Business Manager’s Report

Most of us have experienced the ups and downs of our industry and indications now are that the economy in relationship to our industry is slowly coming back. A recent letter to all Local Union Business Managers from General President Hite stated, “The Construction sector is one of the most important and influential components of the U.S. economy. It is estimated that by 2050, more than 50% of all the buildings in which we will live, work, and shop will have been built after the year 2000 and that it will require a construction and redevelopment expenditure upwards of $57 Trillion. Consequently, we will face an enormous construction workforce challenge of a magnitude that is unprecedented and it will require stakeholders to work together as never before.”

The past 12 to 16 months have been difficult for our Local Union as well as most Local Unions around the country and has negatively affected many of our members. Reports like those mentioned in the paragraph above are encouraging and offer hope for the future to many. Throughout this economic downturn our motivation has been clear—jobs are the number one priority. As for the work outlook locally we are encouraged by communications with our local contractors that indicate a sharp increase in projects to bid in addition to projects already secured. Many of these projects out for bid are advertised as Davis Bacon projects requiring prevailing wage rates due to the attachment of Stimulus money to the various projects. Although this does not guarantee our signatory contractors will be successful in securing this work, it obviously gives them a much better opportunity to bid competitively.

March 1, 2010, marked the seven-year anniversary of Plumbers and Pipefitters LU 441. We have arrived today as a local that has survived many difficult obstacles. And because of this, we have gained strength, perseverance, and character as a labor organization and at the same time gained worth and consideration by many in the State of Kansas. We are viewed as a highly qualified and “better-value” work force that is second-to-none in our industry. We have political influence that is respected on both sides of the aisle when issues arise, we have an established voice that is sought out and heard. This is directly related to the attitudes, skills, craftsmanship and dedication illustrated by the membership of Local 441…Thank You!

[Business Manager’s Report cont’d on Page 6]

Sunflower Meeting

Representatives from the UA and LU441 met Feb. 17 with Sunflower Electric Power Corporation executives for Holcomb Power House project updates.

John Shepherd, Jr., 441 Business Rep; Bill Urton, 441 Business Rep; Mike O’Mara, UA International Rep; Richard Taylor, 441 Business Manager; Clare Gustin, Sunflower Electric Vice President of Member Services & External Affairs; Earl Watkins, Sunflower Electric President & CEO; Jerry O’Leary, UA Director of Energy.
Three Questions By Kerry Stine, Training Director, PPATKS

Over the next few months, we will be discussing the concept of Day School and the need to add money to the local training fund. As we discuss this issue, I think that there are three questions that we need to place at the forefront of the discussion. First, how will Day School benefit our apprentices? Second, how will Day School benefit our contractors? Lastly, how will Day School benefit Local 441? If we will be honest in answering these questions, the direction that we take on this issue should become clear.

In answering the question of how Day School will benefit our apprentices, there are many factors to consider. Currently the apprentices attend class two nights a week over a period of 39 weeks. That means if they are working, all of the apprentices are away from their family all day and evening 78 times a year. That is over 20% of the year. A day school will allow apprentices to attend class from their family and spend more time with their families during the week, rather than evenings and weekends. Apprentices will also be able to come to class after work, rather than on weekends. Full attention and focus can be placed on learning.

Our contractors should see multiple benefits from apprentices attending Day School. A better trained apprentice will provide a cost effective solution to bidding work that many companies are not taking advantage of. There will be a degree of flexibility built into the scheduling process to allow for moving an apprentice from one training week to another, if the contractor needs an apprentice during a particular week. Restrictions on apprentices working overtime will be mostly eliminated. Day School should make it easier to recruit apprentices from all over the state, as they will not need to live near the training facility to be able to attend class. Through large shops in western Kansas we will be able to tap into and develop the local workforce in that part of the state. Our contractors need the competitive advantage that Day School training will provide.

You may be asking how Day School will benefit Local 441 and more specifically you. Customers are always looking for value. The better trained we are from the start, the more value is perceived by those using our labor. Training is recognized to bring about a safer workplace, higher productivity, and higher quality, all of which lead to higher employment and higher quality of life for the membership of Local 441. Anything we can do to raise the standard of training will bring long term benefits to us as members.

