Last month I attended a few days of the United Associations Business Managers and Business Agents training. I was fortunate to attend two sessions conducted by Mark Breslin. One session on organizing and another on marketing the UA and what we have to offer prospective employers.

Both sessions were extremely informative, but the marketing session titled “survival of the fittest” really hit home with many of the attendees. “Survival of the Fittest” is the title of Mark Breslin’s book detailing the current state of union construction and how the future depends on every apprentice and journeyman working in the field today.

Breslin’s background as an employer representative gives a different perspective of the difficulties associated with becoming and remaining a union shop in today’s work environment. While he believes organized labor has much to offer to the employers and their clients, in the form of a qualified and motivated work force, the success of organized labor and its contractor employers rests with the people in the field. From the general foreman down to the first year apprentice, we need to be the most skilled and productive workforce available.

We need to continue to seek training and show both our contractors and the clients that by using a union workforce they will realize savings through increased production and job quality.

Work in and out of the area has begun to slow down. There are 65 members out of work with 10 of them on travel cards working in the states of Florida, Delaware, and Nebraska.

Work in the Hanover area at Dartmouth College is all manned up with completion dates of sometime in June.

Work at Stryker Pharmaceutical in Lebanon for DSI should be ready to begin soon. It has been delayed due to long lead times on valves, skids and equipment. The job is scheduled to hire one more orbital welder and around 6-8 fitters.

Federal Piping has some work in the Concord area and is looking for an experienced Journeyman to service and install packaged boilers under the Residential Agreement. Please call me ASAP if you are interested.

Work at Seabrook Station has picked up with the hiring of 6 members over the past few weeks for some maintenance projects that need to be completed by the end of the year.

Over the past month, 18 fitters, 13 welders, 4 plumbers and 2 apprentices went to work for contractors in our area.

I would like to remind members that if you get laid off, please come by the hall and fill out a Referral Questionnaire so we have the correct skills, phone numbers, and certifications listed for you so we can get you back to work as soon as possible.
The labor movement is the last noble protest of the American people against the power of incorporated wealth.  

-Wendell Phillips-

He who buys it, doesn’t need it.  He who needs it, doesn’t buy it.  What is it?

Answer below (Look in the carpet)

Ahh!  Here we go, Martha.  “To adjust the tension control on your Miracle-Lift chair simply turn the release knob counter-clockwise.

MEMBER NEWS

Condolences

Family and friends of Robert Wilder  
Who passed away Oct. 24th  
after a battle with brain cancer.
Dear Brothers and Sisters of Local 131,

I have been asked to write an article on the District Council’s activities over the past months, which I am very happy to do. In this article I will give an overview of all past activities. Future articles will appear and they may be more specific.

The District Council (DC) has faxed our contractor lists to General Contractors in order to get our contractors onto the bid lists for different projects in all 3 locals (NH, ME, VT). There also have been meetings with these and other General Contractors about upcoming projects, such as the Concord Hospital, Maine Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, Postal Distribution Center, etc.

The DC has met a couple of times with the University System of NH about future projects coming up out at Keene and Plymouth. We have also met with Anheuser Busch in Merrimack about future work. There have been meetings and phone calls with our contractors regarding what projects they can bid on under the Residential Agreement and which ones they can not.

The DC has also been involved politically in NH and Maine with legislation pertaining to licensing, misclassification of workers (which is very predominant with small contractors) and procurement policies on state funded jobs. We are working on making it mandatory that contractors provide health care for their employees on all state funded jobs.

The Governor of NH, John Lynch, has appointed me to the Workforce Opportunity Council of NH. Through this appointment I am looking into whether Local 131’s Training Department is eligible for state grants. As a lot of you know, I have served on the State Apprenticeship Council for many years. We are presently battling with a certain state senator who is trying to undermine our apprenticeship program by outlawing it. I am prepared to go head-to-head with him when and if this ever gets into legislation. I am in constant contact with the NH Labor Commissioner and the Federal Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training regarding all issues surrounding apprenticeships.

Last, but not least, I have been in contact with some non-union companies to see if they are interested in signing with us. We are trying a “top down” approach instead of a “bottom up” tactic, which could mean stripping a contractor and bringing new members into our locals.

These past nine months have been very busy. One thing that has been challenging is trying to get better at communicating and sharing information among the three locals. I feel very strongly that if we all work together, we can begin to recapture our work in all three states.

Till next time, I remain faithfully yours,

Dennis Adams