Business Manager’s Report

Much has transpired since the last newsletter with one item being the completion of negotiations around the state, which included all four zones: Topeka, Lawrence, Frontenac, and Wichita. May 31, 2013, marked the end of a 10-year agreement that was originally negotiated in 2003.

Several language changes were suggested by the membership and the various negotiating committees were able to incorporate many of those changes into one new document that eventually was accepted by all contractor groups signing on to another ten years agreement expiring May 31, 2023. The importance of keeping the language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement the same throughout the jurisdiction of Local 441 is obvious. Wage and Benefit packages were negotiated in each zone for the next two to three years and that part of the contract will continue to be negotiated as we progress through the ten year agreement. Thank you to the membership for your input and involvement and to the negotiating committees for their hard work and commitment to securing a satisfactory agreement for the membership.

After a short two-month break, the apprentice school is back up and running with the beginning of our fourth year with the new day school program. The benefits from the day school program continue to multiply as our ability to train the best in our industry is recognized more and more. Thank you to Training Director Mike Magennis and the entire Training Department for their dedication and continued efforts to make improvements to our training format.

This school year begins with one of the largest first-year classes to date, primarily due to the amount of work our Local’s jurisdiction continues to be blessed with. After reading the Business Representative’s reports, it is obvious that our current employment situation is in very good shape. There are also several major projects in the planning stages that will positively impact upcoming plumbing and piping jobs in our jurisdiction. As current projects are completed and new projects start to ramp up there may be some spotty unemployment, but it should be short lived. There appears to be plenty of work, both industrial and commercial alike, to provide employment for our membership for quite some time. And of course, that is our top priority.

Many of these projects will continue to require manpower needs beyond Local 441’s resources. Assistance from our sister locals, primarily in the area of certified welders and licensed plumbers will continue to be sought. But that source is becoming less and less abundant. I know it has been mentioned many times, but I would like to continue to add my voice urging members who may not have a plumbing license, medical gas certification, or welding certifications to take advantage of our free training to upgrade their skills. Contact the Training Department for details.

There is also the need for supervision. This, Brothers and Sisters, is just as critical if not more so. I want to encourage all members to step up and take on that responsibility if asked. This was a big topic during the past contract negotiations.

[Continued on Page 7]

A/C Unit Installed by LU 441 Apprentices

The building that houses LU441 in Wichita got a new air conditioning unit in May. Most of the work was performed by apprentices, giving them some valuable hands-on training and at the same time providing a financial benefit to the local union.

[Continued on Page 7]
On Labor Day, Gallup says Majority of Americans Still Approve Labor Unions

September 2, 2013

With 24 states now passing right-to-work legislation, and with more Republican-leaning states like Ohio wanting to follow suit with work laws that are dubious at best about whether they increase jobs or decrease wages, it seems surprising that a majority of Americans still approve of labor unions.

Gallup released a survey on Monday, Sept. 2, official Labor Day for 2013, that showed that 54 percent approve of labor unions, a slight increase from 52 percent just last year and six percentage points above the all-time low observed in 2009. On the other side of the equation, 39 percent disapprove of labor unions. The current reading is eight points below the historical average of 62% in Gallup’s trend dating back to 1936.

Gallup polled a random sample of 2,059 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. States and the District of Columbia with telephone interviews conducted Aug. 7-11, 2013 and said, with 95 percent confidence, that the margin of sampling error is ±3 percentage points.

A majority is good, but once upon a time a big majority, as many as 72 percent, said they approved. Gallup reported that labor union approval reached an all-time high of 75 percent in 1953 and 1957. Approval remained above 60 percent through the end of the 1960s, and then declined a little during the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and most of the 2000s. In 2009 approval fell to an all-time low of 48 percent during President Obama’s first term in office. Gallup opines that this drop may have been a “backlash against a Democratic administration that some feared would overly empower labor unions.” Since then, it said, labor union approval has remained at bare majority levels.

