rayner
1924-2003



John Cleary
1926-2003



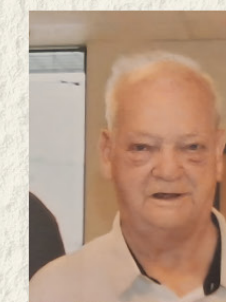
Dewey Gunning
1930-2003



Thomas Dooley
1929-2005



James Dolan
1927-2006



Donald DeGeare
1926-2006



John V. O'Brien Jr
1919-2006



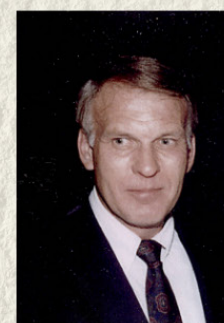
Glennon Robinson
1929-2007



John Crowder
1932-2007



Gordan Lundak
1939-2008



Fred Maslo
1943-2008



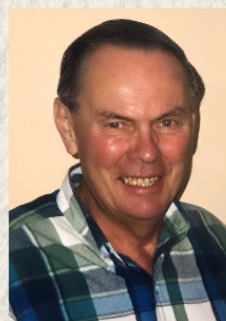
George Green Jr
1925-2008



David Fitzgerald
1940-2009



Darrell Conell
1966-2009



Robert Elliott
1933-2009



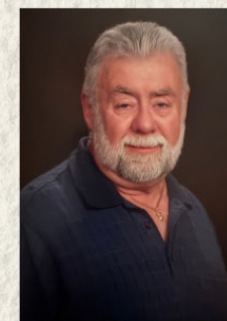
John Hartman
1920-2009



Robert Wozniak
1931-2009



Kenneth Harris
1948-2010



Bruce Swope
1946-2013



Robert Stender
1942-2014



Joseph Kraichely
1923-2014



Steven Neuner
1963-2015



Melburn King
1926-2010



George Hartman Jr
1924-2010



Sally Killian
1961-2010



Robert Chandler
1945-2010



Dennis Johnson
1949-2015



Michael Braun
1956-2015



Charles Mueller Jr
1948-2016



Dwayne Dickerson
1972-2017



Edward O'Brien
1932-2010



Donnell Yancey
1956-2011



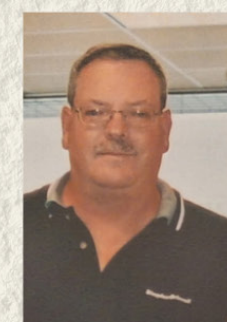
James Price Jr
1965-2011



Brian Wilson
1970-2012



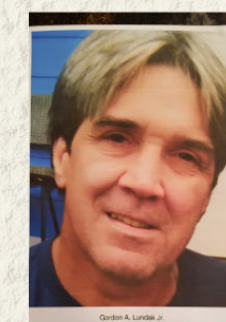
Fred Urbantke
1929-2017



Thomas DeGeare
1950-2017



James McKenzie
1932-2017



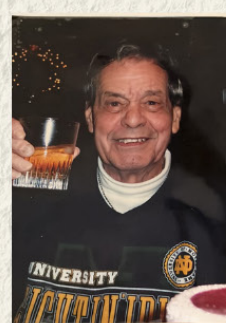
Gordon Lundak Jr
1964-2018



Dean Disabato
1980-2012



Michael Williams
1938-2013



James Creamer Sr.
1929-2013



John O'Donnell
1934-2013



James Riegerix
1950-2018



Mark Silhavy
1952-2018



Michael Margulis
1950-2018



Donald Moore
1933-2018



Juan Ante
1973-2019



Francis Riegerix
1933-2019



Patrick Robinson
1992-2019



John Convy Jr
1941-2019



James McKeever
1934-2023



Harold Cardinal
1946-2024



Douglas Boswell
1943-2024



Rickey Silhavy
