

Jason Amesbury

Business Manager's Report

This has been an incredibly challenging year for our local. To quote UA General Secretary-Treasurer Patrick Kellett, "What unites us is far stronger than what separates us." I can assure you that everything we have learned is truly making us stronger and the following articles in this newsletter will explain our path forward. I encourage all to read them with a critical eye and come to your next union meeting with constructive criticism and input. Attending and participating in our membership meetings is your first opportunity to get involved. Our success as a local union is built on strong, honest communication between our officers, our membership and our contractors.

Regardless of the challenges we have faced, we continued to break all previous records for our local in regards to membership growth and hours worked so far this year. Our Health and Welfare Plan currently insures over 2600 people; our Retirement Savings Plan currently sits at over \$155 million, making it one of the largest private Group RRSP plans in Canada.

The biggest challenge we have faced this year was the rebuilding of an HVAC/R trade school ensuring our current and future apprentices have the same opportunity for expert training that we have all benefitted from. With great pride I can say that the setup of our new school, RTI Refrigeration Training Institute, has been a complete success. With the hiring of a General Manager, Keith MacKinnon, RTI has developed a solid business model and will expand the extra-curricular training available solely for our UA 516 members.

The integrity of our local union is paramount. With the training school back under our alliance we will once again maintain full control of it's management and administration. RTI will provide full financial accountability for its operations.

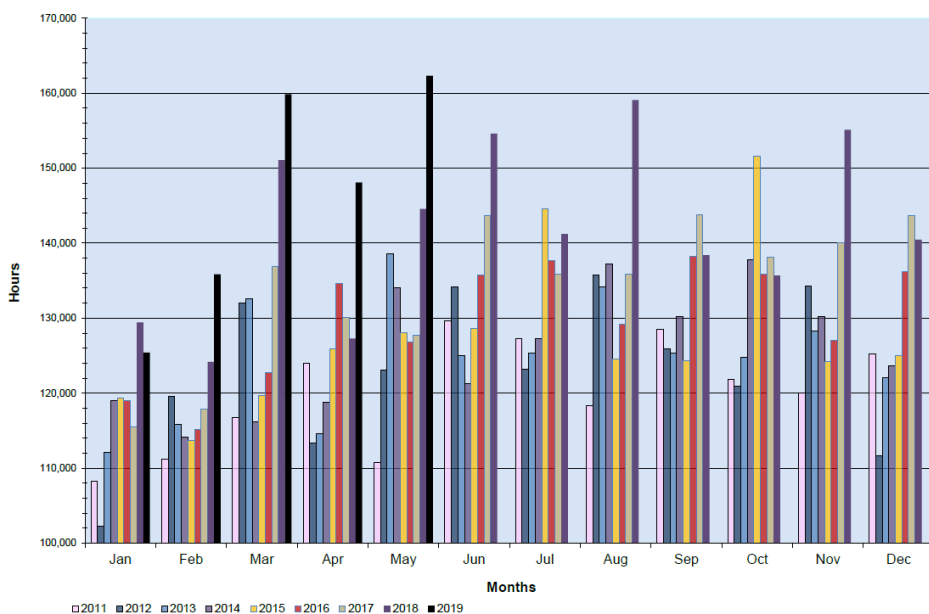
With the support and financial backing of UA Canada, we have been able to rebuild our school with updated technology, equipment, and infrastructure. After

the facts were presented to the Trustees of the UA Canadian Training Fund, the Trustees of the Fund unanimously passed a motion to reimburse all expenses that we had incurred to ensure our new training facility continues to meet and exceed our industry's needs. That is the commitment UA Canada has to our local, our members, and our trade.

The success of our Local stems from the fact that it is a well-oiled machine. But there is always room for improvement. Our organizing campaign continues to be a crucial component as you will see in Kevin Barbisan's Organizing Report in this newsletter on page 4.

Our Officers and administrative team, our Training Director and newly formed training school, our contractors, and our focus on organizing all contribute to increasing our membership and market share which will result in our continued success for generations to come.

