Business Manager’s Report

To put it mildly, the past year has been outstanding for Local 441 in virtually every aspect. I will expand on each of these areas in this article, but the key ingredient to all is the number of hours worked. In the jurisdiction of Local 441, the hours have steadily increased over the last five years from 955,213 in 2003, 1,061,237 in 2004, 1,185,623 in 2005, 1,429,847 in 2006, to 1,726,565 in 2007, an increase of almost 300,000 additional hours worked compared to 2006, and 2006 was considered to be a very good year. All indications are that 2008 will be even better. I would fully expect this time next year for the report to again indicate even more hours worked in 2008. The work projected for our Local, and across the UA for that matter, is phenomenal.

There appears to be plenty of work, both industrial and commercial alike, to provide employment for our Membership for several years. This list covers all types of projects from hospitals to manufacturing facilities, arenas, ethanol plants, powerhouses, airport terminals, jail facilities, shutdowns, fabrication opportunities and Brothers and Sisters, most of this work is yet to start. This is in addition to all the work we are presently involved in. Currently we have full employment in our Local and this includes the fact that we started 51 new first year apprentice this year, organized 61 new members (six of those through Helmets to Hardhats), reinitiated 29 past members and also have approximately 100 travelers in our Local. Please continue to let us know of unorganized tradespersons that you feel have the skills, ability, and attitude to be an asset to Local 441. Your help is needed and greatly appreciated. We must continue to grow this Local Union and make it strong because it is the strength of this Local Union that protects us.

With our political ties and business relationships that have been gained over the past few years, we have set Local 441 up to be the front runner in securing this work. Thank you to the membership for your hard work and dedication to your Local.

There is no doubt that the members of Local 441 are the leaders and considered to be the standard for the industry. This Membership is to be congratulated for their continued support of our contractors and for their efforts in protecting our industry and market share. We must continue to perform on the job, demonstrate the right attitude, show up on time, look presentable, maintain the top level of craftsmanship, and not let up. We are on the road to a brighter future and are ready to reap the benefits. I also want to say thank you to your Agents and Organizer for their dedication and tireless efforts to help insure fair contractors secure this work, which helps to provide employment for all. And the office staff for maintaining and keeping all the books and records in order for the membership and the many Governmental agencies this Local Union is required to remain in compliance with.

With the increase in hours worked and a continued effort to keep expenses down, your General Fund has shown a gain for the year of $335,000 plus as compared to December 31, 2006. The Target Fund, Death Benefit Fund, and Building Fund have all done equally as well with our total assets increasing by approximately $500,000. As you recall, last spring the Death Benefit Committee recommended increasing the Death Benefit payout from $3,000 to $3,200. That increase was approved by the membership. I will recommend that the Death Benefit Fund be looked at again this spring with the consideration to increase the benefit payout once again.

As Chairman of the Health and Welfare Plan, and on behalf of the other labor trustees, Bill Urton, Mike Wolownik, Kirk Miller and Denis Wittman, it is gratifying to be able to relay to the membership the huge improvements that were made to your benefit package at the last Trustee meeting. The membership “bit the bullet” in the past and took the necessary action to rebuild the H&W Plan. Now it is time to reap the rewards of those sacrifices. You should have received

[Business Manager Report, Continued on Page 10]
Dear Brother and Sisters:

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas surrounded by family and friends. What a year! During 2007, we saw a statewide increase in manhours. Southeast Kansas (SEK) was no exception. We had a very busy year and if all goes as planned, 2008 will be even better.

We have had more contractors bidding work, which I believe is a result of us informing the end users of the benefits of using a union contractor. Better training, more manpower!

There are many jobs on the horizon. We are still working to take on more work at the Frontenac Dog Track. (P1 received some of the work but there will be more.)

Parsons area—There is work on a state building with Waldinger and we are looking at other possibilities in this area. The Chanute hospital project is going very well. Alexander Mechanical has hired a few more hands and as the building is closed in, I suspect more jobs will be available.

The American Fab Shop in Columbus is bidding on more waste water projects and as far as manpower needs, time will soon tell.

Work in the Coffeyville area looks good, as Logan is building and expanding their fab shop. Cylix is still working with some of our men in the refinery. Kruse Corporation will complete the Neodesha Hospital project in February and they are looking for more jobs.