Not surprisingly, relatively few Republicans (34%) approve of labor organizations, while three-quarters of Democrats (75%) do. Americans living in the South, the region with the least labor union presence, are less likely to approve of labor unions (47%) than are those living in other regions. ... History shows that labor unions were a crucial part of the movement to create Labor Day, a holiday created by President Chester Arthur. President William Howard Taft put labor at the table when he created the U.S. Department of Labor in 1913.

Even though President Taft [1909-1913], a Republican, made labor a part of his Cabinet, contemporary Republicans have little regard or respect for unions, which they see as major funders for Democratic candidates. What unions ought to be worrying about, Gallup says, is that for unions and their supporters is that over half of Americans say unions will become weaker in the future. Successful efforts to weaken union power, such as the recent passage of “right to work” legislation in Michigan and Indiana, may be contributing to this sense that unions are in decline.


Best Doctors
Expert Second Opinions and Medical Advice at No Cost

Local Union #441 is pleased to introduce an important new benefit that helps you make the right medical decisions. It’s called Best Doctors.

Best Doctors provides access to 53,000+ medical specialists who have been designated as the best in their field by other doctors. Through Best Doctors, you can:

• Have your medical case reviewed by a world-renowned specialist who provides a detailed report with treatment recommendations
• Get expert answers to questions about a diagnosis or treatment plan
• Find a local specialist who is accepting new patients

It’s an innovative medical benefit that complements the care you receive from your own doctor. And you don’t have to travel or visit a doctor’s office. Best Doctors collects your medical records and scans, calls doctors and handles all the details.

What’s more, Best Doctors is 100% confidential and available at no cost to all participants and eligible dependents qualified for coverage in the Health and Welfare program. Here’s what people say about it:

“The experience with Best Doctors was very positive. The representatives were courteous and very helpful in walking me through the process. The time to complete the process was faster than I expected and the recommendation was thorough and well spelled out as to what was recommended. I feel more confident now with regards to my course of treatment.”

“OUTSTANDING. I do not often rate people and services as high as I did the Best Doctors staff. I have already told coworkers about the program and the great experience I had. I have also reached out to my HR representative to thank them for providing this benefit to me.”

“Fantastic. Because of my experience, I feel that for the first time, in a long time, I finally understand what is going on with my health, and what I can do about it. Best Doctors has given me the knowledge to move forward with confidence, and without fear. Your staff is wonderful, my only regret is that they did such a good job that I have no reason to talk to them anymore. Thank you.”

Did you know that 34% of medical diagnosis and 68% of treatment plans are incorrect? Make sure yours aren’t — with Best Doctors.

Addressing a medical challenge can be confusing and sometimes intimidating. Diagnoses can be hard to understand. Treatment options can be puzzling. And Internet searches can leave you frustrated and frightened. With Best Doctors, you don’t have to go it alone. Instead, you get help from the best medical minds in the world.

The officers and staff at Local Union #441 are very excited to offer this new service to complement the existing healthcare plan and to keep you and your family healthy for years to come. This program is not only for serious medication situations, but also for day to day questions you might encounter about your overall health status. All eligible participants should have received an information packet from “Best Doctors” and it should be self-explanatory, but if you have questions about the program before contacting Best Doctors, feel free to contact the Fund Office or your Business Agent and they will assist you. (All medical information is secure and not shared with anyone without your permission.)
Cecil Chisholm Jr, 69, died April 16, 2013. Most recently of Arkansas City, Ks. Member in good standing for 49 years.

George E. Coyne, 92, died July 12, 2013. Most recently of Topeka, Ks. Member in good standing for 49 years.

George Dale Doffing, 63, died May 30, 2013. Most recently of Haysville, Ks. Member in good standing for 65 years.

Gary L. Jones, 73, died August 30, 2013. Most recently of Arkansas City, Ks. Member in good standing for 29 years.

Allen F. Lindbloom, 86, died January 26, 2013. Most recently of Topeka, Ks. Member in good standing for 16 years.

