1998

As we close out another year we find ourselves entering the final year of the 20th century and preparing for the next millennium. The past year has been filled with mixed emotions. Layoffs in mid-year created a reality check for our membership, and the MTC negotiations debacle created an immense amount of anxiety for everyone. Next year, 1999, is a contract negotiation year for us. The effectiveness of the upcoming negotiations will rely heavily on the solidarity of our membership and the strength in unity it represents.

JANUARY

MDA-UAW Local 571 logo computer mouse pads made their way into the plant, adding a pleasing enhancement to area decors.

MDA-UAW meets with the State of Connecticut Department of Labor representatives emphasizing that a more active involvement would improve the apprentice program. State agrees on the importance of the program.

MDA-UAW is pleased to announce that your savings and stock investment plan (SSIP) has gotten even better with many enhancements to the current program. A

15% discount was made available to the MDA-UAW members from Jiffy Lube.

FEBRUARY

A "Worker-to-Worker" seminar was co-produced by the MDA-UAW office and the Region 9A UAW to improve communication within and throughout the membership for disseminating pertinent information.

MDA-UAW supports the AFL-CIO to raise money for Workers Memorial construction with a Bingo Night at the Mohegan Sun.

A delegation of Local 571 officers and members attended meeting with members of Congress from Connecticut and Rhode Island to discuss legislative agendas and the business climate affecting labor in the new year.

MDA-UAW continues to educate and inform members on American made products that we all buy and use. "Made in USA" books were made available to the Consumer Committee.

MDA-UAW retirees receive letter of appreciation from the Director of United Way/Labor Food Center for their donations for the less fortunate.

Many active members went through Leadership Development training sponsored by the Company and the Union.

MARCH

MDA-UAW office continues the special membership cost program with BJ's Wholesale Club that the membership can take advantage of.

MDA-UAW offers the opportunity to purchase logo jackets to members at one-half the actual cost.

Congratulations to the MDA-UAW bowling team for winning the Region 9A UAW annual tournament.

 APRIL

Delegate elections were held to the International UAW 32nd Constitutional Convention which took place in June.

MDA-UAW participates in the AFL-CIO Workers Memorial Monument Ceremony held at the newly constructed site at Washington Park in Groton.

Company to notify 145 members of layoff to the reduction in workload. Union officers continue with their efforts of lobbying for new work by meeting with congressional delegates in Washington, D.C.

Apprentice Committee Chairman Bill Giustini puts on an excellent and well received presentation at the Eastern Seaboard Apprentice Conference.

MDA-UAW Local 571 President Mel Olsson was re-elected to the Board of Directors of Charter Oak Credit Union.

MAY

Two MDA-UAW officers attended a Federal Arbitrators Convention to meet newly appointed arbitrators and get a feeling for their opinions and view points valuable for our future.

Eleven MDA-UAW Local 571 members graduated from the AFL-CIO Counseling Program

JUNE

The Veterans Committee sponsors a bus trip to Washington, D.C. in order that veterans and members can see first hand the monuments that were erected in their honor.

Six recipients of the $2,000.00 John F. Saffomilla and E. Roy Colville scholarships were announced. They are Laura Benson, daughter of Marc Benson, T/A Acoustics D462; Candice Britt, daughter of Clyde Britt, Strct Sr. Draftsman D459; Dylan Hayn, son of Brett Hayn, Strct Sr. Draftsman D459; Eli Peng, son of James Peng, Elect Sr. Designer D459; Kiana Scruggs, daughter of Brenda Scruggs, Admin Specialist D622 and Elliot Shaw, son of Russell Shaw, Struct Draftsman-Appr D459.

Officers, Councillors and Grievance Representatives took part in three session education forum provided by Region 9A UAW education representatives. These forums help to make the leadership more knowledgeable and of broader assistance to the membership.

MDA-UAW retirees met with CT State Legislatures and other union activists to lobby in Hartford for working families.