Please welcome Benso Refrigeration of Chanute, the newest contractor to sign with Local 441. They have even hired one of our SEK members to get their shop up and running.

Only one proposal for a SEK casino was submitted. Penn National proposed to put a casino south of Galena at the three corners. We will work hard on the end users to get this project. Note: Penn National also has site proposals in Sumner County in Wellington.

I would like to say “THANK YOU” to the teachers and our JAC for their hard work and dedication to get the school up and running. We currently have 10 students moving into next semester. We will continue to work hard to recruit new students.

By the time you read this, the welding certification will be completed and our facility should be ready to go. As you can see—we are growing and will continue to grow.

Have a safe and Happy New Year!

Fraternally Yours,

Mike Wolownik

American Fabricator    Columbus, KS

Brother Huck Parsons (in photo at right), Ernie Norris and Apprentice Jonnie Curl (in photo below) shipped out this piece of 144” of fabrication weighing in at 27,000 pounds to New York in December. This is the biggest that they have shipped.

Benso Inc. HVAC Contractor

Mike Wolownik, LU 441 Business Representative, Kenny Benso, owner of Benso Inc., and Richard Taylor, Business Manager of LU 441, after signing Benso as a HVAC service contractor for Southeast Kansas area.

There is no “UNION” without “U.”

Visit YOUR Website: www.UA441.org
Steward Training

LU 441 members attend Steward Training in Emporia, Ks, on Nov. 3, 2007.

Richard Taylor, Business Manager for LU 441, and Kirk Smith, Director of Organizing for the UA.

Clinton, Huckabee, Obama, Romney, Edwards, You. (!?!)

LU 441 Elections are quickly approaching.

Have you thought about running for office? Now’s the time to act.

Your local election committee will be providing more information about the process.

Conversations With Unrepresented Workers: A Few Tips

Contributed by Phil Petty, Organizer

Effective organizing is built on personal relationships, developed through conversation, one person at a time. Here are some tips to make the most of your conversations:

- Don’t do all the talking. Ask questions and listen closely.
- Seek common ground. “Break the Ice” in any conversation by looking to concerns and interests, both on and off the job, that you have in common.
- Maybe you once felt the same way. If so, say so and explain why you changed your point of view. (Feel-Felt-Found. I know how you Feel, I Felt the same way, but let me tell you what I Found out.)
- Be sensitive to different customs, language expressions, and outlooks of the various ethnic and racial groups that are part of the construction workforce.
- Be patient. Don’t argue. Never lose your temper.
- When you disagree, don’t get defensive.
- Recognize that people’s views usually don’t change overnight.
- No matter what the message is, how you say it is often as important as what you say.
- Eye contact, enthusiasm and sincerity
- Speak “from the heart”
Lyons Ethanol Plant
Contractor: Piping and Equipment

Stacey Massey, General Foreman, Butch Ballard, Foreman, Doug Parsons, Foreman, Bill Urton, Dispatcher, Randy Basco, Foreman

Lance Roop, LU 441 member, and John Brannon, Traveler from LU 145, Grand Junction, CO

Sample of craftsmanship demonstrated by LU 441 members
Ideas and Changes for 2008
By Kerry Stine, Director, PPATKS

Welcome to 2008. I’d like to start it off by saying thanks to all who participated in the Continuing Education (CEU) classes that were offered by PPATKS around the state in 2007. It is my hope that you found them useful and informative. I realize that there are still some of you who may need to get CEU’s for 2007 and PPATKS has some options if you will give the office a call at (316) 267-8508.

Let’s take a look at what the future holds for PPATKS. As far as CEU’s, we have some ideas that we will be instituting in the coming months. One of the ideas, is a one hour CEU class that will be held an hour before each Union Meeting. These classes will take place at the locations where the meeting is video-conferenced. The classes will alternate month-to-month between plumbing and mechanical. This should allow the portion of the membership that needs CEU’s to get most, if not all, of what they need over the course of the year. It might also encourage better attendance of the meetings.

Some Saturday CEU classes will be held in the fall to try to cover hours needed by those who were not able to attend the classes on Union meeting nights. As soon as we have a schedule, we will send it to the membership.

Another change for the New Year involves the Weld Certification Program. Currently we have been having the weld tests on a quarterly basis and the tests were alternated between Wichita and Topeka. With the addition of Frontenac as an Authorized Weld Test Facility, thanks the hard work of Huck Parsons, we will add another location to the rotation. This will allow us to rotate locations each month so that every month there will be a weld test being held somewhere in the State. Once again as soon as the schedule is available we will inform the membership.

