I would like to congratulate the recently elected Delegates to the Convention, Pete Boisvert, Mark Neville and Joe Lachance E-Board members, Mark Neville and Dan Coffey and trustee, George Bell. I would also like to thank every member who ran for office as well as those members who took the time to vote on Election Day.

I recently attended a UA Breakfast at the National Building Trades Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. General President Hite spoke of the need for skilled trades people in many areas of the country. He spoke of the need for all UA members to take advantage of the UA’s Training and Certification Programs. UA certifications are required more times than not on many of the larger projects going on through out the country. The UA has been selling the certification programs as a benefit to the client, assuring clients of quality work, on time and on budget. Our members should contact Kim to sign up for certification courses.

General President Hite also spoke about changes to the accrual rate for the National Pension. With the Plan exceeding its investment assumptions for the past two years as well as most locals increasing their respective contributions by 25% the Plan is on its way to recovery. The new accrual rates will take effect January 1, 2007 for all locals that have increased their 2004 contribution rate 25% by January 1, 2007. The new rate will be 75% of the 2004 rates. For Local 131 this means a jump from the present rate of $14.97 per credit year to a rate of $40.11 per credit year. This is all contingent on the local increasing our present contribution rate of $1.75 per hour by $0.45 to a total of $2.20 per hour. President Hite also spoke of ongoing negotiations to sell the Diplomat and the Hillcrest Golf Course. The UA has been working with a development company to secure development rights to the properties, increasing their market value. The plan is to leave South Florida with the money we had invested and work to make the Pension plan whole again.

Work in the area and throughout New England is still slow. Work on the road has picked up with members going to Ohio, Minnesota, Florida, Nebraska and New Jersey and all working at least 6-10s. We now have:

* 145 members working for Local Contractors
* 50 working locally for OOT Contractors
* 20 members working on the road
* 56 members out of work

Work on the New School projects is starting to pick up. The schools are in Bedford and Conway and the two projects are to be done under the Residential Agreement over the next 1 year. Anyone interested in these two projects should contact me ASAP to discuss them further.

AES Granite Ridge began their Outage this week and hired 6 of our members. They have a 2 week Outage scheduled for 4/10/06.

Merrimack Station in Bow has a 30 day Outage scheduled for 4/19/06 that plans to hire 7 of our members to change out 6 soot blowers and misc. emergent work.

The Boilermakers have signed a Reciprocal Agreement with us and will take all the welders we can send them for their portion of the Outage at Merrimack Station ASAP.

There have been a total of 37 members dispatched over the past month consisting of 6 plumbers, 16 welders, 15 pipefitters and no apprentice.
All members are encouraged to access the UA website www.ua.org. There is a bundle of exciting information available in the “members only” section.

Is there any interest in mini-training sessions for members to brush up on their skills or for those members who wish to add to their skills???

**OSHA 10 TRAINING**
The ten-hour construction safety training certification can be obtained on-line at the following website: www.advanceonline.com

**REMINDER TO ALL UA CERTIFIED WELDERS AND MEDICAL GAS INSTALLERS...**
CONTINUITY IS REQUIRED EVERY SIX (6) MONTHS. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO SATISFY THIS REQUIREMENT ON THE JOB YOU MAY DO SO HERE AT THE HALL!

**2006 Plumbing Seminars:**
All Seminars begin at 6 pm!
May 8th, August 7th & November 6th.

Current State of NH Plumbing License and UA Membership Card with dues paid through the current month are required for seminar registration.

**SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:**
Pat Fall, Jon Marnie, Jay Allard, James Doherty, Lane Reil, Chris Croswell, Tim Johnson, Brian Gentile & Tim Poulin for your assistance in cleaning, organizing & boiler installation here at the Local 131 Training Facility!

**NNE District Council 10**

Brothers and Sisters,
I recently attended the Mechanical Contractors Association of America, (MCAA) conference. I attended several workshops with the contractors about the outlook for the future economy. It is the feeling of many experts that future construction work will be mostly retrofits and service maintenance. There should be more new construction than in recent years, but not like it used to be. I also met a couple of new contractors that belong to the New England Mechanical Contractors Association and the MCAA. They both seemed interested in doing work in our area. One of them specializes in chiller work. I gave them the contact names in all three locals of the District Council. Hopefully this will help some of our members to get more work opportunities.

I would like to congratulate those members, Pete Boisvert, Mark Neville, and Joe Lachance, who won the election for UA delegate. It should be a very interesting and well-run convention. Also congrats to the E-Board, Mark Neville and Dan Coffey, and for trustee, George Bell.

Until next month I remain faithfully yours.

Dennis
Well, the first official day of Spring has come and gone and I have stepped back out on the trails! And after one short 3 mile jaunt through Bear Brook State Park (which certainly isn’t a mountain trek) I am once again reminded that I was not as diligent on the treadmill over the winter as I had convinced myself I was. But the days are getting longer, the temperatures are rising and once again, hope springs eternal!

I HOPE I can get my behind back in shape in 2 months to survive the 5 day backpacking trip through the White Mountains that I have planned for the first week of June. I HOPE I can remember how to set up the tent. I HOPE I don’t get blisters from the hiking boots that I haven’t worn in 5 months. I HOPE.

When I first took up hiking three years ago, it was something very new and different to me. I had led a relatively sedentary life for the past 15 or so years. And I had never been a sport freak as a kid. So my first step onto a trail - alone - with no way to predict my stamina or endurance, was a bit scary. I had tried other physical activity in the past. I already owned the treadmill that was collecting dust in the basement. But all those other attempts at doing the “exercise because it’s good for you” activities had all fallen by the wayside. One fact hard to ignore: if it’s boring, you WILL give it up!

So then I gave some thought to some type of structured activity. Tennis? - nope; takes 2 people. I can’t even get my husband and I to sit down at the dinner table at the same time more than once a week, never mind find a steady partner I could count on daily. Karate classes? - nope; too expensive. Besides, I don’t need any more belts. Aerobics classes? - puhleeeeze! Too embarrassing. Ever notice that most of the people in the world wearing spandex in public are exactly the ones that shouldn’t? But I finally got lucky. I found an activity that I enjoy so thoroughly that I don’t even realize just how hard I’m working and just how good it is for me. I just do it because it’s fun! Except in the snow. I just can’t get into frozen eyelashes and numb thumbs. So for now I guess I’m stuck with the treadmill over the winter months. Now NEXT year . . . .