On July 25th the National AFL-CIO opens their convention in Chicago. The convention marks 50 years since the merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. With this merger came solidarity in the labor movement.

This convention brings speculation that a number of AFL-CIO affiliates may break away to form a new organization called “Unite To Win.” At this time the Internationals of the Teamsters, State Employees International Union, United Food and Commercial Workers and Unite HERE (which represents service industry workers) have expressed their dissatisfaction with the direction of the AFL-CIO. These unions feel the Labor movement needs to change its course in respect to organizing, political activity and consolidation of unions in similar industries. At this point it is anyone’s guess as to what the conclusion of the convention will bring to the labor movement over the coming years.

Locally, we have made some changes in the office to consolidate expenses. Mo will be working mornings only from this point on. If you need to get a hold of Mo, she will be here from 7 am to 11 am.

Also we have had a rental unit become available downstairs. The space is 78 foot by 20 foot with a 16 foot overhead door. If you know of anyone interested or looking for space, give us a call.

Work in the area continues to be slow with the local contractors being the only ones that have been putting men to work. There are 101 members on the out-of-work list with only 4 on travel cards. Work on the road is still extremely hard to find and road work in New England is just not available.

Federal Piping has landed some work in the Concord area and may be looking to add some more members to his growing business.

NPI/H&F has been steadily putting members to work, building its workforce back to what it once was. They have landed work throughout the state and are diligently pursuing work to carry them through the fall and even the winter months.

RTH has completed their staff for all the work they have outside the shipyard. The work inside the shipyard has been slowed by the talks of closure. They still have a strong presence there, but not the hirings we had once hoped for.

The work in Dartmouth for B-G has started with the hiring of 1 plumber and 1 welder.

The work in Pembroke on the AG freezer plant for American Refrigeration has also started with the hiring of 2 welders holding UA21 certs.

There has been a total of 47 members hired between June 9 and July 13 which consisted of 16 fitters, 10 welders, 15 plumbers and 6 apprentices.
OSHA 10 TRAINING: Classes will be scheduled according to demand.

UA Valve Certifications:
All UA Certified Valve Technicians are required to recertify every Three (3) years. In order to recertify you must complete a 10-hour recertification refresher course and exam. All certified members must recertify by March 1, 2006. Members are encouraged to sign up for the refresher course so classes can be arranged.

Plumbing Seminars:
August 8, 2005 at 6 pm. UA membership card with dues paid through current month and current NH Plumbing license are required at seminar registration.

UA Welding and Medical Gas Continuity:
For those members who cannot complete continuity requirements on the job at the required six-month intervals, arrangements can be made to do so here at the hall on the third Wednesday of each month.

2004/2005 Apprentice of the Year has been awarded to Brian Gentile. Brian is a 3rd year Apprentice with Hansen-Fox Co. Inc. CONGRATULATIONS BRIAN!

SCHOOL FOR APPRENTICES WILL BEGIN ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH AT 6 PM! ALL APPRENTICES ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND!

JOURNEYMAN TRAINING: Will be scheduled accordingly for interested members.

All members are encouraged to participate in the various training programs offered by this local and the United Association Training Department!

Office Odds & Ends

One of my job duties here in the office is publishing this newsletter. That includes proof-reading, editing, printing, folding, labeling, stapling, stamping and mailing. It takes a couple of days to pull it all together. I have come to really enjoy writing my little stories and filling up the bulletin board with items I hear about that I think might be of interest to you. Please keep calling me with info to print there. I have a collection of cartoons that I like sharing with you. And I appreciate all the feedback I’ve received from many of you about my column.

During this process, I obviously must read everyone else’s columns. Over the last several months it has been discouraging to keep printing reports on slow work and dues increases. I can’t avoid being aware of the difficult times here at Local 131.

Dave and Steve have been struggling diligently to stay afloat during this difficult period; looking wherever they could to cut expenses, raising dues, fighting to get more men out in the field working. They have raised the rent on all our tenants and we are connecting up to the new natural gas line being laid along 28 by-pass in order to save on heating costs. But after many months of these efforts, it seems it simply hasn’t been enough. It has now been determined that payroll must be scaled back. To that end, my job has been down-sized to a part-time position. Starting August 1st, I will only be in the office mornings Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 11:00 am. I will also no longer be at the window to collect dues during the hours right before union meeting. Since David and Steve have numerous other committee meetings to juggle prior to the start of the union meeting, it would be of great help to them if those of you who ordinarily pay dues on union meeting night consider sending in your dues by mail. You can send your card with your check. I will process the receipt, stamp your card and mail them both back to you. As always, I shall continue to serve to the best of my ability.
The strongest bond of human sympathy outside the family relations should be one uniting working people.

-- Abraham Lincoln --

MEMBER NEWS

Ken Prunier has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of pneumonia. Our understanding in this case is that this is a degenerative disease with no known cure.

John Sullivan has returned home. He and his family thank all those members who have expressed their concern. Cards and kind words are always appreciated.

T-shirts are now available at the union hall. Cost is $15.00 each. Sizes from Medium to 2XL

An old-fashioned bike wheel has 21 spokes. How many spaces are between the spokes - 20, 21, or 22?

(answer)