I’d like to finish up with a request to the membership. One of the things that we try to maintain with the training program is an accurate listing of the certifications and licenses that our membership holds. This assists Bill Urton in dispatching and occasionally might mean the difference between getting a job and not getting a job.

It would be a great help if you would let us know what licenses you carry. It wouldn’t take much, an email to Cindy at cnaylor@ua441.org or a phone call to the office at (316) 267-8508. Just tell us your name and the jurisdictions that you carry a license and the type of license. You can even call after hours and leave a message on the machine.

May God bless you in the coming year and let’s all work together for a good, profitable and healthy year.
Kerry Stine, Director
PPATKS

Employment Dispatch

Hello Brothers and Sisters:

WE ARE GAINING!

Although 2007 was excellent for our local, I fully expect 2008 to be better. We will sail right through the winter months averaging 100 travelers in the state (mostly welders) and as spring rolls around those numbers will increase.

I am very happy to report that Midwest Mechanical was contracted and awarded the job of finishing an ethanol plant in Scandia Ks that the non-union could not get done. After receiving a manpower call for 30 pipefitters and welders we are finishing that project and will be in the drivers seat for the upcoming new ethanol plant in Concordia.

But that’s just a tip of what our local is doing. MSI was awarded the downtown arena in Wichita that will start in early spring.

Hospital work across the state is booming and our contractors are on it. P&E Services, P1 Group, Waldinger, Kruse Corp., Alexander Mech., Fagan Company and probably another one or two that I’m missing.

Day & Zimmerman will be doing spring outages at Jeffrey Energy, Tecumseh, and Lawrence that will take in excess of 50 journeyman and apprentices.
P1 Group currently has six welders at the Wolfe Creek nuclear plant and we expect those numbers increasing to approximately 40. P1 Group was also awarded the new Viega plant in MePherson.
Piping & Equipment peaked out at around 50 on their ethanol plant in Lyons and should start winding down around March. They also have work in Bushton and at Frontier Refinery, which we have not been in for several years.

American Fabricators, our new fab shop in southeast Kansas, has a huge amount of work for 2008 and will steadily be hiring.

Environmental Mechanical has work at Ft. Riley that will peak at around 20 for a year.

All in all brothers and sisters our membership is missing.

Don’t worry about hurting someone’s feelings.

We need to know if there is an attendance or work-related problem.

Please be honest and accurate in filling out apprentice evaluations.

Visit YOUR Website: www.UA441.org
60 Years

George E. Todd  |  James C. Wilbert  |  Arthur E. Fletcher  |  Edward Porubsky  |  John H. Bernardi  |  Thomas Ingram

55 Years

Clarence R. Allison  |  Clifford Delay  |  Donald E. Hammett  |  Darrel M. Webb

50 Years

Richard C. Gallagher  |  Robert W. Harrison  |  Alfred F. Wasinger  |  Vernon H. Wells

45 Years

Floyd Drinnen  |  Richard L. Goertzen  |  Roger D. Naylor  |  Keith E. Pinkston  |  Walter Shook  |  Paul W. Williams

25 Year
Harley E Guy  Wichita

30 Year
Dale F Artherton  Topeka
Roger R Chapman  Topeka
David A Delay  Wichita
Clyde J Smith Sr  Wichita
Richard C Turpin  Wichita

35 Year
Stanley M Flora Jr  Wichita
Robert W Mundell  Topeka
Charles E Rice  Wichita

40 Year
James E Ball  Wichita
Lawrence Chaplin  Wichita
Harold D Fast  Wichita
Floyd A Goerzen  Wichita
O Roger Gray  Wichita
Donald A Hoffsommer  Topeka
Jack Ragan  Topeka
Dan R Ricketts  Topeka
Richard D Robison  Topeka
Carl L Rogers  Wichita
Darrel F Rutten  Frontenac
Alfred J Schuster  Wichita
Fred Silver  Wichita
Everett G St Clair  Frontenac
Pete E Tibbets  Wichita
Joseph D Watkins  Topeka
Jerry J Wood  Lawrence

45 Year
Owen Bell  Wichita
Robert Caraway  Wichita
John W Donaldson  Wichita
Floyd Drinnen  Wichita
Richard L Goertzen  Wichita
40 Years

James E. Ball
Lawrence Chaplin
Dan R. Ricketts
Alfred J. Schuster
Fred Silver

35 Years

Pete E. Tibbetts
Joseph D. Watkins
Jerry J. Wood
Stanley M. Flora, Jr.