Jim E. Majors, 58, died July 19, 2013. Most recently of Wichita, Ks. Member in good standing for 66 years.

Edward G. Porubsky, 89, died May 25, 2013. Most recently of Topeka, Ks. Member in good standing for 16 years.

William H. Schneickert, 71, died July 18, 2013. Most recently of Parsons, Ks. Member in good standing for 45 years.

Notices of brothers and sisters who have passed on are posted on our website as received: www.ua441.org. Click on “Member Information” and “In Memoriam.”

Don’t take chances. Be safe on the job.

Training

Things are busy in the training department. On August 19, 2013, we started our largest class in the history of the PPATKS with 58 new students.

We took four new instructors to Ann Arbor, Michigan for Instructor Training Week. Our new Pipefitting Instructor, Andy Tipton, started his core classes for his Instructor Certification. The additional new instructors are responsible for our journeyman and continuing education classes.

Gavin Gilliland will be teaching our OSHA 30 classes, Paul Miller will be teaching Backflow Prevention, and Gary Weaver will be teaching Arc Flash Safety and Mechanical Code Continuing Education classes.

We are in the process of creating the classes needed for the Mechanical Code and Plumbing Code continuing education requirements. We will send out postcards as soon as we have these class dates on our calendar.

In addition, we are planning more classes including: Backflow Prevention, Arc Flash Safety, and Orbital Welding. We have also put together a class for welder qualification practice for Wolf Creek. Tim Ashlock will be the instructor from the training department, with Ed Cloud (Wolf Creek inspector), helping with the testing requirements for the facility. Postcards will be sent with information and class dates. Please remember that classes have a minimum and maximum number of students allowed. If you are interested, sign up as soon as you receive this information.

We would like to thank P1 Group for donating a sectional boiler from Kiowa Community High School. Not only did they donate the boiler, but the manpower to tear it out and deliver it to our training center. We will put this to good use with both our HVAC and Pipefitter/Welder apprentice training. We appreciate the contributions our contractors are able to give. Please remember us when you have leftover materials and/or equipment from job sites.

You should start seeing apprentices on the job wearing our classy new training department t-shirts. Contact Jess or Kim at the training center at (316) 267-8508 to purchase one of your very own.

Our next UA Weld Test is September 21st at the Wichita Training Center.

In closing, remember, we train everyday with our attitudes and decisions we make on the job.

Michael J. Magennis, Training Director

Frontenac Area

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I hope this letter finds you and your family doing very well. I’d like to take a moment and update you on news in Southeast Kansas.

We are acquiring more work, which is great. All school projects were completed on time: specifically, the PSU Delinger Dorm Project. A lot of work was completed in a short amount of time and from the comments we have received, PSU personnel are very pleased with the renovation. The Baxter High School project was completed ahead of schedule so students were able to enjoy the finished work on the first day of classes. Richland Mechanical, who completed the BHS project, was awarded the Pool Project in Fredonia.

There has been a lot of discussion over the Empire Project in Riverton, Ks. We have been working with Burns and McDonnell, the Southeast Kansas Building Trades and Empire to set up a meeting in September. It looks like we will work under a NMA. There are two projects getting ready to bid and hopefully start this year. There will be relocation of some equipment and underground fire and safety.

I met with Price Gregory, the contractor who was awarded the pump station in Humbolt, Ks. The Enbridge Project, which we discussed, will be working under a PLA with Local Union 798. They might be looking for local men for some of this project from LU 441.

In the Galena area, we have a couple of men working on a Water Treatment Project. This project has resulted from the Stimulus Package and has been on the watch for the past four years.

Logan Mechanical is picking up some work in the Coffeyville area with the emergency shutdown. They are doing a great job and we are happy to continue working on some projects within the Refinery; it looks like the Market Recovery Package might be working after all.

The P1 project in Iola going well. Most of the fixtures are set for the rest of countertops to be set and all should be done on time.

