In the last few issues of the UA Journal, President Hite has written about the challenges facing the United Association. Among the concerns is supplying the qualified manpower to our signatory contractors. Nationally as well as locally we are facing an unprecedented number of working members retiring in the next few years. The average age in many local unions including Local 131 is greater than 45 years. With more working members looking to retire we need to recruit and train apprentices in greater numbers to fill the void left by the departure of skilled craftpeople. We also need to look to the unorganized craftsmen to keep our working numbers up. We need to recruit key craftsmen and women from our competition. Once they join our ranks we need to train them to the levels of proficiency we expect from all UA craftsmen.

Having the numbers to fill the manpower calls is only one piece of the equation. The real key is ensuring that every UA craftsperson has the skills required to do the job. That is where the rubber meets the road. If we are to be competitive in the market place we have to be able to do the work right the first time. We must work smarter and faster than our non-union competition. It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that they are the best trained in their respective fields and that they share their knowledge with their fellow workers.

The UA spends millions of dollars annually to train our workforce. The opportunities for our members are endless. From training on the local level to computer based programs, the UA has put great resources into seeing that the members have the opportunity to learn all the skills needed whether it is Med Gas, Valve Training, Foreman Training, Detailing, CAD, Orbital Welding, Rigging or any other aspect of the trade. The opportunity is yours to learn new skills or upgrade your skills. Our training is our best asset. Visit our website and sign up for a class. The skills you learn are what make you and every member of the organization marketable.

I would like to take a moment to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season including what I hope will be a prosperous new year in 2008. Work in the area continues to be status quo with very little new activity due to the holiday season. Work on the road continues to be strong with members working in MA, CT, NY, VA, SC, FL, IL, NE, NM, AZ, WI, NV, and UT.

We currently have;
* 155 working for local contractors
* 5 working locally for out of town contractors
* 35 members on the road
* 80 members on the out–of-work list

We currently have two Outages on the schedule for April 1, 2008. Seabrook Station will have a 35 day refueling and maintenance outage that will consist of a considerable amount of pipefitting work in the containment building on a sump modification. No hiring schedule has been set but there is talk of them starting some mock up work in January.

Merrimack Station in Bow will have a major Turbine Overhaul that is scheduled to run somewhere between 6-12 weeks. Both of these projects are projected to run two shifts of 6-10s for the durations of their outages.

Last month the Building Trades met with the Washington Group who was awarded the Construction Management of Merrimack Stations new scrubber. Preliminary data says that they hope to start construction in early spring 2009 and be in operation by 2011.

With the new year fast approaching I would like to ask all members to go to our website (ualu131.org) and fill out a new Referral Questionnaire or you can always come by the hall and fill one out. It is incredibly important that we have up to date skills, licenses, certifications and contact information not only for us, but for potential hiring contractors to be able to see that we are the best trained and qualified workforce available for their construction projects.
Apprenticeship & Training
Kim Trisciani / Training Coordinator

NH Gasfitter Licensing information is available on the www.ualu131.org website. If you need assistance completing the application process, please do not hesitate to contact me!

Please continue to support and mentor our apprentices! Their success is important for OUR FUTURE SUCCESS!

The UA Certified Orbital Welding course began on November 15th with eight members...this class meets three times per week for ten hours per week and is scheduled to complete on December 15th with a UA Weld test. Interested members are encouraged to sign up for the next session which will begin in January!

I would like to thank all of the members who have contributed to the Apprentice’s Annual Food Drive. Donations will be accepted through December 15th.

Office Bits & Bytes
Mo Demers / Office Administrator

We've all been there. You buy a new house or you move in with a new room-mate. You go back home to mom & dad's basement for a spell or you get a long term job out-of-state. Whatever the reason, you need your mail to start going someplace new.

So you go to the post office and you get one of those little white cards that has spaces for your old address and your new address, you fill in all the blanks and you hand it back to the postal clerk. Great! Done! That was easy, right? Well, not exactly. For a while all is well. Your mail follows you to the new digs. And the post office even decorates it for you with lovely little yellow labels! How nice! They are happy for you in your new abode. But after a while the flow of mail slows to a crawl. No more lovely yellow labels. Your magazines stop coming (did you pay that renewal notice? Hmmm.) Even the bills aren't coming (and you KNOW they want to reach you!) Doesn't the post office love you anymore?

Well, you see, the purpose of that little card is actually to have your mail FORWARDED to that new address. That means that all the mail you get now with the old address on it (like your UA Journal, the credit card bill, your birthday cards, all those catalogues!) will be passed along by the Post Office to the NEW address. But, this great service has a time limit on it. The USPS will only do this for a few months. After that, they start slapping different little yellow labels on all your important packages and returning them to the senders. All your friends. Your creditors. Your catalogues! But alas! The senders don't always read those labels. Now they don't know how to find you; don't know how to reach you. “Where have you gone?” they wonder. “What could have happened?” they worry. And so, you don't get your bills. Your credit is ruined. No birthday cards. You think no one loves you. Life stinks!

To prevent all this unhappiness, YOU must tell everyone about your new address. You must tell your creditors, your magazines, your Union Hall!!! The post office does NOT tell everyone else about it. Filling out that little card just doesn't do what you think it does. Come on...nothin’s ever THAT easy!

2008 Plumbing Seminars
February 11th, May 12th, August 11th and November 3rd
All seminars are at 6:00 PM

Current NH Plumbing License and UA Membership card required for registration.

Effective August 17, 2007 The 2006 edition of the International Plumbing Code and Residential Code have been adopted by the State of NH. IPC 2006 codebooks are available through the JATC for $65 each.

**REMINDER**
All UA certified welders and medical gas installer’s... 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.
Did you know that when you sneeze, all bodily functions stop, even your heart? Sneezing is the body's way of removing irritants; it is most often caused by dust, strong smells, temperature changes or infections. A strong sneeze can cause the material spread to travel 6 to 9 ft. forward at a speed of up to 93 mph. So much force can be generated that people have actually fractured a rib sneezing.

It may surprise you, but commercial car washes use water more efficiently than doing it yourself, typically using 45 gallons of water per car. Home washing typically uses between 80 and 140 gallons. Commercial carwashes must also drain their wastewater into sewers, versus just letting it run into the ground. Some even reclaim and recycle their wastewater, for even greater efficiency!

With the foul weather season upon us, there is always the chance a meeting will get cancelled. Cancellations will be posted no later than 8:00 the day of the meeting on the HOME page of the website. That's the first page you see (even before you log-in). The notice will be in the left column of the white center section, right next to the waving flag.

• If anyone knows of a retiree that has recently hit upon hard times (illness, admitted to a nursing home, shut-in for other circumstances) PLEASE let me know. Don’t assume someone else must have already called. I’d rather get 5 calls than none. And we need to know ASAP so we can be sure they are contacted over the holidays. Now more than any other time of year is when they need to be remembered!!

• Insurance Programmers has announced that they will be making representatives available on site at the union hall at least quarterly. This will most likely be coordinated with our meetings. Postings of these sessions will be placed in this newsletter and on the website. We should all take advantage.

• In the future, for those of you who have a hard time coming to meetings, our meetings will occasionally get video-taped. This service is being donated by Pat McDuffee, when she is available. Any retiree can request a copy. Depending on the demand, we may request a nominal fee to cover postage.

• The Local 131 Apprentices are having their Christmas Food Drive now through Dec 15th. Anyone wishing to donate can drop off items at the hall office or bring them to the next meeting. If you can’t get here, call me and we’ll make arrangements to pick up your donations.