



July \* August \* September 2014

Union meeting dates

July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Aug 7<sup>th</sup>, Sept 4 - 5:00 E-Board/7:00 Membership

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

I want to congratulate Zach Stewart for coming in second at the District 4 Regional Apprenticeship contest in Chicago. He did a great job of representing Minnesota and Minneapolis Plumbers Local 15.

As most of you know Tom Martin announced his retirement at the June union meeting affective August 1, 2014. I want to personally thank Tom for all his input, dedication and hard work that he gave to Plumbers Local 15. I am appointing Scott Lichliter to finish out the remainder of Tom's term as Business Agent. Scott has held positions as an Instructor for the JATC, Executive Board member, Recording Secretary, Vice President and President. I'm confident that Scott will do a great job fulfilling the remainder of the term.

The Plumbers picnic is right around the corner and we have made a couple changes. The picnic is going to be on Sunday August 24<sup>th</sup> at Wabun Park by Minnehaha Falls. We had moved it from there a few years ago when they were renovating the park but now that it is available we thought it was a better venue. We are always looking for ideas to improve the picnic and have more member participation. Give us a call or send an email with any suggestions.

**Fraternally, Business Manager**

**Rick Eilers**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

In this newsletter article I am taking the opportunity to highlight a couple things Health Care related as it pertains to you and I. First item is cost, although medical trend continues to increase at 4% to 7% per year, for active members this is the fourth consecutive year without an increase. Approximately 50% of health care costs are lifestyle choices and preventable. With that said, our better than expected plan performance is affected by our decisions and behaviors. Utilization of our Wellness centers is a big part of that, and the number of visits from our members and families continues to rise. This is a great opportunity we have to engage in our wellness and increase our quality of life, while potentially saving future expenses for treatment and care due to illness, and also by putting a little extra money in your pocket by keeping premium cost increases at bay. If you have not yet visited one of our Family Health and Wellness Centers, I would like to encourage you to do so. For information on services provided, locations, and hours of operation visit the Pipe Trades Services MN web site ([www.ptsmn.org](http://www.ptsmn.org)) and scroll to the link toward the bottom of the page which is the Family Health & Wellness Centers logo. Or you can call 651-348-8851.

**On another note, I would also like to remind everyone to stay current with your dues. Section 157 of the U.A. Constitution states: Any member**

**owing over three (3) months' dues shall automatically be suspended from membership without notice of any kind. A suspended member is denied all rights and privileges and is not entitled to any monetary benefits.** What this could mean to you is that if you are not working, you will not be eligible for referral until all back dues + the \$50.00 re-instatement fee are paid. You will not lose your place on the list, but your dues must be paid up to be referred out.

Have a great summer, and thank you for helping control our health care costs!

**Fraternally yours,**

**Scott Gale, Business Agent**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

I know I'm going to sound like a broken record this month. The last two newsletters I talked about jurisdiction and I'm going to keep pressing it. Twice in the last month, I was told that local 15 and other trade Business Agents has come up with agreements on jurisdiction. In neither case, that had happened. If a Project Manager or a Job Superintendent tells you that there is an agreement, please call and make sure. It is no trouble for me to let you know if an agreement was resolved or not. One thing I've continued to pursue has been under-mount sinks on granite. I've continued to keep active on this and have since received a ruling from the head of plumbing inspectors at the state re-affirming that you need to be a licensed plumber to install these sinks since it is a fixture. Many projects have the under-mount sinks in the granite bid, but with the licensing and the Bricklayers and Allied Crafts local #1 agreeing that this is our work, there should be no reason that I should find anyone but plumbers doing this work. Like always, call if it is not being done on your job.

I am asked often about the stadium and when it will be loading up. From what I'm seeing, that won't be happening for another 6 - 9 months. They will start to increase gradually starting around September and reach their peak around April or May of 2015.

This year's picnic is August 24<sup>th</sup> at Wabun Park by Minnehaha Park in South Minneapolis. Please plan on attending.

Hope you enjoy your summer

**Sincerely,**

**Joe Lane Business Agent**

**Happy July 4<sup>th</sup> to All Our Members!!**

It is with a heavy heart but I have decided to retire as of Aug 1<sup>st</sup> this summer. It has been a great honor to represent you and I want thank everyone for their support over the past 32 months. When I was re-elected the local was divided and in turmoil, but we overcame that and we are all united again.