Well, that’s all the news from Southeast Kansas! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Fraternally Yours,

Mike Wolownik (620) 231-4280
Frontenac Business Representative – Zone 1B

“Every job from the heart is, ultimately, of equal value.
The nurse injects the syringe; the writer slides the pen;
the farmer plows the dirt; the comedian draws the laughter.
Monetary income is the perfect deceiver of a man’s true worth.”
—Criss Jami
AFL-CIO Plans To Partner With Progressive Groups, ‘Open Up The Labor Movement’

WASHINGTON — The past year hasn’t been easy for organized labor. Union density dipped to a historic low of just 6.6 percent of the private sector. Michigan, the birthplace of United Auto Workers union, went right-to-work in a blur. And public-sector unions found themselves funding off more state-level legislative attacks designed to weaken them.

Taking stock of those challenges, Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO union federation, insists that the battles and setbacks have presented the labor movement with a chance to reinvent itself.

“We have to change the way we’re doing business in a significant way to get out of the crisis we find ourselves in,” Trumka told The Huffington Post in an interview. “But this crisis also offers us ample and tremendous opportunity. That’s what we’re trying to do.”

Trumka’s prognosis comes a few weeks ahead of the AFL-CIO’s quadrennial convention, the sort of confab that’s ripe for self-analysis and reflection, particularly for a movement that’s been on the ropes. The labor leader said the AFL-CIO is moving to build permanent relationships with progressive allies in the immigration, civil rights and environmental movements.

The convention itself will offer a reflection of that strategy, Trumka said, including a speech from progressive Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.).

“It’s an opportunity for us to look at ourselves and say, ‘What we’ve been doing hasn’t been working. Let’s figure out what we need to do to change and make it work,’” Trumka said. “It’s the kickoff of a whole new process where we open up the labor movement.”

Past conventions were three-day affairs, but this year the federation has had active committees operating for the past several months, comprising not just labor groups but academics and left-leaning think tanks. Much of the discussion at the convention, Trumka said, will involve how to partner with groups like the NAACP and the National Council of La Raza to push a broader progressive agenda on Capitol Hill and in the statehouses.

The purpose of the talks is a humble one, Trumka said: “Tell us what we need to be. Tell us what people need us to be to meet their needs.”

“It’s the beginning of a continuous process,” he said. “We will continue to bring people in and evolve, so we don’t just meet their needs.”

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It’s the beginning of a continuous process, he said. “We will continue to bring people in and evolve, so we don’t just take a snapshot of where we are and forget about it. We’ve done that in the past. The change has to be continual and become part of what we are and how we function.”

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**12 Barack Obama Quotes to Prepare You for His Appearance at the AFL-CIO National Convention**

By Kenneth Quinnell

President Barack Obama will be one of the keynote speakers at the AFL-CIO 2013 National Convention in Los Angeles from Sept. 8–11. Here are 12 key quotes from him that highlight his commitment to working families:

1. “Politics didn’t lead me to working folks—working folks led me to politics.”—April 2008
2. “I’ve said this before publicly and I’ll say it again, I make no apologies for it. I am a pro-union guy.”—April 2010
3. “Our unions helped build our middle class. We take for granted so much stuff—minimum wage laws, 40-hour workweek, overtime, child labor laws. Those things wouldn’t have happened if it hadn’t been for unions fighting for those rights. So even if you’re not a member of a union, you’ve got to be appreciative of what unions have done.”—April 2010
4. “I am committed to preserving the collective bargaining rights that helped build the greatest middle class the world has ever known. It is the fundamental right of every American to have a voice on the job, and a chance to negotiate for fair pay, safe working conditions and a secure retirement. When we uphold these basic principles, our middle class grows and everybody prospers.”—September 2012
5. “The fact of the matter is that what’s going to help us become competitive is if we’ve got middle-class workers making middle-class wages with middle-class benefits, who can then go out and shop and support a family and buy a new car and pay their mortgage, which will create more business opportunities and maintain America as the greatest market on Earth. And if we do that, then we’re going to be successful.”—April 2010
6. “America cannot have a strong, growing economy without a strong, growing middle class and without a strong labor movement.”—September 2011
7. “We’ve got roads and bridges across this country that need rebuilding. We’ve got private companies with the equipment and the manpower to do the building. We’ve got more than 1 million unemployed construction workers ready to get dirty right now. There is work to be done and there are workers ready to do it. Labor is on board. Business is on board. We just need Congress to get on board.”—September 2011
8. “Now, the fact is, our economy is stronger when workers are getting paid good wages and good benefits. Our economy is stronger when we’ve got broad-based growth and broad-based prosperity. That’s what unions have always been about—shared prosperity.”—September 2011
9. “The right to organize and collectively bargain is a fundamental American value.”—September 2011
10. “I want America to have the best infrastructure in the world. We used to have the best infrastructure in the world. We can have it again.”—September 2010
11. “It’s time we had a president who didn’t choke saying the word ‘union.’”—April 2008
12. “From the factory floors during the Industrial Revolution to the shopping aisles of today’s superstores, organized labor has provided millions of hardworking men and women with a voice in the workplace and an unprecedented path into our strong middle class. By advocating on behalf of our families, labor unions have helped advance the safe and equitable working conditions that every worker deserves.”—September 2010
Retirees met for recognition and awards banquets in May to celebrate their many years of commitment and dedication.
Manhattan/ Fort Riley Area

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Work in the area has been increasing. Kruse Mechanical and Mid-America Water & Plumbing have both increased their manpower recently. McElroys has a couple nice projects starting underground and U.S. Engineering has started the underground on the NBAF Central Utility Plant.

The U.S. Department of Labor is currently conducting a new Davis-Bacon prevailing wage survey for Kansas. The results of this survey will determine the prevailing wages on federal projects for the next 10 years or until the next survey.

I have been gathering information and working extensively with our fair contractors to submit data for the survey. It is very important that we maintain prevailing wages, but the paperwork is very time consuming. That is why I want to give a big THANK YOU to the Contractors that are cooperating and taking the time to submit data.

On July 30, 2013, I attended a special meeting in Topeka with the Service Techs and Service Plumbers in Zone 2A and 2B. The meeting was very informative and addressed many issues unique to the service sector of our trade. Thanks to everyone that attended.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the picnics, and please contact me anytime I can be of service.

Fraternally,
Bill Urton (316) 265-4291
Business Representative/Dispatcher

Topeka/Lawrence/Manhattan Area

Greetings Brothers and Sisters!

Wow! This has been an awesome Spring/Summer. We have seen Waldinger and U.S. Engineering crew up at Mars. We have had a bunch of projects for our state universities and school districts that put our members to work. Power House work at Lawrence, Tecumseh and Jeffries finished up in the Spring and we are readying for the Fall outages. With all the work going on we have had near full employment this summer for which we should all be thankful. While other areas of the country have not been as fortunate, we have maintained a good steady flow of work. Prospects for the fall are looking decent right now, so if you get laid off from the project you’re on, make sure you call Bill and get your name on the list.

Fall CEU schedules will be coming out shortly. Please mark your calendars for the classes in your area. One class I’m really looking forward to is on Saturday, October 26th. This will be a 2012 UPC Plumbing Class headed by Bruce Pfeiffer. We will simulcast from Topeka to Wichita and Frontenac using the new video conferencing system. Postcards will be sent out prior to this event. Right now we have a Master Plumbers Class in progress and will be finishing up in late September.

Union Meetings will be in Topeka from here on out. The new video system is not portable so it has been permanently installed in the Topeka Training Center/Hall. Unfortunately, that means we won’t be using the Lawrence Hall for future meetings. We realize this could cause some concern in the Lawrence area. At the very least, everyone will know where the meeting will be held. The new system works great and will enhance your Union meeting experience whether you’re in Wichita, Frontenac or Topeka. I look forward to showing as many members as possible the benefits of this new system.