 JULY

The officers and Recreation Committee of Local 571 sponsored a night at Senator Thomas S. Dodd Stadium in Norwich, CT. Members brought their families to the park to experience the action of the Norwich Navigators and the Reading Phillies. The night was highlighted by President Olsson passing out baseballs to the "kids" of our members.

The annual MDA-UAW family picnic was held at the Sunshine Resort in Moodus, CT. As in the past, our members, retirees, relatives and guests enjoyed a relaxing and pleasant day.

AUGUST

MDA-UAW announced a discount to Local 571 members and family for computer software training from Workforce Readiness located in Groton, CT. The training provided is on commonly used software at introductory, intermediate and advanced levels.   
MDA-UAW officers support SNET workers as they walked the picket line in front of the SNET building. Solidarity for all.

SEPTEMBER

President Mel Olsson received the Connecticut AFL-CIO Award for Political Activist of the Year. This award is for distinguished service on behalf of the labor movement.   
MDA-UAW union office goes to work for retirees notified by PHS "Smart Choice" that withdrawal with a bipartisan group of State Representatives, State Senators, representatives from the governors office and Congressman Sam Gejdenson's office courses of action were outlines including public forums and a senior insurance fair.   
Citizen and Legislative Committee sponsored a voter registration drive that proved to be very effective.   
The 5th annual MDA-UAW Golf Tournament was held at Cedar Ridge Golf Course. All participants enjoyed a day of fun and relaxation thanks to the efforts of the committee and the volunteers.

OCTOBER

Twenty-five Local 571 members were recognized with "Outstanding Community Service Awards" for their contributions of time and energy over the past years.   
MDA-UAW successfully completes an ongoing effort to improve claims processing and services rendered with our dental carrier. Effective January 1, 1999 all claims will be addressed to Delta Dental.   
Mel Olsson named Vice-Chairman for the American Heart Association Heart Walk at Rocky Neck in East Lyme, CT. Volunteers from the MDA-UAW and company participated in raising $38,000.00 to benefit the association.   
MDA-UAW continues to meet the Medigap providers for our retirees; also starts a planning session to hold a Senior Health Fair at Ocean Beach Park.   
Representatives from Local 571, the Company and Maine Maritime Academy met to discuss the accreditation of our apprentice program.   
Our newsletter "Soundings" won three awards in the UAW International 1998 LUPA Journalistic Excellence Contest.   
Local 571 volunteers support working families during a phone bank held prior to the November elections.   
Eastern Area CAP Council sponsored a fund raiser for Riki Sotil, candidtae for state senate. Riki is President of the Jai-Alai Players Assocation which is affiliated with the UAW.

NOVEMBER

The following members volunteered their time to work at various functions on Election Day and on our phone bank: Mel Olsson, Bob Canova, Pete Johnson, Roy Colville, Paul Lasacono, Judi Page, Dennis Popp, Mark Ciliano, Dave Bliven and Bill Giustini (Almost all of our endorsed candidates won their respective elections).   
President Mel Olsson, Deputy Commissioner William Bellotti, Dept. of Labor Representatives Ken Duff and Jack Guerrera met with Vice President Bob Nardone and Director of Taxation Henry Teskey regarding Apprentice subsidies.   
After preliminary groundwork had been established, some of our members were assigned to work at Avondale Shipyard in Louisiana.   
The Bath Iron Works manning levels continue as a coordinated interface effort both here at Electric Boat and at BIW.   
Over 1,000 senior citizens, many of whom were MDA-UAW retirees, attended a Senior Health Insurance Fair at Ocean Beach Park which was co-sponsored by UAW Local 571, the MTC and State Legislatures.   
Local 571 Financial Officers attended a 2-day conference in Hartford sponsored by the International Auditors Department.   
MDA-UAW membership provided with a $3.00 discount on the purchase of Christmas trees from an area tree farm.

DECEMBER

President Mel Olsson, First Vice President John Worobey, Jr., International Representative Brad Marshall and company officials hold preliminary discussions on forthcoming negotiations.   
The annual Holiday Dinner Dance was held at the Groton Motor Inn in Groton.