30 Years

Roger D. Chapman
David A. Delay

Photos of other retirees who attended LU 441 Retirement Banquets
Super Tuesday: Caucus Locations

On **Tuesday, February 5th**, the Kansas Democratic Party will hold a Presidential Caucus, giving Kansas Democrats an opportunity to select the 2008 Democratic Presidential nominee. **Doors at caucus sites open at 6 p.m. and anyone not in line by 7 p.m. will not be admitted.**

The Kansas Democratic Party has used State Senate Districts and Congressional Districts as the basis for dividing the state into caucus districts. To find your caucus location follow these two steps.

Step 1: Use the “Find Your Legislator” website at the **Institute for Policy & Social Research** website (www.ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/vote/) to determine your State Senate and Congressional District.

Step 2: Use the list at right to find the caucus location for your Congressional District / Senate District combination.

More information about the process or platforms of the candidates can be found at www.ksdp.org/

SuperTuesday.

### Union Office Privacy Policy

We want to make the membership aware of Local 441’s privacy policy. This policy is to protect your personal information as a member. We have many individuals and entities contact our offices requesting information about our members and feel it is important that you know the policy Local 441 has in place to protect your personal information.

**PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS**

**Local Union #441 PRIVACY POLICY**

This policy is to address 441 members’ rights to privacy. Member files are the property of Local 441. Members are allowed to review documents as stated in the Local 441 Member Files Office Policy. However, only the actual member is entitled to the information in their individual file as well as personal information contained on union membership database and any other materials or computer related data that is the property of Local Union #441 with exceptions indicated below.

A member can allow access to their personal information by written release. If obtained, Local 441 staff will provide only the information stipulated and a copy of this information is to be attached to the request and filed in the member file. Other legal documents that are received by Local 441, such as a court subpoena for records, will be complied with as legally required. Also any legal agencies such as Bureau of Census, Internal Revenue Services, Department of Labor, and other such government agencies may be entitled to member information as the law requires. Verification of employment with signed release by the member or other such documents will be responded to within the limits of the release.

Listed below is a list of items that would require member to sign a release of information prior to information being provided to a party other than the member (unless otherwise required by law as indicated above). This list is not all-inclusive. In the event these items are provided directly to the member, a copy is still required to be filed in the member file with date, time and initials of employee that provided to member.

- Personal Information which may include social security number, date of birth, family information, medical information, education, etc.
- Personal Financial Information
- List of employers and dates worked
- Hours worked
- Pension and other benefit information
- Beneficiary information

It is the policy of Local 441 that certain items are allowable unless otherwise notified by the member in writing. Those are:

- Account balances owing to Local 441 (dues/death benefits/other fees) in regards to spouse/relative inquiry, since many spouses/relatives take care of this function for our members. Members are only entitled to their own individual information and not information about another member with exception of 441 staff.
- Ability to update current address, phone or contact information.

It is the policy of Local 441 that entities that are covered under the Collective Bargaining Agreement may share member information regarding members as follows:

- Contractor remittance reports that includes member name, social security number, hours worked, month, benefits
- Member information such as name, address, phone numbers, social security number, date of birth, member status, member certifications/skills, membership dates, employment information.

