At the April Union meeting, allocations of the June increase were made. The disbursements are listed in the Bulletin Board section of the newsletter. Thank you to the members who attended and took part in the discussion and vote on disbursements.

The Pension plan was one of the issues brought up at the meeting. As many of you are aware the plan has been drastically affected by the implementation of the Pension Protection Act of 2006. We have already made deep cuts to try to sure up the plan, the accrual rate has been cut in half, the early retirement subsidy has been eliminated and we have increased the contribution rate. Even with these reductions the plan is still projected to be in the red or critical zone. The PPA requires the fund to submit a certification of funding status by January 2009. Preliminary results from the November 2007 valuation indicate a funding deficiency of $2.36. Once the fund is certified, we will need to develop and implement a rehabilitation plan to bring the pension to 100% funding. In anticipation of the plan being in the Red zone in January the actuary has provided the trustees with a preliminary ten- year rehabilitation plan. The plan calls for the contribution rate to be increased by 40 cents per year for a seven- year period. With three years of a contribution rate of $7.05 to bring the plan to 100% funded.

As a trustee I can say that none of the actions taken since the PPA has become law have been easy. The reductions have affected every member of this association. I believe that over time the pension will become fully funded. At that time we will be able to make benefit improvements.

Work in the area is fantastic at this time with the spring outages in progress. As of 4/9/08 the Merrimack Station call at Bow has been going on for a week with 25 members on site. The Seabrook Station Outage call filled out at 134 members for its first week and all seems to be going well. We currently have:

- 184 working for Local Contractors
- 106 working for out of town contractors
- 24 members on the road
- 4 members out of work

Some of the projects we are aggressively going after are the Life & Science center in Hanover, Huggins Hospital in Wolfeboro, Elliott Hospital at the old Jac-Pac site in Manchester, Osram Sylvania in Exeter, Merrimack Station scrubber in Bow, Fidelity in Merrimack and the Laidlaw CoGen project in Berlin.

Future work will be heavily dominated by hospitals and the demand for certified Med-Gas installers will be extremely high, so please update your qualifications in anticipation of this work and take the 40 hour Med–Gas course in ASAP.

The next important item all our members need to have is the NH Gas Fitters License because enforcement is coming in July 2008 and no work on gas piping or equipment can be done without the new license in your possession. So please act quickly.
The United Association Constitution SEC. 157 states:
“A member owing over 3 months’ dues shall automatically be suspended from membership without notice of any kind. A suspended member is denied all rights and privileges”

The Local is under no obligation to warn you of impending suspension OR inform you after the fact. Phone calls from the Business Manager or the Business Agent are a courtesy of Local 131. It is your responsibility to remember to pay your dues.

The United Association Constitution SEC. 158 (a) states:
“A suspended member must pay his back dues through the current month before his $50.00 reinstatement fee can be paid.”
Local 131 cannot forward any money to the UA until we have it all. So if you only pay a portion of the balance due, the clock keeps ticking and you’re still suspended. If you reach the 6 month mark before the total is paid, you WILL get expelled.

Penalties of Losing “Good Standing” Status

ANY MEMBER who gets suspended:
♦ Can’t vote in any election for 1 year
♦ Can’t hold any office for 2 years
♦ Can’t take an “Honorable Withdrawal” for 2 years
♦ Can’t collect the UA Death Benefit for surviving spouse if member dies while suspended OR within 90 days after reinstated.
♦ Can’t attend meetings or vote while suspended.
♦ Will not receive any correspondence from the Local while suspended (ie newsletters, notices of meetings and events, etc…)

In addition to the above:

MEMBER ON OUT-OF-WORK LIST who gets suspended:
♦ Removed from the list. You CANNOT work as UA member if you are NOT in good standing.
♦ Once reinstated, you are returned to the list at the BOTTOM.

WORKING MEMBER who gets suspended:
♦ Steward is informed and member is to be removed from the job. You CANNOT work as UA member if you are NOT in good standing. Until reinstated, you will not be placed on the out-of-work list.

Office Bits & Bytes

Mo Demers / Office Administrator

THE DANGERS OF NOT PAYING YOUR DUES.
There is much more damage than just being assessed a $50 fine.

UA VALVE REPAIR: Certification update is required every 3 years! Please check your certifications and register for the recertification training. ** Before expiration** - Individual’s must participate in the 12 hour update class and take the UA/EPRI update exam which consists of a minimum of 50 questions. A grade of 80% must be achieved for certification renewal! The course schedule will be determined by the number of individual’s that register!

PLUMBING SEMINARS: May 12 & August 11th. Seminars start promptly at 6 pm. IPC 2006 code book is required! Code books are available for $65.

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We had 28 in attendance at the April meeting. Let’s try to beat that in May!

The May meeting will be the last one before the summer break. Please make every effort to attend. We learn something new at every meeting! Coffee, snacks and lively conversation!

Annual dues will be due upon our return in September. Dues are only $10 for the year.

Barring any last minute conflicts, UA International Representative Bill Turner will be our Guest Speaker at this meeting. He will present a “State of the Union” address. The health of the union affects ALL of us. Let’s show him our solidarity and strength with a great turnout!!

The monthly Retirees’ Breakfast gathering will be Monday, May 05, 9:00 am at City Side Grill in Concord

The next Retirees’ Association meeting will be Tuesday, May 13, 10:00 am at the Local 131 Union Hall.

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This is the last meeting before the summer outing. We always have a great time at the cookout and it’s wonderful to see lots of folks we might not see during the year. We encourage everyone to try and make it, rain or shine. There is shelter if the weather is not perfect. And the food is always great! Again, don’t let transportation keep you away. Call me or anyone at the union hall and we’ll make arrangements to get you there!