It seems like a lot to ask, increasing the amount going into the training fund, but we need to look at the training program as a long term benefit. Day School is a benefit that will provide better training for our apprentices. Day School is a benefit that will give our contractors a competitive advantage. Day School is a benefit that will keep our membership safe, productive and qualified. Please, as information is provided to you in the coming days, keep an open mind about Day School and consider it carefully.

Send Us Your Email Address!

It’s a new world out there, and we at Local 441 are determined to become a part of the electronic age, whether we like it or not. For years we have communicated with our members through regular mail. When it came time to announce a meeting or inform the members about a special issue, we always sent a letter.

Not that there is anything wrong with the mail. We continue to do the vast bulk of our business by mail, but in some cases it is quicker, easier, and far less expensive to be able to send an e-mail to members. At least it would be if we had email addresses for our members. Please complete the form below and mail it to 1330 E 1st St N, Ste 115, Wichita, Ks 67214 OR send us an email at email@ua441.org.

Name _______________________________

Address _______________________________

City, State, Zip _______________________________

Home Phone _______________________________

Cell Phone _______________________________

Email Address _______________________________

LOCAL UNION #441
Officers, Committee and Staff
Jerry D. Short, President
Gib Lane, Vice-President
Richard L. Taylor, Business Manager and Financial Secretary-Treasurer
John Crusinberry, Recording Secretary
Mark Hromek, Sergeant-at-Arms

BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES/ORGANIZERS
Bill Urton, Dispatcher (316) 265-4291
John Shepherd, Jr. (316) 265-4291
Kirk Miller, Sr. (785) 354-8539
Denis Wittman (785) 843-3151
Mike Wołownik (620) 231-4280
Phil Petty (785) 539-8977

OFFICE STAFF
Angela Hermann
Jolene Seiter
Carol Ann Lewis

EXECUTIVE BOARD
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Jeff Robertson
Dan McCulloch

FINANCE COMMITTEE
David E. Emerson
Bill Lorg
T. J. Strickland

EXAMINERS
Mike Magennis
Kirk Miller, Sr.
Denis Wittman
Mike Wołownik

BYLAWS COMMITTEE
If you have any questions or comments regarding 441 by-laws, please feel free to contact one of your By-Laws Committee members.
Jerry Short (316) 733-9511
Carl Cole (316) 218-8475
Dan McCulloch (785) 286-0774

2010 Holiday Schedule
Monday, May 31st - Memorial Day Holiday (All Zones)
Monday, July 5th - July 4th Holiday (All Zones)
Monday, September 6th - Labor Day Holiday (All Zones)
Thursday, November 25th - Thanksgiving Day (All Zones)
Friday, November 26th - Day After Thanksgiving Holiday ( Zones I&B, IIA, IIB)
Saturday, December 25th - Christmas Day (All Zones)
Monday, December 27th - Day After Christmas Holiday ( Zones I&B, IIA, IIB)

Visit YOUR website: www.UA441.org
Employment Dispatch

Hello Brothers and Sisters, 

By the time you receive this newsletter, another year will have come and gone. I know this has been a tough year for most of you, but 2010 should be brighter.

As of this publication, we have 264 members on the out of work list with 28 being apprentices, and 36 members on travel jobs. Our work situation is starting to rebound slowly with work at NCRA in McPherson, Ft. Riley, Marysville Hospital, KU, Lawrence Energy, as well as a scheduled outage at Holcomb this spring.

The Lawrence Energy scrubber project will start taking manpower in June on the Lime Stone prep building. It will peak at 23 men in January 2011 with a completion date of March 2011. The Super Structure will start in November of this year with 10 men and peak at $1 in 2012 with a completion date of December 2012.

With the start of the new year, I would like to update everyone on paying union dues. Dues for Local 441 are the minimum provided in the United Association Constitution. Any member who is three (3) months in arrears in the payment of dues will owe a $50 reinstatement fee. Every month the Local spends several hours on red notification letters as well as hundreds of dollars in postage. There are several other good reasons to make sure your dues are current, these are just a couple to keep in mind.