1947-2024



James Dooley Jr
1954-2019



Tom Riegerix
1961-2020



Leo Creamer II
1929-2020



George Frame
1942-2021



John Rayner Jr
1960-2025



John Groark
1969-2026



Aydin Silhavy
2006-2026



Matthew Young
1987-2026



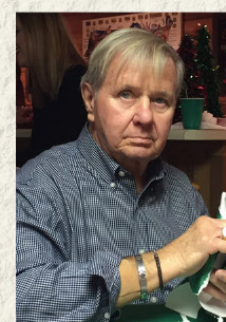
Donald Rotty
1957-2022



Scott Frame
1973-2022



James Kahney
1936-2022



Donald Russell
1931-2022



Brian Hobbs
1971-2026



Richard Stanley
1951-2026



Harold Miller Jr
1932-2022



Gerald Fey
1929-2022



Jerry Strange
1965-2023



Richard Konopka
1946-2023



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What do all these iconic St. Louis
“landmarks” have in common?

St. Louis Zoo (1910)

Ted Drewes (1930)

Fox Theatre (1929)

The Muny (1917)

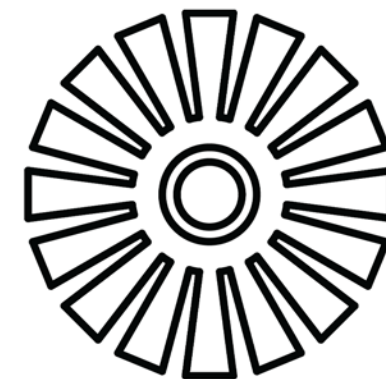
The Gateway Arch (1965)

Crown Candy Kitchen (1913)

Gus' Pretzels (1920)

*They haven't been in St. Louis as long
as Sprinkler Fitters Local 268 has!*

**The employees of Bi-State Fire Protection
would like to congratulate and thank
Sprinkler Fitters Local 268 on 125 years
of building St. Louis!**



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FIRE PROTECTION
CORPORATION

FireTech, LLC

Congratulates

SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268

ON 125 YEARS

OF SERVICING
ST. LOUIS



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CELEBRATING
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For a quarter century,
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solutions with integrity,
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Local 268



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**LET'S BUILD A SAFER TOMORROW.
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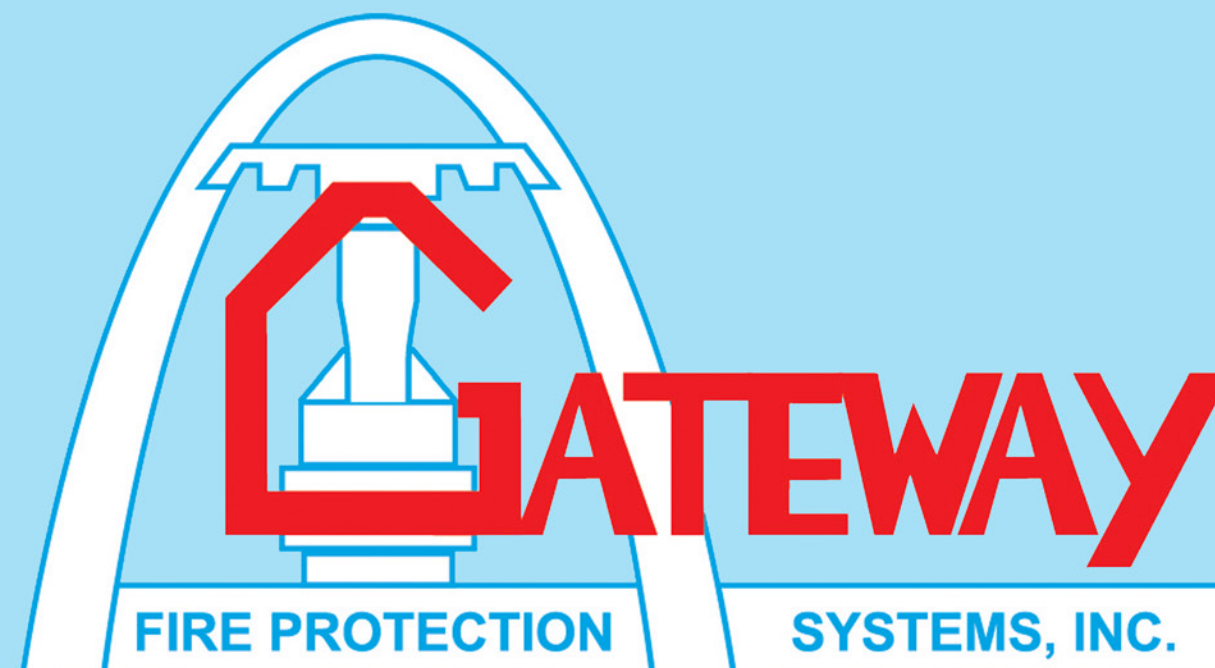
🌐 www.FireTechSTL.com



