



## Marketing Issues

by Jordan Ritenour  
Director of Market Development



### Value-Added Benefits of Training

The organizing tactics we use today have been tried and tested by many locals over the years. In fact, some of our campaigns have been so successful that union-busting attorneys have started using our very own tactics against us. But now is not time to turn from these successful strategies. Instead we should find new ways to organize, while re-incorporating the most successful approaches from the past.

In today's market, it's tough to convince an owner that he or she can increase profit margins by adding higher wages, health insurance and a pension plan to his or her overall cost. However, this is the mission at hand for us.

When speaking to the owner of a company, we must be able to speak clearly and concisely about the time and money that is spent by our apprentice programs and the International on training in all aspects of roofing. For example:

### Safety instruction

Be able to cite the extensive safety training we provide, particularly fall protection, OSHA 10- and 30-hour courses and any site-specific training. Due to the rising costs of workers' compensation, this type of training can save money for the contractor and increase his profit margin.

### Foreman training

In 2008 the International staff, along with the help of many local apprentice coordinators, developed the foreman training program. The program's aims are to help the foreman make his crew more productive, which in turn creates a better work environment and increases the company's profits.

### Hands-on training

Our hands-on training and classroom instruction are unparalleled in the industry. Use the hands-on portion of your apprentice program to demonstrate to the owner the skill of your apprentices, and use it to show end-users the amount of training your local provides. Extend invitations for folks to attend an apprentice class. Your guest list should include roofing company owners, high school guidance counselors, building owners and managers, school board members, and local and state politicians.

Purely *having* the best-trained workforce in the industry is not good enough. We must market and sell ourselves as the best. Too many company owners and general contractors are unaware of the amount of training our apprentice programs provide. Many owners and end-users in today's industry don't even understand apprenticeship. It is our job to deliver the message of this advantage.

Not all owners and end-users will be receptive to our way of thinking, but we must tell everyone about our outstanding training programs. It should not be our "best kept secret." We have the best training in the industry, and we should be proud of that fact.

There are no guarantees that you will be able to change someone's way of thinking about the union way of life. Letting the industry know that we are the best can only help us in the long run. You have the programs; it is your job to market them to the roofing industry. Ask the Market Development Department—we can be of assistance.

I wish for all to have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. ■

## Local 150 Members Picket Non-union Contractor

Local 150, Terre Haute, IN, members picketed non-union Nu-Tec Roofing at a Kroger store in September.

Holding signs that say, "Nu-Tec Roofing Co. does NOT have a contract with Terre Haute Roofers Local 150," Local 150 Business Manager Jeff Hayes and members Greg Lowe and Ben Kemper let the public know that they are dealing with a scab contractor. Nu-Tec Roofing, out of Indianapolis, was performing a re-roof at the grocery chain. ■



Left to right: Local 150 Business Manager Jeff Hayes and members Greg Lowe and Ben Kemper picket Nu-Tec Roofing Contractors, Inc.



## Chicago Roofers Join Rally Against Dave & Busters

What started out as a call to all union brothers and sisters for solidarity against a non-union entertainment venue in suburbia turned into a protest of the masses.

A new Dave & Busters was built in Orland Park, a town outside of Chicago, and not only was it built non-union, but most of the construction crew was from out-of-state. Local building trades members were not going to keep quiet about it.

Hundreds of supporters, including members of Roofers Local 11 and their families, showed up—and brought in the rats. The rally grew to hundreds of people, 25 rats, and a line of protesters that extended across the entire block in front of the complex.

The message was: Make sure you don't spend your hard-earned Union wages at this place of business. That message was made, loud and clear. ■



*Local 11 Business Representative Jeff Eppenstein, member Tony Socki and Recording Secretary Steve Oboikovitz rally against Dave & Busters. Young activists Jeremy Eppenstein and Eric Oboikovitz also join the fray.*



*Larry Gnat, Bob Burch, Marty Headtke, Jeff Eppenstein, Rich Gabel, Gary Menzel, Mark Marzalik and Local 11 President Rich Mathis lead the Roofers in protest.*



*Protesters and rats cover the street in front of Dave & Busters.*