

Companions, Colleagues and Partners

What do you think of when you hear the word “associate?” A companion? A colleague? A partner? All of the above? Whatever your answer, I think we can all agree that associates are good things to have.

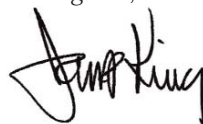
I remember as a kid how excited I would get when my dad bought a new piece of equipment. It meant that I got to take delivery of the same piece of equipment, because the salesman would always replicate it in a 1/25 die-cast model for me. Whatever it was, I would put it to work at one of my two “jobsites” — the one at home, the other at my dad’s office. When I grew up and started buying the equipment I once played with, it was one of these same salesmen — Bob Peck of Yancey Bros. Co. — who shared with me his belief in the importance of local associations. And, it was he who eventually convinced me to join the local utility contractors association.

So, when I think of an associate, I think of someone who provides support, assistance, advice and sometimes just plain fun. Our 2006 Associate Member of the Year — Brian Hunsicker — certainly fits that description. Brian has been involved with NUCA for as long as I can remember. And, his participation has always been at a high level. He is not one to just lend moral or financial support; he is also willing to serve. He has been so involved, for several years I thought he was a contractor. He was in fact right there beside us when we lobbied Capitol Hill during NUCA’s annual Washington Summit and Spring Board meeting in May.

And while I’m on the subject, I want to say a word or two about the Summit. After participating in well over 10 years of legislative fly-ins, I never cease to be amazed by the effectiveness of our visits. We hear over and over again how important it is to make our voices heard, but sometimes we just don’t realize how much it matters until lawmakers and their staff tell us it does. This year’s attendees heard more than once how helpful it was for us to come and educate them about industry issues. NUCA’s Government Relations department does a great job year round for us, but it is the grassroots efforts of NUCA members — contractors and associates alike — that help drive the nail home.

Throughout the dog days of summer, don’t forget that NUCA is quietly working for you every day of the year. And, yes, I’m going to say it again: We and the industry would be much better off if you were working alongside us as companions, colleagues and partners.

Regards,



James King



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July 2007 Volume 31, Number 7 *Utility Contractor* (ISSN 1098-0342) is published monthly for the National Utility Contractors Association by Benjamin Media Inc., 1770 Main Street, PO Box 190, Peninsula, OH 44264. Periodicals postage paid at Peninsula, OH and additional office. Subscription price: \$1.50 per issue, \$15 per year. Foreign subscriptions: \$3 additional per year. Subscription rate for members is \$15, which is included in the dues. ©2007 NUCA. All rights reserved by the National Utility Contractors Association for articles contained herein except where otherwise noted. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted by any means without written permission from the publisher. Printed in the U.S.A.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Benjamin Media PO Box 190 Peninsula, OH 44264-0190 USA.