Thank you, Local 268, for 125 years of outstanding service and leadership.

HERE'S TO 150 YEARS STRONG, COMBINED, AND COUNTING!

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Congratulations Sprinkler Fitters Local 268!

Cheers to 125 Years of Excellence!

The officers and members of Local 183 Milwaukee
wish you all the very best!

Scott Kobb - Business Manager

Downer Malecki - Business Agent

Dan Olson - Business Agent

**SPRINKLER
FITTERS**
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN



CONGRATULATIONS Sprinkler Fitters Local 268

CELEBRATING
125 YEARS
OF SOLIDARITY & PROGRESS

WITH BEST WISHES FROM THE OFFICERS & MEMBERS OF
SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 550

Peter Gibbons
Business Manager

Mark Fortune
Business Agent



Matthew Jones
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John J. O'Mara
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William J. Doherty Jr.
Assistant Business Manager



**BEST WISHES TO
SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268
ON YOUR
125TH ANNIVERSARY!**

SPRINKLERS SAVE LIVES

**Officers, Journeymen and Apprentices
Sprinkler Fitters Local Union 692 of Philadelphia and Vicinity**

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Raphael Marini Jr – Business Agent
Gavin Black – President
Matthew Marini – Vice President
Frank Fenningham – Treasurer
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on the
125th-year
Anniversary of
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ON
**125 YEARS OF PROVIDING
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Plumbers & Pipefitters 25
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Plumbers 63
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Plumbers & Pipefitters 99
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Plumbers & Pipefitters 101
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Plumbers 130
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Plumbers & Pipefitters 136
Evansville, IN

Plumbers & Steamfitters 137
Springfield, IL

Plumbers & Pipefitters 149
Champaign, IL

Plumbers & Pipefitters 157
Terre Haute, IN

Plumbers & Pipefitters 160
Carbondale, IL

Sprinkler Fitters 268
St. Louis, MO

Sprinkler Fitters 281
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Peoria, IL

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East St. Louis, IL

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Plumbers & Pipefitters 551
Herrin, IL

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Phone: 314-647-0628

Building and Construction Trades Council of St. Louis, AFL-CIO

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- | | |
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| Bricklayers, Local 1 | Laborers, Local 660 |
| Cement Masons, Local 527 | Painters' District Council 58 |
| Teamsters, Local 682 | Plasterers' Local 3 |
| Decorators & Displaymen, Tent & Awning Workers, Local 39 | Plumbers and Pipefitters, Local 562 |
| Electrical Workers, Local 1 | Roofers, Local 2 |
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| Glaziers, Local 513 | Sprinkler Fitters, Local 268 |
| Hoisting Engineers, Local 513 | Sprinkler Fitters, Local 669 |
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Illinois Pipe Trades Organizers
JASON T. ROGERS
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The PLUMBER protects the health of the Nation!

HAPPY 125TH!

On behalf of Sprinkler Fitters Local 417, we would like to extend our warmest congratulations to Sprinkler Fitters Local 268 on your remarkable 125th anniversary!

We hope this milestone night is filled with celebration and pride. You should all be proud of the skilled work and dedication you have contributed to the trade, shaping it into the strong and respected profession it is today. Here's to honoring your past achievements and looking forward to continued success in the years to come!