Local 516 Hours Worked



In this issue:

Name	Page
Business Managers Report	1
Membership Hours Graph	1
RTI Refrigeration Training	2-3
Organizing Report	4
Organized Labour	4
Health & Welfare Update	5
H&W Good to Know	5-6
Retirement Dreams	7
Due Diligence	8



A Vision of Excellence

Refrigeration Training Institute (RTI) opened its doors on March 25, 2019 to deliver upon a promise that was made to provide apprentices of the HVAC/R program a place to get the best training possible for success in their chosen career.

RTI was established out of necessity for the industry, as there was a visible void to fulfill the demand of training new apprentices in order to sustain the growth and recruitment of people that are needed for their services here in British Columbia.

With an existing wait list for enrollment into the ITA program, this void would grow larger and our industry would suffer if something was not done about it immediately and a new training facility was established.

Through the vision of the Business Manager of UA Local 516 and with the approval of the Board of Directors, the development of RTI was started with the Vision of Excellence that promises integrity, accountability, transparency and trust for all the stakeholders. We all share in the success and failure of the industry and therefore have a great responsibility to ensure that our members receive the training to develop the skills required of this specialized profession. We will also provide access to specific knowledge that will make our members the best in the business by implementing specific skills training courses hosted in our facility that will give you a competitive edge in the marketplace.

Who we are

Institutes are not just classrooms and hallways but are a collection of caring people that bring life to an idea, share a common purpose and a desire of ensuring the knowledge they have can be passed on and bettered upon by future generations of tradesmen.

The people we have at RTI have the desire and abilities to bring to life the vision and ensure the success of the students that choose a career in the HVAC/R sector.

Keith MacKinnon, General Manager



Keith was brought to RTI on April 29th to manage the daily operation of the Building Facility and ensure the financial viability of

the entity for the Board of Directors.

He has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree earned from Royal Road University in Victoria, BC and a Marketing Management diploma from BCIT. His 20 year career has taken him through various sectors of business management in Retail, Distribution, Wholesale and Manufacturing.

**Ian McCommish
Department Head & Instructor**

Ian switched from a background in Accounting and Finance to the Refrigeration trade in the early 90's. Beginning at an industrial company, he has been fortunate enough to work on most equipment types in the industry. He began teaching part time in Victoria for his employer and made the switch to full time instruction in 2010. Ian will be Instructing Level 4 of the Apprentice program.

Samantha Kosor, Administrator

Samantha joined RTI's team in February of 2019 to help with initial set-up of the facility and to undertake student registrations for the inaugural classes. She has experience as an administrative assistant and registrar with the prior refrigeration school. With her proven ability working with apprentices and contractors and helping to navigate the demands of the industry, she is a welcomed asset to all in the journey towards certification.

Doug Pringle, Instructor

Doug has been involved in the HVAC trade for almost 40 years, working in the education field relating to the trade for the last 10+ years. He currently holds a Red Seal in Refrigeration & Refrigeration Plant Operator, Level A gas certification and RE Electrical certification from

Technical Safety BC.

Doug completed his Degree in Adult education in 2016 and has instructed classes for Pre-Apprentice thru to Level 4. He also instructs Journeyman upgrade courses offered thru RTI.

Karl Kethler, Instructor

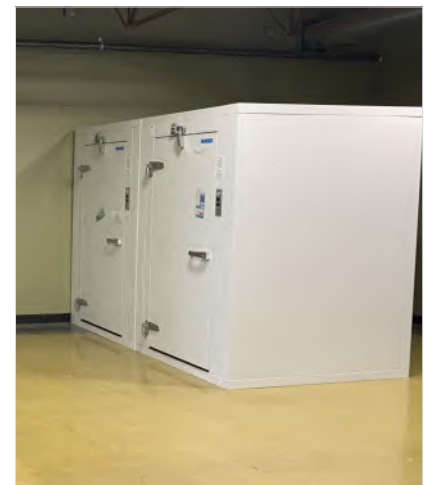
Karl was brought into the fold as a Level 2 instructor of the Apprentice program. He has Red Seal Certification as an Electrician and a HVAC/RMechanic as well as being an A Gas Fitter. His electrical training was completed through BCIT; his refrigeration and gas training were completed through the JARTS program.

