



# CONNECTIONS

December 2008



## CEO Corner

It's hard to believe we are approaching the end of the year already. This time of year always brings with it a busy schedule and little time to reflect.

In spite of the busy schedule, it is important to evaluate what we accomplished over the last year. It is also the time to determine those things that we need to accomplish going forward in 2009, and set our goals accordingly. UMC accomplished much and had a successful year in 2008. We completed several large projects and started a few others, which will extend through 2009. We continue to look at ways to improve safety, quality and productivity on our projects. Going forward, we will measure these items more closely against benchmarks in order to gauge our improvement and realign our focus as needed.

I am very excited about all that UMC has going for it. Most businesses have some level of bricks & mortar, tools, equipment, computers, paper, pencils, etc. All businesses have people to run them. Very few and only the best have the quality of people I see every day at UMC, in the office and on the jobsites. Just like any team, sports or otherwise, the coach can only do so much. It is then up to the players. We have the best players around, and our record of success proves it. When you are reflecting on 2008, and I hope you will, reflect knowing that your efforts and qualities

contributed greatly to the success of a great company.

We need to also take the time to reflect personally, identify our successes in 2008, and set our own personal goals for the upcoming year. With news of the many world crises bombarding us every day from every angle, it can sometimes be a challenge to sift through it all to find the good things. Strive to do this, because they are there.

Regardless of how you celebrate this time of year, I wish you and your families all the best and a Happy New Year.

I hope to see you all at the UMC Holiday Party on January 10, 2009!

JB



## Safety

Safety Performance: Our safety performance has been excellent this year. We currently have an OSHA recordable rate of 3.93, 40% less than the five year average at the end of November. That is a record to be proud of - keep up the good work!

Holiday Safety Hot List: The following is a list of safety considerations for holiday activities. Please be sure to take note of them as you and your family enjoy the season.

1. **Fall Protection:** Use care when getting onto your

roof to put up decorations. Be sure the ladder is extended 3 feet past the landing and secured. (Have someone hold the ladder.) If you have questions about roof anchors or need fall protection equipment, call Safety Director Kirk Baisch at 206.604.2743.

2. **Ladders:** Be very careful when using ladders to put up lights and decorate the tree. **Never:** use a step ladder as an extension ladder, stand on the top two steps of a step ladder, or lean out too far from the ladder to set that one last ornament. Be careful of wet feet on a ladder.
3. **Electric Shock:** Inspect the cords on your lights - if they are nicked or worn, replace them. Be especially careful with outdoor lighting. Do not put too many light strings on one circuit.
4. **Fire:** Be sure to keep your indoor tree well watered. Have your chimney cleaned so that Santa can have clear access. Use extreme care when using candles. Check to see that your lights are not too hot. Do not leave home with your indoor Christmas lights on. Consider switching to LED lights which remain cool and use less energy.
5. **Personal health and injury:** Help yourself avoid colds and flu by washing your hands often, getting a flu shot, avoiding others

when they are sick, covering coughs and sneezes, eating nutritious meals, and getting enough rest. Use care when lifting heavy objects- ask for help if it is too heavy. Don't try to do too much - fatigue is a major cause of colds, flu, and injuries.

6. Consider the **stability of your tree**: secure it to the wall if you have small children and/or rowdy relatives.
7. Remember that **winter driving** can be difficult. Leave enough time so that you are not rushed. Carry chains if you are going over the mountains. Equip your car with a first aid kit and a blanket. Use care when driving in the rain. Keep an eye out for drivers who have forgotten to designate a driver.
8. **Stress** and the holidays seem to go together. Here are some ideas for managing stress. Don't take on too much. Eat healthy meals. Get enough exercise and enough sleep. Make time for yourself - breathe deeply, take a walk, close the door and take a nap, just say no! Maintain a grateful attitude. Help someone less fortunate than yourself. If you control stress, stress cannot control you!

**Have a safe and happy holiday!**

### STAR Performer-Dec.

**Ron Thorvilson**, aka Santa Claus, is December's STAR Performer. Ron worked as a Journeyman Teamster at UMC from July, 1977 until he retired in July, 1998.



For many years after his retirement, Ron returns to UMC each December to grant the wishes and put smiles on the faces of the UMC kids (there are a few that would rather scream when they see him though).

Ron has generously given his time to be Santa year after year and is well-deserving to be called "December's STAR Performer".

Please be sure to thank Ron on December 12<sup>th</sup> at the Santa Party for his continued contribution in making the party a memorable event for all the UMC kids - both young and old!



### Birthdays

#### December

- 4 Steve Stamm
- 5 Paul Idzik
- 8 Rick Coulter
- 9 Audie Wallace
- 11 Jerry Bush
- 24 Ian Footer

#### January

- 2 Pat Damitio
- 3 Chris Gunn
- 5 Steve Bueler
- 7 Wayne Hakola
- 11 Brett Endres
- 11 Kirk Baisch
- 14 Khai Xiong
- 16 Jon Ericson
- 29 Scott Locke
- 30 Rick Hawkins

### Anniversaries



Doug Smith - 25 years  
Richard Riker - 5 years  
Leon Bialkoski - 5 years  
Ronny Clark - 5 years  
Dave Ranger - 5 years

### New Hires



Chris Riddle started work for UMC on 11/17/08 as BIM Lead Drafter. Chris's last position was with Affiliated Engineers (AEI) in Seattle Washington. Prior to that he was with Valley Electric, where he was an MEP drafter. His hobbies include mountain biking, hiking, and swimming in the Puget Sound.