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Business Manager



Matt Herman
Business Agent

Mack Schmitt
President

Charles Bailey Jr.
Business Manager/Financial Secretary/Treasurer

John Passiglia
Assistant to the Business Manager
Vice-President

Steve Kohlberg
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Steve Marshall
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Executive Board
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Pat Bailey
Matt Cates

Finance Board
Kile Bailey
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Justin Snyder

Examining Board- Jake Vavak, Clayton Wilke, Neal Schaller

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HAPPY 125TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY!

SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 268

BEST WISHES FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS!



www.Local533.com

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Congratulations on 125 years

Pipefitters' Association

Local Union 537

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Business Manager/ Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Albert Belsito
Business Agent

Brian A. Nicholson
Business Agent

Daniel E. Coady
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John J. Kelly
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Terence M. Sweeney
Organizer

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40 Enterprise Street, Ste 420, Dorchester, MA 02125
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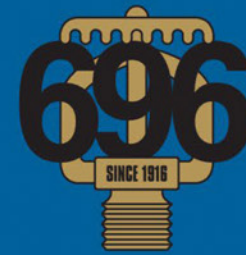
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PROUD TO SUPPORT and CELEBRATE
with
Sprinkler Fitters Local # 268
on their
125th Anniversary



CONGRATULATIONS
to the
SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL UNION 268
ON YOUR 125TH ANNIVERSARY!

For 125 years, your members have been at the forefront of protecting lives and property across our region. Your commitment to excellence, safety, and brotherhood has built more than systems-it has built a legacy.

THANK YOU FOR LEADING THE WAY.
HERE'S TO THE NEXT 125 YEARS!

62 COUNTIES. 2,300 MEMBERS. ONE UNION

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Business Manager

SCOTT LAMORTICELLA
Business Agent

PHILIP MANCINI
Business Agent

DAN HURLEY
President

ANTHONY BARBOZA
Vice President

CHRIS LANGSTON
Financial Secretary/Treasurer

JEFF DRANSFIELD
Recording Secretary

Executive Board:

BRIAN GILLIGAN

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CONGRATULATIONS ON 125 YEARS!



FROM SPRINKLER FITTERS LOCAL 704!!!
SPRINKLER FITTERS AND APPRENTICES OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

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Congratulations
and Thank You
to the
**Men and Women
of Local 268**

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**Skilled Labor to the
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for
125 Years!

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Boilermakers Local 363



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President
Asst. Business Agent

Josh Raterman
Business Manager
Secretary Treasurer

Chad Verble
Vice President
Asst. Business Agent

Mike Dinan
Recording Sec.
Asst. Business Agent

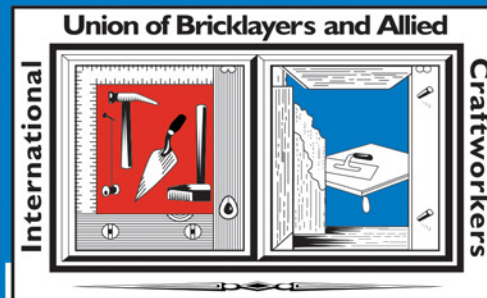
Jim Irwin
Jeff Smith
Trustees

Bradley English
Inspector
Abbie Weber
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BRIAN JENNEWEIN
DIRECTOR

MICHAEL FOX, SR.
SECRETARY TREASURER



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DONALD ENGLE
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LOCAL NO. 18 OF MISSOURI**

MICHAEL WEBER
PRESIDENT/FIELD REP
ANTHONY BONO
ORGANIZING DIRECTOR/VICE PRES/FIELD REP

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**CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 268
ON CELEBRATING A MILESTONE OF 125 YEARS.**

Your dedication to the trade is unmatched.
For those that came before and the ones to come after, Cheers!



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Congratulations and Best Wishes!



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Tom Dempsey

Founder & CEO

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**CONGRATULATIONS, LOCAL 268
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Here's to the Next 125 Years Protecting the St. Louis Region!