Karl's 22 years in the trades have covered residential, commercial and industrial sites for all disciplines. He has enjoyed teaching apprentices on the job and this has led him into this transition to teaching in a classroom environment.

Why it all matters

RTI's commitment to provide industry leading training will only be successful with the support of all stakeholders.

We are committed to maintaining a 28 - 32% apprentice ratio for our industry to ensure the long-term sustainability of the workforce by UA 516. To deliver on our commitment, it will require the support of our members and contractors to participate and help realize these initiatives.



**Building a School,
All it takes is Commitment**

On March 15, 2019, RTI gained access to the building units behind the UA Local 516 offices that were formerly occupied by JARTS and the physical task of building a new school began.

We were all stunned at the lack of any equipment left in the facility. The classrooms were stripped back to bare walls. White boards were removed and all the furniture was gone. In the shop areas, all the donated equipment was removed and tools were missing.

We had one week to build desks and chairs for classrooms and offices, install white boards, projectors, document cameras, and projector screens, order and install photocopiers, and produce instructional material for each level. In essence: rebuild an entire school for the HVAC/R trade in BC from scratch.

With strong support from our staff, equipment manufacturers, suppliers, and contractors, we rose to the occasion and opened our doors to students just 10 days later on March 25, 2019.

Sure it wasn't perfect and we would like to thank our Apprentices for their patience and understanding during this time, but we are well on our way to forming the new standard for the refrigeration apprenticeship education in BC.

We would like to take a moment to recognize the donations and contributions made by these key participants in helping get RTI up and running and facilitating this education program:

- **UA Canada** - for their financial support and commitment and understanding of the importance to provide training to the HVAC/R industry in BC
- **ITA of BC** - for expediting the recognition of RTI as an approved training provider thus reducing delays of apprenticeships interrupted by the closure of another training provider
- **Technical Safety BC** - for expediting our accreditation for the Gas B certification program
- **UA 516 Journeyman and Apprentice Training Fund (JATF)** - for the ongoing commitment to unionized training in BC
- **Independent Supply** - for their donation of 4 forced air furnaces and 4 heat pumps
- **M&T Air Conditioning - Sean Blom** for donation of hot water tank and on-demand system and labour and materials to install units from Independent Supply
- **Daikin - Sylvain Girard** - for donation of 2 turbo-core compressors
- **Ecco Heating** - for donation of sheet metal and gas fireplace for Gas B program

- **Source Furniture** - for discounted prices and expedited delivery of classroom tables, chairs and desks
- **NetXperts Inc** - for their loan of computers for instructor staff
- **Refrigerative Supply Ltd (RSL) & Hoshizaki** - for donation of an ice machine and bin
- **Diamond Ice & Manitowoc** - for donation of an ice machine and bin
- **Rose Corrigan Property Services** - for expedited deep cleaning of all facility common areas, offices, classrooms and restrooms prior to start of classes
- **Fraser Valley Refrigeration** - for the return of workshop tables and other equipment
- **Andrew Mills** - for the donation of 06G compressors
- **Al Levert** - for the donation of various supplies and a discount on a hoist for the lab room
- **Jones Food Store Equipment - Jim Marsen** - for donation of equipment to the Commercial Refrigeration Lab

Without the support and donations of the equipment, supplies and financial backing of those mentioned above, RTI would not be in the position it is today to deliver the education and skills training needed for our members and industry as a whole. With much appreciation we say "Thank You" and look forward to serving in this capacity for generations to come.



RTI Refrigeration Training Institute has all classrooms set up and new equipment, some of which will be dedicated to use by UA members only.

Organizing Report

Only half way through and 2019 is already proving to be another great year for growth in our local union. Two years ago, we made a promise to the membership that we would be increasing our efforts in the Interior and on Vancouver Island. Listening to our members at local meetings in areas such as Kelowna and Nanaimo, we have stepped up organizing by spending one week each month in each of these regions.