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**Super Tuesday: Caucus Locations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senate District</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Atchison High School Gym</td>
<td>1500 Riley St, Atchison</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2nd Congressional District:</td>
<td>8 E. 6th St, Lawrence</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3rd Congressional District:</td>
<td>Liberty Hall 642 Massachusetts St, Lawrence</td>
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<td>4th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Metcalf Memorial Armory 200 Iowa St, Lawrence</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Kansas City KS Community College Performing Art Center 7250 State Ave, Kansas City</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Riverfront Community Center 123 N Esplanade St, Leavenworth</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Woodsland Dog Track 9700 Leavenworth Rd, Kansas City</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>8th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Turner Middle School Auditorium 1312 S. 55th St, KC</td>
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<td>9th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Shawnee Mission Unitarian Universalist Church 7725 W 87th St, Overland Park</td>
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<td>10th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Olathe First Christian Church 200 E Loula St, Olathe</td>
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<td>11th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Mill Valley High School Little Theater 5900 Monticello Rd, Shawnee</td>
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<td>Paola High School 401 N. Angela, Paola</td>
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<td>13th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Franklin Community Center 701 S Broadway, Franklin</td>
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<td>14th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Parsons VFW 101 Main St., Parsons</td>
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<td>El Dorado Civic Center 201 E. Central, El Dorado</td>
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<td>17th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Best Western Inn 3021 W. Highway 50, Emporia</td>
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<td>18th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Robinson Middle School 1125 SW 14th St, Topeka</td>
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<td>Highland Park High School 2424 SE California Ave., Topeka</td>
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<td>Topeka West High School 2001 SW Fairlaw Rd., Topeka</td>
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<td>21st Congressional District:</td>
<td>Marysville City Hall 209 N. 8th St., Marysville</td>
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<td>22nd Congressional District:</td>
<td>1st Congressional District: Geary County Historical Society &amp; Museum 530 N. Adams St., Junction City</td>
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<td>23rd Congressional District:</td>
<td>Gardner-Etigerton High School 425 N. Waverly Rd, Gardner</td>
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<td>24th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Hageman Education Center 409 Cloud, Salina</td>
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<td>Sedgwick County Courthouse Jury Room 525 N Main St., Wichita</td>
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<td>Derby Middle School 801 E. Madison Ave., Derby</td>
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<td>27th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Newman University, De Mattias Hall Rehearsal Hall 251 3100 McCormick St., Wichita</td>
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<td>28th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Machinist Hall 3830 S. Meridian Ave., Wichita</td>
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<td>29th Congressional District:</td>
<td>WSU Metroplex Gym 5015 E. 29th St., Wichita</td>
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<td>30th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Robinson Middle School Gym 328 N. Oliver, Wichita</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>Red Coach Inn 1301 E. 1st, Newton</td>
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<td>32nd Congressional District:</td>
<td>First Christian Church 904 Alexander, Winfield</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>33rd Congressional District:</td>
<td>Pratt Community Center 619 North Main, Pratt</td>
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<td>34th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Memorial Hall 101 S. Walnut, Hutchinson</td>
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<td>35th Congressional District:</td>
<td>McPherson Senior Center 112 East Euclid St., McPherson</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>36th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Hays VFV 2106 Vine, Hays</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>37th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Johnson County Community College, Carl森 Center and Polsky Theatre 12345 College Blvd., Overland Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>38th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Knights of Columbus Hall 800 Frontview, Dodge City</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>39th Congressional District:</td>
<td>Garden City Community College 801 N. Campus Dr., Garden City</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>40th Congressional District:</td>
<td>NWK Educational Service Center 703 W. 2nd, Oakley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Visit YOUR Website: www.UA441.org
Greetings Brothers and Sisters.

As always I want to begin by thanking all of you for your efforts on and off the job in making Local #441 the premier organization in the piping industry. Each day I reflect upon our local union past, present, and future. We have come a great distance. In meeting with the retired members, they remind me of past struggles won in terms of contract negotiations, pensions, and projects completed. Our heritage has always been and will continue to be the backbone of the organization as we embark upon the task of creating a legacy for future members to follow.

The Wichita area continues to create job opportunities at a steady pace. My work continues to revolve around community involvement and recruiting new members both as journeymen and apprentices. Our local union will always protect the jurisdiction of the United Association and promote the prosperity of its membership. In doing so, we must educate all those to be the very best craftsmen and instill a professional attitude toward a job well done.

We will see 2008 continue the trend of “more.” More job opportunities, more apprentices, more new members, and more wage increases. I am proud to give this type of prediction for the future. Not long ago our reports were filled with mostly doom and gloom. I too was faced with minimal wage increases, a Health and Welfare Fund that needed immediate attention, and 300+ members on the out-of-work list. We have indeed come a long way in a positive direction. Our task for the coming year is to keep the trend going. I am committed to targeting non-union contractors and increasing their cost of doing business through organizing and project research. We have put some incredible pressure on the non-union sector and will do even more in the future.

We will continue to promote the union to all persons making a living in the piping industry. It is my firm belief that everyone should have the right to belong to a collective bargaining agreement and its protections. Lastly we will continue to be a presence in the political arena. 2008 will prove to be a monumental year for politics and will shape the future for organized labor.