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Local Unions 520, 520A, 520B, 520C, 520D, 520R
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Chad Goldschmidt.....	President
Donnie Ferrari.....	Vice President
Bob Schmidt.....	Recording Secretary
Rusty Redman.....	Financial Secretary
Donnie Ferrari.....	Treasurer
Christi Hopkins.....	Conductor
John Grimm, Jr.....	Guard
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HAPPY 125TH ANNIVERSARY!

Thank You
to your members, labor leaders and contractors
for keeping Missouri union-strong!



Doug Beck, President
Dustin Himes, Secretary-Treasurer
www.buildmo.org

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125 Years!

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Recording Secretary: Stephanie Moore
Trustess:
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**United Association of Plumbers
Pipefitters & HVAC Techs**

**Congratulations to UA Local 268 on your 125th Anniversary
from all the Members and Officers of Local 123 in Tampa, FL!!**

**Congratulations to the Officers and Members
of Sprinklerfitters Local No. 268
as you celebrate 125 Years**



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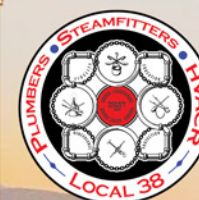
PAUL O'CONNOR
Business Manager

FREDDY DELLIGATTI
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

RICHARD GILLIGAN
Business Agent-at-Large

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UA LOCAL 38

PLUMBERS, STEAMFITTERS & HVAC/R
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**THE OFFICERS & MEMBERS OF
UA LOCAL 38
SALUTE
SPRINKLERFITTERS LOCAL 268
ON
125 YEARS OF BEING
UNION STRONG!**

Larry Mayzola Jr.
Business Manager/Financial Secretary Treasurer

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UA LOCAL 149
PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS



From East Central Illinois to Southwest Illinois/St. Louis, we congratulate our Brothers and Sisters at U.A. Local 268 on celebrating 125 years!

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
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PRESIDENT | Joshua Timm
INNER GUARD |
| Ron Hagan
VICE PRESIDENT | Travis Swope
RECORDING SECRETARY |
| Charlie Deakin
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BUSINESS AGENT | Harlan Gilmore
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PLUMBING |
| | Cole Reedy
EXAMINING BOARD
PIPEFITTING |
| Janssen Sage
FINANCE COMMITTEE | Micheal Wolken
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| Garett Jones
FINANCE COMMITTEE | Joseph Franklin
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HVAC |
| | Jeff Mathis
EXECUTIVE BOARD |
| Richard Flanagan
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UNION PROUD!**

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in producing this book for your
anniversary celebration.



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**Plumbers, Pipefitters &
Mechanical Equipment Service
Local Union 392
Cincinnati, Ohio**

Business Manager
Chris Webster

Business Agents
Bob Baker Mike Craig
Jim Harris Tim O'Hearn

Financial Secretary
Jeff Kirby

**CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST
WISHES TO LOCAL 268
FOR 125 YEARS OF SERVICE!**



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**Congratulations to the Members, Officers and Staff
at U.A. Local 268!**



From the Officers and Members of Local 542

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THE OFFICERS AND MEMBER OF
PLUMBERS, PIPEFITTERS, AND HVACR
TECHNICIANS LOCAL UNION 72,
ATLANTA, GA



SALUTES AND HONORS

**LOCAL
UNION 268**

ON YOUR 125TH ANNIVERSARY

Terry Newsome, Jr. **BUSINESS MANAGER**
Alan Tomberlin **FINANCIAL SECRETARY/TREASURER**
David Evans **PIPEFITTING AGENT**
Lance McCravy **PLUMBING AGENT**

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Atlanta, GA 30316
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Rome Local 72 Office
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Rome, GA 30161
(706) 291-6635 | Fax (706) 291-0816

Albany Local 72 Office
1900 Clark Avenue
Albany, GA 31705
(229) 436-3929 | Fax (229) 439-4803

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ON CONTINUING YOUR IMPORTANT MISSION - PROTECTING LIVES!**



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Congratulations on your 125th Anniversary Local 268

**From the Officers, Members, and Staff of
Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 91**

**Birmingham, Alabama
Claude T. Pierce, Jr., Business Manager
Business Agent, Chris Bell**

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