In closing, always think safety while working and I truly believe the worst is behind us.

Fraternally, 

Bill Upton (316) 265-4291 
Business Representative/Dispatcher

Wichita Area Zone 1A

Greetings Brothers and Sisters of UA Local #441.

As an officer of our local union, I am the beneficiary of a legacy that has been handed down through generations of skill and dedication. It is a heritage based upon tradition of service—service to our employers, to our industry, to our communities, and to our fellow members.

Work in the area continues to be sluggish. Piping and Equipment continues to keep a small crew at Frontier Refinery, however the plant itself has shelved most of its capital improvement projects for the near future. NCRA has let several bid packages out with Logan being awarded the last two projects. Logan will be bringing on a few workers as these jobs progress. Piping and Equipment has kept another small crew busy in the refinery and is currently bidding the Benzene Recovery Unit along with Logan and a handful of non-union bidders. Sunflower Electric has a scheduled a three-week outage for the end of April and the beginning of May at Holcomb Station. Piping and Equipment will be doing this work as the holder of the maintenance agreement. We are currently gathering information and making contacts on a $550 million project in Hugoton. The project will include a hybrid cellulose ethanol plant and power plant producing up to 100 mega-watts of energy and 15 million gallons of ethanol from biomass purchased from area farmers.

Our commercial contractors continue to feel the brunt of the recession, as the market is extremely tight. Many school projects will be bidding in 2010. Work in this sector will not pick up until the aircraft industry comes back. We look forward to many schools being bid as well as the airport expansion being bid in early spring and summer.

We must continue to find ways to be more competitive in the commercial market. A broad benchmark of this is how competitive we can be on school and civic projects. We must look outside the box for ways to improve our market share and productivity to recapture this niche. I have explored many options and am looking for more input from the membership. My ears are always open for creative ideas to debate and implement. Give me a call if you have some input on this topic.

Thank you for your time, talents, and dedication.

Fraternally,

John H. Shepherd Jr. (316) 265-4291 
Plumbers & Pipefitters of Kansas Local #441 
Wichita Area Business Representative 1A

Topeka Area East

Brothers and Sisters,

Work is very slow right now with no immediate solution to place everybody to work. We have some jobs breaking in the near future to help place a few at a time. If you have time off, this is a good opportunity to get caught up on your training with things such as medical gas, back-flow prevention or welding certifications.

These certifications will help give you the edge on our future jobs. It seems we almost always have enough men but we run short on licensed and certified workers. For those with employment, remember the brothers that are off and try to make room for them.

Fraternally yours,

Kirk W. Miller, Sr. (785) 354-8539 
Topeka Business Representative 
3906 NW 16th St. Topeka, KS 66618
Business Manager Richard Taylor Expresses LU 441 Regards to Governor Parkinson

LU441 Business Manager Richard Taylor met with Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson to express our gratitude for his willingness to negotiate a compromise allowing the Holcomb project to go forward and to also discuss current legislative issues affecting labor.

At this writing, the political session is still in progress. Some of the bills we have been watching and supporting concern stiffer regulations for medical gas installations, unemployment benefits, possible new gaming regulations that may affect casino construction, lead-based paint bill, and any bills related to economic development.

We also have worked with the Governor’s staff to provide requirements for state-funded projects to only allow contractors qualified to bid that participate in and support state registered and certified apprenticeship programs.
Five Star New Chiller

Five Star Installs First Chiller of its Kind in Wichita

Five Star Mechanical Inc. was contracted to upgrade the chiller, tower and circulating pumps at the Farm Credit Bank Building at 245 N. Waco.

The chiller incorporates new compressor technology (TurboCor) which utilizes frictionless magnetic bearings, oil-free operation, integral variable speed drive and high speed drive technology.

The chiller also uses R-134A refrigerant, which is environmentally friendly and has no EPA phase out date. The main reason for the selection of this chiller is the efficiency, especially part load efficiencies which is the highest of any chiller on the market. The McQuay TurboCor chiller is the first one of its kind in our area.