Last thing, remember the Topeka Training Center/Hall is YOUR building. If you need to brush up your welding or brazing the shop will be open. Just CALL FIRST to make sure I’m there. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I will stay until 6:00.

Eight 4 Eight,
Fraternally yours,
Rick Salyer (785) 354-8539
Topeka/Lawrence Business Representative
2132 S Kansas Ave, Topeka, Ks 66611

Employment Dispatch

Hello Brothers and Sisters

The Work Outlook

As expected, work in our local has been great this year. We have had full employment throughout most of the year and peaked with 185 travelers in the state. A bulk of the travelers are dispatched to the Mars plant in Topeka and the Abengoa plant in Hugoton which will be winding down toward the end of September. We may have some unemployment this winter, but nothing like the last couple of years.

With the work load we had this spring, Local 441 took in 58 new apprentices to help staff the jobs for our contractors. This serves as a message to our contractors that the local is obligated to man the work, but with this kind of investment in our future work force, the contractors should do everything possible to keep the apprentices employed. The last thing we want is to bring this many in to the local just to have a few months work and then laid off and on the out-of-work list.

Upcoming larger work this fall and winter are as follows:
- Wichita-NCRA Refinery; Wesley Hospital remodel; Pratt Hospital; New Airport
- Topeka-NBAF Energy Center; Jeffrey Energy Shutdown; Fort Riley School
- Frontenac-Possibility of work, but no contractors awarded yet

As a reminder, if you get laid off or know you are going to be laid off, contact me immediately. I may have a call out for manpower. Also, if you change your phone number call me, so I can get it in your file and therefore able to contact you for work.

Brothers and Sisters, enjoy the rest of the summer, work safe and look out for your fellow worker.

Fraternally,
Bill Urton (316) 265-4291
Business Representative/Dispatcher

Find us on Your “Smart” Device!

Use your QR Reader to log on to UA441.org!
It’s a free app for most devices.

Visit YOUR website: www.UA441.org
Don’t take chances. Be safe on the job.
Rep. Paul Davis to Run for Kansas Governor in 2014
Democratic Contender Attends Parade, Labor Day Picnic in Wichita

Speaking at a Labor Day Picnic in Wichita on Aug. 31, Rep. Paul Davis remarked that “we must support unions if we want to protect the middle class.”

Minority Leader of the Kansas House, Rep. Davis filed Aug. 8 to explore a run for the Governor’s seat in the 2014 election.

Davis’ campaign treasurer is former Republican State Representative William A. Kassebaum.

Democrats in Kansas, a relentlessly “red” state, face an uphill battle, and Davis has his work cut out for him. However, Governor Sam Brownback has become increasingly unpopular due to his Draconian policies and strategies that have created hardship for all but the wealthiest in the state.

Among other things, Brownback has raised taxes on poor and middle-class Kansans to pay for the tax breaks he gave to corporations and wealthy Kansans, cut school funding and made higher education even more expensive, unraveled the safety net for disabled and elderly Kansans, stacked the deck against the middle class by creating financial chaos through inequitable taxation and growing debt, strangled the arts, politicized the courts and run the most secretive administration in Kansas history.

Gov. Brownback forced the last legislative session into overtime (at a huge cost to taxpayers) until he got the vote he wanted on his tax plan. He removed the mortgage deduction from state income tax. He scoffed at federal gun legislation and changed state rules, knowing that defending his decision would cost Kansas taxpayers at a time when vital programs are being cut due to lack of funding.

With a Republican majority, Brownback has refused to consider minority issues or perspectives, and he has even led the charge against people in his own party who are not “conservative” enough to further his partisan ambitions.

Brownback’s administration has been a debacle, but can a Democrat win if Republicans continue to vote a straight-party ticket regardless of the circumstances?

Rep. Paul Davis is willing to try, but he will need the support of a large cross-section of Kansans to succeed.

The difference is that a statesman thinks he belongs to the State, and a politician thinks the State belongs to him.