We have been working diligently with local members in these areas to help us organize. We need your eyes and ears out there. You meet fellow technicians while working in the field and at wholesalers. You are hearing their talk and you can assist our organizing efforts by promoting Local 516 to disgruntled non-union employees. You can communicate the benefits of joining Local 516 to techs you encounter who are looking to set up their own companies.

For those unfamiliar with the term “organizing” in the context of the labour union environment the definition according

to Webster’s dictionary is: **or • gan • ize** (ôr'gā niz') 1. to provide with an organic structure 2. to arrange for 3. to establish; institute 4. **to persuade to join a cause, group, etc.** It is a tool the union uses to increase market share, set and maintain the minimum hourly rate for qualified HVAC/R technicians and improve the lives of the workers in our province.

The increased effort is paying off. We are seeing growth in areas where previously there has been none. Since the start of our campaign the numbers speak for themselves:

2017: 1057 members 8 new contractors
2018: 1200 members 6 new contractors
2019: 1291 members * see below

We are pleased to welcome these new signatory contractors thus far in 2019:

- Alstad HVAC
- Dynamic Mechanical
- PGC
- Iceman Refrigeration
- FM Air Cond & Refrigeration

- Maxwell Mechanical
- South Island Mechanical

We met with the owners of each of these companies on several occasions and discussed potential partnerships. They were committed to joining our local union for a number of reasons. Key is the ability for them to tap into our membership of highly trained technicians. Also, our benefit plan and RRSP plan as well as the sense that Local 516 reflects their professional and occupational concerns all contributed to their desire to sign collective agreements with us.

Our motto of “Fidelity Benevolence Education Protection” testifies to our desire to represent the collective interests of our members and contractors, allowing the voices of individual workers and contractors to be heard and made into a goal of our entire union.



What is organized labour and why do we need it?

Organized labour is an association or union of workers forming a legal unit, a bargaining unit, which acts as an agent and legal representative for a unit of employees in all matters of law or rights arising from the administration of a collective agreement. Organized labour has brought tremendous positive change to the working public. Members enjoy higher wages, better hours, safer working conditions as well as benefits such as medical coverage, vacation time, and retirement benefits.

Unions, through elected leadership and bargaining committees, negotiate labour contracts with employers. Beyond improving wages and working conditions bargaining may also include work rules, complaint procedures, just cause for termination, and a number of other issues. Collective bargaining is achieved through two different methods, “top down” and “bottom up” campaigns.

The top down approach is the method we use in most instances. We meet with and discuss potential partnerships with non-union contractors across BC. There can be misconceptions by contractors over costs and actual benefits of becoming part of our organization. Face to face meetings take time and effort to reverse negative connotations some have about unions. All too common we hear: “We don’t need you to tell us how to run our company.” That is far from the intent of becoming part of Local 516. We discuss the collective agreement that *both* parties agree to as a benefit to both the employer and employee; we are not interested in becoming involved in the day to day operations of their business. And our meetings are always conducted in an upfront and transparent way for them to recognize the benefits of joining us.

Another organizing approach is “bottom up” where employees are seeking to band

together and join the union. We meet with an individual or group and provide information on how to proceed. The goal is to sign up the majority (at least 50% + 1) of workers in a company before we can submit an application to the BC Labour Board to move forward. A 10-day waiting period allows time for both the union and the employer to discuss the applicants petition to form a bargaining unit. After this period a secret ballot vote is conducted on site with an adjudicator from the Board. If the vote is in favor of the union then bargaining can proceed to form a collective agreement.

We must unitedly keep the momentum going, continuing to invest our time and effort in advancing the economic and social goals of members now and in the future. Get involved by attending your union meetings. Ask how you can participate in ways of advancing the interests of UA Local 516.