### Calendar of Events



#### December

12<sup>th</sup>-Santa Party (UMC)  
18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> - Holiday Turkey Deliveries

#### January, 2009

10<sup>th</sup>-Holiday Party (**VENUE CHANGE** - Embassy Suites, Bellevue)



## Turkey Days

REMINDER - December 18 and 19 will be the delivery of the holiday turkeys to all employees!!!

## Holiday Party Update

REMINDER - The UMC Holiday Party location has changed to the **EMBASSY SUITES, BELLEVUE** due to a major renovation at the Red Lion Hotel. They were unable to have the project completed prior to our event date.

## UMCCF News

### Mukilteo Food Bank

REMINDER - The food drive is currently in full swing. We are collecting non-perishable and canned foods to donate to the local Mukilteo Food Bank. You can deposit your donations in the barrel located in the kitchen and they will be brought to the food bank throughout the holiday season.

The Fife office and job sites can also participate by simply bringing the canned foods or non-perishables to the job trailer/office and Les will bring them to Mukilteo to include in our company's donation to the food bank. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!!

These times are trying for all of us, however, there are people very desperate to feed their family and we can help ease the stress for them - your generous donations are appreciated!!

## Children's Hospital Toy Donation Drive



REMINDER - The toy donations are in full swing for the kids at Children's Hospital. You can bring in your new toy donation and put it in the toy collection bin located in the reception area. The toy drive will run through Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

The Fife office and all the jobsites can participate in this toy drive by having a collection bin in one location and the contents will be transported back to Mukilteo via our internal courier service - please see Les Bouck for the pick-up schedule.

"Restrictions" (copied from the Children's Hospital website) are for safety and infection control reasons, so please donate only new items that are washable, nontoxic, and not easily broken. They are unable to accept used toys or toys that represent violence. Please do not send large metal trucks or toys. Please do not wrap donations.

### **Greatest Needs of the Toy Program Wish List**

- Gift Certificates
- Disposable cameras
- Scrapbook supplies
- Prepaid phone cards
- Card games
- Magic tricks
- Disney or other character toys
- Small Lego sets
- Nail polish
- Trading cards
- Coloring books
- Arts and crafts kits

### **Other Priority Needs**

- Spanish, Vietnamese, and Russian videos, books, and music for all ages
- Cassette tapes (lullabies, easy listening, all ages)
- SNAP models for older school age to teenage
- Tickets to local entertainment events
- Fisher Price Tuff-Stuff tape players

### **Infants and Toddlers**

- Mirrors
- Teething toys
- Washable rattles
- Plastic chain links
- Board books
- Sorting/stacking toys
- Washable squeeze toys
- Beginning cars and trucks
- Light, sound, and pop-up toys
- Busy boxes

\* Please, no gyms

### **Pre-School / School Age**

- Brio train cars only (no track)
- Smaller sturdy plastic cars and trucks
- Small inside balls and/or Koosh balls
- Small magic wands
- Animals and/or dinosaurs
- Nerf games
- Small Legos
- Tech-niks
- K-nexs
- Black velvet pictures to color

### **Teens**

- Discman and CDs
- PG and PG-13 videos
- X-Box, Game Cube and Play Station 2 games
- Journal supplies
- Quality headphones
- Pre-paid phone cards

- Electronic hand-held games
- Pro sports team caps and t-shirts
- Bath soaps, gels, and lotion gift sets
- Fingernail polish and manicure supplies
- Gift certificates (music stores, restaurants, specialty stores, etc.)

#### **Arts & Crafts**

- Watercolor painting kits
- Oil pastels
- Beeswax sheets for candle making (all colors)
- Black velvet pictures to color
- Glitter pens/glitter glue
- Fabric markers
- Scene/story stickers
- Doodle art posters
- Fimo/Sculpy clay
- Beading supplies
- Coloring books
- Sketch books
- Puffy paints
- Play Doh

#### **Self-Contained Craft Kits**

Call (206) 987-4133 for information. Some kit ideas include beadie babies, friendship or bead bracelets, hemp jewelry, paper projects, sand art, and stamping.

#### **Games**

- Playing cards
- UNO
- Clue
- Jenga
- Taboo
- Trouble
- Mancala
- Battleship
- Guess Who
- Catch Phrase
- Connect Four

#### **Crayola**

- Crayons
- Markers
- Other Crayola brand art materials

### **Charitable Contributions**

REMINDER - You will be receiving the UMCCF 2009 donation form shortly as it's that time again to start thinking about supporting charities near and dear to our heart. We ask that you consider weekly deductions to help those truly in need. You can select a charity from the UMCCF website list or you can name your own organization - either way, any donation will be greatly appreciated!