Yes we did have some rough spots to overcome but we did it together. Remember we are all in this together. When one of our markets are failing due to an economic down turn, you just don't let it go, or cut wages and benefits to be competitive against the non-union, as what was happening in our residential markets. When a crisis arises you make decisions that benefit all in your union not just a certain segment. In a union we share the ups and downs of the economic cycles equally. A union means: all of us, together, equal. We all know what happened. We did the right thing for all our members and made us whole again, all of us in wages and benefits. Because of the wise decisions we made on our last contract, the hours worked in our local by our single family home members doubled.

My feeling is that if any union officer would ever bring back a contract that cuts wages in any of our residential markets to be competitive, than those officers should work for those wages they negotiated and then let them try and support their families on those lower wages and benefit's. A crisis is when some of the best decisions are made. We were in a crisis, but the decisions we made during those times showed our true character. No one group is better than the other. We made decisions together, members and officers and when you do that: "Good things happen to good people, when they make good decisions!!

With that being said I am leaving, knowing full well that our Business Manager Rick Eilers, Agents, Scott Gale and Joe Lane feel just as strongly as I do on these issues. I also feel with the up most confidence in our local's future with the leadership our full time officers or I would not have made the decision to retire. I want to thank everyone for the honor of electing me and allowing me to represent them. Sometimes you don't make a lot of friends when making tough decisions as we had to. Sometimes it can be a burden being a full time officer. But it is not a burden but an honor when you can see the tough decisions you made help your members and families maintain their quality of life. Remember it is all about our families, and their quality of life, our standard of living, yours and the other members of Local #15 no matter where or what markets we're working in, we're all members with families trying to survive, together, helping one another, with equal wages, always remember that!!

Sincerely, Tom Martin

**JAC News - Continuing Education:**

At this time we are still offering classes every Thursday during the summer, but have had a very poor response. Though its summer and the nice weather is finally here, time will be running out quickly for master plumbers as their 16 hours of continuing education is due prior to their renewal in December. We will be unable to accommodate extremely large classes during the fall months.

If you are a master or journeyman plumber you can get your 16 continuing ed. credits any time during your two year licensing cycle. Master plumbers must complete their 16 hours by December 2014, and journeyman by 2015. Going forward for

those that hold both licenses you can do 16 hours in the even years or take 8 code during the even year and 4 code & 4 technical credits during the odd year. This will meet both license requirements.

New ASSE Backflow Tester/Rebuilder requirements for those already RPZ certified: The new requirements go into effect for a journeyman plumber first during their 2014 – 15 cycle. If you do not obtain this certification and renew it prior to December 31, 2015 you will need to take the full certification (60 hours) over again. Master plumbers must renew their current RPZ license prior to 12/31/2014, take this class and renew this license prior to December 31, 2016. If you don't, you too will have to take the full certification (60 hours) over again prior to license renewal. We are currently offering this class to bring members up to the new ASSE standard in a 7 night class. Starting with our August 19<sup>th</sup> class this will change to Tuesday & Thursday, a 3 -1/2 week commitment. This class is limited in size to 20 at a cost of \$175.00. Payment must be made to the Minneapolis Plumbers JAC no later than July 14, 2014. These classes will run continuously every 4 weeks except for union meeting nights and holidays. Information can be found on our website: [www.training15.com](http://www.training15.com) for all continuing ed. classes

Med Gas: For all members that are currently NITC Med Gas certified you must also register with the State of Minnesota. If you have not done this yet go to our website to print out an application. Med Gas continuing ed. can be used as 4 code or 4 technical credits for those that are Med Gas certified and registered with the State, and for those that are not Med Gas certified it can only be credited as 4 technical credits.

The City of Minneapolis is once again offering testing for the Minneapolis Competency card. At this time St. Paul is not offering testing. Applications are available on our website.

Interested in teaching in the St Cloud area? If so, please call the office at 612-374-5262.

**Credit Union Deduction**

\$20.00 will be deducted from your credit union account on July 1, 2014 for deaths #3-6.

**Plumbers' Local 15 members and staff extend their deepest sympathies to the families of...**

Byronn Lundeen	3/ 22 at the age of 76
Elmer Greeninger	5/19 at the age of 78
John Borgman	6/3 at the age of 73
Omer Oestreich	6/20 at the age of 91

**Labor Day Holiday-Monday Sept 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

Labor Day shall be a paid holiday for Plumbers working under the Metro area contract. The employee shall be paid at the regular rate of pay. If they employee is laid off within ten (10) working days prior to the day observed as the holiday, the employer will pay said holiday to the former employee if still unemployed.