The project required some unique and challenging piping configurations but with the team of Project Manager Todd Dickey, Pipefitters Doug Richards and Jeremie Hoover, Apprentice Andrew Wills, and Service Tech Stacey Richards, the project went well and the customer is very pleased with the quality of workmanship.

Doug Richards, Jeremie Hoover, Todd Dickey, Stacey Richards, Andrew Wills

LU441 Volunteers, Others Step In to Help Rainbows United Prepare for Opening

Brother Walt Shook led a team of Local #441 volunteers to convert eight child restrooms to comply with Americans with Disability Act standards. Their work benefited Rainbows United, Inc., an organization that enhances the lives of children with special needs and their families.

Rainbows needed to consolidate services and convert their preschool facility to become licensed for school age children. However, the $15,000 needed for the conversion was not available. Long-time supporter Walt Shook committed to complete the project without cost to Rainbows.

Shook contacted Business Manager Richard Taylor who communicated the need to John Shepherd, Local #441 President Jerry Short, Lonny Wright, Tony Pierpoint and Troy Rhea volunteered to help.

Shook spent six hours on a jackhammer breaking out the slab floors. Pierpoint completed the jackhammer work while Rhea worked on adding kitchen sink rough-ins. Short and Wright reworked the undergronds to achieve the water closet ADA requirements.

Material for the project was donated by Phoenix Supply, Inc. and the ADA toilets were donated by Kohler through Tom Bookhout with Hajoca. Work was done on time to allow for a March 1st opening.

"We are thankful for these donations and for the volunteers who are helping convert this space into one we know our school-aged children will enjoy," said Stephanie Harder, Vice President of Development.

Rainbows United serves more than 2,000 special-needs children and their families throughout Sedgwick and Butler counties.

Lonny Wright, Facilities Assistant Paul Wolfe, Walt Shook, Troy Rhea, Gordon Johnson, Tony Pierpoint, Jerry Short (kneeling)

Troy Rhea

Jerry Short
Frontenac Area

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As I’ve reported for the past several months, the work remains slow in southeast Kansas. Fortunately, contractors in the area are looking and bidding work in other parts of the state and have been successful landing a few of them.

The Mt Carmel Hospital projects are still on the radar. So far, we have no word on the remodel of the 4th Floor. The Fab shops seem to be slowing down in southeast Kansas and the big layoffs at the Power House in Kansas City will affect some of our brothers. We are just thankful for the work the powerhouse has provided.

The news is not all bad. I will be holding the position of President of Southeast Kansas Building Trades, and we have been working hard to build up the trades in southeast Kansas. Hopefully, we will create more of a presence in the area for the Unions.

As far as other projects: bidding continues on the Independence School Project; the Iola School project should be put on the ballot soon; and finally, some work at PSU should kick off this year. Updates will follow.

It has been a very difficult year for some months in southeast Kansas for employment, but we are very fortunate to have upcoming work in other parts of our jurisdiction. Just a reminder, it is the first of the year, so check on your dues pleas. The allocation of money for the Frontenac Zone is coming up and we have $1.80 to discuss, you will be posted with date and time soon.

Fraternally Yours,

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

cal 441 members and other Building Trades members show up in support at these hearings. Once a schedule is available indicating dates, times, and locations for the hearings, we will be contacting members to participate. Also, during this time, law suits will no doubt be filed by environmental groups. Depending on the severity of the law suits, this could further delay the project. Sunflower’s hopes are that the project will break ground sometime in 2011.

We also discussed the Abcena Biorefinery project that is to be built in southwest Kansas near Hugoton. This is a cellulose plant funded by the Federal Government at a cost of $550 million. It will have the capability to generate electricity and produce ethanol. An agreement between Abcena Biorefinery and Mid-Kansas Electric Company has been signed identifying the terms of a power purchase agreement for 75 megawatts of base load electricity. Mid-Kansas Electric is a coalition of six rural electric cooperatives. These same cooperatives also own Sunflower Electric. Sunflower has put us in contact with Mid-Kansas Electric and is supporting the use of Building Trades on the project. Federal funding of this project will require prevailing wage rates to be used.