In closing, I would like to invite all persons to attend the monthly meeting of the newly formed South Central Kansas Chapter of IAPMO. IAPMO is the sponsoring organization of the Uniform Plumbing and Mechanical codes. The UA has expressed wholeheartedly the need to support IAPMO in all of its functions for the preservation of health and welfare in the communities we live. They meet the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. Contact me for monthly locations. We usually have an hour or two of continuing education at no cost. In fact, the cost of being a member of the chapter is $0. It is, however, important to become involved. Lastly, I hope and pray everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Keep your mind on the past and your focus on the future.

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

LU 441 Retiree Group Photos

Topeka Area

Brothers,

I hope you all had a great holiday season. With the caucuses upon us, Local 441 will be supporting a candidate when the primaries blow over.

We have already supported some local legislators and plan to support more as the elections come up. We have quite a few friends at the capital and plan on making more.

It is a shame that 80% of the membership carry the rest with this task by putting the 4 cents an hour into the PAC fund. I want to take time to thank the majority of the membership who carry the ones who won’t pay the $80 a year to protect their kids education, their workman’s comp, take care of their elderly parents, try to control health care, keep illegal aliens out, and so much more.

It’s also the ones who pay that are the members that give the most in things like helping with candidate forums and putting up signs and such.

To the members who pay into PAC, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, and to the other members, please reconsider so we can leave our country, our state, and our union better than they were left to us.

Fraternally yours,
Kirk W. Miller, Sr. (785) 354-8539
Topeka Business Representative
3906 NW 16th St.  Topeka, KS  66618
At a meeting of the Board of Trustees on December 12, 2007, the Trustees made significant improvements to our Health and Welfare Plan. All members currently covered by the H&W Plan should have received a “Summary of Material Modification” (SMM) letter prior to January 1, 2008.

The Trustees lowered the medical share pay to $1,500 for individuals, and the per-family amount to $3,000. The vision care benefit maximum was again increased, to a maximum per family of $400 per calendar year. The vision benefits have now doubled over a one year period. This new maximum will only apply for services provided on or after January 1, 2008. The annual dental benefit maximum was increased for services performed in 2008 from $1,000 per person to $1,500 per person and dental implants will now be covered at 50% of the allowable charge up to the annual benefit maximum (again for services received in 2008). The lifetime maximum orthodontic benefit was increased to $1,500 for services received in 2008.

The Trustees also increased the amount of the Plan’s weekly disability benefit from $185 per week to $300 per week. The change in the amount of disability benefits will be for benefits paid on or after August 1, 2008, and will not be retroactive for claims paid prior to August 1, 2008. There were many other changes which were described in the SMM letter, but these are the benefit changes that will have an almost immediate impact for the majority of our Participants and their Dependents.

Last Plan Year the amount we paid to doctors, hospitals, pharmacies and other medical care providers increased by 42.7%. This is pure cost. In other words, the 42.7% increase does not include any administrative expense.

There were many reasons for this large increase, including the simple fact that the number of covered Participants rose dramatically during the year, but the Plan’s actuaries estimate that if our number of covered members had remained constant, we still would have paid a 19% increase in medical cost.

Most insurers and actuaries are predicting a 6% to 10% increase in medical cost for 2008. Yet, in spite of these intimidating statistics, the Trustees were able to prudently increase our benefits. The estimated cost of these benefit improvements is approximately 1.2 million dollars, but the Plan did very well last year and the Trustees understand that the sacrifices made by you made these improvements possible. Sacrifices such as the annual $20 increase in the contribution rate.

Also, the fact that the number of hours worked hit a 24 year high played a large part in the Plan’s financial stability. Other factors, such as our dramatic switch to generic drugs helped. As a group, we took to heart the fact that when we ask for generic drugs, we lower our out of pocket cost and the cost for the Plan. The percentage of prescription generic drug purchased by our members rose sharply in 2007.

One note of caution. I will not predict doom and gloom, but no one can foresee how many members or their dependents will face catastrophic medical expense during the year. If this happens and costs spiral up, the possibility that we may need to adjust our benefits downward in the future does exist. The Trustees instructed me to notify them immediately if the Plan’s reserves fell by more than 13%. After talking with Richard Taylor and the other Trustees about the work outlook for 2008, I don’t think there is much chance of that happening. In fact, the Trustees are reasonably confident that this will not happen in 2008. That aside, it gives me great pleasure to be able to inform you of these improvements to our benefits and I hope the upward trend of our benefit package continues.