Health & Welfare Plan update

The Refrigeration Workers Health & Welfare Plan continues to operate well in the face of change. In recent years, the trustees have been able to increase and enhance dental coverage across the board, bring retiree dental coverage on par with working member coverage, increase limits on retiree benefits, increase coverage for paramedical expenses (Registered massage therapy, chiro, physio, etc.), and just last year, increase the long-term disability benefit. Current plan experience sees an average of \$1,300 per member in annual health care claims (with an approximate 11% annual increase), \$190 per member in annual vision care claims, and \$1,400 per member in annual dental care claims (with an approximate 7% annual increase). Short-term disability sees over \$200,000 paid out annually. The additional premium-based benefits (life insurance, long-term disability, etc.) are regularly reviewed as well to make sure the Plan is getting great value for the applicable coverage.

The creation of the **Employer Health Tax** by the BC government signified a monumental change in our province, necessitating a thorough review on the effects to the union group plan and the union contractors. The new tax would take effect January 2019, and the government would continue to charge individuals and group plans until January 2020. During 2018 collective bargaining, to help prepare the contractors for the upcoming expense while not jeopardizing the strength and longevity of the Health & Welfare Plan, a new Health & Welfare rate was negotiated to \$2.81 per hour. While lower than previous, the new rate allowed the contractors to afford the cost shifted to them, and still allowed for plan enhancement and provided a buffer for rising prescription costs. When the expense of the MSP premium is completely eliminated at the end of 2019, the trustees will reassess the overall plan coverage and costs, and then explore possible increases, enhancements, and additions to the plan.

Good to know ...

Please contact the Health & Welfare office when you experience **life events** such as marriage, new baby, adoption, separation, death, address change etc. We are family, so we want to be there when you celebrate and when you grieve. We will help you through all the paperwork and processes.

If you have any questions regarding pregnancy leave, parental leave, family responsibility leave, compassionate care leave, reservists' leave, bereavement leave, and jury duty, please contact the Health & Welfare office and we will do our best to assist you.



Traveling?

If you have working member benefits (Class 1, 2, or 12) and have coverage from your provincial government health plan, then you have adequate **Travel Insurance** for sudden and unexpected injuries or acute episodes of disease. It is always a good idea to check if there are any travel advisories issued regarding the location you are travelling to, as this may affect your insurance coverage. If you have retired benefits (Class 10 or 11), you NEED to purchase travel insurance.



Workplace accident?

Injuries at work must be reported to WorkSafeBC (WCB). If you receive **WCB payments**, notify the Health & Welfare office as soon as possible. If you are injured outside of work, notify the Health & Welfare office as soon as possible so that we can provide you with a **Short-Term Disability Application**. For time off work while injured **the Health & Welfare Plan can credit your hour bank and union dues**. But you must communicate this to our office. Please also remember to inform us when you return to work.



Member access to a variety of resources

The **Employee and Family Assistance Program by Shepell** offers many services to UA 516 members and their families. Many resources are available to you as part of this program, from professional counselling to nutrition support to financial support, just to name a few. You can check out their website at www.workhealthlife.com, or call 1.800.387.4765. Let them know you are part of the Refrigeration Workers Health & Welfare Plan. Any calls and/or use of their services is strictly confidential and we receive no record or information of such.

Alcohol and Drug treatment program

The **Construction Industry Rehabilitation Plan (CIRP)** is available to all UA 516 members. CIRP is a non-profit, joint union/management sponsored alcohol and drug treatment program, providing mental health and addiction services to the organized construction industry. They can be reached by email at info@constructionrehabplan.com, by phone at 604.521.8611, or at www.constructionrehabplan.com.



Health and Welfare Office Contact Information

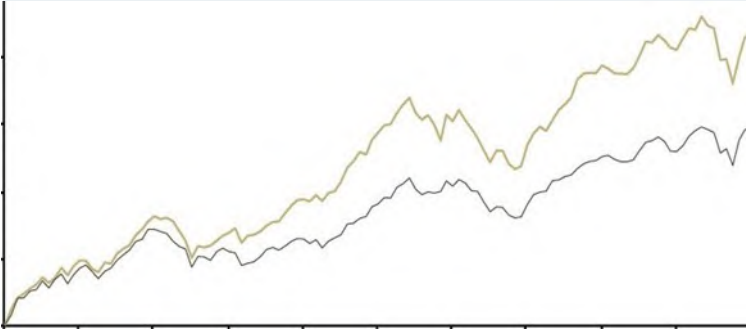
Phone: (604) 882-8212

Fax: (604) 882-8207

Email: janine@ua516.org or geoff@ua516.org

Dreaming of your future retirement?