Negotiations

Amongst many other activities, the next couple of months will be spent working with the Zone IA (Wichita area) Negotiating Committee preparing and conducting contract negotiations. This is a wage opener intended to establish the increases to total package over the last three years of our current Collective Bargaining Agreement, which will expire May 31, 2013. We have been researching and collecting information to aid us in obtaining the best contract that we can negotiate; while remaining competitive in the future. Increases have previously been negotiated effective June 1st for the Topkea-Lawrence area, $1.25 to total package, and the Frontenac area, $1.80 to total package. The membership will be notified of Special Order of Business meetings scheduled in each Zone to determine how the increases will be allocated.

Finances

The 2009 audit was just completed. Once your Finance Committee has had an opportunity to review the audit in detail, Local 441’s Accountant will give a full report of the audit at the May 10th union meeting. Despite the year we had with hours down, your union funds did end the year with modest positive gains while keeping expenses down. We realized a total increase in Local 441’s net assets of $149,724 with $75,838 of that realized by the General Fund. Expenses were kept under control with only a 2.54% or $41,771 increase in operating expenses.

Along with the Finance Committee, we will continue to monitor where costs can be cut, where we can be more efficient in our day-to-day operations, and strive to lower our operating expenses. It is your money that operates this local union. As Financial Secretary/Treasurer, it is my responsibility along with the Finance Committee to see that it is spent wisely and in a manner that benefits the common good.

With this steady increase to your General Fund it reached the benchmark that allowed your current work assessment percentage rate to lower from 4.5% to 4.0% as outlined in ARTICLE VI of our Constitution and By-Laws. This decrease in work assessment percentage took place with the first pay period in February.

Political Scene

The 2010 political session has been somewhat less eventful this year primarily due to no activity needed concerning the Holcomb Power Plant Expansion. I have been able to meet with Governor Parkinson a couple of times (see picture on page 4) to express our gratitude for his willingness to negotiate a compromise allowing the Holcomb project to go forward and to also discuss current legislative issues affecting labor. At this writing, the political session is still in progress. Some of the bills we have been watching and supporting concern stiffer regulations for medical gas installations, unemployment benefits, possible new gaming regulations that may affect casino construction, lead-based paint bill, and any bills related to economic development. We also have worked with the Governor’s staff to provide requirements for state-funded projects to only allow contractors qualified to bid that participate in and support state registered and certified apprenticeship programs.

As we look to the future we will continue to embrace our role in providing a skilled and highly trained workforce which provides value to our local Union, to our contractors, and to our industry for this generation and future generations to follow.

Work smart, work safe, and God bless.
“UA Local #441
Plumbers & Pipefitters
Monthly Union Meetings

KANSAS LOCAL #441 UNION MEETINGS
Second Monday of every month, 7 p.m.
(316) 265-4291/1330 E. 1st Street, Wichita

Next Meeting Dates:
April 12, May 10, June 14

UA LOCAL #441 RETIREE MEETINGS

Frontenac Area Retirees
Meet Tuesday mornings at Home Café, Cherokee, KS at 8 a.m.

Lawrence Area Retirees
No monthly meetings scheduled. We encourage a group to establish meetings and let the Hall in Wichita know venue.
You are also welcome to attend other area retiree meetings.

Topeka Area Retirees
Meet every Wednesday morning at Hardie’s at 21st and Wanamaker at 8 a.m.

Wichita Area Retirees
Meeting at the Hall, 1330 E. 1st Street N., on the first Wednesday every month at 10 a.m.
Breakfast is the second Wednesday of every month (except December) at 9 a.m. at Spears Restaurant, 4323 W. Maple, Wichita.

Note: All retirees and spouses and former members’ widows are welcome to attend any of the area meetings.

Lawrence Area

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

Work in the area is slow. New construction on the Power House will start later this year.

Current jobs in progress are:
P-1, Chaney, Environmental Mechanical, and Rodriguez are working at the KU Campus; Piping Contractors, McElroy’s, and Day & Zimmerman, NPS have men at the Power House.

Business Representative Kirk Miller of Topeka and I are working with legislators on House Bill 2590. This bill pertains to a third-party inspection on medical gas installation.
This past year a young man was getting his wisdom teeth pulled and due to incorrect installation there were severe complications. If the bill had been in effect this would not have happened. Thankfully this Bill will be passed by 2011.