Now for the bad news. Due to the enrichment of our benefit package, the Plan’s “Termination of Employment” COBRA premiums increased to $383 per month for single coverage and $738 per month for family coverage. The change in our COBRA rates will be effective March 1, 2008.

Also, the BCBS premium for the Retirees rose to $1,503.65 per month for single coverage and $3,007.29 per month for family coverage.

These premiums are based upon the BCBS non-group $1,000 per individual deductible major medical policy. For our retired members and their spouses that qualify for the retirees subsidy, the premium will be $301 per month for single coverage and $601 for family coverage. This change in the premiums will be effective April 1, 2008.

Please contact the Fund Office in Wichita at (800) 423-6517 or you can call me at (620) 232-3799 if you have questions about the Retirees Subsidy Program, or other Health and Welfare questions. You should call me if you have any Local 441 Pension questions. The Fund Office in Wichita no longer answers questions about our local pension(s).

In closing, we hope each of you has a healthy and prosperous year.

As always, should any of the foregoing conflict with the actual Plan rules and documents, the Plan rules will prevail.

Joe Pucci, Administrator for the Trustees
(620) 235-1744

[Business Manager Report, Cont’d from Page 1]
Dear Brothers & Sisters,

As the saying goes, “out with the old and in with the new.” 2007 was a good year with work being steady and the predictions for 2008 look strong and prosperous.

Phase 3 of Lawrence Memorial Hospital expansion project is expected to begin around February 2008 and continue to spring 2009. Once the emergency department moves to its new location, the old space will be renovated to house new surgical facilities.

This will include approximately 21,000 square feet of additional space, bringing the total size of surgical services to 57,000 square feet. The new facility is designed with six functional operating suites and shell space for two more, providing an opportunity for future growth.

Applications for Apprenticeship in Zone II B are the 3rd thru the 14th of March. If you have someone you would like to recommend, have them go by the Work Force Center in Lawrence and apply.

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

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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, 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 (888) 214-0777 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) 432-3990 or (785) 291-4180

Delta Dental of Kansas
www.DeltaDentalKS.com
(800) 234-3375 or (316) 264-4511

If you have a Pension through the United Association, the National Pension office is where you would 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.

If you have a local pension or Kansas Annuity benefit, you will also need to contact the Health & Welfare office to request the retirement information for that benefit.

National Pension (800) 638-7442
Local Pension/KS Annuity
(316) 264-2339 or (800) 423-6517

United Association Website: www.ua.org

Visit YOUR Website: www.UA441.org
Apprenticeship applications will take place March 3-14, 2008.

If you know a good prospect that might be interested, let them know!

Why Joining a Union is a Healthy Move

If you joined your union because you wanted to pay less for your health insurance, new statistics show how smart you were to do so.

Based on information from March 2007, a survey by the Labor Dept.’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) demonstrates that union workers are much less likely to have to pay any portion of their health coverage—but that even if they do make a contribution, it is, on average, less than that paid by their non-union brethren.

Only half of union-represented workers pay a portion of their premium for single coverage, while 81 percent of non-union workers do so, says BLS.

For those who do pay a portion, those who have the benefit of union representation—with negotiators who fight on their behalf at the bargaining table to keep their contributions as low as possible—pay an average monthly premium of $62.45. Non-union employee contributions average $83.51 per month. (The difference amounts to about $250 a year—maybe the cost of a car payment?)

Union members paying for a portion of family coverage also do better, paying an average $211.91 per month, compared to $323.80 paid by non-union workers. (There the difference is an even more impressive $1,342 per year; that may be a mortgage payment!)

And here is perhaps the most convincing twist to this story: since union-negotiated health plans with employee contributions typically are more comprehensive, they cost more. Union plans for single workers cost nearly $400 a month on average, while plans for non-union workers average $341.13. The pattern holds for family coverage, with union plans costing a monthly average of $970.06, compared to $953.13 for non-union plans.

So, as a union member, you are paying less for a costlier, arguably higher-quality plan. That helps keep you in the middle class—and that feels good, doesn’t it?

[Check out the improvements to YOUR Health and Welfare Plan. Read Joe Pucci’s article on page 10 of this issue!]