One of the core issues that we as a union pride ourselves on is that our members have the opportunity to retire, and retire well. The Refrigeration Workers Group Retirement Accumulation Plan has expanded over the years and has now come to consist of the Group Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), the optional Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA), and more recently, the Retirement Income Fund (RIF).



Some quick numbers:

In December 2010, with 1089 registered accounts (members plus spouses), the total assets of the group plan were at \$74,443,137. At the end of May 2019, the plan included 1403 accounts for a total value of \$152,255,991.

The **Group RRSP** comprises the largest portion of the Plan. Employer contributions are determined by the collective agreement, and are held in trust for your retirement. **If you do not provide specific investment instructions, the funds are invested in *default funds* according to your estimated retirement age.** It is a good idea to **reassess your risk tolerance regularly and review your investment portfolio** to make sure you are invested in appropriate funds. You generally cannot withdraw or transfer the funds out of the plan prior to retirement, but the trust rules do provide a possible exception for certain cash withdrawals, transfers, or eligible Home Buyers Plan withdrawals.



The optional **TFSA** is an excellent way to save some extra money for retirement, large purchases, or vacation. You get the benefit of the same fund lineup and low fees that the Group RRSP has, with the flexibility of being able to withdraw when you need to. Canada Revenue Agency rules apply, and your spouse can even set up an account within the Plan. There is a withdrawal fee associated with TFSA accounts.



The **RIF** has been a key addition for those members who want to continue with the fund selection that the overall plan offers while they transition into retirement. Members approaching retirement are able to contact Vancouver-based Investment Retirement Manager, Stephen Rye at 1-855-548-7356. Stephen and his team can help with one-on-one service and ensure the process is thorough and as smooth as possible.

As always, TRG Group Benefits can also assist those that need retirement planning services. They can be contacted at 1-800-315-5115.

Be sure to check the Savings Plan section of www.ua516.org for recent Fund Returns, Unit Values, Forms, and information on the various tools and resources available for all your retirement-planning needs!



Lee Taylor

Due diligence ... protecting your employer's vehicle and contents

Service vehicles are frequently targeted by thieves. The disruption, inconvenience and liability these events cause are often underestimated or not fully recognized. Theft from automobiles is one of the most common forms of property crime in British Columbia according to Statistics Canada. Unfortunately, when auto related theft occurs it can open up a world of questions and finger pointing from your contractor.

The importance of performing proper due diligence can't be overstated. Due diligence is defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary as *"the care that a reasonable person exercises to avoid harm to other persons or their property"*.

With this definition it helps us assess what we must do to ensure we have

done everything we possibly can within our control to prevent an unfavorable outcome to a situation. It is important that every member lock their service vehicle at all times when they are not using it. Furthermore, if your contractor requires you to use puck style locks and use a vehicle alarm, ensure they are correctly installed and armed as well.

It is also your responsibility to provide your employer/contractor with a detailed and comprehensive personal tool list. Each time you add a personal tool to your collection you should update the list with a description of the tool, its replacement cost, along with model and serial numbers. Your contractor will need this information when making a claim with their insurer in the event of a break in. Having a detailed and up-to-date

tool record protects both you and your employer.

If the unfortunate occurs it is your responsibility to report it to the police and have the police complete a report. Ensure your contractor is made aware and they are given a copy of the police report.

Taking the time to prevent property theft while performing our due diligence saves money and aggravation for everyone. The few moments it takes to arm your alarm, install your puck locks, and maintain your tool list is a far cry from the inconvenience of having a thief steal the tools that are required for you to make a living.