Tom Holland of rural Baldwin has announced his candidacy for governor. Election Day is a way off, but every effort should be made to support Tom in his run for this position. Tom is labor friendly and a strong supporter of the Union.

Fraternally yours,

Denis Wittman (785) 843-3151
Lawrence Business Representative
930 E. 28th Street
Lawrence, KS 66046

CONTACTS
Wichita (316) 265-4291 Training (316) 267-8508
Topeka (785) 354-8539 Training (785) 234-2006
Lawrence (785) 843-3151
Frontenac (620) 231-4280 Training (620) 724-6115
Local Union 441 Website: www.ua441.org

The Health & Welfare Office handles your local pension information, KSR (401k), and general questions regarding your health insurance (such as your status in qualifying for insurance benefits.)
If you have specific questions regarding your insurance, such as a list of doctors, please refer to the numbers listed below for Blue Cross and Delta Dental.

Ben Newhouse is Local 441’s Independent Financial Advisor.
Members, please feel free to give him a call at 1-866-577-7100
for assistance and advice with your Mass Mutual investment account.

Health & Welfare Office
www.ppi-fund.org
(316) 264-2339 or (800) 423-6517
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas
www.BCBSKS.com
(800) 432-3900 or (785) 291-4180
Delta Dental of Kansas
www.DentalDentalKS.com
(800) 234-3375 or (316) 264-4511

If you have a Pension through the United Association, the National Pension office is where you call for any questions related to your pension.

If you are close to retirement and are ready to start the paperwork, please request an application for a retirement packet from National. Also request a work contribution history report from National Pension as this will assist you in the process.

National Pension (800) 638-7442
Local Pension/KS Annuity
(316) 264-2339 or (800) 423-6517
United Association Website: www.ua.org

Manhattan/Fort Riley Area

While the entire Nation suffers through a recession and unemployment in the construction industry exceeding 25%, Fort Riley continues to grow.

My family moved to Manhattan in 1962 partly due to the work at Fort Riley. As a UA Member, my Father worked on numerous projects at the Fort, so it was no surprise when I began my construction career on a Fort Riley Project. I have seen many changes at Fort Riley over the years, but the ongoing construction boom is astounding. The expansion of Army Operations at Fort Riley is affecting the entire region. New housing, hotels, medical facilities, restaurants, grocery stores, schools and other buildings have recently been constructed or are currently under construction.

The announcement by Homeland Security that a new National Bio-Ag Research Facility (NBAF) will be located in Manhattan is stimulating area building activity even more. Over one Billion Dollars of Public Works Construction Projects are scheduled to begin this year. The projects include NBAF, new Irwin Army Hospital, one hundred million dollars of school additions and renovations, KSU Peterson Recreation Renovation, Water Treatment Facilities, Discovery Center, Barracks, and other Fort Riley Projects. Add on top of these the private sector projects including: two hotels, convention center, restaurants, office buildings, and more.

Local #441 and numerous UA Contractors are working to secure the construction work and the long-term service work that will follow. Congratulations to McElroy, Inc. for opening a shop in Manhattan and aggressively marketing themselves in the area.
We will continue to work hard at securing work in the area and help reduce the unemployment being endured by Local Union #441 Brothers and Sisters.

Fraternally Yours,

Phil Petty (785) 539-8977
Organizer/Business Representative

Job Hotline: (316) 269-2472
Wichita Arena

The Intrust Arena in downtown Wichita looks pretty nice from the outside, but some of the most impressive construction is not seen by the typical visitor. In fact, the better built it is, the less it should be noticed!

It is no small feat to design and build a HVAC system that will condition the air in a structure this large, and plumbing that will handle the crowds during intermission.

If you get an opportunity to attend an event at the new Intrust Bank Arena, I encourage you to do so. It is state of the art and a very impressive facility. The plumbing, mechanical, HVAC, and ice rink were all installed by UA union contractors. In fact, most of the work performed by the major subcontractors on the project was performed by union contractors. This was a very good project for Local 441 and one of which we can all be proud.